# NĀGĀRJUNA AND HEGEL: A DIALECTIC DISCUSSION

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by

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ABSTRACT

To some, the mere mention of dialectics will conjure the image of Hegel. Amongst modern scholars, his reputation is maintained, his dialectical method made infamous by his own usage and strengthened through its versatility: it has expanded beyond philosophy, used within the fields of history, economics, and theology. However, Nāgārjuna, while afforded a space, has nonetheless faced criticism ever since his introduction into Western scholarship. Despite some voices rising in his defence as a post-Kantian thinker, pioneered by T.R.V. Murti and F. Stcherbatsky, a significant opposition has thrown the accusations of deviant logic and nihilism to rebuke the Madhyamika's serious philosophical discourse. Light will be shed on Nāgārjuna's system, guided by insight into his context, the purpose of his speculation, as well as following the direction the Madhyamika Prāsaṅgika school takes – which is the tradition most aligned with Nāgārjuna's method and who heralded him as their primary source alongside Buddha. In so doing, the claim that Nāgārjuna is a dialectician will be defended and the doors opened for a comparison against Hegel, thereby showing the heights achieved and cementing the advanced level of Indian philosophy.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Casey Robinson is currently finishing her 2nd year studying through the South-Asian Department at Cornell University. This May she plans to graduate with a master's degree. The summation of her two years, Casey's thesis involves a specific comparison of the dialectic method of Hegel with Nāgārjuna's catuṣkoti, acknowledging the overwhelming similarity in both their ends and means. Ms. Robinson also defended Nāgārjuna from the misconceptions arising in contemporary western scholarship.

Casey has been studying Sanskrit for the past four years at Cornell University, thanks to elementary and intermediate courses taught by Patrick Cummins and advanced courses under Dr. Lawrence McCrea. In addition to Sanskrit, she was able to take an Introductory Intensive Tibetan course with the late Dr. William Magee through Maitripa College over the summer of 2022. Following this, Casey has continued her Tibetan studies through Columbia University facilitated by the Shared Course Initiative between Cornell, Yale, and Columbia.

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Introduction

To some, the mere mention of dialectics will conjure the image of Hegel. Amongst modern scholars, his reputation is maintained, his dialectical method made infamous by his own usage and strengthened through its versatility: it has expanded beyond philosophy, used within the fields of history, economics, and theology. However, Nāgārjuna, while afforded a space, has nonetheless faced criticism ever since his introduction into Western scholarship. Despite some voices rising in his defence as a post-Kantian thinker, pioneered by T.R.V. Murti and T. Stcherbatsky, a significant opposition has thrown the accusations of deviant logic and nihilism to rebuke the Madhyamika's serious philosophical discourse. Light will be shed on Nāgārjuna's system, guided by insight into his context, the purpose of his speculation, as well as following the direction the Madhyamika Prāsaṅgika school takes – which is the tradition most aligned with Nāgārjuna's method and who heralded him as their primary source alongside Buddha. In so doing, the claim that Nāgārjuna is a dialectician will be defended and the door opened for a comparison against Hegel, thereby showing the heights achieved and cementing the advanced level of Indian philosophy.

To determine whether Nāgārjuna is a dialectician, Hegel and the dialectic must be explained. Only after that is it possible to define any overlap. Having originally been inspired by C. E. M. Joad's *Guide to Philosophy* Hegel will be explored through his brief explanation and by delving into the sources he citied. Joad mentioned two philosophers who both tried to consolidate the various views which arose from Hegel's complex rhetoric. William Wallace writing less than a century after Hegel brought over his ideas from Germany and into the English philosophical sphere, W. T. Stace on the other hand studied Hegel alongside an interest in mysticism and saw philosophy's role as very similar to religion. Hegel justified his theory through an exploration of the Greeks, particularly Zeno and Plato, and backed by those secondary sources the main tenets of the dialectic will be outlined: namely, conflict and inexpression. With these isolated they will be applied to Hegel's modern iteration. Since the dialectic is both a historical and contemporary process, Hegel's immediate context is relevant. Additionally, he borrowed many ideas from Kant whose vocabulary and ideas were instrumental in getting Hegel to his theory. By exploring his philosophy in depth and through

the medium of two time periods, hopefully his complex ideas are easier to follow. After Hegel and the western understanding of the dialectic has been summarized, these two criteria will be shown compatible with scholarship explaining the Buddhist Madhyamika philosophy. Murti and Stcherbatsky both wrote with the intention of illustrating the overlap with western philosophy, but in addition to these two Jeffery Hopkins' book *Emptiness Yoga* will be used which rather attempted an accessible but faithful translation and commentary on Jang-Gya. Having established a similar foundation for these two philosophies, Nāgārjuna will be explored further, describing the nuanced differences shown against Hegel, and defended from criticism both in India and abroad. These admonitions will be shown to be ungrounded, concluding the relevance of Nāgārjuna to dialectic studies.

The dialectics is broad in scope and meaning. Although closely linked to Hegel, he did not invent this term out of the thin air. His discovery rather completed a sketch, making visible something which he admitted was a central principle in all philosophy. As such, Hegel's dialectic is merely an archetype for what could be one of many iterations. He will be followed first to solidify a set of criteria intrinsic to a dialectical method, and only then address how the nuances of Hegel's context influence his own formation. This also ensures that Nāgārjuna does not have to be identical with Hegel to classify as a dialectician, but merely be grounded under the same framework. The dialectic for these thinkers is a method, set out in example after example, rigorously repeated in the hopes that the student will grasp the core formula. The most basic reasoning, Murti explained, is "interminable conflict [resolved by] rising to a higher standpoint" (Tiruppattur Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1955), 9.). Alongside this definition, the name Hegel chose further revealed and strengthened the motivating themes behind it. The word 'dialectics' had been used as far back as the Greeks, and therefore was ripe with connotations. 'Dialegesthai', meaning to converse with, forms cognates with the English words dialogue and dialect. This expresses its relation to speaking and disagreement. Its appearance in ancient Greek philosophy is ambiguously represented, however. While Zeno of Elea was seemingly praised by Plato for his use of the dialectics, Kant instead suggested that the Greeks scoffed at its mere mention: it was "the logic of illusion - a sophistical art for giving to its ignorance, indeed even to its intentional tricks, the air of truth, by imitating the

method of thoroughness" (Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Paul Guyer, Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A61, 198.). The distain Kant superimposed onto the past is clearly evoked, making sure to highlight the waifish quality of their truth. This is aimed at its usage by the sly sophists. Thus, on the one hand, it afforded itself prestige in the hands of Plato and Zeno, while simultaneously it was rebuked by others for being just riddles with deceit filled logic operating under the guise of philosophy. Regardless of these conflicting opinions, Hegel found a throughline amongst these bifurcated halves and elevated the status of this concept. From its etymology conversation was stressed, which necessitated the presence of two people, and, within its philosophical context, they were forced to have divergent opinions, incorporating this idea of debate. Moreover, from the sophists and their mental trickery, the theme of inexpression and crafty argumentation appeared. The dialogues of Plato also reinforced these. The past, to Hegel, represented various snapshots for looking at the dialectics in its different forms of development, and those stills which he found affinity with provided an avenue for exploring its most basic properties: these are the ideas of inexpression, or the thought that the truth of reality cannot be disclosed through finite terms, and conflict. Standing at the very centre of Hegel, these tropes root his dialectic and every subsequent move which he made. With an investigation into history, however, certain considerations must be given both to the subject matter and the nature of inquiry more generally. Even with the best of intentions, a study of the past contains its own academic concerns, which are sometimes obvious and sometimes not when looking at Hegel. Therefore, a brief survey will be made into his obstacles, both broad and with reference to *The Philosophy of History*.

When studying the history of philosophy, it is unavoidable that modern scholarship augments the past with its own advanced understanding. This is twofold when looking at Hegel and persists even when turning to Nāgārjuna. This is both because of our contemporary biases and increased lexicography, but also regarding their own time and view of historical figures. In this way, a generalized overview of the problems can assess both these claims together, and then continue to isolate Hegel and Nāgārjuna further for more specific content. Even if striving for a passive aim, unconscious external influences cannot help but play on the recorder's mind and interpretation seeps in. These morph ancient thought and impel them further from

their reality. Kripke provided an avenue for exploring this issue, through his indexical theories of reference around 'baptism' or dubbing. Before words are attributed to their object, all that can be used are demonstratives to indicate, only once the defining characteristics have been recognized can the word emerge as an arbitrary name to hold together all these disparate objects. As Zagzebski made clear, Kripke had "proposed that a natural kind such as *water* or *gold* or *human* should be defined as whatever is the same kind of thing as some indexically identified instance… the demonstrative term '*that*' refers to an entity to which the person doing the defining refers directly, typically by pointing" (Linda Zagzebski, *Divine Motivation Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 42.). In her ethical example, first there were specific good people, then came the identification of what unified them. The act of naming arose after an awareness of a shared set of properties. This allowed Hegel, for example, to claim that the dialectics was already going on although as of then unaware. It could only to be vaguely pointed to, waiting to be joined together under a single term. This would be Hegel's contribution. However, there is a less favourable reading possible. Even if not at the original dubbing, and so not privy to the conversation over its bounds and limits, the word can still be spoken, added to, and referenced. This is done under the condition that "when the name is 'passed from link to link', the receiver of the name must… intend when he learns it to use it with the same reference as the man from whom he heard it" (Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001) 96.). Devitt was the first to recognize the possibility of reference changed which was condoned by the addition of "multiple grounding[s]" (Antonio Rauti, "Multiple Groundings and Deference," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 62, no. 247 (April 2012): 318, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41426894.). This had given rise to the likelihood of "mistakes [which] can infect re-grounding" (Rauti, 318.). The fault was first sparked over the misunderstanding regarding the name 'Madagascar' which Marco Polo had not grasped. Multiple groundings sprung from the idea that "many uses of a name are relatively similar to dubbing" (Rauti, 318.), and because naming was "designational" (Rauti, 319.). This feature meant that a person who was not at the original naming ceremony, but who had learned the name from someone who was, can designate information to another person who was also not there, thus extending the chain beyond the initial dubbing. This process can be repeated indefinitely, which illustrates how over time, as new ideas which are linked are discovered, the

scope of the word is enlarged to envelope these changes. This is why once the chemical formula was found, the idea of water came to include this description, as $H_2O$. At first glance this vindicates both modern and past superimposition, as they are just one more link in a gradually expanding definition. In these cases, they were not creating a new word but having found the germ of theory in early writings, were simply adding faithfully to the definition. However, these ideas were also threated with fallibility. They enable the introduction of misunderstanding and incorrect information. It is as easy to make the claim these imputations were retroactively fixed onto the past. Without 'deferent' judges to confirm how the term had been used and meant, anyone would be able to manufacture an adapted meaning which ignored the reality of the past, in favour of their own understanding. As Rauti emphatically ends his paper on this subject "if deference prevails, reference change is blocked" (Rauti, 336.). Claims are justifiably made about the past if there is evidence that these ideas existed under a different name or as a subtle principle not understood by those at the time. However, especially with Devitt's extension, it also facilitates the introduction of new ideas onto the old, condoning adding layers of interpretation of suspicious accuracy. It is natural in philosophical inquiry to look at the past and compare the questions and answers being addressed, but this ensures added analysis. While not offensive in isolation, since philosophy can only progress by moving on and reflecting, it does become problematic when used as justification. Hegel and the Buddhists both fall victim to this fault, justifying their trajectory and authority by showing how their concepts are attributable to previous revered figures. Moreover, the entire paper is aimed at that exercise. Therefore, whether the historical counterparts were really the same as their past, or effectively a literary device, the pre-eminence of old figures is often used to ensure a strong justification for the origins. When viewed in the abstract, removed from its content, the line between harm and benefit is hard to determine. In turning towards a specific work of Hegel, it can be seen how these modern prejudices crept their way into a seemingly innocent comparison and harmless anthology.

This first criticism points out how generally it is impossible to avoid bias, this second issue translates it to its manifestation within a specific work of Hegel. Looking at the purpose of *The Philosophy of History* offers a very interesting case-study into him and his historical preference. His ideas and language are filtered

and refashioned to no longer reflect truth, which is particularly relevant in this work since Hegel actively explored history and academic thought across cultures. On the surface, Hegel expressed a desire to take a multi-cultural approach to philosophy, but the historical context illuminates the irony and replaces it instead with a nefarious reason. He, for example, made the eccentric claim "that the substance of all previous philosophy is contained, preserved, and absorbed, in his own system" (Walter Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel* (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), 3.) and in this way highlighted his text as a summation of all inquiry, truly meaning *all*, regardless of time or place. "According to this view the successive systems do not contradict, but supplement, each other" (Stace, 132.), and so all individuals' contributions were necessarily represented in some form, no matter how basic. By turning a critical lens towards the past, looking for those instances of commonality and necessary advancements, he attempted to find the "fundamentals of the universal philosophy" (Stace, 30.). Conceptually, philosophy was not a static object to Hegel, but a methodology for looking at the world and coming closer to reality, and as such the answer could not be found in one simple place. However, there would be one area which overshadowed the rest. Wallace defined Hegel's philosophy as a "universal philosophy… conscious of its continuity and proud of its identity with the teachings of Plato and Aristotle" (Stace, 3-4.), hinting towards his rather restrictive partiality. While the goal was to be worldwide, Hegel prioritized the Greeks, and beyond mere footnotes, other cultures ended up being side-lined and ignored. Hegel only really attempted to envelope Eurasian thought within his text *the Philosophy of History*, finding time in his introduction to spurn any intellectual movement in Africa, "at this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. For it is no historical part of the world" (Georg Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, translated by John Sibree (New York: Dover Publications Ltd., 1956), 99.). But even with them he is still quick to demote the non-European thought to a mere step-stone on the way to the intellectual heights of the Greeks and Germans. Naturally, questions may be raised as to why the Greeks solely deserve this praise given Hegel's all-embracing claim. Eventually this pretence was dropped, coming to say that before the Greeks the world was "dream-like" (William Wallace, *Logic of Hegel* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1874), lxvii.) and with them came the "first breath in the air of thought. The history of thought" (Wallace, lxvii.) had only begun with them. Whilst it is true that globalism and increased trade made Sanskrit text more

accessible in translation, there is more than a misunderstanding of fundamental concepts, but also a transparent devaluing of their contributions as primitive forms of philosophy. While not necessarily excusable, global philosophy with the benefit of hindsight was a clear act of eurocentrism, and thus there was a vested interest in making philosophy a vehicle of active propaganda for the supremacy of European thought. Hegel, operating under this premise, does not consider the possibility of a dialectical process outside Europe, and stressed the Greeks as the true origin of philosophical discourse. Armed with a comprehensive account of Plato and Aristotle, Hegel saw a foundation for their own philosophy, whether truly there or not. They were a touchstone, the place from which any of his theory to be credible must link back to. For this very reason, the claims themselves might be over-stated and ought to be regarded with a certain scepticism, to be viewed more as a rhetorical device. However, rather than completely ignore these opinions, they still offer insight into Hegel's motivations and although possibly no longer reflecting the truth, the implications are telling. Consequently, W. T. Stace warned of this very predicament, but continued that, given these implications were advanced upon by Hegel and others, it is nonetheless valuable to examine "the thoughts which lay wrapped up, implicit, hidden away" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 5.). Therefore, little is ultimately changed if Hegel was misrepresenting the Greeks, but it is still important to keep these things in mind. While Hegel's theory is tied to the past, ultimately its strength is not solely based on the effectiveness of its author to faithfully comb through all cultures in search of the dialectic. As will be argued, if he had chosen to look in other areas, he might also have seen these same roots taking hold on other systems of philosophy. Having limited himself to only the Greeks, his investigation focused on identifying in a tiny portion of the world a translucent process, which was solely responsible for advancement in thought, and necessarily relied on negation and the interplay between contrasting theories.

