

1 The Hermeneutic of Concealing and Un-Concealing of Being in 2 Madhyamaka-Buddhism and Advaita-Ved?nta

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7 **Abstract**

8 In the history of Indian philosophy the relationship between Advaita-Ved?nta and
9 Madhyamaka-Buddhism is constantly disputed. It is argued, how one thought has eventually
10 benefited from the other. This work explores the above-mentioned relationship in the context
11 of Heidegger?s intercession with Nietzsche, where concealment and un-concealment are
12 understood as explicit ontological characters of Being. Subsequently, N?g?rjuna?s description
13 of reality as ??nya? or void is explored as an expression of nihilism, nevertheless similar to
14 Heidegger?s observation of concealment of Being in ?nihil?. And Advaita-Ved?nta, as a
15 thinking of non-duality expresses the hermeneutic of un-concealment of Being, i.e., of ?one?
16 and ?the same?. These ontological characters of Being allow us to discover a sabotaging
17 brotherhood between N?g?rjuna and ?ankara, because the ?nihil? and ?something? are
18 ontologically two essential sides of the same thinking.

19

20 **Index terms**— buddhism, advaita-ved?nta, being, intercultural ontology, heidegger, indian philosophy

21 **1 Introduction**

22 In the history of Indian thinking the relationship between Advaita-Ved?nta and Buddhism are of considerable
23 interest. Many are they, who stand for and against this much disputed relationship, including the prominent
24 figures like S. Radhakrishnan, S. N. Dasgupta and so on. 1 Chronologically and critically evaluating ?ankara
25 must have been in a close acquaintance with Buddhist thinking and it is argued that Gaudap?da, the teacher
26 of ?ankara's teacher was a Buddhist even. 2 1 S. N. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, (Vol., I, Delhi:
27 Motilal BanarsiDass, 1992), 493-4. 2 Karl H. Potter (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy -Advaita Vedanta*
28 up to Samkara and his pupils, (Delhi: Motilal BanarsiDass, 1981), 14. The intended framework of this exploration
29 is not to research, if we have any further evidence for this disputed relationship or how one thought has eventually
30 benefited from the other; instead, we explore this asserted relationship in the light of ahermeneutic of concealing
31 (verbergen) and unconcealing (entbergen) of Being. It is understood Halbfass that the questioning of Being is
32 an exclusive property of western ontological tradition. He asserts that there is no equivalent to the Aristotelian
33 project of a 'science of being qua being' in the Indian thinking, nor to the Platonic perplexity about being and
34 non-being; nor there is an explicit counterpart to Wolf's conception of 'ontology'. At the same time, he emphasizes
35 that the concept of Being in its very original sense plays an essential and undeniable roll in Indian thought. 3
36 Heidegger argues at the beginning of his celebrated work 'Being and Time' that the long history of western
37 ontological tradition since Plato and Aristotle is based on prejudices against the understandings of Being.
38

39 It becomes here clearer that a 'hermeneutic' of Being is inherent in the Indian thinking, whether it is called
40 'Brahman' or '??nya'. 4 The conventional ontology, since Plato and Aristotle understands Being as the 'Highest',
41 i.e. *causa prima*, the cause of every beings. To be the 'highest' means, to enclose all the attributes of time and
42 space in its highest level; therefore it is understood as the superlative, i.e., the perfection. Hence, Heidegger
43 argues that the fundamental question of Being remains primarily unexplored in the long tradition of western
ontology, which Heidegger terms as the 'forgetfulness of Being' (die Seinsvergessenheit). 5 According to him, to

44 philosophize means to explore Being in its meanings, i.e., to establish the original unity of Being. The idea of
45 exploring the meaning of Being from a single unity does not mean the existing idea of the single and multiple
46 meanings of Being adopted since Aristotle. 6 It stands for the idea of a still-original unit, from which even
47 the Aristotelian representations of unity and diversity of beings, can arise. 7 3 Ibid. 4 ??artin Heidegger, Sein
48 und Zeit(Tubingen: Max Niemeyer Publication, 2001), 02. 5 Ibid. 6 Aristoteles, Metaphysik (1003a 32 -36),
49 translated& published by Horst Seidl, (Hamburg: Meiner, 1982) 123.

50 7 ??laudius Strube, Das Mysterium der Moderne: Heideggers Stellung zur gewandelten Seins-und Gottesfrage,
51 (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1994), 50.

