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THE CONCEPT OF “INDIAN PHILOSOPHY” AS A PRODUCT OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE (WILHELM HALBFASS’S *INDIA AND EUROPE* REVISITED)

ABSTRACT

This paper is a sequel to another paper of the same author: “Some Marginal Notes on [W. Halbfass’s] *India and Europe*” (in: E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism. The Work of Wilhelm Halbfass and its Impact on Indian and Cross-Cultural Studies*, Amsterdam–Atlanta 1997). In the present paper the concept of “Indian philosophy” is discussed – with references to the analysis of the concept in the book *India and Europe* by W. Halbfass. The central idea of the paper is this: “Indian philosophy” is not a kind of primordial entity it is often said to be, but rather a contingent concept which gradually evolved in the 19th and 20th century in the process of intercultural interaction between Indian (South Asian) and European (Western) intellectual traditions.

Keywords: philosophy, Western, non-Western, Indian, Chinese, Russian, transfer, intercultural dialogue

In the mid-1990s I was invited to participate in a volume dedicated to the work of the German-American scholar Wilhelm Halbfass (1940-2000). The book, titled *Beyond Orientalism*, was published in 1997 as Volume 59 of the *Poznań Studies in the Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities*.¹ I had had a chance to get acquainted with Professor Halbfass himself, while staying in the USA in 1991, and even enjoyed his hospitality at his home near Philadelphia. I was charmed with his personality and admired his works (books and papers). Most probably, Professor Halbfass himself suggested to the compilers of *Beyond Orientalism* that I should be invited to contribute to the project. For my contribution I chose to analyse the book *India and Europe*² which I had brought home from the USA and read avidly.

The two books, *India and Europe* and *Beyond Orientalism*, have very substantial points in common with the project (Between Uniqueness and Universality. Modern South Asia: a Space of Intercultural Dialogue) for which I am writing the present paper. *India and Europe*, as, for that matter, other books of Wilhelm Halbfass as well (though in various degrees), investigated some particular aspects of “intercultural dialogue” (rather “dialogues”) in South Asia, and *Beyond Orientalism* was meant to discuss the ideas and achievements of Wilhelm Halbfass in this field. The latter book was planned as a series of dialogues between the contributors and Wilhelm Halbfass himself.

My paper for the volume proved to be a kind of critical review of *India and Europe*³ Incidentally, the paper was included in the first part of *Beyond Orientalism*, which was titled “Cross-Cultural Encounter and Dialogue.” Re-reading my paper now, I see that it lacks balance on the critical side and at some places demonstrates a kind of petty irritation. Perhaps, I have channelled that way my personal irritation with my own life in Moscow in the mid-1990s. Had I known that the author of *India and Europe* would die in about two years after the publication of the volume *Beyond Orientalism*, I would certainly write my paper differently. From W. Halbfass’s responses to my critical remarks I got the impression that he was somewhat upset with me. We never corresponded after that,⁴ and till now I feel bad that I had not curbed my critical inclinations and might

¹ E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism. The Work of Wilhelm Halbfass and its Impact on Indian and Cross-Cultural Studies*, Amsterdam–Atlanta 1997.

² W. Halbfass, *India and Europe. An Essay in Understanding*, Albany 1988. This book was an enlarged and reworked version of the author’s earlier book in German: W. Halbfass, *Indien und Europa. Perspektiven ihrer geistigen Begegnung*, Basel–Stuttgart 1981.

³ Cf. S.D. Serebriany, ‘Some Marginal Notes on [W. Halbfass’s] *India and Europe*’ in E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism*..., pp. 71–101.

⁴ Earlier I had a somewhat similar experience, also connected with intercultural dialogues in and about South Asia. In 1967-1968 I lived several months in Varanasi as a student. Then and there I got acquainted with Raimundo (alias Raimon) Panikkar (1918-2010) and his circle of Roman Catholics (some of them were Indians, but most of them were Europeans). Understandably enough, I felt there more “at home” with Roman Catholics, than with Hindus or Muslims. Professor Panikkar tried to conduct an intercultural, or rather inter-faith, dialogue between Roman Catholics and Hindus (cf. e.g. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raimon_Panikkar>). Then for about ten years we

have hurt Wilhelm's sensibility. Nevertheless, I still think that what I wrote in the mid-1990s about *India and Europe* is by and large true, even if I could have worded my remarks in a more subtle and polite manner. I described that paper of mine as *a kind of ṭikā or a series of ṭikās on Wilhelm Halbfass's India and Europe*.⁵ Now I may try to add some more ṭikās to those ones.

One of my critical comments then was that the author of *India and Europe* had not analysed in his book the words and concepts of "India" and "Europe," having taken them as self-evident.⁶ In his *Responses to my Respondents*, that is in his comments to the papers of the first part of *Beyond Orientalism*, W. Halbfass wrote: *The words "encounter" and "dialogue," which the editors have chosen as title-words for the first part of this book, are central, but elusive terms in India and Europe (and its German predecessor, Indien und Europa). Just as the words "India" and "Europe" themselves do not appear in the index, neither do they. There is no definition, no theory, no explicit thematic treatment of "encounter" and "dialogue." Yet their presence is pervasive. In a sense, the entire book was meant to fill these concepts with content, to exemplify and illustrate them through concrete historical and hermeneutic processes.*⁷

In the next paragraph, W. Halbfass writes about the word "understanding" which too, is something the book [i.e. *India and Europe*] was meant to exemplify and illustrate. He adds: *In the following, I will try to briefly reexamine and clarify my usage of the three terms.*⁸

The word "encounter" (in German, "Begegnung"), for W. Halbfass, *does not carry any ... terminological weight. It is, in its cross-cultural application, not much more than a convenient label for a variety of processes through which individuals or groups of different cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds take notice of each other and their mutual otherness...*⁹

"Dialogue" is more problematic. More often than "encounter," it appears in quotation marks [see, for instance, IE, pp. 160, 368, 439]; this indicates that I am referring to current cross-cultural and inter-religious usages of the term which require caution and scrutiny. But in spite of the frequency of such questionable, thoughtless and merely rhetorical

corresponded from time to time. By the end of the 1970s Professor Panikkar sent me his book *The Vedic Experience. Mantramañjari: An Anthology Of The Vedas For Modern Man* (Berkeley 1977), suggesting that I might write a review. I did write a review and got it published in a Moscow journal (*Народы Азии и Африки*, No. 3 (1980), pp. 226-234). The review was on the whole quite positive, but contained some critical remarks as well. Professor Panikkar received the issue of the journal, and a colleague of his at the University of California, Santa Barbara (where Professor Panikkar taught part time) translated my review to him. I never got a letter from him after that.

⁵ S.D. Serebriany, 'Some Marginal Notes...', p. 71; "ṭikā" in Sanskrit (Hindi etc.) means a commentary of a very simple and unassuming kind, a series of explanatory notes to a text.

⁶ So in my paper ('Some Marginal Notes...', pp. 76-80) I dwelt rather at length, in a comparative vein, on the multifaceted meanings of the words (concepts) "India," "Europe" and "the West." I hardly need to repeat here what I wrote there.

⁷ E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism...*, p. 141.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., p. 142.

usages, I do not see any alternative. Consequently, the last paragraph of my “Epilogue” uses the word without quotation marks [IE, p. 375]. There is no alternative to speaking and listening to one another, but we must not be naïve about it.¹⁰

And next follows a typically Halbfassian sequence of questions for which Halbfass himself do not have (or is hesitant to formulate) definite answers:

What is the language in which Indians today speak about themselves and their tradition?

Do they still speak for the tradition?

How does this tradition itself speak to me?

What is my ability to listen?

How can I understand the tradition on the one hand and the broken identity of its modern representatives on the other?

Do I understand myself in the process?

*Could it be that understanding itself is not just a European, but a Eurocentric notion?*¹¹

Instead of giving answers to these seven questions, Halbfass concludes with a statement: *With all these questions in mind, I still have to listen and to speak to the other. Whatever the problems with “dialogue” and “understanding” may be – these are channels that have to be kept open.*¹²

On the next page we read: *Understanding and dialogue are inseparable. Understanding itself is of the nature of a dialogue, and implies the presence of and the movement towards a realm of shared meanings. No participant in the encounter between India and the West has developed these ideas more eloquently and described the problems and prospects of understanding more clearly than J.L. Mehta: “The whole enterprise of ‘understanding’ [and, presumably, of ‘dialogue’? – SDS], it would seem, is a characteristically Western one. It must be added, however, that it is also a recent one, even in Western history.”*¹³

Unfortunately, in my dialogue with Wilhelm Halbfass I have not been able to reach full understanding. He seems to have taken my critical comments quite seriously (even, I am afraid, with some displeasure) and, among other themes, devoted about four pages to discussing my remarks on the meaning of the words “India” and “Europe.”¹⁴ His response did not seem convincing to me, but then I had neither audacity nor time to continue the polemics. His sudden and untimely death in May of 2000, soon after his 60th birthday, has made our further dialogue impossible.