Although Nāgārjuna will appear later in this essay, only after a detailed investigation into the dialectics and its nuances have been finished, it is important to mention alongside the prejudices which influenced Hegel, those which also impacted Indian philosophy. As Hegel had done, so too were Buddhist thinkers tempted to superimpose their beliefs onto the past and in that way easily circumvent the need for further justification. In India this was by no means a unique trait, greater Indian thought had always

maintained a glorified vision of the past, paying homage to the sages and texts who had sparked the original inspiration. Buddhists had before them an idealized image of their founder. To be taken seriously, everyone had to show how their ideas directly linked back to Buddha, or, if that were not possible, to the next best thing, which were the various excellent thinkers whose ideas were reified and already attributed to him. This can be seen with Jang-gya, an expounder of Buddhist doctrine and a reference point later in this essay, who credited "Dzong-ka-pa as the 'Foremost' (*rjè*), a term commonly used in Tibetan for a great religious leader [but here] it is limited in usage almost entirely to [him]" (Jeffrey Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga* (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1987), 33.): it is used for him a total of 31 times in only a short section on the unique tenets of his school, which shows how famed interpreters were also given the spotlight. As new interpretations began to be favoured over others, there naturally arose several competing ideas within the greater cohesive Buddhism. Cozort described the differences that formed between these sects, while acknowledging their overall harmony. Forming within monastic communities, "Monk-scholars did not identify themselves as belonging to this school or that school" (Daniel Cozort, *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School*, (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1998), 17.) but these different ideas sprung from the active debates that populated their daily life. As a result, it is all founded under the same framework, and sharp distinctions fail to appreciate the overwhelming amount that they "do not disagree on" (Cozort, 17.). These various readings having arisen, it became pertinent to bring them together under one consistent image. This gave rise to the very dubious bifurcation of the canon of Buddhist literature into nitārtha and neyārtha. Statements that are 'nitārtha' have a clear meaning, speaking directly of liberation, whereas 'neyārtha' are provisional, either in need of further explanation or to be rejected in favour of nitārtha after its temporary use is fulfilled. To those in the middle-way consequence school, only those passages which spoke "of final Deliverance which is Relativity, where there is no separate object, no profound meditation, no volition, no birth, no causation, no existence, no Ego, no living creature, no individual soul, no personality and no lord are nitārtha (having direct meaning)" (Fyodor Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna* (Varanasi: Bhartiya Vidya Prakashan, 1966), 29-30.). The claim includes in its scope that all texts fundamentally have relativity underlying them, just that some were taught with technically incorrect information to better

persuade an ignorant pupil along the path. All neyārtha doctrines were "Upāya… a means-value; it is to be abandoned after it had served its purpose" (Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 57.). There is a well-crafted metaphor to illustrate this point. Two villagers "went into temple and began to look at the paintings" (Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 99.). An argument broke out about the subjects of two of the paintings. Upon seeing a passing mendicant, the two approached to resolve their issue. "The wanderer thought, 'Being murals on a wall, these are neither Maheshvara nor Nārāyaṇa.' … in conformity with the conventions of the world, he told the villagers that one of them was right and the other wrong… the wanderer also did not incur the fault of telling a lie" (Hopkins, 99-100.). Buddha, likewise, taught occasionally in illustrative language to convince and draw the student one way or the other depending on which was necessary for them. As Stcherbatsky reinforced, "Saints do not use their own arguments. They just use the arguments that appeal to simple folk and convey the truth by methods which simple folk can understand" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 31 [Analysis of Contents].). In creating this hierarchy of truth regarding Buddha's word, the standardisation of measuring this is entirely up to the whim of the author. Therefore, in the same way as Hegel, but perhaps more egregiously, Indian thinkers shadowed their speculative thinking in the words of those who came prior. This afforded their theories more credibility, and so it was a common argumentative technique to refer to Buddha in hopes of an automatic and immediate silencing of the opposition.

Ancient World – Dialectics

The dialectics, as a process, is not without guidelines. To justify his own usage, Hegel found precedent in the past, looking into the ancient world and their philosophy to discern an artificially constructed pattern within academic inquiry. He claimed that his ideas were "implicit in their teachings although they did not explicitly recognize it" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 104.). As such History was the stage for Hegel's philosophy: the battleground upon which he chose to establish his ideas, and he placed a significant priority on it. He divined features of his methodology being unknowingly transmitted and exercised. Two were isolated and Hegel focused special emphasis on them as recurring motifs. While both are necessary steps to reach the final product of Hegel's dialectic, the predominant of the two is inexpression. In fact, it is so crucial

to the understanding of the dialectical process that upon first discerning a philosopher's use of it, Hegel attributed the origins of the entire process to them. Hegel identified the first dialectician as a Greek philosopher. He said that "what specially characterizes Zeno is the dialectic which, properly speaking, begins with him" (Hegel, History of Philosophy Lecture pg. 261), while praising the *Parmenides* as "surely the greatest work of art of the ancient dialectic" (Georg Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit,* translated by Arnold Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 32.). This, as will be seen, is a broad claim, made questionable by Zeno's own clinging to dogmatic principles; however, his unique argument style is what solidified this reputation. Hegel commended Zeno for his use of paradoxes and his aim was not "to resolve nor to transcend [them, but] to uncover the conceptual sources" (Allegra De Laurentiis, "'And Yet It Moves': Hegel on Zeno's Arrow," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 9, no. 4 (1995): 264-265, https://www.jstor.org/stable/25670156.). In her work, De Laurentiis offered an illumination of Hegel's treatment of Zeno. To her, Hegel admired that Zeno had given "proof of the inherently contradictory character of our concept of motion" (De Laurentiis, 265.). This created the need for "the exclusive truth of Being" (De Laurentiis, 267.), an all-embracing, transcendental concept; a philosophy which denies the physical as mere existence - in this way avoiding the noticeable contradictions in external phenomenon-, and in its place sets reality as a separate mode of being reached only through reason. Although Zeno presented many examples, the arrow paradox was an instance where he refuted the notion of a pluralistic universe on account of common-sense change being impossible. He showed the logical absurdity in the space traversed containing "the two contradictory determinations of 'continuity' and 'discreteness'" (De Laurentiis, 267.). While motion in its physical manifestation cannot be truly said to exist, to doubt that there is some illusory movement is going too far as well, "[the arrow] can nonetheless move" (De Laurentiis, 268.). Zeno found himself caught in a dialectic, by denying that either an existent or non-existent motion properly explained this phenomenon. He oscillated between the position of space as a fixed field quantifiable into small pieces and the expanse as a continuous interconnected whole. Zeno ended in a position where the truth is only the pure being of the experience. This philosophy is distinguished from those at the time due to its emphasis on "logical contradiction" (De Laurentiis, 265.), which becomes an important concept for Hegel and the linchpin of the dialectic method. Subsequently,

Hegel wrote highly of Zeno, defining his achievement around how he demonstrated "falsity … in itself [fighting] the battle 'within the enemy's camp'" (De Laurentiis, 268.). Kant similarly recognized the benefit of Zeno's paradoxes, and so defended him from Plato's insult as simply a "wanton sophist" (Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, A502, 512.). Therefore, Hegel inspired by Zeno of Elea and the possibility of a dialectical process, with its characteristic features of negation and contradictory absurdities, manoeuvred the paradoxical questioning of Zeno into a dialectical criticism of everyday phenomenon. Zeno has a novel argument style, founded upon those located principles, and in this way validated his own application of the dialectic by attributing its origins outside himself.

Hegel discerned the concept of negation from Zeno but realized that a further principle showed itself ingrained within it. The idea that truth cannot be properly expressed is closely linked and provides the foundation for negation being such a fundamental reasoning tool. If truth cannot be expressed, then anyone's claim that they have arrived at some universal rule is necessarily false and must be flat out refuted. When this rejection takes place, only an implication remains, pointing to the truth, but not expressing it. This can be explored through Zeno's failure to apply this to himself. Having first discovered these contradictions, he then "rejected this knowledge" (De Laurentiis, "'And Yet It Moves': Hegel on Zeno's Arrow," 269.). He had shown the absurdity inherent in his contemporaries' positions, indicating that their claims were insufficient for reaching truth, but all this was done for the purpose of strengthening his resolve in the One. What Zeno had failed to recognize was that his own staunch belief in the One was likewise riddled with conceptual errors and assumptions. His reasoning to dismiss Pythagorean plurality can be reflected to abandon the Eleatic One. Frederick Copleston summarized this contradiction in his magnus opus *A History of Philosophy*: "Pythagoreans asserted plurality to the practical exclusion of the One — there are many ones; the Eleatics asserted the One to the exclusion of the many" (Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: The Dialectic of Zeno* (Image Books – Doubleday, 1993), https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Topics/philosophy/_Texts/COPHP/7*.html.). Zeno had correctly identified an inaccuracy in the Pythagorean view of the many: not only does the many presuppose the one, but the many necessitates change, which is an impossible concept. Despite

acknowledging this, he failed to grasp how his own hypothesis was just as dogmatic and extreme, albeit in the other direction. Some may worry that inexpression result in the view that philosophy is meaningless. If truth can never be accurately recorded and passed to another, the indulgence of the human tendency to categorize is wasted effort. However, while the end goal is unachievable, the progress and attempt to learn some of its mysteries imbue philosophy with a purpose and meaning. Hegel illustrated Zeno's role in philosophy by comparing it to Kant, highlighting the cyclical nature of philosophy simultaneously with explaining how it gave him a "task…to produce affirmative results from the disintegration of concept" (De Laurentiis, "'And Yet It Moves': Hegel on Zeno's Arrow," 269.). Zeno likewise was ultimately incorrect in attributing truth to the One, but his efforts were crucial. Due to this single action, indeed entirely dependent on this action happening, inquiry was able to move another rung upwards, "transcending its earlier stages" (Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 63.) and to slightly elevate the world consciousness alongside. Inexpression of truth and its necessity for future growth is not limited to the works of Zeno, every writing is "a step in the development of the one universal Spirit" (Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 78.) no matter how minor, everything plays a role. Zeno provided a perfect avenue to explore this because of how his philosophy is remembered, paradoxes are unique in capturing the inexpressibility of truth, depicting not a classical syllogism but the contradictions inherent in taking any position. With his dialectic, Zeno tried to overcome the problematic areas in other schools, erring only when clarifying the One, for even his category was inadequate to fully define the truth. Therefore, it is not only negation which Hegel latched onto from Zeno and the past, but he also turned to its corollary of inexpression.

Zeno, however, was not the only writer who made use of these threads within his arguments. Plato, regarded as one of the most essential voices in western philosophy, also had a similar yet peculiar relationship with truth and expression. When reading Plato, what is most immediately obvious is that the style is nothing like the modern essay. Written in the form of dialogues, questioning becomes the foundation for Plato's philosophy to manifest itself. As with Zeno's paradoxes, questioning relies on challenging and negating the position of one's opponent. The benefit of this method is that it forces the opponent to address their own presuppositions and fully confront concepts. It is not the actual content of the debate but the methodology

of Plato's philosophical speculation which is supposed to grip the reader. This is additionally evidenced by Socrates' questioning style, a memorable aspect of Plato's writing, which reinforced this idea that he did not wish to express his own point but rather usher the student onwards to arrive at their own conclusions. It is characterized by intense one-on-one rapid-fire questions, in which a position was advanced by the opponent, subject then to Socrates' rigorous analysis. These questions included simple clarification, such as to define a term or to bring forward an example case but may also fundamentally address the opponent's perspective to locate flaws. Socrates' method focused on denying his interlocutor's position. Cohn delved further into Socrates as a literary figure, divorcing him from Plato and confronting the two images of them to see for concordance. Socrates made his opponents trip over their own words, benefited by his "presence [which exerted] an immeasurable pressure on the other participants in the dialogue scene" (Dorrit Cohn, "Does Socrates Speak for Plato? Reflections on an Open Question," *New Literary History* 32, no. 3 (2001): 496, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20057673.). Less emphasis is placed on giving a definite answer to the original question but to show that any answer, and especially the one given by the interlocutor, is incorrect. Meanwhile, Plato obscured himself in another way. He chose to abdicate the persona of philosopher extraordinaire to Socrates, his teacher, and he "himself never [spoke] directly to his readers" (Cohn, 485.). While perhaps simply a sign of respect to his pedagogue, this inclusion allowed Plato to distance himself from the positions propounded: in some places "it is difficult (if not impossible) to understand Socrates as Plato's spokesperson" (Cohn, 486.). In most cases, Socrates is the intellectual giant; however, even this arrangement is challenged occasionally. Socrates shows a shocking "inconsistency" (Cohn, 489.), and some suggested that in the *Symposium* Plato wanted the reader to side "not with the sober Socrates but with the drunken Alcibiades" (Cohn, 489.). Plato's distinct philosopher character of Socrates, in a similar way to Zeno, allowed him to negate and challenge his opponent's view while remaining lofty, not willing to taint his reality with fixed expression. This method of approaching philosophy, which aimed to leave behind a formula for addressing fundamental questions while keeping the very answers at arm's length, was put forward by Plato, Zeno, and Hegel, among others. Since the solutions were not communicable, negation of others left an inference for the truth. To them the journey was deemed to be most important to the student, not learning

someone's answers by rote. It is upon these themes of negation and inexpression, which are mutually compatible and fortify each other, that Hegel founded a base for his dialectics.

Recognizing that Hegel delved into the past to validate the concept of negation and inexpression does not encompass the totality of Hegel's reliance on the Greeks, in addition to these themes, conflict becomes an essential feature for the betterment of philosophy. Conflict here refers to scholarly dogmatism that creeps into neighbouring schools of thought pushing theories away from each other and into stalemates. As will be seen, conflict is a catch-22 of philosophy. Conflict between two schools of thought dug their thinkers into intolerance of each other; however, it was only after these two had been taken to their extremes and all corollaries branched off, that the ground was set for them to be transcended. Therefore, to fully examine conflict, it must be known both as ordinary philosophical disagreement, but also how it fits within the greater course of philosophy. Conflict has the tendency to cause people to react instinctively with criticism. A German philosophy scholar, Terry Pinkard offered a parallel with the connection between religion and science. "[Scientists] may claim to reject [religion] because they do not fit their canons of 'scientific procedure' or the 'commonly accepted standards' or rationality. The former may reject the latter because they substitute procedures of scientific rationality in places where only the 'heart' can rule" (Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 4.). Since these theories encourage their own method of surveying and mediating the same information, the concepts which each side utilizes are often misaligned making collusion impossible even if attempted. Both sides argue from their own standpoint and as such are forced to think of the other with contempt and derision. While these impasses appear pernicious at first, rigidifying opinion, without it the very nature of growth is stifled. As seen earlier, Kant's incomplete theory left behind a 'task' for Hegel. In Greece, for example, the philosophies of idealism and realism were taking shape, and causing animosity. It was the job of later philosophers to show that "every true philosophy must be both idealist and realist: for Idealism is the grasp of the whole and the universal, Realism the fulness of the details and the parts" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, lix.). Ultimately, without both idealism and realism, the realization that in their combination lies greater truth would have been impossible. Dogmatism, therefore, while stifling thought for those present, is also enriched

by and responsible for the dialectic process, the present "embraces the result of all that has preceded" (Wallace, ix.).