52 Such an idea is the ontological origin of Heidegger's thinking, in which the possibility of the understanding of
53 Being (Verstehen) is thought to be the origin. This is the idea of an origin, from which everything ontologically
54 originates, which shall be neither compared with God nor understood as the cause of the world; 8 it is the
55 ontological grounding of Being. Without the destruction of metaphysically constructed ontology in the sense of
56 manifold meanings of being, it is not possible to elucidate the fundamental thinking of Being as the most original
57 unit, which forms the basis for all other previously overlooked associations in conventional ontology. This is
58 the beginning of the post-metaphysical thinking of Being; and this is the ontological origin of Dasein, which
59 is not ontically selfevident for the 'common sense', but opens the dubiousness of all self-evident. 9 Nietzsche's
60 proclamation that God is dead is characterised with the end of metaphysics. The death of God pre-supposes
61 ontologically that the concept of God, which is understood in the horizon of time, is no more, i.e., the negation
62 (nihil) is in God itself. According to Heidegger's Nietzsche interpretation, it is the historical moment, which
63 characterizes Being explicitly as nothing (nihil) that negation and affirmation are in Being itself; they are the
64 two sides of the same thinking. 10

65 2 II. The Concealing and Un-Concealing

66 Character of Being Therefore, Heidegger understands in those words of Nietzsche not the dead-God of religions,
67 but the end of long-established understandings of Being as *causa prima* and as *causa sui*. If Being is understood
68 in the horizon of time, it is no more Being (*Sein*), but only a being (*Seiendes*), perhaps the highest being (*das
69 höchsteSeiende*). God understood as *causa prima* or as *causa sui* can be conceivably this highest being, but not
70 Being. Being can be understood neither in the horizon of time nor in the horizon of space, for Being is the
71 fundament even for space and time. For this reason, Being is neither eternal nor non-eternal, Being is neither
72 something nor nothing; in terms of Indian thinking, it is nĀ?"tinĀ?"ti (not this, not this). For the reason that
73 the conventional ontology deficiently perceives Being in the horizon of time and space, it is often understood as
74 *causa prima* or as *causa sui*. The eastern thinking, however is framed neither in terms of western metaphysics nor
75 in terms of nihilism; still, it is the same 'highest something' that is understood by the term 'Saguna Brahman'
76 (Brahman with qualities). This is an understanding of Brahman in the horizon of time and space, because all
77 qualities are ultimately the qualities of time or space.

78 3 In

79 Heidegger's essay, 'The Question Concerning Technology', we see the 'bringing forth' in the sense of revealing
80 stands not only for the artistic and technical activities, but also for a 'bringing-forth-from-itself'. It is interpreted
81 in the sense of the Greek word '?????'. Assuming that the '?????' is an act of 'bringingforth-from-itself', it shows
82 the urge towards the 'efficient cause' ('?????', '?????' German »Überlegen«); and ultimately stands for the
83 revealing (Entbergen) of Being, 11 that the concealing of Being in beings becomes passive. Heidegger interprets
84 Being as a completed fact in accordance with the Greek construction that is determined differently than the
85 metaphysical understanding. He explores further that not only the handcraft manufacture or the artistic and
86 poetical bringing into appearance or concrete imagery is a bringing-forth (? ??????), but '?????' also the arising
87 of something from out of itself, is a bringing-forth. Hence, '?????' is indeed ? ?????? in the highest sense,
88 because, what presences by means of '?????' has the bursting open belonging to bringing-forth. So, according to
89 Heidegger the bringing-forth brings hither out of concealment forth into un-concealment that the bringing-forth
90 comes to pass only insofar as something concealed comes into un-concealment. This act of coming into un-
91 concealment rests and moves freely within, what we call revealing (das Entbergen). The Greeks have discovered
92 the word ?????? for this revealing. The Romans translate this with 'veritas', that we say 'truth' and usually
93 understand it as the correctness of an idea, 12 In relation to the ancient question '???????' and its answer in
94 terms of 'causa efficiens' (??????, ??????)

95 Heidegger observes that the created-ness in the broadest sense of the produced-ness of something is an essential
96 structural element of the ancient concept of being.

97 i.e., *adaequatio rei et intellectus*.

98 Vittorio Klostermann, 1985), 219.

99 In making of presence of an idea, which 'idea' must look of the appearance of such, e.g., a table, it is a
100 craftsman, who decides that the appearance of something in the presence of sensory visibility, that something
101 specific (table) becomes present. However, this appearance of the table does not come by itself or it is a 'from'
102 the craftsman, but possible only attended by a craftsman, to whole this idea of the table was already a priori.
103 He looks back only to the pre-supposed idea and work to make this idea present. Hence, he is the one, who is