Now, while writing this paper, I re-read once again several chapters of *India and Europe* and felt again the queer mixture of admiration and exasperation. The book is

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., p. 143. W. Halbfass quotes the book: J.L. Mehta, *India and the West. The Problem of Understanding*, Chico, Calif. 1985, p. 130. Jaraval Lal Mehta (1912-1988) was an Indian philosopher, an internationally famous expert on the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. W. Halbfass repeatedly stressed that works of J.L. Mehta had influenced him a lot.

¹⁴ E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism...*, pp. 152-157.

indeed an admirable work of research, a rich mine of ideas, analysis and information. It is, no doubt, worth re-reading again and again. But some traits of the book are really exasperating.

In my 1997 paper I dared remark:

*The English, or rather American, version, revised and enlarged, of the original German book may be read and in fact cannot help being read as a rather uneasy synthesis of continental European and American standards. From a slightly different viewpoint, it may be described as a not quite successful synthesis of German traditions of scholarship, thinking and style with the patterns of academic discourse in (American) English. Among other things, one notes a good number of Germanisms in the English language of the book.*¹⁵

In a footnote I added that *some passages in India and Europe might probably be better understood if read together with the German original*. Now I may put it more straightforwardly: *India and Europe* is a not quite successful translation and reworking of *Indien und Europa*. It is a pity the author did not live long enough to bring out another, revised edition of the English language version (in German it might have had the subtitle *zweite und verbesserte Ausgabe*). Now if anybody ever gets the idea to translate *India and Europe* into any other language, it would be necessary to consult constantly the earlier book in German, as well as those papers in German which the author used for enlarging the original version.¹⁶

As for the contents of *India and Europe*, it very often whets the appetite of a reader, but leaves this appetite quite unsatisfied. This may be explained by the vastness and the great complexity of the theme which Wilhelm Halbfass tried to embrace in just one book (which, at that, is not too large). As I mentioned earlier, in *India and Europe* the author did not analyse properly the "title terms" – "India" and "Europe" (the fact he partially acknowledged in his "response" published in *Beyond Orientalism*). Now, to the list of words (notions, concepts), not elucidated enough in *India and Europe*, I would add the word "philosophy." As a philologist, I also feel that the history of the concept of "Indian philosophy" deserves more attention than Wilhelm Halbfass could possibly pay to it in his book. It would be presumptuous to try and complete within the limits of a short paper what Wilhelm Halbfass left incomplete in his great book. Here, I will only try and sketch the possible future ways of writing the full story of the collocation (term) "Indian philosophy."

¹⁵ S.D. Serebriany, 'Some Marginal Notes...', p. 72.

¹⁶ Here again I may refer to a similar experience of my own. In the mid-1990s I was commissioned by the Moscow branch of Soros Foundation to translate into Russian the book by Umberto Eco *The Role of the Reader*. The book had been recommended for translation by some Russian experts who thought (as they later explained to me) that the English language book, published by Indiana University Press in 1979, was a faithful translation of the Italian book by the same author titled *Lector in fabula* (1979). I started translating *The Role of the Reader* from (American) English, but soon realised that some pages of this book were utterly incomprehensible without Italian originals, that is the corresponding chapters of *Lector in fabula*, as well as some papers in Italian which Umberto Eco included (getting them translated into English by different hands) in the American book. So my Russian translation had a subtitle: "Translated from English and Italian" (cf. У. Эко, *Роль читателя. Исследования по семиотике текста*, перевод с английского и итальянского С. Серебряного, СПб.–М. 2005).

* * *

The word “philosophy”¹⁷ belongs to the semantic field usually embraced by the word “humanities.” The kinds of intellectual activity we now call “(the) humanities” (“sciences humaines,” “Geisteswissenschaften,” “nauki humanistyczne,” “гуманитарные науки” etc.) and/or “social sciences” (“sciences sociales,” “Sozialwissenschaften,” “nauki społeczne,” “общественные науки” etc.)¹⁸ have got their present form (if not their very existence) during the 19th and 20th century. These terms and the kinds of pursuits (disciplines) they denote are the “products” of modern European culture, even though some parts of them may have appeared and/or got their actual shape because of contacts between Europeans and peoples of other climes.

About some disciplines belonging to this kind (and their names) it is well known that they were “invented” in the 18th or even 19th century. Thus, the word “sociology” was coined, in the 1830s,¹⁹ and a programme for the corresponding discipline was first developed by the French thinker (philosopher) Auguste Comte (1798-1857). Once the modern discipline of sociology was there, scholars could search for its antecedents and anticipations both in the European tradition (down to Plato) and in other cultures. For instance, the Arab author Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406) may be called one of the “founding fathers” of sociology (as well as of historiography and even economics).²⁰

A bit different is the story of the word “philology” and the corresponding discipline (or a group of disciplines). In classical Greek the adjective φιλόλογος meant just “fond of discussion or argument, talkative,” in Hellenistic Greek also implying an excessive (“sophistic”) preference of argument over the love of true wisdom, φιλοσοφία.²¹ The Greek word φιλολογία originally did not designate any scholarly discipline and meant just love of learning, of literature as well as of argument and reasoning. In the Latin composition *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury) by Martianus Capella (the 5th century AC), Philologia (a maiden) appears as an allegory of literary erudition. It was only since the late 18th century that the word “philologia” became a name for a scholarly discipline or a group of disciplines: in various European

¹⁷ It would be more correct (even if pedantic) to write: *The various cognate words in various languages (philosophy, philosophie, Philosophie, filosofia, filozofia, φιλοσοφία etc.) which have their common source in the Greek word φιλοσοφία...* See further note 90.

¹⁸ Again, the words (terms), listed here as synonymous, may have more or less different meanings in their respective languages. But here it would be out of place to discuss those differences.

¹⁹ Actually, the word “sociologie” (in French) was first used about 1780 by the French essayist Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès (1748-1836) in an unpublished manuscript (cf. J. Guilhaumou, ‘Sieyès et le non-dit de la sociologie: du mot à la chose,’ *Revue d’histoire des sciences humaines*, No. 15 (2006), pp. 117-134). Auguste Comte, in the 1830s, coined the same word independently – and made it famous.

²⁰ Cf. [Ibn Khaldun is] regarded by some Westerners as the true father of historiography and sociology – W.E. Gates, ‘The Spread of Ibn Khaldūn’s Ideas on Climate and Culture,’ *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1967), p. 415. Cf. also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibn_Khaldun>, 21 June 2015.

²¹ Cf. <<https://en.wikipedia.org/?title=Philology>>, 21 June 2015.

languages not only the phonetic forms of the word (what Ferdinand de Saussure would call "les signifiants"), but their meanings ("les signifiés") as well have been and still are rather different.

Now, in retrospect, the words "philologist" and "philology" may be applied to certain activities (or "practices") in the past which were not called by these (or similar) words then and there. For instance, in Russian, the term "Александрйская филология" is widely used,²² even though the Greek scholars of Alexandria, meant by this term, hardly ever applied to themselves the Greek words φιλόλογος and φιλολογία.

Similar stories may be told about the words "culture" and "civilisation," two of the most important terms in contemporary humanities and social sciences.

The word "civilisatio" looks like a regular Latin formation from the noun "civis" (citizen) via the adjective "civilis" with the addition of the suffix "-atio." But there was no such word in the classical Latin language. The word (as a legal term) was formed much later in medieval or early modern Western Europe and meant roughly "turning a criminal legal process into a civil one." It was only in the second half of the 18th century that the word "civilisation" in English and in French acquired its contemporary meaning(s).²³

The word "cultura" ("culture," "Kultur" etc.) has a more complicated history. Narrations about this word usually begin with Cicero. In his *Tusculan Disputations* (Book 2, §13) there is the famous passage: *Cultura ... animi philosophia est*. At the bilingual web-site we find a literal English translation: *...philosophy is the culture of the soul*.²⁴ But the translation is obviously wrong. It imposes upon the text of Cicero the modern European meaning of the word "cultura/culture." The Latin word "cultura" here is a "false friend (of a translator)"²⁵: it resembles a word from some modern European language, but actually has a different meaning.²⁶ More adequate translations of the passage would be these: "Philosophy is cultivation of one's soul" or, probably, "Philosophy is working

²² Cf. a recent book: B.B. Файер, *Александрйская филология и гомеровский гекзаметр*, Москва 2010.