Seeing conflict without fail everywhere within philosophical progress, Hegel came to realize its necessity, with the benefit of hindsight. He remarked upon the regularity with which theories rise and fall out of prominence. "Each epoch of history [has its own] terms of thought… logical language" (Wallace, lxviii.), which takes the previous generation as its starting point, but changes by keeping some ideas as they are and adapting others to reach the next world consciousness. This is closely linked with Hegel's view of the physical world and the past, since he believed that history was the unfolding and exploration into self-consciousness and freedom. If looked at closely and with the right detail "a definite line of evolution, the principle of which is that the Idea gradually and progressively unfolds itself in time in the successive systems" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 132.). In this way, not isolated to the domain of philosophy, the world as it appears is not a random collection of events, ushered in by "blind chance" (Stace, 133.). Instead "history is the self-manifestation of the Idea in time" (Stace, 133.), and the current "art… history… and political history" (Stace, 133.) reveal the degree to which the world has engaged with its own concept of freedom and self-control. "This process is necessitated, so that the form of government assigned to a particular stage of development *must* present itself" (Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 46.), which is why different ruling structures prevailed over certain times and then become viewed as abhorrent maltreatments of the past once the collective consciousness had advanced to a sufficient stage. Monarchies were necessary when the mind was in its early stages but must pass beyond into democracy after some time. The mental space mirrored the physical, since as time went on, people recognized their own "particularity and individuality" (Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 46.). People no longer felt that the model of a single authoritarian ruler was viable, and so distributed responsibility amongst its various and separate members. Hegel noted these "progressive, reforming, and reactionary aspects" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, lxix.), an emerging pattern manifested in how history behaved, a cycle forming into periods of radical new ideas, followed by disagreement. Searching for an intangible end, some became stuck to dogmatic ties, giving greater depth to the content but revealing no more truth than those prior. He saw history moving in "cycles, but with each new cycle a difference

supervenes" (Wallace, lxx.). History never returned to its origin, entering a never-ending loop, but rather it spiralled upwards, adding onto itself in novel ways with each revolution. History, therefore, "does and does not repeat itself" (Wallace, lxx.), it must incorporate both these static and dynamic roles, and without the nature of knowledge to enter conflict, the speculative inquiry of philosophy would be pointless and fruitless. This illustrated Hegel's general view of philosophy and the fundamental part which conflict plays. It is just as necessary as inexpression and these two evolved mutually alongside each other, visible in every stage of philosophy. Although the core concepts underpinning the dialectic have been discovered, before Nāgārjuna can be looked at, Hegel must be viewed through his contemporary role.

Hegel - Context

The dialectics is, therefore, dependent on history. Hegel attributed the need for the dialectic in principle to conflict and, within his own specific historical context, to the stagnation caused by rationalism and empiricism. This difference of opinion, concerned over "how we obtain knowledge" (Cyril Joad, *Guide to Philosophy* (London: Victor Gollancz ltd., 1948), 108.), is one which defined the nature of philosophy during Hegel's time. These two theories once taken to their extremes, forbid any overlap, since they are by definition at odds with each other. In rationalism all truth is subjected to the sphere of reason, while the other points only to appearances. The arguments in favour of rationalist and empiricist schools are paralleled to the diametrical relationship between idealism and realism. Having formulated these two irreconcilable theories, the schools entered a slump over how to challenge their opponents, essentially waiting for the introduction of a metamorphosis to force a unity between these antithetical viewpoints. Empiricism is a reaction against a previous period of speculation, in this case rationalism. Their supporters demanded a return to common-sense after a miscalculated foray into intellectual exploration. This had resulted in an over-estimation of the intellect's capabilities and the belief that truth can be found somewhere outside experience. This explains why rationalists appeared slightly earlier, since leading into the early 19th century, "Descartes (1596-1650), Leibnitz (1646-1716) and Spinoza (1632-1677)" (Joad, 112.) pioneered the rationalist position, while "Locke (1632-1704), Berkley (1685-1753) and Hume (1711-1776)" (Joad, 112-113.) were the driving forces behind empiricism. Rationalism is the positive swing of philosophy at the time. These thinkers

wanted to find "necessity and contingency" (Joad, 108.) which the mind is in possession of and is logically prior to experience. It is due to this that many advocates overlapped with the field of "mathematics [thinking they] could discover the truth about the universe by the same methods" (Joad, 108.), seeing the world as an extension of this perfect science. A world of rational ideals was hidden behind the world of experience which could be discovered through the exercising and refining "of the reasoning faculty" (Joad, 122.), and symbols were borrowed from their work outside philosophy, becoming an easy substitute for representing their new rules. With a desire to explain the origin of these hidden truths, most turned to an ideal world, seemingly confirming what was theorized from "self-evident" (Joad, 123.) intuitive experience. This definition leaves itself open to criticism, raising scepticism over how 'self-evident' these premises really were. Leibnitz unconvincingly used the Principle of Sufficient Reason to explain the difficulty away. Here he said that "unless it has a sufficient reason why it should be thus" (Joad, 109.), the proposition is not a fact. All reasons pointed to are based on the inductive principle, that there is a "resemblance of the future to the past" (Joad, 130.). While there is no explicit reason to trust inference, it often proves reliable to do so; where there is smoke, there is fire, "the sun rises to-morrow…if water reaches a certain temperature it will turn to steam" (Joad, 130.). However, just as with the language used by Leibnitz, any theory behind induction led to discussions over "number of occasions… probability… [approaching] certainty" (Joad, 131.), subjective markers which can only imply an event but not guarantee it. As a result, rationalism is characterized by its reliance on inevitability, speculation and going beyond the senses. Rationalism arrived at a strict belief in the intellect and its capacity to arrive at truth, unearthing the hidden logical principles which operate throughout the world, and grounding their proponents into a steadfast position.

Rationalism at the dawn of the 17th century was codified and refined, but there were those who felt that this theory did not encapsulate truth but obscured it. Empiricism, whose beliefs were "directly opposed to those of the rationalists" (Joad, 112.), sought to right this wrong. Rationalism was necessary for the rise of empiricism. This negativity always remained, even while the school began to delve into unfamiliar territory and establish their arguments in novel ways. Fundamentally empiricism only represented a return to simplicity, to "actual brute facts" (Joad, 112.), by "pointing out the insufficiency of… metaphysical terms"

(Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, xxxiv.). It started with a denial of necessity, expressly opposing the central principle which underpinned rationalism, and then they repeated this scepticism towards all things. Locke addressed the issue with a focus on creating subjective idealism, his concern being with perception and the "limits of human knowledge" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 39.). Locke noticed that all mental events require a "raw material supplied from sensation" (Joad, 39.), whatever function performed, be it "remembering, comparing, imagining and so forth" (Joad, 39.). Inspiration for these must have come from either previous or present experience. This criticism of common-sense experience aimed to assert "that we know not external things" (Joad, 41.) and so destroy any difference between the world of appearance and the world of reality. They reduced all knowledge to being *a posteriori* since all mental raw material could only come from experience. Whereas Locke only began by analysing necessity in human experience, Hume and Berkley took empiricism to its extremes. Hume's radical scepticism enforced a sharp negative attitude towards the previous era of philosophy and science in general. The Humean mosaic revealed his understanding of experience, a series of snapshots which "habitually going together… associate themselves together by the mere fact of happening or occurring together" (Joad, 370.). This collage encompassed the whole of reality for Hume, anything else supplied was false. With this view, all possibility of real necessity was lost. While these questions struck at the very core of human experience, shattering unchecked premises, they did also somewhat resonant with it. Kant, using Hume's very ideas as inspiration, was crucial in helping to bridge the gap forming between these camps. However, alongside this solution came noumena, a designation related to inexpression, showing how amidst this negation is an insinuation to a transcendental reality. Therefore, as an approach is made to Hegel, empiricism emerged as the counter swing to rationalist arguments and their relationship was defined as opposite and impossible of reconciliation, needing a radical shift in perspective to overcome their odds.

With this stagnation in philosophy, several thinkers proved unparalleled by challenging and transcending the dogmatic attitudes of the day. Hume, by outlining the extremes of empiricism, entrenched their antipodal relationship with rationalism, and woke Kant "from him dogmatic slumber" (Joad, 372.), opening the door for a paradigm shift in philosophy. While Hegel reorganized and shifted priority, it was mainly Kant who focused on how the mind really works epistemologically. As with idealism and realism

before, both rationalism and empiricism deserved merit as they had a joint claim on the truth, and so it was necessary to recognize "the claims of both in a system which transcends" (Joad, 381.). Kant wanted to create a "*modus vivendi* which would reconcile the empiricists' insistence upon the observation of actual fact… with the general principles of reasoning" (Joad, 367.). He achieved this through his theory of apperception. This is the general idea that, before the knowing mind has any access to sense data, it must be manipulated in such a way as to make it comprehensible. His solution to the conflict, therefore, lay in denying the specific nature of the raw material, explaining that it comes to the knowing subject already "worked up and modelled by our minds" (Joad, 367.). To illustrate this, imagine a "pair of blue spectacles permanently affixed to my nose [this would lead to the belief that] blueness is a universal property… I shall be mistaken [about the] quality imposed upon them by the peculiar conditions of my seeing" (Joad, 379.). A blue tint would mark every visual sensation, but because this has been a ubiquitous feature of all previous experience, the added colour is not questioned. In the same way, the mind is untrained to recognize its reliance on mediation and takes the given data, assuming its truth. Kant's contribution manifested itself though stressing the "activity of the experiencing subject" (Joad, 268.), "for Kant, thinking and experiencing cannot be disassociated" (Joad, 377.), they were inherently linked. There was an element of thought "in all our knowledge of the external world" (Joad, 376.), but only through analysis of experience could the objective truth be revealed in the logical principles. They are necessary conditions which make any mediation of thought possible. The certainty apparent in the outside world is really a function of minds. The rationalist rules do not govern bodies in motion, but rather how our minds process the phenomenal existence which causes the perception of objects in motion. To Kant, the fact that "in all sorts of ways we go out beyond what we see" (Joad, 383.) was proof that the mind was constantly processing information before it reached the understanding. Joad takes as an example a table, which is never fully seen "from any position or in any light" (Joad, 383.), yet one is convinced that the underside does in fact exist, or that there is another leg when only three can properly be seen. In fact, to go against this assumption would challenge the very fabric of our mind's logic. This shift in priority allowed Kant to accept principles from both sides, while reformulating the argument to show that any previously stated disagreement was no longer applicable.

Kant claimed a possibility of transcending dogmatism, and it was up to his further theorization to reinforce this. He had targeted the mind as the principal agent in cognition and so applied the tools of epistemic inquiry to it. He used both his own new distinctions, as well as pre-existing ones, to address the specifics of how rationalism and empiricism were transcended. He brought forward the questions "*are a priori synthetic propositions possible*?" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 38.), and, by answering with a yes, would reveal if necessity existed under "the rules which the mind obeys when it reasons" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 376.). By finding a logical grounding to inherence, the nuances of how and why Kant is successful is established. This specific characterization, 'synthetic *a priori*', presupposes a fourfold split which depicts the possibility of agreement between rationalism and empiricism, and so by affirming its existence, the conflict is shown to be merely an appearance. The *a priori* and *a posterior* distinctions are paired with rationalism and empiricism respectively. The synthetic and analytic split achieves the same function by bisecting between the two theories, but it is done in such a way as to bridge the gap already settled between *a priori* and *a posterior*. By offering an alternative way of sectioning the nature of empiricism and rationalism, the combination of these two dichotomies can be achieved. The key term is synthetic, which requires that in a judgement something new be added. This content, as opposed to analytic, is arranged by the external world and can only be proved by an external examination; "all *a priori* exercise of reason, apart from the co-operation of the senses and experience, is impossible or resultless" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, lii.). The intellect, if wished to be looked at in isolation, "can only fall into perpetual contradictions and sophistries" (Wallace, li.), and this was where Kant allowed for empiricists to accept a victory. Any knowledge which is synthetic and therefore of interest to the philosopher must "must lie open to experience" (Wallace, li.), so even if its necessity can be found prior, the only use which it offers must be external. Kant, having reduced the debate between the rationalists and empiricists to a look into this fourfold cross-section, saw the existence of *a priori* synthetic judgments as a source of unification. Both sides could claim a mark on the outcome: the rationalists were partly correct in that there are *a priori* facts, therefore proving that necessity does exist in a sense irrespective of experience. On the other hand, empiricists were aware that truth only means anything if applied, and so synthetic judgements, while adding to the predicate, are true only when set in relation to an object of observation.

With this distinction added, Kant reached the conclusion that only by investigating the faculty of knowing itself, rather than external sense, would any insight into overcoming their conflict be furnished. Although Kant represented a grand change in thinking, his theory was not flawless, and the responsibility fell onto others for direction forwards.

Hegel had first hand perspective of the dialectic at work, having Kant as an immediate example to show him how the nature of philosophy is fundamentally structured. However, being left open to criticism, Hegel drew his influences and remodelled the rest to avoid the major concerns. Kant's characterization of truth as "thing-in-itself" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 42.), while contentious, was made centre stage for Hegel. This term recontextualized objective reality; "the world as it is, the world that is independent of our knowledge, [is] called by Kant the world of *noumena*" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 381.). According to this, everyone has their own specific view of the world, as in the previous table example, something as simple as even shape depends on the individual and their position. One sighting of the table is in stark contrast to another. These are merely two incorrect approximations of the true table, neither see the table as it is in-and-for-itself. In making this connection, Kant introduced the discussion over phenomena and noumena, events which are due to appearance and those which are in-and-for-itself. Conceptually phenomena relate to the mind through the mediation by its intellectual facility, there is a separation, as well as a link, caused in assuming the role of subject. In the act of knowing, the mind takes its distinct place as observer and the object that of observed. However, for something to logically classify as truth under the definition as 'thing-in-itself', no minutia of external influence can affect it; it is unable to be marred by falsity or chance. By having the mind enter this subject-object relationship with only access to appearances, any possibility of seeing noumena is abandoned, alongside any attempts to truly known it or establish an objective standard from which to compare it. This provided the basis for inexpression; however, in so doing left itself open to criticism. In opposition to both empiricism and rationalism, Kant had made himself a popular target and everyone pointed to the implications created from a total separation of appearance and reality. His detractors did not have to think of unique arguments and levelled the same ones used against Locke's representationalism: how could a "[knowing mind] know that [the noumenal world] exists, or that it has the

property of underlying and being the cause of [the phenomenal world]" (Joad, 395.) when there is only ever direct access through the phenomenal world. The mind necessarily mediates through "concepts [cause, substance, quantity, etc. which] apply only to what appears to us, not to the thing as it is in itself" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 42.). They rejected Kant on the grounds that accepting his worldview made reality "for ever unknowable to us by reason of the very way our minds are constructed" (Stace, 43.). Furthermore, they stressed the inherent contradictory assumptions Kant had to adopt when arguing about this bifurcation. Although Kant had claimed that "reality is unknowable" (Stace, 42.), he had also stated that two facts were "known about it [namely] that it is not self-contradictory, and that it would be knowable by pure understanding" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 395.). If reality is 'unknowable', Kant cannot claim any knowledge of it, including these statements. Through Kant's inclusion of the thing-in-itself, he could easily be refuted, as noumena could never exist as stated. To soften this criticism, many at the time professed that "reality not only underlies but manifests itself in appearance [but Kant] in a particularly obnoxious form" (Joad, 396.) suggested anyone's study of phenomena is the "further [they] drift from reality" (Joad, 396.). To Kant, there were noumena and they were accessible to a certain intuitive faculty, contradictions notwithstanding. Faced with these objections, Kant felt little need to defend himself, certain in the pre-eminence of his ideas. Although a flat denial of noumena would have circumvented this issue, its connection to inexpression made it valuable and Hegel adopted the idea. He, however, was not convinced by all of Kant and adapted some problematic areas for a solution. Kant was being tied to subjective idealism, a kind of sceptical nihilism which sees "mental states [as constituting] the universe" (Joad, 56.). The whole world is purely mental and personal, leading to a toxic philosophy of solipsism, "eternally incarcerated in the prison-house of my experience" (Joad, 56.). On the other hand, Hegel was working towards objective idealism, intending a foundation for a monistic reality which combines the individual into a whole with their outside community. In response, flatly rejecting Kant, Hegel suggested that "we possess intimations of its nature in other forms of experience" (Joad, 364.). Noumena were transcendent and immanent in the physical world, working alongside phenomena to conceive of reality as it is. To arrive at the dialectics, Hegel needed to follow on from Kant and answer the objections to which he voiced little attention. In this way, Hegel approached the nineteenth

century eager to correct his predecessor's mistakes and carve out a name for himself. Therefore, Kant with the introduction of a variety of new concepts ushered in by the dawn of a transcendence of the previous era's philosophical impasse provided a groundwork for Hegel to explore the dialectic.