104 'bringing-forth' the 'idea' in the presence and keeps the area of this 'bringing-forth' the given (???????) represents
105 a process, in which something passes from concealment in the un-concealment. This process, ' ? ??????' is on
106 one hand a challenge and on the other hand a 'bringing-forth', that they both are the two ways of revealing of
107 '???????' 14 In conventional ontology being is often understood as the essence of beings. Heidegger criticises
108 that in the understanding of being as the essence of beings the meaning and truth of Being remain un-discussed
109 and unquestioned. It rests on the understanding of Being as the permanent 'Is-ness', as it has been thought,
110 since the Platonic origin of philosophy. This constant presence is often interpreted as the Supreme Being or the
111 divine, which confronts in Nietzsche's 'death of God' with its necessary end. The 'death of God' in Nietzsche
112 advocates the absence of this permanent property that has not moved away from its constant presence by itself,
113 but was killed by human. In an onto-theo-logical written metaphysics this proclamation of Nietzsche confronts
114 with the dead God and consequently the question of being faces a 'noway-out'. 15 Heidegger understands the
115 'death of God' as the essential part of the history of Being, in which the forgetfulness of Being comes to the light.
116 Then, Being is conceived as concealing as well as revealing; and this lets Heidegger claim that his interpretation
117 of Being is the interpretation of those unexplored unity of essence, which is based on the meaning of Being, i.e.,
118 the truth of Being; consequently Being is 'something' as well as 'nothing', and is characterized with the revealing
119 (entbergen) and concealing (verbergen) in its history. Hence from this most original unit, which goes beyond the
120 dichotomy of affirmation and negation, originates everything ontologically, and it shall be compared neither with
121 God nor with the cause of the world.

122 It is the natural outcome of the Platonic philosophy, which thinks being in the horizon of constant 'Is-ness',
123 i.e., as presence of the '?????'. Hence in the onto-theo-logical constituted metaphysics, whether in the sense of
124 '????', or in the sense of 'causa prima' or the 'will to power', Being is conceived as an ever present being. This
125 attributed character of Being as the constant presence, as the supreme being, as divine, comes in Nietzsche's
126 'death of God' into its necessary end. Simultaneously this 'death of God' makes the time ripe for an unexplored
127 and un-discussed unity of the essence of metaphysics as Being, i.e., the meaning of Being. 16 Further the truth,
128 the ??????? remains necessarily with being, 17 because 'to-be-true', means 'to-be-discovered', which refers yet
129 again to the revealing and concealing character of the truth of being. 18

130 **4 III. Concealing Character of Being and the Question of 'nihil'**

131 There is more dreadful thinking, than the death of God of religions behind Nietzsche's statement: 'God is dead'.
132 The 'death of God' ontologically means that everything eternal, the truth, the values are 'not'; it means further
133 that the negation is in God itself. According to Heidegger, it is the ultimate withdrawal of Platonic metaphysics,
134 in which Nietzsche reverses the very essence of metaphysics. ??9 Hence, Nietzsche's 'death of God' makes the
135 foundations of the innermost understanding of being in its long history of two thousand years unstable, 20 that
136 he rewrites the Platonic interpretation of Being as '????' as the 'will to power' ('WillezurMacht'). According
137 to Heidegger the 'death of God' is immersed in the history of being since the Platonic interpretation of '????';
138 and it was never an unexpected abrupton of Nietzsche's thinking. ??1 Nietzsche perceived this immanent and
139 dangerous nature of Plato's thinking that he accuses Plato for establishing dogmatism. He says that the entire
140 philosophical tradition since Plato, together with the Christianity and Indian Veda-Ved?nta tradition are nothing
141 but the dogmatic errors. ??2 It is to be assumed that a thinking appears to be dogmatic for Nietzsche, if the
142 basic concept of a universal truth is designed and affirmed with a universal validity; in Plato's thinking it is
143 the 'idea of good'; in Veda-Ved?nta thinking it is 'Brahman'. Both of these concepts are attributed with all the
144 positive features, including existence as the essential necessity and possibility of its very being; they are thought
145 in their absolute totality and necessity. Nietzsche denies any idea of the absolute totality and necessity that
146 the validity of any self-evident, hence un-reflected value is for him an error. Nietzsche hangs on the possibility
147 of potential deception, where the factual security or objectivity of values and truths moves to the position of
148 the subject; therefore according to him the last and the first are mixed up. ??3 Subsequently, the supreme as
149 absolute totality and necessity must come according to Nietzsche at the last. Thus Nietzsche proclaims, there
150 are many truths; and subsequently none! Ontologically, this is the thinking of becoming; which pre-supposes
151 the rise, growth, decay and decadence. On one hand, this thinking of Nietzsche is an endless path of becoming
152 that even the supreme becomes an ideal of perpetual quest, the eternal becoming, which Nietzsche experiences
153 as the highest. On the other hand Nietzsche does not reject the belief in the opposites of values, but only the
154 adoption of an assumed original concept, known as 'causa sui' in the philosophy. So, Nietzsche had to declare
155 that the 'causa sui' is the best self-contradiction that has yet been devised. According to him, it is a kind of
156 logical necessity, but un-natural; nevertheless the extravagant pride of man has brought it to this extend that
157 the mankind too deeply and terribly entangled in this nonsense. ??4 According to Heidegger the nihilism is to
158 be understood as the completion of Platonic metaphysics.