²³ Cf. e.g. L. Febvre, *Civilisation. Évolution d'un mot et d'un groupe d'idées*, Paris 1930 (in English: 'Civilisation: Evolution of a Word and a Group of Ideas' in P. Burke (ed.), *A New Kind of History. From the Writings of Febvre*, trans. by K. Folca, London 1973, pp. 219-257); É. Benveniste, *Civilisation: contribution à l'histoire du mot*, Paris 1954 (in English: 'Civilization: A Contribution to the History of the Word' in idem, *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. by M.E. Meek, Coral Gables, Fla 1971, pp. 289-296, 312-313 (*Miami Linguistics Series*, 8)). See also: B. Bowden (ed.), *Civilization. Critical Concepts in Political Science*, Vol. 1-4, London 2009; *Europäische Schlüsselwörter: wortvergleichende und wortgeschichtliche Studien*, Vol. 3: *Kultur und Zivilisation*, München 1967.

²⁴ The site refers to the edition: *Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*, trans. by A.P. Peabody, Boston 1886.

²⁵ Cf. e.g. R. Lipczuk, 'Bibliografia na temat "faux amis"' in A. Kątny, K. Hejrowski (eds.), *Problemy frazeologii i leksykografii. Materiały z konferencji zorganizowanej przez Wydział Filologiczny Wszechnicy Mazurskiej, Olecko, 16-17 czerwca 1999 rok*, Olecko 2000, pp. 175-200. Cf. also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/False_friend> 21 June 2015.

²⁶ Of course, the translator might have argued that he used the English word "culture" in the sense of "cultivating" or "cultivation," and this must be obvious from the context. But it is also obvious that those readers who do not know the original Latin text and the original meaning of the word "cultura" would understand the English word "culture" not the way Cicero understood it.

at one's soul." From the context in which the passage appears, it is clear that Cicero used the word "cultura" in its literal meaning: "cultivating" (from the verb "colere" – "cultivate," e.g. a field or a garden):

...Nam ut agri non omnes frugiferi sunt qui coluntur,sic animi non omnes culti fructum ferunt. Atque, ut in eodem simili verber, ut ager quamvis fertilis sine cultura fructuosus esse non potest, sic sine doctrina animus; ita est utraque res sine altera debilis. Cultura autem animi philosophia est; haec extrahit vitia radicitus et praeparat animos ad satus accipiendos eaque mandat eis et, ut ita dicam, serit, quae adulta fructus uberrimos ferant.

In Andrew P. Peabody's translation:

...as all cultivated fields are not harvest-yielding, ... so all cultivated minds do not bear fruit. To continue the figure: as a field, though fertile, cannot yield a harvest without cultivation, no more can the mind without learning; thus each is feeble without the other. But philosophy is the culture of the soul. It draws out vices by the root, prepares the mind to receive seed, and commits to it, and, so to speak, sows in it what, when grown, may bear the most abundant fruit.

The subsequent history of the Latin word "cultura" and its various reflections in modern European languages has been already described by many hands (though, certainly, the theme is far from being exhausted),²⁷ and I need not retell it here in many details. For the purpose of this paper, suffice it to recall that all the modern meanings of the words "cultura," "culture," "Kultur," "kultura," "kultuur," "культура," etc. developed since the late 18th century, the time of the Enlightenment. So, the history of the Latin word "cultura" is, in a way, similar to the history of the Greek word φιλολογία.

Now we may turn to the history of the word φιλοσοφία.

Just as we know that the word "sociologie" was first made popular, as a name of a discipline, by Aguste Comte, so Greek and Roman authors believed that the words φιλοσοφ and φιλοσοφία, as the terms with specific meanings, were first used by Pythagoras. Thus, Diogenes Laertius (the 3rd century AC) in his famous book *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* (Book 1, Prologue, §12), wrote: ... *the first to use the term [φιλοσοφία], and to call himself a philosopher or lover of wisdom, was Pythagoras.*²⁸ Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 – c. 215 AD) in his *Stromata* (Book I, Chapter 14: 'Succession of Philosophers in Greece') wrote similarly: ...*Pythagoras, the pupil of Pherecydes, first called himself a philosopher.*²⁹

For the purpose of this paper, I would like to stress two points, which are, in a way, mutually contradictory.

On the one hand, Diogenes Laertius must have expressed a common belief when he argued (at the very beginning of his book) that philosophy is a Greek "invention" and did not exist among other peoples ("barbarians"): *And thus it was from the Greeks*

²⁷ Cf. e.g. J. Niedermann, *Kultur. Werden und Wandlungen des Begriffs und seiner Ersatz-begriffe von Cicero bis Herder*, Firenze 1941; *Europäische Schlüsselwörter...*

²⁸ Cf. <http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Lives_of_the_Eminent_Philosophers/Book_I#Prologue>, 21 June 2015.

²⁹ Cf. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/02101.htm>>, 21 June 2015.

that philosophy took its rise: its very name refuses to be translated into foreign ["barbaric"] speech.³⁰ Cicero, in the 1st century BC, would have agreed with Diogenes, as he (in his *Tusculan Disputations* and other writings) explicitly strove to "transplant" Greek philosophy onto the Roman soil, never trying to translate the Greek word φιλοσοφία into Latin, but just transcribing it as "philosophia."

On the other hand, as seen from today's perspective, it is clear that Greek philosophy as an integral tradition from Thales onwards was indeed an "invention," a "construct," which, as far as I understand, was "invented"/"constructed" by Plato and Aristotle.³¹

In a similar way, but on a larger scale, the tradition of European (Western) philosophy as an integral whole, "from Thales to Wittgenstein³² (and further)" was "invented"/"constructed" mainly during the 19th and 20th century.³³ Wilhelm Halbfass wrote: *In the history of European philosophy, there has been much retrospective application and extrapolation of the term and concept of philosophy. Ways of thinking and intellectual orientations and pursuits which were not originally under the guidance of an "idea" of philosophy were interpreted, adapted and assimilated as philosophy. In an exemplary and highly significant sense, this has happened in the early period of Greek thought, when Plato and Aristotle adopted and appropriated Pre-Socratic thought as philosophy. The retrospective application and historical expansion of the concept of philosophy is also part of the reflective self-positing of philosophy. Its self-definition is an ongoing historical process, and is much more than a series of attempts to define an academic discipline or a specific conceptual domain. At important junctures in the history of European thought, the attempts to define and understand what philosophy is coincide with European self-proclamations and with attempts to comprehend the meaning and direction of the entire European tradition* (EI, pp. 285-286).

To put it differently, the concept of "European (Western) philosophy" is a very important part of European (Western) culture, of its self-understanding, even though we cannot help being aware that this concept has been (is now, and probably will ever be) a changing, conventional and contingent "construct," like, for that matter, most of other key concepts of this and other cultural traditions. As I will try to show further in this paper, much the same may be said about the concept "Indian philosophy."

Now, as if echoing or even continuing the argument of Diogenes Laertius, some (if not most) modern Western philosophers believe that philosophy, as a specific kind of intellectual activity, has been practiced only within European (Western) cultural tradi-

³⁰ *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* (Book 1, Prologue, §4). Cf. EI, p. 3.

³¹ As Wilhelm Halbfass wrote, ... *Plato and Aristotle adopted and appropriated Pre-Socratic thought as philosophy* (EI, p. 285). See further the broader context of this quotation.

³² Pairing these two names seems to be quite common. Cf. a Danish translation of a book by a German philosopher: Wilhelm Weischedel [1905-1975], *Forstå filosofferne. Fra Thales til Wittgenstein*, København 1997.

³³ If I am not mistaken, the very process of this "invention"/"construction" has not yet been properly researched and described.

tion (which, of course, has its origins in ancient Greece). Exemplary (as W. Halbfass would say) in this respect are some pronouncements of Martin Heidegger:

Philosophie heißt abendländische Philosophie; – es gibt keine andere als die abendländische, sofern das Wesen dessen, was Abendland und abendländische Geschichte ist, durch das bestimmt wird, was überhaupt Philosophie heißt (1939).³⁴

(Philosophy means *Western* philosophy; there is no other [philosophy] except the Western one, because the very essence of the West and Western history has been determined through what is called philosophy³⁵).

...es gibt keine andere [als die abendländisch-europäische Philosophie], weder eine chinesische noch eine indische... (1951-1952).³⁶

(...there is no other [except the Western/European philosophy], neither a Chinese, nor an Indian [one]...³⁷).

Das Wort φιλοσοφία sagt uns, daß die Philosophie etwas ist, was erstmals die Existenz des Griechentums bestimmt. Nicht nur das – die φιλοσοφία bestimmt auch den innersten Grundzug unserer abendländisch-europäischen Geschichte. Die oft gehörte Redeweise von der „abendländisch-europäischen Philosophie“ ist in Wahrheit eine Tautologie. Warum? Weil die „Philosophie“ in ihrem Wesen griechisch ist... (1956).³⁸

(The word φιλοσοφία tells us that philosophy is something that for the first time determined the existence of the Greek world. Not only this: φιλοσοφία determines also the innermost feature of our Western/European history. The often heard expression “Western/European philosophy” is actually a tautology. Why? Because “philosophy” in its essence is Greek.³⁹).