Hegel – Dialectics

This provides the context for Hegel, the theories which are contemporaneous to him and to which he was tasked to directly respond to. Having recognized issues with Kant, areas left unassessed and needing to be corrected, Hegel turned to his own definition of how knowledge acquisition can best be understood. In this way, matching Kant and investigating the faculty of reason rather than the content, the dialectic became an addition upon Kant's categories and how they came about. Hegel wanted to take these disparate and unconnected features and arrange them together. He sought a rubric which the mind is in possession of and utilizes whenever any information is brought forward; "the true philosophical method… the absolute method" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 288.). Kant had been criticized for not adequately providing room for an intuitive faculty able to glimpse information on *noumena,* but Hegel's system was comprised differently and ensured a means of approaching truth. He attained this through the vehicle of the Hegelian triad. For the most part his method rigorously holds to a triad structure, only at inconsistent moments deviating to produce a new idea. While the actual success of each attempt may be up for debate, "these irregularities do not indicate, however, that [the] description of the dialectical method is wrong [it] does not necessarily invalidate the principles" (Stace, 97.). The overall project is instrumental in showing how the triads are usually individually organized, as well as how each concept necessarily stems from either those which are prior or opposing. Thus, while any particular successes or failures are interesting, they become inconsequential when viewed as "the result together with the process through which it came about" (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 2.). The strength of Hegel's dialectic comes from its framework and not from any of its specific implementations. Kant had turned the philosopher's gaze towards the mind, but Hegel wanted to better explain the logic behind a mind which functions through contradiction. This addressed a criticism of Kant which Hegel specifically attached to. To Kant the categories existed in isolated groups, but Hegel wanted them to flow naturally from each other. Kant had "merely [thrown] down the twelve categories as so many

unexplained facts… such dogmatism was quite sufficient for Kant" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 82.) but not to Hegel. The categories had to form a cohesive whole. He began with the most basic mental thought and through a repeated process illustrated how from a single premise, the entirety of everything is produced. It is the task of the *Encyclopaedia* to follow this journey. The first and final steps offer archetypical examples of Hegel's "triple rhythm" (Stace, 92.). The first is simplified to its most basic and essential features, while the last extends greater insight into specific features unique to Hegel's dialectical process through the nuance of how he chose to cease it. The triad contains within itself lots of information accessible in its theoretical nature, and the skeletal structure can be drawn to pave the way before its specific content is fleshed out. The three members stand in relation to one another as the thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis. The first is the "affirmative category" (Stace, 92.), the second is the first's own "self-contradiction" (Stace, 93.), it both is "opposite and is identical with [the first]" (Stace, 92.). The "contradiction between the first and second categories is always reconciled in a third category" (Stace, 92-93.). It is additionally unique since these three constituents "deduce themselves" (Stace, 92.), Hegel professes to apply no "external source" (Stace, 92.) when analysing his concepts. The first category simply and passively arises and the rest naturally produce "out of itself" (Stace, 92.). At its most simple, the positive aspects defined the first unit, and thus the second as its negative while the third as the unity of these, but there are a variety of other ways to classify these three components. Viewed according to their abstractness, the individual terms in the dialectic are subsumed by an investigation into how each member of the triad relates to each other and the external world. "The first two terms… are relatively abstract, while the third is relatively concrete" (Stace, 104.). The first two, when "taken apart from each other" (Stace, 105.), are incomplete halves in need of a synthesis. The anti-thesis, as represented by negation, is simply of the same sort as the thesis, a "quality of a thing" (Stace, 105.). The negation results in "a false abstraction, a one-sided half-truth, which cannot stand alone" (Stace, 105.). It is the final member of the triad that sparks a deviation, which is the "concrete truth" (Stace, 105.). This is the part within the triplet which most accurately resembles reality, becoming "more and more concrete" (Stace, 105.) as the dialectic progresses. This points towards a feature of the dialectic which parallels its path to the idea, reinforced by the words 'relatively'. The first term was once itself concrete, and the synthesis will

subsequently become abstract, when made the subjects of neighbouring triads, and so these definitions are dependent on their current situation. In another distinction, Hegel viewed the triad "as characterized by 'immediacy'" (Stace, 105.), which translates to its priority regarding unity or division. The first and third parts are 'immediacy' which is defined along its nature as "simple and undifferentiated [which] purports to be in itself the sole truth without reference to anything else" (Stace, 105.). These two are mediated by the second, which is facilitated by the awareness of a "differentiation" (Stace, 106.). Adopting Kantian language around noumena, Hegel showed the second immediacy to be a significant advance upon the first. The first is a "simple identity, that within which no differences have yet disclosed" (Stace, 105.), while the final is a complex unity where "differences are … absorbed in an identity" (Stace, 106.). The synthesis "abolishes and preserves the differences… expressed by Hegel by the word *aufheben* ['to sublate']" (Stace, 106.). Defined by its capacity to encompass the two prior members, it is in-and-for-itself in so far as the contradiction is explicitly made clear but realized within its wider context as belonging to a single entity. As before with 'abstract and concrete', these definitions are relative to the context. These positive characterizations are within flux, ready to be isolated as their own stable concepts, but quick to subvert any expectation with contradiction. The dialectic fundamentally rejected being static and depended on the student and their historical context to lend itself the best meaning. As Hegel said, "the power of the spirit is only as great as its expression, its depths only as deep as it dares to spread out" (Hegel*, Phenomenology of Spirit*, 6.) and so while it is true to admit that the immediacies are identical, the enhanced understanding implied within the second reinforces the validity and strength of the dialectic in defining reality. Kant, while smashing philosophy's previous foundation, made an imperfect structure as a replacement; Hegel saw this as opportunity to springboard from apperception into a logic system which worked upon the principles which he had gathered from throughout ancient Greece and into the modern world.

Having simplified the general form, the first triad presents the most basic manifestation of this triadic structure and offers a compelling and paradigmatic case for the dialectic method. Hegel's first triad concerned the concepts being, nothing and becoming. Hegel explained that the simplest mental function was 'is', "mere being" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 135.) with no specific content. Unlike in regular speech, this 'is' did

not function as a copula and despite being a verb did not include within its scope any action. There was no qualitive or quantitative assessment being made, simply the recognition of somethings existence; "it is mere thought… because it is immediacy itself without difference and without characteristics" (Wallace, 135.). In equating the Absolute to mere being devoid of content, however, it was reduced to an "abstraction, [and] is therefore absolutely negative" (Wallace, 137.). Essentially to say that something 'is', without "either form or matter" (Wallace, 138.) is just the same as saying it 'is not'. "The simple self-identity of the first term has developed a difference within its own substance" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 126.). This meant the predicate of non-being sprung naturally and fundamentally from being. An example given to explain this connection is that "God is only the supreme being and nothing more" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 138.). While God (or more abstractly the Absolute) exists, any attempts at positive assertions are futile; the whole cannot be defined without knowledge of its limits. God has no limits and in being an impossible demand leaves it identical to nothing. Another way to demonstrate their connected relationship is offered by Joad. In his example, he asks his reader to imagine the self, taken in isolation as its own self-contained concept. However, this independent nature is a façade, the only way the self can even be known is after it is defined in reaction against its opposite. In this case, the self can only be mediated through the fact of its being distinguished "from the Not Self" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 405.). Despite showing their intimate connection, these two terms 'being', and 'non-being' are, as instinct burns to acknowledge, opposites and distinct. Hegel clung to their identity seeing them as "only *ought* to be distinguished" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 139.), while common-sense struggled to pull the mind back. There was a "nominal distinction" (Wallace, 140.) acting as an intermediary, but no real distinction between the two. The difference was at that point "unutterable, [what] we merely fancy to exist" (Wallace, 140.). Hegel gave voice to the intuitive reasoning which did not accept the simple difference of these two opposites but found instead their synthesis disclosed within the very push for their separation. The role of 'becoming' is to uniquely incorporate both individual members into its synthesis, ensuring their identity and difference are both preserved, in so doing creating an immediate compromise. 'Becoming' is "inherent unrest" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 143.) the complicated flux between ""To be' and 'Not to be'" (Stace, 142.): "Being is the passage into Nought, and Nought the passage

into Being" (Stace, 143.). Becoming is "the first concrete thought… whereas Being and Nought are empty abstractions" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 144.). While 'becoming' can set to rest the contradiction and conflict within the prior two terms, as seen in the ancient world, expression inevitably gave rise to its own rejection. The "third doctrine which unites, but unites on a higher plane [is itself] shown to be inadequate, and liable, therefore, to self-contradiction, [but it still embodies] more truth than the original [two doctrines]" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 403.). Thus, becoming also is "wrong [in that it can] be shown by careful examination to be self-contradictory" (Joad, 403.). Having begun with simple "self-identity; being is being and nothing more, A=A" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 126.), suddenly "it is something different from A; it is B… simple difference" (Stace, 126.), resulting in 'becoming', which is "identity in difference [where] the major and minor term, are brought together into unity on the common ground or middle term" (Stace, 126.). Hegel's first triad offers a simple archetype for looking at his dialectic process, however given its pure simplicity, it glosses over many of the nuances which stand it out as the unique representation of his dialectic.

The final triad is worthy of note not only because it is another perfect repetition of his triad formula, but because, by marking the end point, Hegel addressed the dialectic's end limit. The first category arose out of thin air, arrived at when the mind removed all determinations and considered the pure abstract. Having started it, the process threatened to be a run-away train and Hegel must definitively state when and how the dialectic ends. This is where Hegel introduced the 'idea'. As the final category, the 'idea' inhabited the best and most concrete approximation to truth and reality. The definition was the most detailed amongst all that Hegel had found along the path. It is also necessary to flesh out the idea as it will be a point of comparison with Indian philosophy. "The Idea as a unity of the Subjective and Objective Idea" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 323.) formed the triad, having as its thesis, "cognition proper – the true" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 286.), as its anti-thesis, "volition – the good" (Stace, 288.), and as the synthesis, the absolute idea. Cognition proper was itself the unity of "analytic and synthetic" (Stace, 288.) methods and so tied back to all the previous categories through an unending chain, as such its distinct features are already established. The result of the synthesis of these two logical modes was that there is "an external world, which… appears within the organism as internal to it" (Stace, 285.). In its purely passive form, the categories "do not alter the truth"

(Stace, 287.) of anyone's cognition, they simply took "the external world… as already existing" (Stace, 287.). Objectively it accepted the world and so ensured its closest approximation to one's *true* surroundings, however, in so doing it was limited to the "finite" (Stace, 287.). The cognizing mind was "[separated and divided by] subject and object, and fails to comprehend their unity" (Stace, 287.). The external objects came in the form of "empty and abstract universals" (Stace, 287.), appearances mediated by in-built concepts through which they can be comprehended. The faculty of understanding arose here, "a *necessary* stage in the self-evolution of thought" (Stace, 287.), but it was not the final. This knowing mind was unable to truly grasp reality, enforcing at the outset a distinction and a denial of their identity. However, this very action secured its own "contradiction" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 315.). It was a form of "finite cognition which presupposes the object as something given, and [was] thus devoid of necessity" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 288.). As a result, the inherent self-contradiction led the mind further until it arrived at "demonstration" (Stace, 288.). Cognition needed the blind acceptance of the external world as a premise before it actively functioned. Volition, on the other hand, was the "spontaneous activity of the subject [and] moulding and altering of the world to suit itself" (Stace, 289.), and so reversed the order, positing an active mind before it had confronted the external world. With its purposes to promote and spread "the good" (Stace, 290.), it was eager to bestow its subjective conclusions on the surroundings. However, in so wishing, the will was immediately confronted with "something alien to it, something which is not itself" (Stace, 290.). It too was restricted in scope and, in a mirroring of cognition proper, treated "the world [as] an alien being which confronts it and limits it" (Stace, 289.), there was still an "absolute separation… between subject and object" (Stace, 289.). Therefore, before reaching the synthesis, there was the finite cognition which accepted the world, demanding that the individual supplies necessity, whereas the antithesis suggested rather a finite will which exists in opposition to the world which is in possession of necessity. There existed the world on one side supporting itself against individual change and its contingent environment, while the will provided itself with the means to refashion the objectively established world. These two forces existed in conflict and required the transcendental 'absolute idea' to cast aside their finite trappings, situating them within their rightful place under the infinite Whole. Thus, upon closer inspection, they were really two sides of the same coin, "the category of the will returns to

the category of cognition proper" (Stace, 291.). They both strove from their opposing perspective "to make subjectivity and objectivity identical, and thus to overcome its own finitude, and to render the object no longer alien to itself" (Stace, 291.). The only solution was to "overcome [their] own contradictions by combining" (Stace, 292.) them with each other, to realize there was no conflict at all, merely a dogmatic tendency to unnecessarily prioritize one over the other. The synthesis essentially resulted in a "unity of means, which is the object, with end, which is subject" (Stace, 292.). The 'absolute idea' ended with "no defect which requires it to pass… into a higher category" (Stace, 294.), it was "not a one-sided abstraction. It is the concrete whole. It is the final truth" (Stace, 294.). Therefore, upon reaching the absolute idea, Hegel identified it as the cause of cessation to the dialectical process. Confident that nothing could be more concrete that the 'absolute idea', Hegel further expounded on the nature of this category to highlight its role as end-stop. Once this final detail is examined, Nāgārjuna can be compared to this complete image of Hegel and the dialectic process.