159 Hence, Nietzsche pioneered an ultimate return towards the Platonic thinking as a counterpart of the belief in
160 constant values and truths. These all include in Nietzsche's words, 'God is dead, we have killed him!' Nietzsche
161 experiences in this 'God is dead', not just a God, who is mortal, rather he experiences a God, who is already
162 dead. ??5 The metaphysics, which is exhausted in Nietzsche in its essential possibilities, marks a historical
163 moment, in which the '????' as the highest comes to an end and subsequently paves a way to a new beginning
164 of thinking. This de-valuation of the highest values and ideals in Nietzsche's thinking as historical process of
165 nihilism reveals itself as metaphysics since Plato. Then Nietzsche is integrated in the history of Being as the last

4 III. CONCEALING CHARACTER OF BEING AND THE QUESTION OF 'NIHIL'

166 metaphysician; subsequently, Heidegger aims at a new beginning for thinking, where Being makes itself free from
167 the role of constant presence. As the result, the onto-theo-logical character of metaphysics becomes questionable
168 for thinking, not because of any atheism, but from the experience of a thinking, which is located in the onto-
169 theo-logy as the un-thought unity of essence. 26 ??4 Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, ??5. ??5 Heidegger,
170 Holzwege, 212-213. ??6 *Ibid*.

171 Heidegger's understanding of nihilism as the completion of Platonic metaphysics and subsequent beginning
172 of thinking asserts a kind of historical back-projection. This back-projection of philosophizing makes the
173 forgetfulness of Being the starting point; and the highest expression of this forgetfulness is seen in Nietzsche's
174 'death of God'. Nevertheless this forgetfulness of Being is not strictly identified with nihilism alone, for, Heidegger
175 recognizes that the danger of nihilism existed since the very beginning of thinking. The metaphysics increased this
176 danger; consequently in thinking Nietzsche's 'death of God' emerges the ultimate development of Platonic '????'.
177 This does not mean that Plato is to be regarded as a nihilist, but the danger of nihilism drastically increased
178 since Plato; and embraced its ultimate completion in Nietzsche's 'death of God', for, the 'death of God' was
179 unable to uncover the concealed as the groundless ground of the truth. ??7 Hence, Nietzsche as the last Platonic
180 metaphysician experiences the necessary completion of metaphysics in devaluating the highest values, ideals,
181 goals and reasons concerning God. ??8 As the result the metaphysics is characterized with the forgetfulness of
182 Being, which unfolds itself in the history of Being as an epoché since Plato to Nietzsche. ??9 As the reversal
183 of Platonism, Nietzsche could say that the art is the 'stimulus' of life; 'stimulant' is the apparent reversal of
184 »Quietiv«. ??0 Nietzsche's understanding that the truth is 'a kind of error, without which a certain kind of
185 living beings could not live' 31 is a further example for the experience of this extreme reversal of metaphysics. In
186 such experiences Heidegger discovers the substantive lack of Being as Being, and life as the essential access to the
187 question of Being. This lack of Being terms Heidegger as the revealing of Being in its concealment, i.e., its truth
188 as nothing, as void, as 'nihil'. ??2 Nietzsche's nihilism upholds a void, where the de-valuated *summum bonum*
189 was constantly present.

190 Nietzsche in his attempt of overcoming this void replaces the traditional value-orientedness with 'will to power';
191 that the will to power emerges as the new principle and standard of values. Hence nihilism holds itself according
192 to Heidegger in the realm of Being, where the concealing aspects of being alone counts; for, the creation of new
193 values hides Being effectively. However, the nihilism does not recognise that Being is also nothing, i.e., Being
194 in his concealment understood as nothing, that is the 'nihil' of Being. 33 This is the nihilism, which apparently
195 remains hidden in Plato's metaphysics, which comes in Nietzsche's thinking to its explicit appearance as nihil.
196 Therefore, according to Heidegger the history of metaphysics takes its course from Plato's interpretation of Being
197 as '????' and '??????', and its necessary completion Being is interpreted as 'will to power', which sets values and
198 thinks everything in terms of values. ??4 What is explicit in Nietzsche's thinking is then nothing but the ultimate
199 expression of Being as 'nihil'. In the history of Being, Being that bears its concealment with itself, hides itself in
200 its history; this is the metaphysical epoché marked with the forgetfulness of Being. ??5 Platonic metaphysics.