Such or similar views are shared by many philosophers and historians of philosophy in the countries of European culture, including Russia. But whatever Martin Heidegger and other Western philosophers might say, such concepts as “Chinese philosophy,” “Indian philosophy,” “Islamic philosophy”⁴⁰ and so on have got their places in the academia

³⁴ M. Heidegger ‘Hegel. Die Negativität. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Hegel aus dem Ansatz in der Negativität’ in idem, *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 68, Frankfurt am Main 1993, p. 9.

³⁵ The translation is taken (with some changes) from the paper: J.S. O’Leary ‘Heidegger and Indian Philosophy’ in E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism...*, pp. 177-178. As far as I know, this work of M. Heidegger as a whole has not been translated into English yet.

³⁶ M. Heidegger, *Was heißt Denken?*, Tübingen 1954, p. 136 (= *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol 8, Frankfurt am Main, 2002, p. 228). The book is available in the Internet: <<http://www.twirpx.com/file/606988/>> 22 June 2015.

³⁷ Again, the translation is taken from J.S. O’Leary, ‘Heidegger...’, p. 178. Cf. EI, p.168. Cf. the English translation of the book as a whole: M. Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?*, New York 1976 (but I have got no access to this book).

³⁸ M. Heidegger, *Was ist das – die Philosophie?*, Pfullingen 1956, p. 13 (= *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 11, Frankfurt am Main, 2. Auflage 2006, pp. 9-10).

³⁹ The English translation is mine. Cf. a partial translation of this passage by J.L. Mehta in EI, p. 168. There is an English translation of this book, first published in 1955, but I have not been able to access this translation – cf. <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1136870.What_Is_Philosophy>, 22 June 2015. Cf. also: G. Parkes (ed.), *Heidegger and Asian Thought*, Honolulu 1987.

⁴⁰ The concept and phenomenon of “Russian philosophy,” like other spheres of Russian culture and, for that matter, like Russia herself, occupy, as it were, a border-line zone. Some authors would claim that

of many countries, as well as in the minds of many non-academic people. For instance, Routledge, a serious academic publishing house, first started a project titled the *Routledge History of Philosophy* (1993–), which meant of course history of Western philosophy.⁴¹ But then, to the main project other volumes were added: *History of Islamic Philosophy* (1996),⁴² *History of Jewish Philosophy* (1997),⁴³ *History of Chinese Philosophy* (2008),⁴⁴ *History of Indian Philosophy* (2008)...⁴⁵

It is probably not by chance that Martin Heidegger denied specifically the existence of Chinese and Indian philosophy. In books on history of philosophy we very often meet statements that philosophy originally – and independently – appeared in three “places”: in Greece, China and India.⁴⁶ My guess is that this idea has come from the famous book of another German philosopher, Karl Jaspers, *Von Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte* (*The Origin and Goal of History*, 1949). In that book, Jaspers put forward his conception of *Achsenzeit* (“axis time” or “axial age”), a breakthrough in the cultural development of mankind, which breakthrough, according to Jaspers, took place from 800 to 200 BC in several geographical (cultural) areas. As the philosopher wrote in his later book, *the spiritual foundations of humanity were laid simultaneously and independently in China, India, Persia, Judea, and Greece. And these are the foundations upon which humanity still subsists today*.⁴⁷ But, when in his book *Von Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte* Jaspers discusses philosophy, the five areas of the *Achsenzeit* are usually reduced to three: Greece, India, and China.

What is even more important, the concepts of “Chinese philosophy” and “Indian philosophy” have become crucial parts of today’s self-understanding of the correspond-

Russian philosophy (or philosophy in Russia) is just part of European (or even Western) philosophy. Others would insist (approvingly or in a derogatory way) that Russian philosophy is a world apart from European philosophy. This controversy is of course only part of the larger debate: to what extent, if at all, Russia is part of Europe. Cf. my paper: ‘Philosophy as a Free Search for Knowledge: the Concept and Its Transfer to Russia and India’ in *Международная востоковедная конференция (Торчиновские чтения). Метаморфозы. 22-25 июня 2011 г. Часть первая*, Санкт-Петербург 2013, pp. 206-215.

⁴¹ Cf. <<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415315470/>>.

⁴² O. Leaman, S.H. Nasr (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy*, London–New York 1996 (*Routledge History of World Philosophies*, 1).

⁴³ D.H. Frank, O. Leaman (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy*, London–New York 1997 (*Routledge History of World Philosophies*, 2).

⁴⁴ B. Mou (ed.), *History of Chinese Philosophy*, London–New York 2008 (*Routledge History of World Philosophies*, 3).

⁴⁵ B. Purushottama, *Routledge History of Indian Philosophy*, London–New York 2008. Here the ambitious American ongoing project titled *Encyclopedia of Indian philosophies* (ed. by Karl Potter) may also be mentioned. The first volume appeared in 1965, and the series have not yet been completed. Cf. <<http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/encyclo.html>>, 22 June 2015. Cf. also the French book: R.-P. Droit (ed.), *Philosophies d'ailleurs*, Vol. 1: *Les pensées indiennes, chinoises et tibétaines*; Vol. 2: *Les pensées hébraïques, arabes, persanes et égyptiennes*, Paris 2009.

⁴⁶ Cf. the statement in a Filipino textbook: *Many philosophers hold that there are three great original centers of philosophy in the world – Greek (or Western), Indian and Chinese – C. Ramos, Introduction to Philosophy*, Manila 2004, p. 20.

⁴⁷ K. Jaspers, *The Way to Wisdom. An Introduction to Philosophy*, New Haven 2003, p. 98. (The book was first published in 1954.)

ing cultures (or, to be more exact and specific, of the self-understanding of the educated people in the corresponding countries). And, as far as I know, more or less the same may be said, *mutatis mutandis*, about most other non-Western philosophies. In this sense we cannot possibly doubt their existence.

In connection with these so-called non-Western philosophies,⁴⁸ I would like to discuss here two points (topics). First, the appearance (formation) of the very terms (concepts) “Chinese philosophy,” “Indian philosophy” etc. Secondly, to what extent (if at all) the word “philosophy” in these expressions retains the meaning (or meanings) which this word has had in the European (Western) context(s).

First of all, we may state that in most, if not all, non-Western cases the expressions “attributive adjective + philosophy” (or “philosophy of ...”) are the results of contacts with Europe (the West), because the very word “philosophy” (transcribed or translated one way or another in a particular non-Western language) is always a loan word from a European (Western) language.

* * *

In scholarly works it is often discussed whether or not in a particular non-Western cultural tradition there existed a word for “philosophy.”⁴⁹ Such discussions are certainly rather naïve from the view point of a philologist/linguist and an historian of culture. Indeed, naïve is the very intention to find in a different language (especially in a language of a very different culture) a word which would have the “same” conceptual meaning⁵⁰ as a particular word in one’s own (European) language. Such an intention betrays a kind of egocentrism (or, we may say, ethnocentrism, if we are ready to posit a “European ethnos”). For Europeans (as, for that matter, for people of other cultures as well) it is common to take their own culture as a kind of universal norm. What is there in “our” culture, must be there in other cultures as well (if we consider them not inferior to ours). Philosophy is considered a very important (even constitutive) part of European cultural tradition. Hence, it is natural to assume that other great traditions, those of China and India in the first place, must have had philosophy (or philosophies) as part(s) of their cultures as well.

But cultural anthropologists realised long ago that what is taken as “natural” and “universal” in one culture may not at all be so in another one. Among the most well-known instances are these:

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. D. Bonevac, S. Phillips (eds.), *Understanding Non-Western Philosophy. Introductory Readings*, Mountain View, CA 1993; B.-A. Scharfstein, *The Western Blindness to Non-Western Philosophies*. A paper presented at the 20th World Congress of Philosophy (Boston, Massachusetts, August 10-15, 1998) – cf. <<http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Comp/CompScha.htm>>, 22 June 2015; cf. also: <<https://global.oup.com/academic/category/arts-and-humanities/philosophy/non-western-philosophy/?cc=us&lang=en&>>, 22 June 2015.

⁴⁹ A review of such discussions in the Indian case cf. IE, pp. 263-286 (Chapter 15).

⁵⁰ Words referring to material objects may of course have more or less identical meanings in different languages. Thus it would usually make sense to ask: “What is the word for ‘sun’ in language X?”

- In pre-Columbian America wheels were practically not made nor used (except in toys for children).
- The Inca Empire, the largest empire in pre-Columbian America, did not have a written language.