Having shown how Hegel reached the idea through the final step of his dialectic, the unique nature of this term demanded further inquiry. The 'idea', for Hegel, existed in this limbo between analytical and religious metaphor, represented by pseudo-mystic truth, often being brought up alongside 'God'. Thus, in one way, 'God' is described to no longer be attached to a humanoid creator figure, it is "the Absolute, or God, [or] the universe. God is the thought of thought, the absolute subject-object" (Stace, 292.). But, also with a religious bent, he thought "the objects of philosophy and of religion are the same, - 'the Notion of God'" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 412.). The God of Hegel is, therefore, both separated from its religious metaphor, while preserving some of the word's connotations. As seen sometimes Hegel directly evoked this reference, but in others places merely nodded to the imagery of an awe-inspiring God, wishing to benefit mankind. The impression left might prove to be just what was needed to strengthen someone's resolve in Hegel's 'idea' and so an intentional consideration. At first glance, the 'idea' can be overly daunting, and by lacking any definite main thesis, the specific 'Good' and 'True' might seem unconvincingly proven. With the invocation of God, however, the very nature of this Absolute is imbued with his positivity and ultimate Good. While these features of God hint towards his magnanimity and power, another aspect is crucially also

transplanted from the religious context, and this relates to intuition and how God can be known. There are many who have claimed to know God in a physical form, but most arrive through prayer. This act circumvents the realm of direct experience, and instead makes use of another faculty of understanding. This is "infinite cognition" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 293.), which as the name suggests is no longer restricted by the finite world and its determinations. Emphatically denying that "the mind of man is finite" (Stace, 293.), such that when trained to use this special "philosophical cognition" (Stace, 293.) they can apprehend the infinite. By invoking God, Hegel highlighted the arduous task and zealous drive needed to come to know the Absolute in its perfection. It also stressed that there was nothing beyond the absolute idea, as the condition of the infinite, there was nowhere else for the mind to go. Understood along sectarian line, Hegel attributed numerous claims about the 'idea'. The 'idea' is "the absolute and all truth, the Idea with thinks itself" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 323.). It was the "pure form of the notion, which can contemplate its content as its own self" (Wallace, 324.). The ideal of self-consciousness is to see "the Self [as] both the subject that knows and the object which is known, so the absolute whole both constitutes the object of its knowledge by externalizing itself and knows the object which it has externalized" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 411.). A similarly difficult concept to grasp, these definitions reorientate the reader towards an analytical definition and means of attainment. The dialectics is used by Hegel to organize the intuition and expressed knowledge which an individual can be faced with. Having identified how to attain knowledge on a "higher plane [which embodies] more truth" (Joad, 403.), a careful examination of *anything* will prove to be "self-contradictory" (Joad, 403.). He states that the "*content* of the Absolute Idea is simply the system of logic" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 293.) which he had just laid out in the *Encyclopaedia*. This system of logic, defined around noumena, is also imperfect. While each category individually is an inadequate definition of the 'absolute', and the closer to the 'absolute idea' one gets, the closer to objective truth they are, even in combination they are still too "narrow and restricted" (Wallace, *Logic of Hegel*, 325.). It is only once they have all been placed into their corresponding position and unified within the "living development of the idea" (Wallace, 325.), that the best approximation is reached. This 'living' idea escapes language. However, this only goes to show that it is indeed not the content of Hegel's dialectic which is most important, but the framework by which this journey

is made. While Hegel laboriously made efforts to show the validity and accuracy of his dialectical method in getting to the 'absolute idea', it is still instead the system which he left behind for the keen student to master which is of greater value. Having constructed many individual and connected examples, he left the student to master them. With the possibility to refine their mental capacities and begin to intuit their own formulation of reality, Hegel influenced them towards his completed conceptualization of true logic. Unlike for Kant, "the [Absolute] not only expresses itself universally throughout the world and our experience; it is the world which is permeates" (Joad, *Guide to Philosophy*, 410.) and Hegel proselytized himself as offering "the only possible instrument, by the use of which the human mind can reach the truth" (Joad, 402-403.). There is, therefore, a hierarchy to every stipulation, since all are unable to reach the ineffable absolute, they scramble for some higher priority. Some claims are closer to it, and the dialectics provides a means of characterizing the level of concreteness, and proximity to the absolute.

Nāgārjuna - Preliminary

Having explained Hegel's own context and use of the dialectic, it is possible to analyse Nāgārjuna within this framework to acknowledge overlap within their method thereby making clear the similarity of their contributions to philosophy and be in a better position to appreciate the differences. With a set of general criteria already established from Hegel's investigation of Greek philosophy, Nāgārjuna's doctrine of emptiness can be compared with these to glean whether there is any validity in calling Nāgārjuna a dialectician. As recognized before these are the concepts of conflict and inexpression. Conflict is implied even in the name of Nāgārjuna's school. Both as a self-proclaimed 'middle path' but also by referencing its argument style 'prāsaṅga', it is hinted to how the Mādhyamika-Prāsaṅgika system can mediate between extremes and are willing to defend their proposed view. However, the middle path was a theory inconsistently applied across Buddhists sects, each school of Buddhism had had their own differing usages, not all of which focused on philosophical conflict. The Theravāda tradition explained it as a balance between extreme asceticism and extreme indulgence. This reflected Buddha's own life: he began as a prince, surrounded by grand displays of wealth and wanting for nothing, then after in stark contrast he rejected all

these frills and ornamentation, adopting the life of a sanyāsin, or religious mendicant, refusing fine foods and comfortable lodgings. At the moment of insight under the Bodhi tree, he realized the erroneous nature of both these views, and how they are tied fundamentally to suffering. Upon attaining enlightenment, the Theravādins explained, Buddha described a middle path which avoided both. On the other hand, the Mahāyāna argued that the middle path was more conceptual. They claimed that the "Buddha used to say that he neither believed in Śūśvata-vāda, an absolute affirmation, not in Ucchedavāda an absolute negation. His position was one of 'madhyamāpratipada' (literally, the middle position)" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 17 [Prologue].). The first of these, which represents the positive assertion, is a stepping beyond the realm of experience. As seen with Hegel, the dialectics must start with a positive swing; in the same way that rationalism sought an ideal world, so too did absolute affirmation go beyond experience. This affirmed substance is the "doctrine of the Eternal soul" (Stcherbatsky, 13.). Their proponents were "eternalists who imagined a return to a pure spiritual condition" (Stcherbatsky, 3.). This led Buddha to a "denial of every permanent principle" (Stcherbatsky, 3.), but he failed to understand how a return to "original purity" (Stcherbatsky, 3.) could even be possible once it "had been polluted by all the filth of mundane existence" (Stcherbatsky, 3.). However, this extreme position was not plucked from the vacuum of Buddha's mind or used as stylistic device to bolster or prove a point, the conflicts indicated were an active part of philosophical inquiry. As a result, the rejection of a permanent principle is most likely a direct response to "an impersonal unique substance of the world, as developed in the Upanishads" (Stcherbatsky, 3-4.). By voicing this extreme, Buddha made it fundamentally clear that the school of thought which he heralded forward, was a movement away from the status-quo and established religious order, in pursuit of its own solutions to similar questions. In distinction to this, absolute negation is linked to "materialism *Ucchedavāda*" (Stcherbatsky, 13.). The materialist school within India was viewed as pernicious in how their doctrine encouraged immorality, hedonism and denied reincarnation. These adherents did not emerge from isolation, they were denying the reality of a reincarnated self, rejecting the models for ethical life necessitated by reincarnation, a feature rooted in post-Vedic studies. This theory was simpler, conforming to the mandates of Ockham's razor, it posited less. However, the status quo silenced this burgeoning thought, answering the

objection with a loud dogmatism. By accepting real impermanent phenomena, upon death, the soul, which had an existence prior, must be completely annihilated. Philosophers considered that alongside a conservation of matter, mental forms must also be preserved across time. These two views were deeply entrenched into opposition. Buddhism paved a way for their synthesis. Alongside the arguments of affirmative thinkers, Buddha maintained the conventional existence of past lives since they had been *definitively* proven during his meditation under the Bodhi tree. He also supported the claims of incongruity when consciousness existed in one moment and was followed by its total disappearance in the next. This left him unconvinced by the materialist school of thought. However, he did agreed with those arguments laid against Upaniṣad schools of thought from them. The result was the creation of a philosophy which prioritized the importance of change. The Mahāyāna are interested in propounding a school which clearly mediated between two prevailing theories at the time, tied as they were to their extremes of dogmatism. It thus paralleled Hegel, as according to this view the belief in śūśvata-vāda resulted in a superimposition of what does not exist externally onto the world, which the rationalists likewise did, but those in ucchedavāda were rejecting too much and excluding the reality of obvious fact, as did empiricists. One of the crucial features which a dialectic must be in possession of to qualify is conflict. This was not lacking by any means in India, where debate charged current interest and individuals sought truth in any way it came across their path. This appears to confirm the criteria of conflict with a focus on dogmatism as the instigator which was deemed a necessary feature of a dialectical process.

Murti, writing with a knowledge of Hegelian dialectics, offered an interesting suggestion that Nāgārjuna's middle path was an improvement and slight variation on this doctrinal middle way of the Mahāyāna. It was rather a "criticism of both the ātma and anātma theories" (Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 8.). "The Upaniṣads and the systems following the Brahmanical tradition" (Murti, 10.) was still maintained as proposing an absolute affirmation in the form of a permanently manifested self, but, whereas before the extreme no-self view was taken by the materialist, Murti suggested that it was rather "the ābhidharmika system [which] was the antithesis of the antimonial conflict" (Murti, 75.). Before Nāgārjuna, Buddhism was still in its "suggestive stage" (Murti, 52.), developing just a negative attitude to Brahmanism as

only this self, or positive, school had developed yet; the no-self view had to build up first to be transcended. Buddha did not "formulate a coherent metaphysics… with all its implications fully drawn… he gave the inspiration and impetus to the nairātmya view… in sharp contrast to the ātma view" (Murti, 35.). Philosophy was still in its infancy and the true "system could arise only after the two traditions had developed sufficiently" (Murti, 35.), the world unprepared as it was for the intellect of Buddha. In this way, while the post-Vedic schools had developed the doctrine of the self through their studies, the no-self school needed time to catch up. As a believer in expedient means, Buddha left behind many different techniques to attain enlightenment and progress along the path, therefore this first move of Buddhism was to solidify the theory behind no-self. It was only after Nāgārjuna arrived and gave voice to the final moment of the dialectic which steered "clear of the two extremes of nitya, and anitya, or ātman and nairātmya" (Murti, 85.) that completed this process. Therefore, Buddha's spoken doctrine was only provisional, waiting for further advancements establishing Theravāda schools before it can be fully formulated into a dialectic. Nāgārjuna, when he introduced his new claims and a revision upon the entire classical mode of interpretation, this was Buddha's desired and prophesized end. To Murti, the middle path had always meant a doctrine of relativity between a self and no-self, it merely required the passage of history and the appearance of a talented philosopher to finalize its specific characteristics. As seen above the Theravāda and Mahāyāna, traditions differed on their interpretation of the middle path and Murti offered one possible explanation for this shift as the Mahāyāna schools tended to develop later. If this is to be believed, Buddha and Nāgārjuna both, despite their separation in time, were connected to each other through their ideas and together furnished a strong possibility of a dialectic within ancient India.

As stated earlier, however, conflict only forms half the criteria from which to assess the claims that Nāgārjuna is a post-Kantian and dialectic thinker. The other part comes from inexpression. Intrinsically linked, the feature of inexpression requires the philosopher to devise a new method, focused on negation, to hint towards the truth by describing what reality is not. This means that while never quite being able to find expression, the final goal can still be taught and systematically brought before students. It has already been suggested, by an emphasis on the middle way, that denial is foundational to the Mahāyāna which turns away

from extremes. In addition, Jeffrey Hopkins' book *Emptiness Yoga*, offers a means of access to a primary source which negotiated the nuance of emptiness and its realization. The crucial concept which he extracted from this was the "non-affirming negative" (Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 127.), which he believed was intrinsic for understanding and then realizing emptiness. The "four alternatives formed the basis of the Catuṣkoti or tetra-lemma of Nāgārjuna dialectic" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna,* 16 [Prologue].): that x exists, that not-x exists, that both x and not-x exist, and that neither x nor not-x exist. As an argumentative strategy, its effectiveness is summarized by its comparison to "diamond fragments" (Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 204.). A moniker attached to it for its ability to cut through false appearance like a diamond. Chandrakirti, in terms reminiscent of the dialectics, defined it around "easily refuting the view of permanence… easily refuting the view of annihilation [and] easily gaining conviction about the illusory-like dependant-arisings" (Hopkins, 393.). The repetition of 'easily' emphasizes its effectiveness in dismantling wrong views. The first two are means of denying dogmatism. This third attribute is the closest thing to something "positive" (Hopkins, 223.) which comes out of the reasoning, but is not a 'view' but rather a 'conviction'. Nāgārjuna's four options exhausted the possibilities for the nature of existence concerning whatever concept it came across, and so only intuition remained at the end. The mind, searching for its object, "[excludes] and [negates] without setting any positive assertion in place of what is negated" (Hopkins, 158.). This showed a method which, unlike Zeno, recognized and held firm to the principles of negation. "Chandrakīrti's [favourite reasonings] are the diamond fragments and the sevenfold reasoning" (Hopkins, 205.), which are compatible and grounded by negativity. Both address the reader to simply affirm or deny the options presented, with the hopes that after careful consideration the inevitable conclusions will draw them towards emptiness. Underpinning these reasonings are the concept of "negation [and] entailment" (Hopkins, 223.) which encapsulate the rules which the mind must accept when looking for definite qualities. Negation reveals that "what is being conceived does not exist as it is conceived" (Hopkins, 139.) and so has the student imagine and immediately prove dubious any given idea which is presented before themselves. Entailment, or pervasion, comes from the terminology of debate and relates to the term within the syllogism which demands "that all instances" (Hopkins, 39.) of an event are predicated around another phenomenon. "'Whatever is a *p*

is necessarily a *q*'" (Daniel Perdue, *Debate in Tibetan Buddhism* (Colorado: Shambala, 1992), 46.) expresses the need for an occurrence to totally and in *every* circumstance overlap. In western philosophy, the example is 'all crows are black' leading to the converse that 'all black things are crows'. Entailment as a debating assumption avoids this confusion. This principle applies both to the claim that when looking for an inherent property in any of the four alternatives, it must have strict pervasion over it, but also ensures that once all the options have been attempted and proven insufficient, emptiness is undoubtedly entailed as its consequence. By systematically going through each of these and refuting any possibility of finding an accurate description of phenomena, the mind is forced to focus its attention on the pure negation, emptiness, the absence of inherent being. Having been left without a satisfying answer, the mind grasps at the '"'unspeakable' 'indefinable'. Non-duality is above all words" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 5 [Analysis of Contents].). This explains how by the contemplating of negation, the ultimate path to enlightenment is laid out. This knowledge is accessed very personally, and its further communication is inhibited by its unique entrance to the mind. The route of attainment forces grappling with inexpression and truth. Nāgārjuna's method, by intimating the student with this meditative process, asked them to believe in negation as the only steadfast and reliable method for reaching the inexpressible.