201 Nietzsche's superman (*Übermensch*) is the highest expression of the concealing of Being; he sustains the truth
202 of beings as a whole. But this truth does not show straightforwardly, however it does reflect it off, as if in the art;
203 this is the nature of superman, in which Nietzsche experiences Being as the 'will to power'. Then the essence of
204 nihilism is not, what is explicit in the thinking of Nietzsche, but it rests in history of metaphysics as the thinking
205 of '????', further as the denial of Being, which remains hidden in the history. In search of the essence of this
206 immanent nihilism Heidegger asserts that the name 'nihilism' itself stands for 'nihil', a thinking, in which the
207 'nihil' becomes essential. Heidegger interprets Nietzsche accordingly and nihilism is that, which is concerned with
208 Being as nothing, i.e., in all respects nothing; this is the experience of conceptualised emptiness. However, the
209 nihilism is founded in Being itself, and it is the story of Being itself, the story of the concealing of Being. In the
210 history of metaphysics Being as something and as nothing comes apart into its dividend explored constitution.
211 This is the essence of Being, which remains un-thought and un-discussed in nihilism, because nihilism as 'nihil'
212 does not realize that the 'nihil' is also to be understood as the synonym of non-nihil; 36

213 IV. The Concept of '??nyata' and the Concealing Character of Being subsequently the two inherent sides of
214 the same thinking, marked with 'revealing' (*entbergen*) and 'concealing' (*verbergen*) of Being.

215 Madhyamaka school of N?g?rjuna describes the universe as totally devoid of reality, that according to them
216 everything is called '??nya' or void. '??nya' or void is the explicit expression of 'nihil' that there are in certain
217 perspectives the nihilistic inclinations comparable to Nietzsche. Hence, in many of the comparative studies,
218 Madhyamaka school is often described as being explicitly nihilistic. Nevertheless, a considerable amount of
219 such studies depend on the superficial and apparent nihilistic characteristics of this school. This is due to
220 the (mis)understanding of the term '??nya' or '??nyata' that is often used to describe the indeterminable and
221 indescribable reality in Madhyamaka school. In western nihilistic tradition the term nothing is a hypothetical
222 possibility that can neither be conceived as a reality in the sense of affirmation and negation. This is a kind of
223 conceptual emptiness, which would lead to no further; that every possibility of describing or understanding
224 becomes strange to this conceptualized emptiness. It can neither be affirmed nor be negated, because it is just
225 'nihil' alone.

226 The core of N?g?rjuna's theory of ??nya is the doctrine of dependent origination, called ??6 Heidegger,
227 Nietzsche: *Der europäische Nihilismus*, 44.

228 Pratityasamutp?da. The Pratityasamutp?da advocates that the reality lacks Svabh?va, i.e., 'essential nature'.

229 In the context of explicit historical rivalry between Buddhism and Ved?nta, it is also to be noted that Svabh?va is
230 intrinsically linked with understanding Brahman in Upanishads. According to the Upanishads (Saguna) Brahman
231 is understood as the summum bonum, i.e., the perfection of all (Sva)Bh?va.

232 Buddhism, which rejects Brahman should therefore assert on the lack of Svabh?va. According to
233 Pratityasamutp?da the phenomenal realities know no causa prima as the origin of their Bh?va, but always
234 dependent on other specific things forming a chain of causation. Every object is thought to be necessarily
235 relative, hence neither absolutely real nor absolutely unreal. Subsequently, all phenomenal realities hang between
236 'something' and 'nihil', avoiding the extremes eternalism and nihilism. Hence there is neither eternal Svabh?va,
237 nor a reality, where the Svabh?vas can be rooted. Everything is originated therefore dependently that there is
238 no room for any eternal Svabh?va. This is the teaching of Pratityasamutp?da, and the lack of this Svabh?va
239 is described as ??nya by N?g?rjuna. He comes forth with his dialectical brilliance to negate the concept of
240 Svabh?va; subsequently the theories of Satk?ryav?da and Asatk?ryav?da proposed by S?mkhya and Ny?ya schools
241 respectively, and even Aj?tiv?da and Vivarta-v?da are essentially immune to N?garjuna's dialectics. N?g?rjuna's
242 dialectical approach pre-supposes the Pratityasamutp?da (dependent origination) that everything is originated
243 depending on something else; that there is a cause for every effect and every cause is the effect of a previous
244 cause. Subsequently he describes in his ??nyatasaptati on ??nya that everything, (self, not-self, both self and
245 not-self) being nameable thing, are like nirv?na, devoid of essential nature. Since there is no essential nature in
246 things, causes and conditions, whether taken separately or collectively, everything is empty (E11; T24). 37 37
247 N?g?rjuna, ??nyatasaptati, Karl H. Potter, Encyclopedia of Indian philosophies -Buddhist philosophy from 100
248 to 350 AD, (Delhi:MotilalBanarsidass, 2002), 135.