China and India themselves provide very telling examples of such "conspicuous absences":

- In traditional Indian culture, before the coming of Muslims, there was practically no counterpart for such intellectual activity as history (historiography),⁵¹ which, on the contrary, has been practiced from the very early stages of European cultural tradition; in China, too, the writing of history (even though, admittedly, not exactly in the same way as in Europe) has been practiced since long ago.⁵²
- In India, the study of language (first and foremost, Sanskrit) and its structures has been one of the most developed and sophisticated intellectual achievements.⁵³ In China, on the contrary, indigenous theories of grammar and linguistic analysis have been practically nil, which was, most probably, conditioned by the nature (structure) of the Chinese language.
- It was easy for European scholars to identify Indian counterparts of European logic (different thought they were from European patterns).⁵⁴ As for China, among traditional scholarly disciplines (pursuits), there was no clear-cut counterpart of what in Europe is called "logic;" "Chinese logic" is rather reconstructed by modern scholars from various Chinese texts.⁵⁵

And, of course, it is easy to name various constituent parts of modern European culture, which have not been there in any non-European traditional culture: from orchestra music and nuclear physics up to parliamentary democracy and the idea of human rights.

So, we may conclude, there is no *a priori* necessity that a cultural element present in one culture should be found (with a corresponding name for it) in another culture. This general observation seems to be valid in the case of European philosophy and its Greek name.

⁵¹ Cf. a recent discussion of this topic: Th.R. Trautmann, 'Does India Have History? Does History Have India?', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (2012), pp. 174-205, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000636>>.

⁵² In modern times, the Chinese, the Japanese and other peoples using Chinese characters had no problems with identifying the character 史 with the European words "historia," "history" etc. Cf. further about the problems with such words like "philosophia" etc.

⁵³ Cf. e.g. H. Scharfe, *Grammatical Literature* in J. Gonda (ed.), *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. 5, fasc. 2, Wiesbaden 1977.

⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. J. Ganeri, 'Indian Logic' in D. Gabbay, J. Woods (eds.), *Greek, Indian and Arabic Logic*, Amsterdam 2004, pp. 309-396 (*Handbook of the History of Logic*, 1).

⁵⁵ Cf. e.g. S. Weimin, 'Chinese Logic and the Absence of Theoretical Sciences in Ancient China,' *Dao*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (2009), pp. 403-423, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11712-009-9133-x>>.

* * *

It is worthwhile to dwell at some length on the histories of the terms “Chinese philosophy” and “Japanese philosophy,” because these histories provide a good background for discussing the term “Indian philosophy.”

The history of Japanese and Chinese words for “philosophy” may be taken as “exemplary” (to use again Wilhelm Halbfass’s favorite word) cases. This history has been rather well documented.

Among the countries who use(d) Chinese writing system (and, in various degrees and up to various time limits, the classical Chinese written language), Japan was the first to adopt on a large scale many elements of European (Western) culture. After the so-called Meiji Restoration (1868), educated people in Japan felt the necessity to introduce into their intellectual world many European ideas and to find, one way or another, words for such ideas. One of the key figures in this process was Nishi Amane (西周, 1829-1897), an outstanding scholar and intellectual, state official and translator.⁵⁶ In 1863-1865, he lived and studied in the Netherlands and after coming back home became an active participant in the Meiji Restoration. While in Europe, Nishi Amane realised that such theoretical disciplines “as economics, political science and legal theory were unknown in Japan.”⁵⁷ He also learned that in Europe there was a kind of overarching intellectual discipline whose name he first transcribed, syllable by syllable, as “hi-ro-so-hi.”⁵⁸ It was, of course, the Dutch word “filosofie.” Later, in the early 1870s, Nishi Amane wrote: “In our country there is nothing that deserves to be called philosophy; China too does not equal the West in this regard.”⁵⁹ So Nishi Amane felt the necessity to coin a new word for the European concept that he was eager to introduce to Japan. After some experimentation, about 1874, a word was constructed, made of the two Chinese characters (ideographs) 哲學 (now more often written in a simplified way: 哲学), pronounced in Japanese as “tetsu-gaku” and roughly meaning “(the quest for) the knowledge of the truth (or wisdom).”⁶⁰ This compound of two ideographs later was accepted also in China and Korea for conveying the meaning “philosophy.”⁶¹

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. Th.R.H. Havens, *Nishi Amane and Modern Japanese Thought*, Princeton 1970; B.D. Steben, ‘Nishi Amane and the Birth of “Philosophy” and “Chinese Philosophy” in Early Meiji Japan’ in J. Makeham (ed.), *Learning to Emulate the Wise. The Genesis of Chinese Philosophy as an Academic Discipline in Twentieth-century China*, Ed. By John Makeham. Hong Kong 2012, pp. 39-72 (*Formation and Development of Academic Disciplines in Twentieth-century China Series*). Cf. also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nishi_Amane>.

⁵⁷ J.C. Maraldo, ‘Contemporary Japanese Philosophy’ in B. Carr, I. Mahalingam (eds.), *Companion Encyclopedia of Asian Philosophy*, London–New York 1997, p. 737.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 738. Quoted from Th.R.H. Havens, *Nishi Amane...*, pp. 108-109.

⁶⁰ There are various stories about how exactly Nishi Amane came to choose this particular compound, but I need not go into details here.

⁶¹ “Philosophy,” of course, was not the only European concept for which the Japanese (and later the

Nishi Amane thought that "philosophy" (哲學) was something peculiar to European culture. But soon the expression 日本哲學 (Japanese philosophy) came to be used, even though there were and are different opinions about its exact meaning. According to John C. Maraldo, *The appellation "Japanese philosophy" is problematic in several senses. Many philosophers regard philosophy as a Western discipline imported into Japan a little over a century ago, and to this day restrict the term to investigations whose theme or method originates in the Western tradition. "Japanese philosophy" in that case simply means Western philosophy as it is pursued in Japan. Others may apply the term to*

*philosophically informed enquiries into pre-modern ("pre-philosophical") Japanese traditions. And some use the term to refer to pre-modern Japanese Confucianism, Buddhism, or other schools of thought; or again to contemporary treatises inspired by Eastern as well as Western sources.*⁶²

In any case, we may say that the term "Japanese philosophy" came into being as a result of cross-cultural contacts and the intercultural dialogue between Japan and the Western world.

The story of the concept (term) "Chinese philosophy" is a bit different. This concept first appeared in the writings of European authors⁶³ and only later (at the beginning of the 20th century) acquired its Chinese form (中國哲學, in the simplified form: 中国哲学), also in the process of intercultural dialogue with the West, mediated by Japan.⁶⁴ Contemporary Chinese authors, philosophers and historians of philosophy, are quite aware of the fact that the concept of "philosophy" came to China from the West via Japan and that the concept of "Chinese philosophy" (中國哲學/中国哲学) developed as a result of interpreting Chinese intellectual heritage in the light of European ideas.⁶⁵

The German scholar W. Denecke writes: *In contemporary China, "Chinese philosophy" is a well-established academic discipline practiced in philosophy departments that also teach "Western philosophy." This can be traced to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when Chinese overseas students studying in the West or Japan – as well as a mas-*

Chinese) had to coin (or, in the Chinese case, to adopt) new words. The other European concepts of this kind were "culture," "civilisation," "literature," "freedom," "individuality" etc. Strange as it may seem, in the Japanese language before the 19th century there was no word for the heart as an anatomical organ; so such a word also had to be coined.

⁶² J.C. Maraldo, 'Contemporary Japanese Philosophy,' p. 737.

⁶³ Cf. the sub-chapter titled 'The Invention of "Chinese Philosophy" in Europe' in the Introduction to the book: W. Denecke, *The Dynamics of Masters Literature. Early Chinese Thought from Confucius to Han Feizi*, Cambridge, Mass. 2011 (pp. 4-11): ... *the concept of a "Chinese philosophy" in Europe originated earlier [than in China itself – SDS], namely with the Jesuit mission in China* (p. 4). I thank Professor (Ms) Tan Sor Hoon (Department of Philosophy, National University of Singapore) who kindly drew my attention to this valuable book.

⁶⁴ Cf. J. Makeham (ed.), *Learning to Emulate the Wise...* As far as I know, there is no similar study about the formation of "Indian philosophy" as an academic discipline.