By stabilizing this meditative experience, the practitioner has direct access to emptiness. However, from the literature around the topic, inexpression fundamentally limits the ability to speak definitively about the nature of emptiness. The narration of enlightenment is itself reserved between a guru and disciple, and importance is placed on confirmation first-hand by a master who already has been validated. For Buddhists, Buddha had complete and guaranteed insight into enlightenment and, due to direct transfer of experience through guru and disciple, anyone's ratified enlightenment should be identical to that of Buddha. As a result, when talking to those who had not made this revelation, the details were impossible to impart in any adequate language. Buddha's assertions were very clear on this matter, and he is portrayed as inhabiting a "studied silence regarding some fundamental metaphysical questions" (Stcherbatsky, 4 [Analysis of Contents].). Rather than because of "ignorance" (Stcherbatsky, 4 [Analysis of Contents].) as previous scholars had suggested, the consistency and limited use with which he applied this silence suggested an intentionality. Silence was the

response to fourteen specific questions, "which the Buddha declared to be *avyākṛta*, i.e. the answers to which are inexpressible" (Stcherbatsky, 16 [Prologue].). Edgerton, in his *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, defined avyākṛta as "indeterminate [,] indistinct, neutral" (Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1993), 79.) and Apte as "not developed, not manifest… 3. Incomprehensible" (Vaman Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1998), 272.). These all centre around the ideas of non-expression, not due to stupidity, but because of the manner the truth is represented. These fourteen questions, which are answered with a simple yes or no, were asked in order that Buddha might reveal more information about "the world… the tathagata [and] whether the soul is identical with the body or different from it" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 16 [Prologue].). Buddha also gave a reason for his explicit silence, when asked by Vacchagotta for this, he said to be "free from all theories" (Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 45.). Probing into the eternality and finitude of these concepts, Buddha "could not do justice to truth: Buddha called such speculations mere 'ditthivāda' (dogmatism) and refused to be drawn into them" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 16 [Prologue].). Rather than 'not do justice' because of ignorance, Buddha knew any expression attempted, due to their own minds' failings, would not be fair to enlightenment itself. "Nāgārjuna teaches these reasonings not for the sake of debate or merely in order to set up a beautiful philosophical system, but for meditation" (Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 215.). As a result, ultimately these debates between the divergent schools in Buddhism, or with Hinduism, were not of greatest concern to Buddha, it was up to the individual to decide for themselves if these teachings rang true. Buddha did not have allegiance to any specific named school, but to the truth. Thus the "purpose of the dialectic was to *disprove* the views advanced by others, not to prove any views of one's own" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 18 [Prologue].). Although this proved its consistency, it reinforced the philosophical trickery and logical manipulation. Zeno's paradoxes, despite being very different in style to Nāgārjuna, explored the same themes, wishing to devise mental games for the object of philosophy to be more uniquely expressed. By having a single statement refute itself so obtusely, or to stretch the patience of an opponent by continuously using the same mechanic to sequentially dismiss all complaints, these managed to capture the inexpression of

truth, while garnishing it with a mocking attitude. With true reality beyond the words of finite expression, and conflict all around as each monk fostered their own views within the monastery, the explicit anti-dogmatic attitude was seen as always at the core of Buddhist logic, and that it was preserved and elevated to its proper prominence by Nāgārjuna and the middle way consequence school. This also marked it as underpinned by the same principles which Hegel had identified at the centre of any dialectic.

Turning to Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, it can be investigated as the primary vehicle by which his methodology is represented. It provides the practical manifestations from which to assess the details of his theory. Unlike Hegel who identified a chain which perpetuated his dialectical process, Nāgārjuna isolated individual queries and investigated them rigorously through an array of examples. Therefore, one paradigm is emblematic of the rest and explains both the origin of the questions and the nature of their answer. In the Appendix is a translation for chapter 25 on Nirvāna, and in it the culmination of Nāgārjuna's dialectic shows itself. In a seemingly jumbled order, he mentioned various held beliefs about nirvāna and systematically shows how they all are unsuitable. However, there is a continuity throughout, verses 4 to 6 deal with the first alternative, nirvāna as existing, 7 to 8, about it as not existing, 9 to 14, as both, and 15 and 16, as neither. Importantly in verse 3, Nāgārjuna also stated characteristics of nirvāna, all of which are predicated on negativity, emphasizing its indeterminateness. Nirvāna is only understood as meditated through saṃsāra, in contradistinction to conventional reality, so does not have inherent existence. Assertive definite statements cannot be made, but it must be understood along these lines for the purpose of the ensuing debate. The iconoclastic tetralemma is summarized in 22 and 23. Under scrutiny here are the concepts of permanence and eternality, which represent consequences that arise from saying that something inherently exists and the nature which it must take to do so. In this way, the orthodox beliefs of nirvāna are questioned, but not the reality of nirvāna itself. Nirvāna is undeniably tied to Buddhahood and so is real, but without enlightenment its mode of being is impossible to translate into workable terms; ideas tied to existence, permanence, eternality, these are all inadequate in truly expressing the nature of nirvāna. To show this, Nāgārjuna took nirvāna and stood it in opposition to some of its defining qualities. By unpacking the terms, its consequences are shown to be incompatible with those accepted readings of nirvāna. In verse 4, for example,

the focus is on aging and how any existing thing is linked to the process of time. However, this is not possible if nirvāna must be understood as transcendent to time. If nirvāna were said to exist, it would immediately contradict the very nature of its existence which it is defined by. This process is continued with the other three: non-existence was refuted on the grounds that this presupposed its existence which has then been nulled and was thus still dependent on, or 'clinging' (8) to, existence. Both are denied because it would be counterintuitive, just as 'light and darkness' (14) existing simultaneously. And finally, neither since they relied on both being established beforehand (15). The only conclusion possible was that nirvāna is empty. It has conventional existence and has been talked about as if to exist by Buddha at times, but only to cement one's belief, not as a final doctrine. Understanding this, Nāgārjuna identified doctrinal characteristics and dismantled them showing how they are all unsuitable in every way.

Nāgārjuna – Dialectics

Hegel left behind criteria from which to establish a dialectic method. These were not individual to Hegel. These attributes necessarily were behind any attempt at philosophy regardless of time or place. What was unique about Hegel was the explicit isolation of these and their identification at the core of philosophy. Nāgārjuna's systematic method, as philosophy, will have these themes implicit in them by mere virtue of this. But he did not only tacitly endorse these three, he also similarly brought them to the forefront. Nāgārjuna's nirvāna section of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* showed this. Conflict, inexpression, and negation were always just below the surface, dormant and ready to be expressly utilized for the argument. Concerning conflict, as with Buddha's statements about the middle way, the viewpoints eschewed were not trivial fantasies. Nāgārjuna explored dogmatic positions which translated to definite contemporary views. Conflict, therefore, appeared in the form of recognizing that many of these positions which are refuted are ones which existed and were widely held. On top of that, the specific use of language, for example 'dṛṣṭayaḥ' (21), connoted not only a metaphysical viewpoint but an erroneous one, signalling towards their real-life counterpart. Moreover, the whole structure reads like a conversation. It begins with defining terms (3), the features which nirvāna must hold throughout. Then he narrates the tetralemma, going over several examples, verses 4,5,6 all express

the same general information: definition x is inadequate, because any existing thing involves positing x's opposite. It is only its states of being which changes: aging, conditioned and clinging. Perhaps within the debate the intermediary needed more convincing, so one instance was not enough. It also ends with some interesting corollaries, for example, that the 'koṭi' of saṃsāra and nirvana are the same and this might be seen as further intellectual exploration once the debate has been settled. Furthermore, this word 'koṭi' (20) is defined as 'lemma', pointing to its need for an opposing second, completing it into a dilemma. It is the word used for 'alternative' in Catuṣkoti. Additionally, the word has its etymology in the two ends of a bow. Analogous to Nāgārjuna's conflict, these two ends are on opposite sides but are united together in purpose and material. This theme of conflict was only further strengthened by the frequent use of rhetorical questions which either presupposed a debate or brought it onto the page to engage with the reader directly as the interlocutor. Inexpression showed itself framing the chapter. The first verse firmly stated that even within the empty understanding of the world, nirvāna will be just as problematic a concept, if brought within the scope of existence. Nirvāna is real, but it is not going to be settled in any way conceivable to the mind, it is inexpressible. Likewise, the final verse (24) reminded the reader that the calming of 'all mental perception' and 'falsehood' are conventional avenues for attaining enlightenment but viewed in the absolute they are just as faulty, relying on inherent existence which has no real being. Buddha could not have taught this as a real doctrine since it is erroneous, and he was unblemished. The only recourse is in the inexpression of truth, not able to be limited into conventional understanding. Negation fundamentally recurred throughout. Most of the arguments are in the form of a conditional, determining that the 'if-clause', which asserts one of nirvana's various modes of existence, cannot be true because the following consequences are undesired. In the end, whatever way it is achieved, the result was that the reader is forced to emptiness after all preceding options have been negated. Additionally, the negative particle 'न' was used 38 times in all, which in isolation means nothing, but brought up alongside the general tone of the chapter illustrates its tendency towards negativity. In this way, throughout chapter 25 on nirvāna, Nāgārjuna grounded his thinking in the dialectical framework, these three criteria showing themselves perpetually at the centre of his treatise.

Nāgārjuna is a dialectician, but due to his historical context, it is distinct in form from Hegel. The absolute provides a means to compare them as both see truth represented as a monistic whole. In part necessary because of inexpression, the end points manifested themselves in a shared set of principles. There were some similarities. Nāgārjuna ended his dialectical process at intuition, which, as with Hegel, "becomes a mystic power" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 15.). In part this insight was achieved analytically, "The four truths, i.e. ontology, were, at first studied and ascertained by sound logic (pramāṇena viniścita) and then suddenly perceived as vividly as a grain of corn on the palm of the hand" (Stcherbatsky, 2.). Upon realization that all four alternatives are inadequate for truly expressing the nature of truth, emptiness manifested itself but only as 'non-duality'. "Unique reality according to Mahāyāna, cannot be characterized in words (anirvacanīya)" (Stcherbatsky, 12 [Analysis of Contents].), and intrinsically cannot be fully known until directly experienced. This experience is devoid of conceptual knowledge. Already the language is reminiscent of Hegel, and it is only strengthened by a shared use of religious metaphor and imagery whose connotations are supported and encouraged. "A hint of [the absolute] may be found in the following… the Whole of all wholes, it is the element of all elements (*dharmānām dharmatā* or *dharma-dhātu*), as their relative (*śūnyatā*), as 'thisness' (*idantā*), as 'suchness' (*tathata*) as the suchness of existence (*bhūta-tathatā*), as the matrix of the Lord (*tathagata-garbha*) and as Buddha's Cosmic Body (*dharma-kaya*)" (Stcherbatsky, 12 [Analysis of Contents].). Later Stcherbatsky explained that "'Quiescence' [was] real bliss… a condition in which all emotion and all concrete thought is stopped for ever… Nirvāna was the most appropriate to express annihilation" (Stcherbatsky, 5.). The concrete aims of philosophy and religion are aligned. Stcherbatsky had shown how these threads were woven together, 'concrete thought' as its rational means, with 'bliss' and heavenly 'nirvāna' as the aim of moral cultivation and compassion. The purpose here is tied to the monastic tradition to which Buddhism owes it construction. It also goes beyond a simple homage to them, the nature of the divine, and how it is traditionally accessed, are directly referenced by Nāgārjuna to vitalize his theory. Therefore, Hegel and Nāgārjuna both were describing analytic methods of dissecting experience to establish a higher belief in the beyond, the transcendental nature of this position lent itself to religious metaphor and experience which both philosophers endorsed whole-heartedly.

This is not the only similarity. Apperception is theorized by Nāgārjuna, which Hegel had maintained an attachment to as he developed his dialectic. To the Buddhists the fundamental error causing suffering is the incorrect imputation of inherent existence. According to their worldview, physical sense perception is not the issue, but the perspective and wrong thoughts of human beings which need to be "remedied by insight … [or] by concentrated attention" (Stcherbatsky, 2l.). In fact, Nāgārjuna's shocked the Buddhist sangha by asking in verse 20 'what even is different between [saṃsāra and nirvāna, surely] not even the most minute difference is found?', not between the "Absolute and the Phenomenal" (Stcherbatsky, 12 [Analysis of Contents].). This, as Kant did later, identified the root issue as within the mind. This reduced the problem to frame of reference. The truth created no substantial difference to the phenomenal world after its realization, only that it is now held under a new attitude: "there was not a shade of difference between the Absolute and the Phenomenal, between *Nirvāna* and *Samsāra*. The universe viewed as a whole is the Absolute, viewed as a process, it is phenomenal" (Stcherbatsky, 12 [Analysis of Contents].). The external world is not at fault and marred with *svabhāva* but consciousness which imputes additional nefarious properties upon the world. Therefore, once this realization has been made and fully understood in meditation devoid of sensation, the practitioner can return to the physical world of sense perceptions with the cognition of emptiness maintained. To explain this, Hopkins narrated the situation in which a magician has cast a spell on some pebbles making them appear as cows. There are three types of people: those who come across the pebbles and see them as cows, the magician who sees animals but knows that they are only pebbles, and a passing wanderer who after the crowds have left sees only the pebbles. The magician is as if "wearing sunglasses" (Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 106.), they have realized emptiness, but without totally forgetting it, still re-immerse themselves with the realm of saṃsāra. Hopkins also used the analogy of "tinted glasses" (Hopkins, 77.) elsewhere in his book. This metaphor illustrated the way that inherent nature is a mediating barrier between the individual and reality. As with Hegel, the dialectics was a function of one's own mind, it was the logic by which the world is mediated, the understanding of which afforded a peak into true reality. The nature of this logic, however, was fundamentally at odds with the classical modes of logic within philosophy.

In addition to apperception, they both explained that this faculty is understood only through contradiction and negation, which showed their joint embrace of logical deviancy. Before noting the similarity, the real meaning of this claim must be understood. Deviant logic is defined by Susan Haack as a "class of [well-formed formula where] the class of theorems/valid inferences of $L_1$ differs from the class of theorems/valid inferences of $L_2$… for the case where $L_2$ is classical logic" (Susan Haack, *Deviant Logic, Fuzzy Logic* (Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 4.). Haack identified two types of systems which could stand against logic, one "[proposes] a *rival* [the other] a *supplement*" (Haack, 2.) based off whether some classical principles are accepted, or if they are all abandoned. Haack claimed the first is the "strong sense of 'alternative'" (Haack, 7.), meaning it completely challenged the orthodox logic models. Aristotle offered a means of judging through his very simple system of logic which is underpinned by only three laws. Hegel and Nāgārjuna can be compared to these to discover whether their dialectics fit the criterion for a stand-alone competing method. Aristotle's three laws of thought pertain to logical necessities: the law of identity, the law of non-contradiction, and the law of excluded middle. The first of these is the most basic assumption, that x=x, mere identity. This is mainly needed to ground the other two laws. The law of non-contradiction states that if one statement is applied to an object, its reverse cannot be true of the same thing. Therefore, if a person is mortal, they cannot at the same time be immortal. The law of excluded middle means that a statement is either true or false and presupposes that this truth is discrete, there is no middle ground from which to argue a degree of quasi-truth. Therefore, the person can be either mortal or immortal not something in between. These three rules are at the centre of the syllogism, for example, and so are the fundamentals of most philosophical systems. In contradistinction, however, Haack explained at the core of deviant logic was that the "conjunction of certain accepted beliefs with classical logical principles yields unacceptable consequences, and that the simplest means of avoiding this recalcitrance is to modify the logical principle" (Haack, 40.). Deviant logic, while sounding dubious and more capable of error than its non-deviant cousin, is just a formal way of describing a logical system which no longer adheres to classical models. She argued that there can be *good* reason for adopting this change, if they acknowledged these four questions: "whether the alleged consequences really follow… are really unacceptable… radical modification [is necessary

and] whether the particular Deviant system proposed is such as to avoid the unwanted consequences" (Haack, 41.). Having identified these, Hegel and Nāgārjuna can be compared to the definitions to determine if they are deviant and whether there is any validity in claiming a similarity in their deviancy.