249 Further, N?g?rjuna asserts that ??nya is itself ??nya, that it lacks the Svabh?va. Does this mean that N?g?rjuna
250 understands ??nya as conceptualized emptiness and subsequently holds a position comparable to Nietzsche? No;
251 N?g?rjuna asserts that even ??nya is not an essential nature (Svabhava), in contrast to the nihilistic claim of
252 conceptualized emptiness. N?g?rjuna does not assert on conceptualized emptiness; the term ??nya provided
253 N?g?rjuna the best possible way to express on the real nature of intrinsic reality as such. The intrinsic reality as
254 such is understood as something that is indeterminable and indescribable, avoiding the extremes. In contrast to
255 nihilistic standpoints N?g?rjuna Volume XVII Issue V Version I

256 5 (A)

257 does not intend to deny the intrinsic reality as such, but the apparent phenomenal world perceived in terms
258 of 'is' and 'is-not' that according to him existence and nonexistence, beginning and end, better and worse are
259 not actual (tattva), but only practical ways of speaking. ??8 The term '??nya' stands then for the expression
260 of the reality, (l?kavyavah?ra) (E10; T24) which cannot be expressed in terms of l?kavyavah?ra, that means, in
261 terms of affirmation and negation. N?g?rjuna's understanding of '??nya' is something similar to the position of
262 'zero' in a mathematical scale; that positives and negatives are neutral to it. There, the reality in itself becomes
263 something that is understood beyond the objectivity and referentiality, which can neither be perceived through
264 the perspective possibilities nor understood through cognitive capacities. Hence, the reality, being devoid of
265 phenomenal characters is understood by N?g?rjuna as ??nya. In the opinion of S. Dasgupta, N?g?rjuna used the
266 word '??nya' in order to designate both phenomenal and trans-phenomenal reality in a somewhat technical sense.
267 He adds further that the world is called ??nya, because it is emptied or devoid of any intrinsic nature. ??9
268 Hence the reality can neither be real, nor be unreal. The indeterminable and indescribable real nature of things
269 called ??nyat? or voidness. This transcendental reality (noumenon) behind the phenomenal is termed by the
270 Madhyamakaas '??nya', and as indeterminable and indescribable it goes beyond the possibility of N?mar?pa. The
271 '??nya' must therefore free from change, conditionality and from any other phenomenal characters. According
272 to Potter, when N?g?rjuna calls something empty, he is implying it doesn't really exist, but he is by no means
273 suggesting that it doesn't seem to exist and that its functioning may well seem to occasion results such as
274 misery and pain, ??0 However the term ??nya or ??nyata itself is something that is intelligible, primarily in
275 the sense of the negation of the ultimate reality, i.e., the description of 'what it is not'. The real nature of
276 object cannot be established by the intellect and cannot, therefore, be described. That which is real, must
277 be independent, i.e., it should not depend on anything else for its existence and origination. According to S.
278 Dasgupta, it is ?ankara, who takes up the popular connotation of the word ??nya as 'nothing' while criticising
279 the ??nya-v?da, and consequently he condemns the expressive character of 'nihil' in '??nya-v?da'. ?ankara argues
280 that a philosophical position, which pictures the empirical that the ??nya evolves to be a technical term for
281 N?g?rjuna. ??8 Ibid. ??9 Sanghamitra Dasgupta & Dilip Kumar Mohanta, Some reflections on the relation
282 between Sankara and Buddhism, in Indian philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XXV, (Pune: University of Pune, No.3,
283 July, 1998), 351352. ??0 Potter, Encyclopedia of Indian philosophies -Buddhist philosophy from 100 to 350 AD,
284 15. world as a transitory show of non-substantial appearances (??nya) is not even worthy of a criticism, because
285 absolute unreality of sheer appearances without any underlying reality (Tattva) to appear is a selfdefeating
286 proposition, which cannot be defended by any instruments of valid cognition. ??1 Even though it may for the
287 moment look as a misinterpretation from the side of ?ankara, he as someone, who asserts the unity and reality of
288 ?tman could recognise only the 'nihil' in the theories of N?g?rjuna. N?g?rjuna perhaps was not meaning to deny
289 the existence of the ultimate reality as such; however it is also true that he explores the 'nihil' of this ultimate
290 reality, but not the nihilism that Nietzsche experiences in similar western context. Nietzsche experiences nihilism

291 as 'nothing', i.e., nihil in Nietzsche is not the counterpart of something, but the conceptualized emptiness of
292 nothingness. Heidegger on the other hand understands essence of Nietzsche's thinking as something negative, as
293 nihil, i.e., as the concealing of Being itself. The understanding of nihilism as conceptualized emptiness fails to
294 look at the 'nihil' as the synonym of non-nihil, ??2 V.

295 6 Advaita-Ved?nta Un-Concealing

296 Character of Being but only as two dividend exploring extremes. That is why Heidegger says, nihilism means, the
297 essential incomprehension of the essence of nothingness and Nietzsche, the last metaphysical thinker, is caught
298 in metaphysics and consequently not able to realise that nihil is the synonym of non-nihil. In its essence

299 ??nyav?da can perhaps compared with the theory of relativity that there is no fixed thing, no fixed phenomenon
300 to be experienced. The absolute is independent of its own Svabh?va, hence also beyond the N?mar?pa, i.e., beyond
301 any phenomenal description, which should be unconditionally true. Then there is nothing metal or non-metal,
302 which can be considered as real. Does this assumption mean that there is 'nothing', and the universe is understood
303 in term of 'nihil', that even the values are not?