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. B. Mou (ed.), *Routledge History of Chinese Philosophy*, London–New York 2008 (esp.: B. Mou, 'On Some Methodological Issues Concerning Chinese Philosophy: An Introduction,' pp. 1-39; A.S. Cua (alias Ke Xiong-wen), 'Emergence of the History of Chinese Philosophy,' pp. 3-30).

sive influx of Western books – sensitized Chinese intellectuals to the supreme status of philosophy in European cultural history. Chinese and Japanese intellectuals greatly admired Western philosophy, in particular logic, as the key to scientific progress, modernization, and thus ultimately as a tool of self-defense against Western imperialism, and they coined the neologism “wisdom learning” (Ch. zhexue, J. tetsugaku 哲學) to translate the Western concept of “philosophy.” Thus the birth of the academic discipline of “philosophy” in China is intimately connected to the definition of philosophy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the West, a definition that was very much in flux as philosophy was undergoing a radical reduction from the master science that it had been until the eighteenth century and was becoming a secularized academic discipline trying to secure its place in the new struggle between the two cultures of the natural and humanistic sciences.⁶⁶

The Australian sinologist John Makeham comments: *The question of whether there is such a thing as “Chinese philosophy” has been a vexed issue in the West and in China. Historically, one can point to a number of influential Western philosophers such as Nicholas Malebranche, G.W. Leibnitz and Christian Wolff who had no problems with the proposition that Chinese philosophy is indeed philosophy. On balance, however, it would seem that the dismissive views of G.W. Hegel are more representative of mainstream Western views about the status of Chinese philosophy as philosophy. Even in the very earliest Jesuit writings to comment on Chinese philosophy, these contrary assessments are in evidence. In China, doubts about whether traditional thought could be classed as philosophy were first raised in the opening decade of the twentieth century by such prominent intellectuals as Wang Guowei 王國維 (1887-1927) and Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929), and continue to be debated to this day.*⁶⁷

* * *

Now the story of the concept (term) “Indian philosophy” has much in common with the stories, just told in a nutshell, of the concepts (terms) “Japanese philosophy” and “Chinese philosophy.” The differences between the former story and the latter ones are conditioned mostly by the differences between the histories of the countries (cultures) in question. Here are the most important points of difference:

(1) Unlike China and Japan, India (the South Asian sub-continent)⁶⁸ has had no indigenous tradition of political unity for the cultural (or, we may say, civilisational) space as a whole. It was only in the 16th and 17th century that the subcontinent (almost the whole of it) was embraced by one central political power. But this unification was

⁶⁶ W. Denecke *The Dynamics of Masters Literature...*, p. 4.

⁶⁷ J. Makeham (ed.), *Dao Companion to Neo-Confucian Philosophy*, Dordrecht 2010, p. xxxvi.

⁶⁸ After 1947 the name “India” became ambivalent. When we talk about the time before 1947, we mean by India practically the whole of the South Asian subcontinent or at least those territories which came under British control by the 1850s and were known as the British Indian Empire. In 1947, the Indian Empire was transformed into two states: India (since 1950, the Republic of India) and Pakistan (in 1971 turned into two separate states: Pakistan and Bangladesh). The term “South Asian subcontinent” helps to avoid ambiguity.

effected by people (known as "Mughals") who came from outside (from what is now called Central Asia) and professed a religion, Islam, not shared by the majority of the local population. The empire of the Great Mughals disintegrated in the 18th century and was gradually (during about a century) replaced by the imperial structure built by other outsiders, Britishers (though with a considerable help from local people).

(2) Both China and Japan have managed to maintain what may be called ideological unity of their peoples. In both countries, through centuries, various systems of thought and various creeds (indigenous and foreign) competed between themselves, but, in both countries, kinds of syntheses or at least compromises (even if sometimes uneasy ones) have evolved. In South Asia no comparable synthesis has evolved. Until today, South Asia is an arena of various cultural conflicts, which sometimes even erupt in violent outbursts. The main (not at all the only) protagonists are, on the one hand, the complex of indigenous creeds, united by Europeans under the name "Hinduism," and, on the other hand, Islam. Muslims first came to South Asia (to Sind, now in Pakistan) in the 8th century and kept coming in successive ways through most of the following centuries. For at least six centuries (from the 13th up to the 18th) Muslims were a dominant political power on the subcontinent and a very influential cultural power. Many local people were converted to Islam. But, unlike, for instance, in Iran or Egypt, Muslims failed to convert the majority of the local population into their faith. Unlike in Spain and Portugal (the Iberian peninsula), in the South-Asian subcontinent no *Reconquista* took place. As a result, the subcontinent has come to resemble the Balkans, but on a larger scale.⁶⁹ The intercultural dialogue between Hindus and Muslims was, since the late 18th century, complicated (or shall I say aggravated?) by the domineering presence of the British power and the powerful influences of European culture. This triangular dialogue resulted, in the middle of the 20th century, in the Partition of the subcontinent into predominantly Hindu India and predominantly Muslim Pakistan.

(3) The linguistic history of South Asia is more like (and even more complicated than) the linguistic history of Europe. In Europe, there are the classical languages, Greek and Latin (with Hebrew as the original language of the older parts of the holy

⁶⁹ Comparing South Asia and the Balkans came to my mind quite some time ago. As it often happens, I am not sure whether it was a product of my own thinking or an idea that I might have picked up somewhere and forgot about the source. In any case, this comparison is evidently not a figment of my imagination. Cf. the announcement of the "Sawyer Seminar" (at the Ohio State University) on the theme "CrossRoads: Culture, Politics, and Belief in the Balkans and South Asia": *On the surface, the Balkans and South Asia might seem to have little in common. However, despite many specific differences, they share similar dilemmas of linguistic, religious, cultural, and ethno-national complexity, similar turbulent political developments associated with imperial, post-colonial, and Cold War legacies, and similar diversity of responses to these historical and contemporary challenges. Both areas have seen a mixing of people through migratory settlement, conquest, contact, and trade. But both have also experienced periods of reaction to cultural hybridity: a radical unmixing of people through partition and population exchange. The impact of these upheavals is seen in the direct violence of war and devastation, but also through crises on the levels of language, religion, and other modes of culture and human creative activity. The unique yet similar issues within each region compel us towards a comparative approach that will offer a transnational perspective on the intersection of language, religion, culture, and nationalism* – <<https://sawyer.osu.edu/>>, 23 June 2015.

scriptures), which were, with time, ousted and replaced by numerous younger languages, their cultural heirs and successors.⁷⁰ In South Asia, there are at least three counterparts of Greek and Latin: Sanskrit for Hindus (as well as for Jains and, in the remote past, for Buddhists), Arabic, and Persian (Farsi) for Muslims. Sanskrit (and its more archaic form, the Vedic) has been the sacred language for Hindus, as well as the language of secular scholarship and rich literature (sometimes the language of government as well). In the Muslim states, including the Empire of the Great Mughals, Farsi was the language of administration and high culture, including literature. India produced some of the greatest poets in Farsi, e.g. Masud Sa'd Salman (1046-1121),⁷¹ Amīr Khusrow Dehlavī (1253-1325),⁷² Bēdil Dehlavī (1642-1720),⁷³ and others. Like in Europe, the classical languages in South Asia had to face younger rivals, local vernaculars, which started their development mostly in the 2nd millennium AC. But South Asian vernaculars have not yet been as successful as their European brethren. In South Asia, no “nation states” appeared to foster the development of “national” languages. Instead, as just have been said, one empire was replaced with another one, again with one imperial language. English, in the 19th and 20th century, became the dominant language in the whole of South Asia. The South Asian vernaculars first grew in the shadow of Sanskrit and Farsi (with Arabic in the background) and later, since the 19th century, in the shadow of English.⁷⁴

(4) Unlike China and Japan (and unlike Russia), India was compelled to adopt many elements of Western culture (philosophy, among others) not by the pressure of circumstances, including the military pressure of Western powers, but by the immediate (colonial) rule of one particular European power, the Great Britain. This point (the foreign rule) must be mentioned for the sake of historical objectivity, but, in itself, it has hardly made much difference as far as the story of philosophy goes. The

⁷⁰ The linguistic history of Europe, as well as the present linguistic situation on the (sub)continent, is now studied within the framework of a special discipline called “eurolinguistics” in English and “Eurolinguistik” in German. Cf. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurolinguistics>>, 22 June 2015.

⁷¹ Cf. e.g. S. Sharma, *Persian Poetry at the Indian Frontier: Mas'ud-i Sa'd-i Salmān*, Delhi 2000. Cf. also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masud_Sa%27d_Salman>, 22 June 2015.

⁷² Cf. e.g. S. Sharma, *Amir Khusraw. Poets of Sultans and Sufis*, Oxford 2005; P. Losensky, S. Sharma, *In the Bazaar of Love. Selected Poetry of Amir Khusrau*, New Delhi 2011. Cf. also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amir_Khusrow>, 22 June 2015.

⁷³ Cf. e.g. A. Schimmel, *Islamic Literatures of India*, in J. Gonda (ed.), *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. 7, fasc. 1, Wiesbaden 1973, pp. 42-44. Cf. also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdul-Q%C4%81dir_B%C4%Abdel> and <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bidel-bedil-mirza-abd-al-qader-b>>, 22 June 2015.

⁷⁴ Krishna Kripalani (1907-1992), a grandson-in-law of Rabindranath Tagore and the Founder Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters), wrote in his book *Literature of Modern India: With the consolidation of British power in India in the beginning of the 19th century, the national role of Sanskrit and Persian as languages which overrode the boundaries of regional mother tongues was increasingly shared by English... Historical circumstances made [the] English language the active agent of this ferment [of modernisation – SDS] in India and gave it a unique role in the development of the modern age and its literature* – K. Kripalani, *Literature of Modern India. A Panoramic Glimpse*, New Delhi 1982, p. 17, 24; see also the chapter ‘Sanskrit and English’ in this book, pp. 86-93.

other three points seem to be much more important for our story: that India (South Asia), by the time she came to experience the impact of the West, was united by one political structure and one language (English), but torn within by conflicting cultural (social) forces.