Both these philosophers brought radical shifts to their philosophical status-quos in their use of logic. The superiority of Hegel's system drew on this very fact, without it, it would be unable to transcend the logic of the past and cast a new route forward amongst the quagmire of incorrect theorization. As seen the conflict inherent in philosophy was, for Hegel, really to be viewed only as such from the classical point of view. Since his dialectics represents a fundamental move away from classical models, his formula for understanding philosophy going forth was radically different and needed a new metric from which to assess its consistency. The rationalists, in trying to show that the world conformed to the general axioms of mathematics, had used logic and its basic principles to test the strength of their theories; the response from empiricists was their own logic, which still relied on the coherence of this system, while finding original outcomes. However, given Hegel's professed aim to transcend both empiricism and rationalism, these older models were no longer suitable. Logic, which is the tool by which the mind arbitrates truth and determines its validity, can still be a function of the mind even if it no longer worked conventionally. It was not a problem when Hegel rejected the traditional templates, he clearly showed why deviancy was necessary, while being in conformity with Haack's criteria. By admitting the possibility of their joint existence, Hegel taunted both the law of non-contradiction and the law of excluded middle. In addition, the first step of the dialectic, which has 'being' spontaneously arise from its identity to 'non-being', denied even the first rule from Aristotle, a feature so basic that it is usually taken for granted. Through this, Hegel showed all three of Aristotle's rules as inherently flawed and inadequate for a true understanding of reality. Hegel's system avoided these unwanted consequences by acknowledging their nominal difference, but fundamentally disagreed that there was any real contradiction. Haack defined a deviant logic around 'well-formed formula' that were different from the classical one. The second of these claims is easier to prove. Hegel's logic replaced the classical model, since none of its three laws were accounted for in the transcendental dialectics, and relied on exploiting their weaknesses to create a new concept which united and overcame them. Regarding Haack's

first criteria, Hegel triad method, which was mostly consistently applied, with only occasional deviations, seems to likewise prove itself as worthy of being called a system. As has been shown Hegel does not merely throw out this threefold structure from nowhere, he had meticulously scoured through history to arrive at a logic system that not only explained his theory but better made sense of how philosophy interacted with itself. There appeared to be limits bounding the effectiveness of the classical Aristotelian logic and so the presence of deviance should not be a cause for alarm but rather a reason to investigate further in search of merit where ordinary logic breaks down. Hegel deviated from how concepts were classically understood within their schools and the rules they necessarily clung to, using this position to elevate his method above their contradictions. By recognizing the value of deviant logic when confronted with the faults of those models which came prior, he forced the mind to embrace the idea of a flexible logic able to side-step the areas which in others are found lacking.

Hegel's dialectic was necessarily deviant to work effectively as a formula for transcendental logic. Nāgārjuna similarly needed to show the error in his contemporaries' modes of thinking. In these situations, the immediate priority to the consequentialists was to make their opponent realize the faults in their view as that was their current dogmatic hindrance on their journey to enlightenment. Unlike those around them, they were malleable when arguing, able to respond to any situation. This was because they bifurcated themselves: they adopted the principles and definitions as needed by their opponent to challenge them and then rejected any system for classifying their own absolute. "His arguments are advanced on the basis of the principles admitted by his opponents and they are meant only to repudiate the tenets of his opponents" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 27 [Analysis of Contents].). However, they assumed no degree of existence while doing this. Believing that by simply using a syllogism they were admitting a pre-existence to the premises, no arguments of any kind were seen as adequate to argue from the consequentialist camp. This is the reason why no thesis of their own is advanced. The consequence school took their rejection so far as to deny even "*svatantra* or independent logical arguments" (Stcherbatsky, 13 [Prologue].). There was "no valid argument… method of the Mādhyamika is different. He does not vindicate any assertion in order to convince his opponent. It is enough for him if he shows that his opponent is not capable of establishing his thesis"

(Stcherbatsky, 23 [Analysis of Contents].). Logic was flawed, and so "no one can find fault with the Mādhyamika, for he has no view of his own to advance" (Stcherbatsky, 18 [Prologue].). As Nāgārjuna wrote in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* (st. 29)*:* "'*Yadi kūcana pratiṅñā syān me tata eva me bhaved dosaḥ. Nāsti ca mama pratiṅñā tasmān naivāsti doṣaḥ*' 'If I had a thesis of my own to advance, you could find fault with it. Since I have no thesis to advance, the question of disproving it does not arise'" (Stcherbatsky, 19 [Prologue].). Even Nāgārjuna's own logic was simply a means to an end. The doctrine of emptiness itself was bound by these same strictures, becoming "as inane as a mirage, as a garland of flowers in the sky" (Stcherbatsky, 13 [Analysis of Contents].) once it had been used up to refute all existing theories. This is addressed specifically in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, likely because it was a topic of debate which opponents at the time were actively arguing against Nāgārjuna with on the grounds of hypocrisy. This credits the arguments with an added life as they feel so tied to their debate context, voicing the opponent's view and how Nāgārjuna dismantled them with an inflated sense of pride and condescension. Realizing the faults of one's cognitions because of their emphasis on the false imposition of existence, they "totally condemned Logic for understanding the Absolute" (Stcherbatsky, 19 [Analysis of Contents].). In this way, there were essentially two modes of logic: one which dealt with the erroneous dogmatic assertions of other schools, and another which governed the nature of the infinite and intuition into nirvāna.

Nāgārjuna knew that rather than try positive argumentation in favour of the absolute, he should avoid debate entirely. He therefore argued from the standpoint of his opponents and showed the incoherence in their position. He repudiated every other position to leave his own standing at the end, its validity assured in light of this. The first three of Haack's criteria for a good reason to reject the old models focused on this aspect of Nāgārjuna's logic. Although rejecting logic for his own system, he made frequent use of the prāsaṅga method, a "technical word which means *reductio ad absurdum* argument" (Stcherbatsky, 12 [Prologue].]). The use of the word '**प्रसज्येत**' (you would [undesirably] entail) in verse 4 explicitly referenced these arguments and how the postulated existence of nirvāna is an erroneous and contradictory position when its conclusions are fully drawn. By analysing a concept and showing that by its mere assessment the

individual supporting it is reliably drawn into unwanted consequences, Nāgārjuna marked similar footsteps to those of western dialecticians. As Hegel had done with the thesis and anti-thesis contradiction, Nāgārjuna showed that the classical modes of logic were not suitable for any arguments dealing with reality. In merely taking them to exist, they displayed undesired results. He provoked logic through individual problems which he solved with the same basic solution. He took as his starting point any of those concepts which his students needed more help in fully grasping or which opponents had tried to raise against him. This is seen is the structure of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* which is simply a list of different topics starting with each opening on the पूर्व पक्ष (pūrva pakṣin, or opponent position) followed by a response from Nāgārjuna and the usage of the tetralemma. Unlike Hegel, therefore, who struggled in maintaining a perfect dialectical triad throughout, he is outshined by Nāgārjuna who by virtue of a slightly different focus detailed his method without any deviation. In addition, the repetition of Nāgārjuna's argument indicated the pervasiveness of the issue which inherent existence inflicted on human cognition. The remedy could not be administered by a simple tweaking of ideas but needed to cause a complete over-haul in theory which was able to acknowledge and move beyond the previous issues. Therefore, Nāgārjuna proved that no theory was adequate to describe the absolute, confirming the first two of three criteria for Haack; however, as she remarked, a system could point to the inherent flaws within another system but if it did not fix it, "what kind of system would [it] be?" (Haack, *Deviant Logic, Fuzzy Logic*, 41.).

Having argued that every school was totally incorrect in their assumptions about reality, they isolated their own as a unique and profound use of intuition. Their intuition was transcendent to logic. In complete rebellion to any logical superimposition, they explained that they asserted no thesis. Instead, logic in its entirety was dropped, "thus preparing the mind for taking a right-about-turn (parāvṛtti) towards prajñā" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 17 [Prologue].). As "reality was beyond thought-construction" (Stcherbatsky, 12 [Prologue].), this mystic intuition could not adhere to the standard forms of logic since that required that one of the four alternatives be correct, instead the truth is transcendental and immanent in the world and therefore demands a change in perspective to be truly appreciated. "In the

Mādhyamika system, where logic was denied altogether, the preparation consisted in a course of negative dialectic, after which the intuition of the transcendental truth springs up as an inward conviction (pratyātma-vedya)" (Stcherbatsky, 29.). Stcherbatsky considered this maltreatment of logic to symbolize a familiarity between Nāgārjuna and modern western philosophers: "A higher mystic principle is then involved, because the usual methods have failed to give satisfaction. With Descartes and Leibnitz it is God, with many Indian systems, it is Yoga as a mystical power" (Stcherbatsky, 32.). As Hegel had similarly done, Nāgārjuna had transgressed logic norms seemingly so fundamentally derived, the law of excluded middle, for example, was necessarily denied allowing for the transcendence of all four views in one which was distinctly neither of the four original choices. This confirms the reading of deviant logic, not as a negative, but rather as a distinct advantage and a sign towards a competent use of the dialectic. Without this rejection of standard principles, in fact, a dialectic is possible, and quite often, as is seen in art, the most talented figures required already established rules to transgress, systematically and uniquely. Nāgārjuna is no different, underpinned by an emphasis on negation, even the very idea of logical necessity is done away with and replaced by its own intuition-based understanding. Although the absolute itself was left alone, an awareness of what something is not, gives knowledge into what it is. Nāgārjuna's system did not classify the absolute itself, but in characterizing its boundary, its nature was relayed. To Hegel "*all negation is determination*… negation likewise involves affirmation" (Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel*, 33.) and so although Nāgārjuna did explicitly describe the absolute, his methodology was nonetheless its logic by characterizing all its incorrect cases. Hegel and Nāgārjuna are deviant logicians. However, there is a gulf forming between the two concerning the validity of the methodologies. This does not forbid interaction between these two philosophies, but Nāgārjuna denounced cognition on the basis that the inherent inability to see things as they truly caused and perpetuated defective changes in the world. Nāgārjuna delved into *a priori* reasoning, noticing the method which it took to traverse its bounds, but unlike Hegel, saw this absolute process as riddled with errors, necessarily being shed to attain enlightenment.

While there is a source of unification around their shared use of deviant logic, there is a fundamental difference between how these two philosophers regarded the values of apperception. Nāgārjuna put forward

a temporary logic which had a use but was to be thrown aside as all other doctrine must inevitably be. Turning back to the tinted glasses analogy, Hegel was interested in identifying their existence and then the nature of the tinting, what constant categories did it enforce onto the world. Nāgārjuna, on the other hand, after identifying the detail of these glasses, desired to remove them completely. Murti described "the Hegelian dialectic [as] *conjunctive* or integrating …syncretism [and] creative" (Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 128.). This was based off the grounding of the synthesis, which not only unified the theories but preserved their differences. This facilitated Hegel's dynamic dialect, each category moving onto the next, while Nāgārjuna's dynamism comes from the internal evolution of the tetralemma. "Hegel is an example of the third alternative" (Murti, 131.) of Nāgārjuna, which he had identified as intrinsically incorrect because "all the incongruity attaching to each of these hypotheses separately will be applicable to their combination" (Stcherbatsky, 28 [Analysis of Contents].). Hegel, with his early influence from paradoxes, believed the absolute was best captured through the preserving and affirmation of contradiction. Nāgārjuna, on the other hand, rejected any attempt to categorize the absolute and saw the synthetic union represented by Hegel, and the "Jaina" (Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 131.) school in India, as detrimental. If "for the Madhyamika, buddhi is ignorance, [the Hegelian dialectic] is the falsifying function (saṃvṛti) obscuring the real from us" (Murti, 304.). Hegel had shown how with the simple thought of pure being, the mind was able to manufacture for itself rules and a logical priority of the absolute. Hegel's dialectic is "*within phenomena* [the Mādhyamika] *away from phenomena*" (Murti, 305.). "What then becomes of the Hegelian doctrine [it is] an illusion that has to be transcended" (Murti, 306.) for Nāgārjuna. As noted earlier with Hegel's reliance of Zeno's philosophy, contradiction was encouraged and not necessary to be overcome in the final product. Hegel's dialectics is positive in structure. He wanted to create the transcendental idea finally reached through a grand summation, whereas Nāgārjuna refused to state this final idea except in vague terms which simply aimed to direct. However, despite a difference, this does not prohibit the dialectic being applied onto one to the exclusion of the other. As has been pointed out, the dialectics is merely a framework characterized by a set of properties which facilitate the fruition of its essential nature.

Interpretation

Nāgārjuna, with not a lot of added finesse, was able to conform to a dialectical method very easily; however, he appeared in western philosophy unable to grip attention at a time in society when individuality was strongly encouraged. While certainly not without scope for disagreement, it has already been mentioned the bias within philosophy which dismissed the philosophical strivings of other cultures outside Europe as primitive. The inertia of these writings has made it difficult for a serious comparison of western and eastern philosophies, many believed misunderstandings and were unaware of the further nature of Buddhist philosophical thought. The two main criticisms piled onto Nāgārjuna were nihilism and deviant logic. Firstly, Nihilism was a frequent means to silence Mādhyamika insight: Western philosophers "characterised [it] as 'complete and pure nihilism'… 'based upon a non-entity or upon the voids'… 'negativism which radically empties existence'… 'absolute nothingness', the Madhyamikas are called the most radical Nihilists that ever existed" (Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, 60-61.). However, this was not a new admonition, "opponents of Mahāyāna in India describe it much in the same manner" (Stcherbatsky, 61.). Its representation as extreme nihilism was a false condemnation which only "Japanese Scholars have, however, never committed the mistake of" (Stcherbatsky, 9 [Analysis of Contents].). Stcherbatsky determined the cause as western ignorance since assumed that "Buddha did not care for speculation or… was incapable of logical thinking" (Stcherbatsky, 7.). Other schools of thought in India at the time had a vested interest in misrepresentation to bolster their own views. While it is true that the Mādhyamika position resulted in denying everyone else with a definite position flatly, the "criticism is as uninformed as it is misleading" (Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 9.). The Mādhyamika is a middle position whose one extreme *is* "Nihilism (uccheda-vāda, denial of continuity) [it avoided] the scepticism of Nihilism (the rejection of objects and consciousness both as unreal)" (Murti, 7-8.). Even in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, this is addressed "to say they don't exist implies the notion of annihilation… to say that what once is now no more// entails annihilation" (Nāgārjuna, *The Root Stanzas of the Middle Way*, translated by Padmakara Translation Group (Colorado: Shambala, 2016), 48-49.). This identified the second alternative as the view of nihilism, and the explicit rejection of this view was definitively stated. Additionally, the complaints ignored that Buddha taught of "one great sphere of reality. Teachings such as this prevent a practitioner from falling into nihilism"

(Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 95.). Conventionally objects are falsely seen to exist, since as they are known now, they have no innate reality. From the transcendental view only the absolute is real, alongside the absolutely negative there is an absolutely positive. Sometimes the very translation of '**शून्य**' as emptiness strengthens their misconception. As Hopkins had earlier brought up with the 'non-affirming negative', the intention is not to reduce reality to an ultimate nothingness, but to build a conviction in a transcendental absolute. Emptiness is first found in a pure vacuum in meditation and then brought out into the real world. Therefore, the nihilist attitude is wrong to be attributed to Nāgārjuna and his school of logic, it is a misconception that arose from a unfamiliarity with the goals of their dialectic method.