304 The Advaita thinking of ?ankara encloses the unity of the Brahman (the Absolute) and the ?tman (the
305 individual self). It is all about the unconditional unity that the individual self is nothing but the Absolute
306 itself. However, it seems due to 'Avidya' that the individual exists. In terms of intercultural ontological thinking,
307 it is the hermeneutic of Heidegger's understandings of 'belonging-together' between Brahman and ?tman that
308 ?ankara assertively proclaims as the 'A-dvaita' ('Nonduality'). The strict ontological concept of Brahman in the
309 Advaita statement endorses the Brahman as the 'one' and 'the same' that there is no room for differences, because
310 Brahman is understood as difference-less in itself and it is the only true entity. Therefore Brahman for ?ankara is
311 neither 'Saj?t?ya' (homogeneous) nor 'Vij?t?ya' (heterogeneous). Simultaneously the Advaita illustrates Brahman
312 in ontologically relevant terms like, truth, consciousness and bliss ('Sat-Chit-?nanda'). These essential, the only
313 possible positive expressions of Brahman mean that Brahman is the only reality (Sat), pure consciousness (Chit)
314 and eternal bliss (?nanda). Hence Brahman is untinged by difference, the mark of ignorance; Brahman is one
315 that is not sublatable, for, sublation itself depends on there being consciousness; ??3 In inter-cultural ontological
316 context, this is the understanding of Brahman in terms of 'is', hence, experienced as the constant presencing
317 (An-wesen), as 'bringing-forth'. This is the hermeneutic of the revealing of Being, because this ontological un-
318 concealment is always present in all phenomenal modes of being. The conventional western ontology understands
319 Being as the highest being (das höchste Seiende), subsequently it tends to categorize. The understanding of
320 Being as the highest being pre-supposes always the existence of lower beings, hence there is a hierarchy. In
321 such a hierarchy there is no 'belonging-together'; there prevails only categorization as the clear expression of
322 systembuilding-mechanism. Hence, every attempt of categorization experiences Being not as Being in the sense
323 of belonging-together, for, categorization stands and Brahman is eternal bliss, which is understood not in the
324 horizon of time, but goes beyond the limitations of horizons.

325 The Advaita thinking of ?ankara is considered to be the most loyal exploration of the essence of Upanishadic
326 teaching. According to ?ankara's interpretation the world is M?ya, means the superimposition of Brahman, the
327 ultimate reality. This ultimate reality is not different from ?tman, which is pure and objectless consciousness.
328 Brahman as 'one' and the 'same' is the point of assertion according to ?ankara. The perceived difference is the
329 superimposition due to ignorance, i.e., 'avidya'. Similar to Buddhism, the Brahman is understood in Advaita as
330 that, which is beyond 'N?mar?pa'. The name and form are always the expression of categorization; that objects
331 (phenomena) are named, so that one may be distinguished from another. As one and same Brahman is the
332 differenceless, means, beyond N?mar?pa. Hence, Brahman as one and the same is understood as the fullness,
333 unborn, uncreated, undying, and hence immortal and eternal. Between 'Brahman' and '?tman' prevails only the
334 absolute and difference-less unity; that is the Advitam, the nonduality. According to Advaita we can, therefore,
335 sum up that Brahman alone is absolutely real. always for a hierarchy, the hierarchy of the highest being and the
336 relative beings (das Seindeste und die Seiende). The Advitam, which ?ankara advocates is all about the mutual
337 belonging, which asserts the difference-less unity between Brahman and ?tman. This difference-less unity is the
338 belonging-together between the absolute and the individual that the hermeneutic of Being as 'one' and 'the same'
339 plays a central role in ?ankara's thinking.

340 We have already seen that Heidegger's understanding of Being goes beyond the horizon of time and space,
341 subsequently it goes beyond all attributes. Researching on intercultural ontology, if it is not the same un-
342 concealing (entbergen) of Being, what else shall we understand under the concept of (Nirguna)Brahman, the
343 very primary concept of something, that is immanent in everything and without any qualities of time and
344 space? In the realm of intercultural ontological thinking ?ankara's understanding of Brahman is nothing but the
345 un-spelled hermeneutic of Being! The exposition of this ontological understanding is grounded on a 'belonging-
346 together' ('zusammengehören'), i.e., the 'belonging-together' of ?tman and Brahman. This is the advitam,
347 the nonduality, which goes beyond any categorization. The unique ontological thinking in Advaita is based on
348 ?ankara's explication of a still fundamental concept than the highest (Saguna), rather the quality-less Brahman.
349 Such a fundamental concept of (Nirguna)Brahman must be difference-less, formless and without any attributes;
350 and this is understandably the unifying whole behind the verity of appearances and the groundless ground
351 behind all the existence. Hence ?ankara's 'Nirguna Brahman' transcends all categorization; and it is free from all
352 attributes and is described as 'netineti' (not this, not this), meaning that none of the attributes would adequately

353 describe this part-less whole, hence it is neither this nor this. The ontologically relevant terms 'Satyam', 'Jn?nam',
354 and '?nandam' are the only positive ways of expressing this ultimate. Then, the positives as well as the negatives
355 comprise in same ultimate, for, it is the ultimate even for positives and negatives, and any of these alone would
356 express this ultimate only deficiently.