* * *

Just as *in contemporary China, "Chinese philosophy" is a well-established academic discipline practiced in philosophy departments that also teach "Western philosophy"...*,⁷⁵ in today's (Republic of) India, "Indian philosophy" is also a well-established academic discipline taught in philosophy departments of universities along with "Western philosophy" (at Indian universities "Indian philosophy" is studied mostly by girl students; it is considered a good subject for future wives). University courses of "Indian philosophy" are usually divided into two parts: "classical Indian philosophy" and "modern Indian philosophy." The former begins with the Vedas (with the emphasis on the upani-shads), includes the "Bhagavad-gita" and the six (or more) "schools" (darśanas), as well as "Buddhist philosophy" and "Jaina philosophy."⁷⁶ The languages of "classical Indian philosophy" are Sanskrit, Pali (in some Buddhist texts) and Prakrits (for some Jaina texts). "Modern Indian philosophy" begins usually with Rammohan Ray/Roy (1772 or 1774-1833) and continues with Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), M.K. Gandhi (1869-1948), Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950), Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975), Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) and other less known figures (cf. IE, pp. 291-292). The language of "modern Indian philosophy" is mostly English.

Like the concept of "Chinese philosophy," the concept of "Indian philosophy" was formed first in Europe. In the 18th century, in the French *Encyclopédie* there already was an entry on "Philosophie des indiens" (cf. IE, pp. 59-60), just as there was an entry on "Philosophie des chinois." One of the first European Indologists, H.T. Colebrooke (1765-1837), as early as in 1824, published two essays titled *On the Philosophy of the Hindus* (cf. IE, pp. 84-86). G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831), even though he did not consider "Indian philosophy" a "real philosophy," because it was "inseparable from religion" (IE, p. 89),⁷⁷ he did already use the expression "Indian philosophy" ("indische

⁷⁵ W. Denecke, *The Dynamics of Masters Literature...*, p. 4 (quoted above).

⁷⁶ The standard university text book is *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* by S. Chatterjee and D.M. Datta. The book was first published in the 1930s, but new editions are still published today. Cf. also another standard textbook: M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, first published in London in 1932 and also republished many times.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Die indische Bildung ist sehr entwickelt, großartig; aber ihre Philosophie ist identisch mit ihrer Religion, so daß die Interessen der Religion dieselben sind, die wir in der Philosophie finden* – G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*. Cf. <<http://www.zeno.org/Philosophie/M/Hegel,+Georg+Wilhelm+Friedrich/Vorlesungen+%C3%Bcher+die+Geschichte+der+Philosophie/Einleitung/Orientalische+Philosophie/B.+Indische+Philosophie>>, 22 June 2015. Cf. an English translation: *Indian culture is developed to a high degree, and it is imposing, but its Philosophy is identical with its Religion, and the objects to which attention is devoted in Philosophy are the same as those which we find brought forward in Religion*. Cf. <<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/>

Philosophie").⁷⁸ Paul Deussen (1845-1919), an admirer of Schopenhauer and a friend of Nietzsche, made "Indian philosophy" an integral part of his "Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie" (Vols. 1-2, 1894-1917). Another German, Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900), by the end of his life wrote a book titled *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (1899), that has been more than once republished.

In W. Halbfass's book *India and Europe* there is a very important and interesting Chapter 16 "The Adoption of the Concept of Philosophy in Modern Hinduism" (IE, pp. 287-309). Not being a philologist, W. Halbfass did not trace the history of the adoption of the term "Indian philosophy" by Indian authors. This history may be a theme of future research. Here, I would like only to mark two points in this process: the very beginning and what may be considered the point of the complete adoption (establishment) of the term in question.

As W. Halbfass notes, *with Rammohan Roy, the so called "father" of modern Indian thought, the word and concept of "philosophy" do not have any great role to play. He utilizes the words "philosopher" and "philosophy" only in a casual and unreflected sense* (IE, p. 292). So it would be useless to try to find in the writings of Rammohan the term "Indian philosophy."⁷⁹

But in the books written by Indian authors in the 1920s, the term "Indian philosophy" is used as completely self-evident and not requiring any reflection. I mean, of course, in the first place the *Indian Philosophy* (in two volumes) by S. Radhakrishnan⁸⁰ and *A History of Indian Philosophy* in five volumes by Surendranath Dasgupta (1887-1952).⁸¹ These two works have established the patterns of presenting "Indian philosophy" in India and, to a large extent, elsewhere.

To repeat: the story of "domesticating" (or, to use the word of Halbfass, "adopting") the concept of "Indian philosophy" by Indian (mostly, if not exclusively, Hindu) intellectuals in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century remains to be told in detail. Here, I shall make only some comments on the process and its present results.

hp/hporiental.htm>, 22 June 2015. Cf. Chapter 6. ('Hegel') in IE (pp. 84-120). Neo-Hindu thinkers, like S. Radhakrishnan, must have agreed with Hegel's judgment, but drew different conclusions. For such thinkers the close connection with religion was a great merit of "Indian philosophy."

⁷⁸ Cf. e.g. Hegel's essays on the Bhagavad-gita: *...indische Religion und Philosophie...* – G.W.F. Hegel, *Über die unter dem Namen Bhagavad-Gita bekannte Episode des Mahabharata von Wilhelm von Humboldt*. Berlin 1826, ed. H. Herring, New Delhi 1995, p. 28.

⁷⁹ We must also take into consideration the fact that during the life time of Rammohan there was hardly such a pan-subcontinental intellectual elite who could think in terms of "India" as a whole. Such a pan-Indian consciousness developed gradually during the 19th century. Cf. a remark of a contemporary Indian author: *...before the nineteenth century, no residents of the subcontinent would have identified themselves as Indian* – S. Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, New Delhi 2004, p. 154.

⁸⁰ The first volume was first published in London in 1923, the second volume came out in 1927. Since then the two volumes have been republished many times. It is undoubtedly one of the best known and most authoritative books on "Indian philosophy."

⁸¹ The first volume was published in Cambridge in 1922, the fourth volume came out in 1949, and the fifth one, posthumously, in 1955. Later the whole set was republished, and now electronic versions are available on the Internet.

First, we may note that in India the problem of founding an indigenous word for the European concept of "philosophy" was not so pressing as in Japan and China, because leading Indian thinkers of the 19th and 20th century wrote in English. It is also worth noting that in various Indian languages different words are now used for conveying the meaning of the European word "philosophy." In Bengali, Hindi, and some other languages "philosophy" is translated with the Sanskrit word "darśana" (which in classical Sanskrit meant literally "vision," as well as a particular "school" of thought, but not any kind of intellectual activity in general).⁸² In Marathi "philosophy" is rendered as "tattva-jñāna" (lit. 'the knowledge of the truth,' cf. the Japanese and Chinese 哲学 above).⁸³ In Urdu and other languages which have developed in the shadow of Farsi (and Arabic) no new word had to be invented, because the Arabic word "falsafa(h)" (فلسفه), a Greek loan word in Arabic, had been there. But of course in the new circumstances this old word got new meanings, because in pre-modern Islamic culture "falsafa(h)" meant only a particular kind of thinking, the one inherited from Greeks.⁸⁴

The history of "modern Indian philosophy" includes quite a number of works in indigenous Indian languages, but their importance (in terms of pan-Indian influence) only rarely may be compared with the importance of works written in English.⁸⁵

Second, the reflection on the legitimacy and appropriateness of the term "Indian philosophy" (similar to the reflections referred to above, of Japanese and Chinese authors) appeared in India later, in the writings of such authors as Daya Krishna (1924-2007),⁸⁶ K. Satchidananda Murty (b. 1924),⁸⁷ Jitendra Nath Mohanty (b. 1928)⁸⁸ and some others.

⁸² W. Halbfass discusses at length the word "darśana" and its relations with the word "philosophy" in Chapter 15 of *India and Europe*. We may say that the new meaning of "philosophy" has been superimposed upon the old word "darśana" in addition to all its former meanings – which, incidentally, makes this word and other words with a similar fate in modern Indian languages rather "overburdened" with various meanings, old and new. In a similar way, the old Sanskrit word "dharma" has been charged with the new meaning "religion," the old word "vijñāna" with the new meaning "science" and so on. In some cases, an obscure Sanskrit word could acquire a high status of an important term. Thus, the Sanskrit word "samskṛti" came to be used as the translation of the European word "culture" in several Indian languages. For more details see my paper in Russian: С.Д. Серебряный, 'О переводах слов «культура» и «цивилизация» на неевропейские языки' in *Европейские судьбы концепта культуры (Россия, Германия, Франция, англоязычный мир). Материалы русско-французского colloquiuma 11-12 октября 2007 года*, Москва 2011, pp. 24-40.

⁸³ Cf. e.g. *Marathi-Russisch-Deutsch Wörterbuch*, Pune 2013, p. 206. Cf. IE, pp. 289-290.