Beyond nihilism, Mādhyamika was also demoted in respect because it was seen to encourage deviancy. However, this goes beyond the deviancy previously explored and touched upon a more fundamental error. Although Hayes argued that there is still a value in Nāgārjuna as an "imperfect philosopher [he] put forward a number of fallacious arguments… he made frequent use of the fallacy of equivocation" (Richard Hayes, "Nāgārjuna's Appeal," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 22, no. 4 (December 1994): 363, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23446093.). His conclusion still found value in Nāgārjuna's mission but considered any specific exercise undertaken by him to be failed. The fallacy of equivocation applied because Nāgārjuna "used [svabhāva] in several different senses at key points in his arguments" (Hayes, 325.). Whereas before, the breaking of Aristotle's laws was a sign of possible merit, which addressed gaps in the logic not accounted for. The law of equivocation suggested a more intrinsic error, making unsound any arguments which he put forward. The specific issues related to *svabhāva;* "Nāgārjuna plays on an ambiguity in "svabhāva," the word for own nature. The word "sva-bhāva" means a nature (bhāva) that belongs to the thing itself (svasya); it refers, in other words, to a thing's identity… "svabhāva" could also be interpreted to mean the fact that a thing comes into being (bhavati) from itself (svataḥ) or by itself (svena); on this interpretation, the term would refer to a thing's independence." (Hayes, 311.). And more specifically addressed Chapter 1 verse 5, in the *Mulamadhyamakakārikā*, Hayes rendered the translation as "Surely beings have no svabhāva when they have causal conditions... And if there is no **identity**, then there is no **difference**" (Hayes, 312.).

The issue is "that the first line of *kārikā* 5 by itself makes better sense if svabhāva is construed as 'causal dependence', while the second line makes better sense if the line is construed as 'identity'" (John Taber, "On Nāgārjuna's so-called Fallacies: A Comparative Approach," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41, no. 3 (July 1998): 215, https://www.jstor.org/stable/24663502.). He noticed that there is no continuity between these two statements and suggested Nāgārjuna "plays [and] takes advantage of an ambiguity" (Hayes, "Nāgārjuna's Appeal," 311.) which imply an intended action, not mistakenly made. Although Hayes did not think that Nāgārjuna's arguments deserved to be completely ignored, he still identified a damning fallacy at the centre of Nāgārjuna's work, threatening the soundness of his points.

This was not the first strike against the Mahāyāna tradition for deviant logic. But when initially confronted with this, it was embraced due to its relevancy to transcendental logic and the entire dialectic mission. However, Hayes identified the specific grievance of the fallacy of equivocation, which rather than a logical norm, was instead a stringent rule governing the everyday workings of the debate, which ensured its healthy performance. When trying to argue the validity of one's system, this move represents not a tactful strategy, but a disingenuous attempt to circumvent the opponent and wrongly assume superiority. This accusation of deviant logic then was more serious. However, both contemporary scholars and prāsaṅgikas addressed this concern. Taber, who offered a response in defence of Nāgārjuna from Hayes' fallacy argument, believed that Hayes had misunderstood the use of the locative in the verse, taking it as a locative absolute, rather than "as a simple locative… the first half of *kārikā* 5 is not a hypothetical statement but a categorical one: 'There is no identity/own-being/essence of entities *in* the causal conditions…'" (Taber, "On Nāgārjuna's so-called Fallacies: A Comparative Approach," 216.). The misreading meant that Hayes did not understand that the first half was "elaborating his rejection of the Sāṃkhya *satkāryavāda* … the rejection of the *asatkāryavāda* follows immediately from that" (Taber, 216.). In support of this reading, the Padmakara Translation Group rendered verse 5 as; "things arise dependently on these,// which therefore are declared to be conditions" (Nāgārjuna, *The Root Stanzas of the Middle Way*, 4.) which while taking a more liberal approach to translation, did use the locative 'on' as opposed to a temporal particle. Dzong-ka-ba, writing as a Tibetan exegete of Nāgārjuna's philosophy, had a different approach. His solutions relied on limiting the traditionally

three modes of dependent arising down to two. These traditional three were characterized by a "reliance on causes and condition… [an ability] to set itself up under its own power… [and] being imputed in dependence on their own collection [of parts]" (Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga*, 415-416.). As examples, for the first consider "sprouts [and] seeds" (Hopkins, 416.), the second the absolute which is the only thing that has this self-involved power to arise from itself, and "short where there is long" (Hopkins, 416.) for the third. These three have a direct match translating to their own svabhāva, which Jan Westerhoff classified as "essence-*svabhāva*, substance-*svabhāva*, and absolute *svabhāva*" (Jan Westerhoff, *Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka: A Philosophical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 20.). Essence-*svabhāva* relates to the third and how any essential characteristic is inherent if it is undeniably resulted in, for example, "the son is existentially dependent on the father" (Westerhoff, 28.) or "like the heat of fire" (Westerhoff, 22.). Substance-*svabhāva* applies to the first. Here, there is no real *svabhāva* as nothing which can be pointed to either internal or external are not compositional and so derived from another source, it is the very foundation of emptiness that all things are interconnected. Absolute *svabhāva* is "a property that is regarded as the true or final nature of things" (Westerhoff, 12.) and functions as the monistic whole. As stated earlier, however, Dzong-ka-pa dissolved one of these distinctions: "Absolute svabhāva is equated with the essence-svabhāva of all objects" (Westerhoff, 46.). Just as with heat to fire, emptiness is intrinsic to all objects. If these two natures are intwined, then when looking at nirvāna, it clarifies why any assertions had to be negative. It must be mediated through conventional saṃsāra terms. Emptiness is not the true expression of the absolute, it exists only as an imputed term based around all other erroneous thoughts. "In short, if there is no *svabhāva* or 'own-being' of the effect pre-existent in the causes, there can be no *parabhāva* or 'other-being,' either" (Taber, "On Nāgārjuna's so-called Fallacies: A Comparative Approach," 216.). To attain enlightenment, even the idea of the absolute must be abandoned, and in so doing the idea of the non-absolute too fades away. If there is no 'identity' then there is also no 'difference', just as without long there is no short. Consequently, there is no issue with Hayes' reading. Since everything is dependent on causal conditions, they cannot be said to have an independent existence, an 'identity' of it's own. As discussed, identity has an interconnected relationship with difference, and so the complete annihilation of this concept also results in difference disappearing.

Therefore, Hayes has not identified a 'fallacy of equivocation' with Nāgārjuna's argument but has failed to truly understand him, leaving him with just the right amount of deviancy.

In conclusion, Nāgārjuna appears to be a dialectician. Hegel had identified the dialectics as the most superior form of thought and which best encapsulated human thinking. Although their specific uses and features of the dialectic have some divergences, both theories converge around negation, inexpression and conflict which were discovered at the centre of Hegel. While attention is paid to thinkers beyond Nāgārjuna, who could be credited with shifting priority and thus fashioning a dialectic later, this does not invalidate his contribution. Even if demoted to a proto-dialectic, Nāgārjuna's arguments fundamentally elevated the Mādhyamika method to the forefront of Buddhist thought. Regardless of if these ideas were totally explicit, the dialectics finds itself concentrated around his writings and sects. His theory has also remained within the public consciousness, unwilling to be completely silenced, even while being condescended and mocked by some who choose to engage with it.

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APPENDIX

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|---|---|
| यदि शून्यमिदं सर्वमुदयो नास्ति न व्ययः । | If all things are empty, arising does not exist, nor decay. |
| प्रहाणाद्वा निरोधाद्वा कस्य निर्वाणमिष्यते ॥१ | Either from abandonment or suppression of what [can it then] be desired [to reach] Nirvāna. (1) |
| यद्यशून्यमिदं सर्वमुदयो नास्ति न व्ययः । | If all things are not empty, arising does not exist, nor decay. |
| प्रहाणाद्वा निरोधाद्वा कस्य निर्वाणमिष्यते ॥२ | Either from abandonment or suppression of what [can it then] be desired [to reach] Nirvāna (2) |
| अप्रहीणमसंप्राप्तमनुच्छिन्नमशाश्वतं । | Without-reminder, unattainable, unable to be destroyed, not-eternal. |
| अनिरुद्धमनुत्पन्नमेतन्निर्वाणमुच्यते ॥३ | Un-suppressible, not produced. This is what is said [about] Nirvāna. (3) |
| भावस्तावन्न निर्वाणं जरामरणलक्षणं । | As an existing thing, Nirvāna cannot be characterized by a lack of aging. |
| प्रसज्येतास्ति भावो हि न जरामरणं विना ॥४ | You would entail [this fault], for [Nirvāna cannot be] without aging as it is an existing thing. (4) |
| भावश्च यदि निर्वाणं निर्वाणं संस्कृतं भवेत् । | If Nirvāna is an existing thing, Nirvāna would be conditioned. |
| नासंस्कृतो हि विद्यते भावः क्व चन कश्चन ॥५ | Since it is not unconditioned, where and whatever is this existing thing? (5) |
| भावश्च यदि निर्वानमनुपादाय तत्कथं । | And if Nirvāna is an existing thing, how is it un-clinging [to existence]. |
| निर्वाणं नानुपादाय कश्चिद्भावो हि वुद्यते ॥६ | Nirvāna [would] not be un-clinging, for every existing thing is found to be [clinging]. (6) |
| यदि भावो न निर्वाणमभावः किं भविष्यति । | If Nirvāna is not an existing thing, how will it be not existing? |
| निर्वाणं यत्र भावो न नाभावस्तत्र विद्यते ॥७ | [In those minds] in which Nirvāna is not existing, there is no not existing thing. (7) |

यद्यभावश्च निर्वाणमनुपादाय तत्कथं ।

निर्वाणं न ह्यभावो ऽस्ति यो ऽनुपादाय विद्यते ॥८

And if Nirvāna is not existing, how is it un-clinging [to existence].

For that Nirvāna which is not existing, is not found to be un-clinging. (8)

य आजवंजवीभाव उपादाय प्रतीत्य वा ।

सो ऽप्रतीत्यानुपादाय निर्वाणमनुपदिश्यते ॥९

That which, moving restlessly to and fro, is either clinging or dependent.

[But] that is not taught to be Nirvāna, which is un-clinging and independent. (9)

प्रहाणं चाब्रवीच्छास्ता भवस्य विभवस्य च ।

तस्मान्न भावो नाभावो निर्वाणमिति युज्यते ॥१०

And the teacher [Buddha] spoke [of] the abandonment of existing things and not existing things.

Therefore, it is not possible that 'Nirvāna is existing or not existing'. (10)

भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाणमुभयं यदि ।

भवेदभावो भावश्च मोक्षस्तच्च न युज्यते ॥११

If Nirvāna could be both existing and not existing,

Liberation [also] would be existing and not existing, that is not right. (11)

भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाणमुभयं यदि ।

नानुपादाय निर्वाणमुपादायोभयं हि तत् ॥१२

If Nirvāna could be both existing and not existing,

Nirvāna is not un-clinging and independent, for it is both [an existing and not-existing thing]. (12)

भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाणमुभयं कथं ।

असंस्कृतं च निर्वाणं भावाभावौ च संस्कृतौ ॥१३

How could Nirvāna be both existing and not existing?

Nirvāna is unconditioned, and [both] existing and not existing things are conditioned. (13)

भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाण उभयं कथं ।

न तयोरेकत्रास्तित्वमालोकतमसोर्यथा ॥१४

How could Nirvāna be both existing and not existing?

Of those two, it is not [possible to be] in one place, such as [in the case] of light and darkness. (14)

नैवाभावो नैव भावो निर्वाणमिति या ऽञ्जना ।

अभावे चैव भावे च सा सिद्धे सति सिध्यति ॥१५

The position which is that 'Nirvāna not only is not existing but also is not not-existing'.

[Only] after existing and not-existing things are established, can that be proved. (15)

नैवाभावो नैव भावो निर्वाणं यदि विद्यते ।

नैवाभावो नैव भाव इति केन तदज्यते ॥१६

If Nirvāna is found to be not only not existing but also not not-existing,

By what means is it possible that it is not only not existing but also not not-existing? (16)

परं निरोधाभगवान् भवतीत्येव नोह्यते ।

न भवत्युभयं चेति नोभयं चेति नोह्यते ॥१७

After the Buddha's suppression [i.e., death] he is not felt even as 'he is',

Nor that 'he is both', and nor is he felt as 'he is neither'. (17)

तिष्ठमानो ऽपि भगवान् भवतीत्येव नोह्यते ।

न भवत्युभयं चेति नोभयं चेति नोह्यते ॥१८

Even if the Buddha were standing [here] he is not felt even as 'he is'.

Nor that 'he is both', and nor is he felt as 'he is neither'. (18)

न संसारस्य निर्वाणात्किं चिदस्ति विशेषणं ।

न निर्वाणस्य संसारात्किं चिदस्ति विशेषणं ॥१९

Is there even no distinguishing feature of Samsāra [separating it] from Nirvāna?

Is there even no distinguishing feature of Nirvāna [separating it] from Samsāra? (19)

निर्वाणस्य च या कोटिः कोटिः संसरणस्य च ।

न तयोरन्तरं किं चित्सुसूक्ष्ममपि विद्यते ॥२०

And that which is the end-limit of Nirvāna, is also the end-limit of Samsāra.

What even is different between those two, [surely] not even the most minute difference is found? (20)

परं निरोधादन्ताद्याः शाश्वताद्याश्च दृष्टयः ।

निर्वाणमपरान्तं च पूर्वान्तं च समाश्रिताः ॥२१

Incorrect views concerning [what happens] after suppression, the beginning and end, permanence, etc.

[Your] Nirvāna is dependent [on] either an earlier limit or a later limit. (21)

शून्येषु सर्वधर्मेषु किमनन्तं किमन्तवत् ।

किमनन्तमन्तवच्च नानन्तं नान्तवच्च किम्

॥२२

When all qualities are empty: What is eternal?, What is limited?

And what is eternal and limited? And what is neither eternal nor limited? (22)

किं तदेव किमन्यत्किं शाश्वतं किमशाश्वतं ।

अशाश्वतं शाश्वतं च किं वा नोभयमप्यतः ॥२३

What is this thing? What is the other? What is permanent and impermanent?

Therefore, what is both permanent and impermanent, or also both? (23)

सर्वोपलम्भोपशमः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवः ।

न क्व चित्कस्य चित्कश्चिद्धर्मो बुद्धेन देशितः

॥२४

The quieting of all mental perception, Liberation is the quieting of falsehood.

In no place and to no one, was a Dharma [doctrine] instructed by the Buddha (24)