⁸⁴ See further note 86.

⁸⁵ Cf. IE, pp. 288-290. See also: V.M. Bedekar (ed.) *Philosophy in the Fifteen Modern Indian Languages*, Poona 1979; K.S. Murty, *Philosophy in India. Traditions, Teaching and Research*, Delhi 1979, pp. 116-120 ('Appendix: Modern writings in Indian languages').

⁸⁶ Cf. e.g. D. Krishna, *Indian Philosophy. A Counter Perspective*, Delhi 1992.

⁸⁷ Cf. especially his book *Philosophy in India. Traditions, Teaching and Research* referred to above.

⁸⁸ Cf. e.g. his paper 'Between Indology and Indian Philosophy' in E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism...*, pp. 163-170.

Third, the “Indian philosophy,” “constructed” or “invented”⁸⁹ by S. Radhakrishnan, S. Dasgupta and their followers, presents and interprets only Hindu thought, with Buddhist and Jaina thoughts as tributaries to the main stream (the “mainstream”). Intellectual endeavours of Indian Muslims are conspicuously ignored.⁹⁰ True, before the 19th century, there was rather little communication between Hindus and Indian Muslim on those levels of intellectual activity which now may be called “philosophical.”⁹¹ But this fact does not, in my opinion, justify the complete exclusion of Muslim thought from the history (and the concept) of “Indian philosophy.”⁹² We may say that the partition of Indian intellectual legacy into predominantly Hindu “Indian philosophy,” on the one hand, and “Islamic thought (or “philosophy”),” on the other, anticipated at it were the Partition of the British Indian Empir in 1947, in predominantly Hindu India and predominantly Muslim Pakistan.

* * *

Now I will consider briefly another problem mentioned above: to what extent (if at all) the word “philosophy” in the expression “Indian philosophy” retains the meaning (or meanings) which this word has had in the European (Western) context(s).

First of all, it should be noted that in the “native” European (Western) context(s) the word “philosophy”⁹³ may have quite a few different meanings. Thus, it is clear that in the collocations “Pre-Socratic philosophy,” “medieval (scholastic) philosophy,” and “modern European philosophy” the same word “philosophy” has got slightly (to say the

⁸⁹ Cf. the celebrated book E. Hobsbawm, T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Ed. By Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger. Cambridge 1983 (*Past and Present Publications*). Cf. also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invented_tradition>, 22 June 2015.

⁹⁰ K. Satchidananda Murty tried to restore the balance in his book (referred to above), tellingly titled *Philosophy in India* and not “Indian Philosophy.” In Chapter 3 (‘History of philosophical thinking in India II’) there is a short section ‘Indo-Muslim Philosophy’ (pp. 92-94). In Chapter 4 (‘Philosophy in modern India’) there are a section ‘Muslim philosophy’ (pp. 106-110) and a section ‘Indian Christian and Parsi philosophers’ (pp. 110-112).

⁹¹ In my paper for *Beyond Orientalism* I wrote (p. 89): *It is true that there were too few traceable contacts, too little ‘fusion of horizons’ between Hindus and Muslims in those spheres of their respective traditions to which the European word ‘philosophy’ can more or less legitimately be applied. Therefore, from the viewpoint of an historian of philosophy, the Hindu and Muslim traditions in South Asia appear to be two utterly different worlds.* Now I feel I should have written ...almost two utterly different worlds. Because of the limits of space, as well as the limits of my knowledge, I do not consider here the history of Islamic thought (“Islamic philosophy”) on South Asian subcontinent.

⁹² Cf. the title of Chapter 9 in *India and Europe*: ‘On the Exclusion of India from the History of Philosophy.’ In my paper for *Beyond Orientalism* I dared criticise (esp. on p. 93) Wilhelm Halbfass for his treatment of Indian Islam and for taking for granted, in this particular respect, the neo-Hindu concept of “Indian philosophy.” In his “response,” Halbfass, while not agreeing fully with my criticism, nevertheless wrote: *I want to emphasize that I am by no means satisfied with my treatment of Islam in India and Europe* (‘Some Marginal Notes...’, p. 158).

⁹³ Here, of course, I take the English word “philosophy” as a short hand sign for many related words in many languages which are connected, one way or another, with the Greek tradition.

least) different meanings. Especially in the 20th century Western thought, connotations of the word "philosophy" (even within academia) became much more variegated than in the 19th century. This makes the expressions such as "Indian philosophy" or "Chinese philosophy" more acceptable and legitimate. As Jitendra Mohan Mohanty in his paper for *Beyond Orientalism* wrote, *the difference between Carnap and Heidegger is no lesser than that between Heidegger and Gadādhara*.⁹⁴

Nevertheless, it is difficult to overlook certain most important points of difference between "Indian philosophy" and the whole of "European (Western) philosophy," multifarious as the latter undoubtedly is. Wilhelm Halbfass in his *India and Europe* noted at least two such points.

(1) In the West, the "self-definition" of philosophy *is an ongoing historical process, and is much more than a series of attempts to define an academic discipline or a specific conceptual domain. At important junctures in the history of European thought, the attempts to define and understand what philosophy is coincide with European self-proclamations and with attempts to comprehend the meaning and direction of the entire European tradition. Regardless of the conceptual correspondences between darśana or ānvīkṣikī*⁹⁵ *and "philosophy," neither of these concepts has played a role in India which would be historically comparable to the role of "philosophy" in Europe* (IE, p. 286).

In other words, in traditional Indian culture there was no intellectual activity which might be compared – in terms of its function in the culture – to that overarching intellectual discipline in (modern) Europe the name of which Nishi Amane first transcribed, in Japanese, as "hi-ro-so-hi."

(2) Analysing the differences between *what is commonly called "philosophy" in the West and the doctrines and systems which* [traditional] *... Indian doxographies present under the title darśana*, Halbfass wrote: *... we are dealing here with "philosophy" as something given by tradition, i.e. as a certain spectrum of firmly established, fully developed doctrinal structures; we are not dealing with "philosophy" as an open-ended process of asking questions and pursuing knowledge. Darśana, as used in the doxographies, is a fundamentally retrospective concept. It refers to what others have thought in the past, to views and systems which have been inherited from the past. There is no suggestion of progressive, future-oriented thought, and there are hardly any methodological implications in the doxographic usage of [the word] darśana* (IE, p. 273).

The keywords here are "open-ended" and "future-oriented." In Europe (in the West) philosophy mostly has been part (sometimes probably even the engine) of the "future-oriented" growth and development. Indian thought, at least up to the 19th century, whether we call it "philosophy" or by some other name, was mostly part of a very different social (cultural) structure which was shaken off its traditional existence by the intrusion of Europeans (and their philosophy) in the 18th and 19th century.

⁹⁴ J.M. Mohanty, 'Between Indology and Indian Philosophy' in E. Franco, K. Preisendanz (eds.), *Beyond Orientalism...*, p. 165. Gadādhara is an Indian 17th century author in the tradition of *navya-nyāya*.

⁹⁵ *Ānvīkṣikī* (lit. 'inquiry') is another Sanskrit word which European scholars sometimes compared or even equated with "philosophy." Cf. Chapter 15 of *India and Europe*.

And yet let me quote, in conclusion, another German scholar, Heinrich Zimmer (1890-1943): *Indian philosophy ... has remained traditional. Supported and refreshed not by outward-directed experiment, but by inward-turned experiences of yoga-practice, it has interpreted rather than destroyed inherited belief, and in turn been both interpreted and corrected by the forces of religion. Philosophy and religion differ in India on certain points; but there has never been a dissolving, over-all attack from the representatives of pure criticism against the immemorial stronghold of popular belief. In the end, the two establishments have reinforced each other, so that in each may be found characteristics which in Europe we should attribute only to its opposite. This is why the professors in our universities who for so long were reluctant to dignify Indian thinking about our everlasting human problems with the Greek and Western title "philosophy" were far from being unjustified.*

*Nevertheless ... there exists and has existed in India what is indeed a real philosophy, as bold and breath-taking an adventure as anything ever hazarded in the Western world. Only, it emerges from an Eastern situation and pattern of culture, aims at ends that are comparatively unfamiliar to the modern academic schools, and avails itself of alien methods – the ends or goals being precisely those that inspired Plotinus, Scotus Erigena, and Meister Eckhart, as well as the philosophic flights of such thinkers of the period before Socrates as Parmenides, Empedocles, Pythagoras, and Heraclitus.*⁹⁶

In the 21st century, India and the whole of South Asia continues the dialogue with the West, as well as with the rest of the world. Various intercultural dialogues go on within South Asia itself. Whatever Indian thought might have been in the past, now it is bound to be both *open-ended* and *future-oriented*. Otherwise, it would hardly fit into today's globalising world.

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⁹⁶ H. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, ed. J. Campbell, Princeton 1969 (1951), pp. 33-34.

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