357 Our language is mostly in the forms of affirmation and negation; we often affirm something or affirm the
358 negation of something. A language, that is framed in the horizon of affirmation and negation would be evidently
359 inadequate to express the ontological mystery and completion. Does this understanding of Nirguna Brahman
360 not hark back to a 'mystical union', as Heidegger understands Being in the post-metaphysical thinking? Of
361 course, this exploration is not about discovering the complete essence of equality or the total difference, but
362 paying attention to the basic hermeneutic features, which make these two remote ways of thinking in the realm
363 of Being comparable, without making the uniqueness of a thinking in the other dissolved. Hence, it is all about
364 discovering the hidden ontological possibilities, which are covered by the ordinary modes of language, culture
365 and further the science. Such an attempt finds its essential expansion in the field of hermeneutics.

366 In early Greek thinking Being stands for the phenomenological emergence of '???????' behind the multiplicity
367 of the phenomenal world, that the pre-Socratic thinkers asked for a unifying aspect behind the verity of
368 appearances. At the very beginning they named it water, fire and so on, and later Parmenides understands
369 it in terms of the dichotomy of Being and non-Being. In the metaphysical era it was perceived as the *prima
370 sui*, the creator God. This experience that Being often finds itself compared with the highest something in the
371 history of western ontology, is seen in Advaita as well, that is the 'Saguna Brahman'. Important is that ?ankara
372 was able to distinguish clearly a higher (ontologically fundamental) from a lower Brahman, which is evident
373 in his *Brahmas?trabh?sya* and elsewhere. This ontologically fundamental Brahman is viewed from the aspect
374 of knowledge (*vidya*), and is free from all adjuncts, all name and form. It is Nirguna Brahman, and it is the
375 knowledge of this Brahman that constitutes liberation according to ?ankara. Saguna Brahman or God (*Ishwara*)
376 is the lower Brahman; it is Brahman viewed from the aspect of ignorance (*avidya*). ??4 Further it is also to be
377 noted that in the context of our ontological exploration S.N. Dasgupta is very accurate in assuming that Sankara's
378 Brahman was very much like the ??nya of N?g?rjuna, because it is difficult indeed to distinguish between pure
379 being and pure nonbeing as a category. ??5 VI.

380 7 Conclusion

381 The Advaita thinking can be claimed as metaphysical and the Buddhist thinking can be understood as nihilistic;
382 but they strike simultaneously a chord of hidden ontological possibilities, exactly the hermeneutic completeness
383 and mystery of Being. To experience the revealing and concealing aspects of Being in the thinking of Advaita
384 and Buddhism demands an ontological destruction comparable to Heidegger's destruction of western ontology,
385 46 44 Ibid., 74. ??5 Dasgupta & Mohanta: Some reflections on the relation between Sankara and Buddhism,
386 353. ??6 Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 2-3. so that the experience of Being may come to its phenomenological
387 light. The experience of the hermeneutic of Being in the Advaita thinking lays hidden in the dogmatic ascribed
388 characteristics of Brahman. But, for a keen observer this hidden ontological experience is evident in the passages
389 such as, where the Upanishads ask towards the 'Sat' of the Brahman. In such an expression, the 'Sat' is conceived
390 independently of the divine principle of creation and the hermeneutic of Being becomes explicit. To research such
391 hidden possibilities and explore them is the intended obligation of this work; in the words of Heidegger, it is the
392 destruction of conventional understanding of ontology; and every destruction intends and subsequently encloses
393 a construction.

394 In the realm of the hermeneutic of Being, the ??nya-v?da of N?g?rjuna and ?ankara's understanding of
395 Brahman are non-different; rather they are one and the same! What is explicit in the thinking of N?g?rjuna is
396 then nothing, but the expression of Being as 'nihil'. In the history of Being, Being that bears his concealment
397 with itself, hides itself in Nietzsche's thinking. Therefore Heidegger interprets nihilism as a thinking, in which
398 Being becomes explicit as nihil, as the essence of Being that Being carries its oblivion with itself. ??7 However, it
399 is also to be noted that there is no watertight metaphysical distinction in Indian thinking similar to Heidegger's
400 understanding of the dividend explored dichotomy of Being in western metaphysics.

401 Nevertheless the hermeneutic of Being as nihil and something is entangled in Indian context. The western
402 metaphysics is condemned by Heidegger, not because it deals with *summum bonum*, but because it understands
403 Being in terms of the dichotomy of something and nothing, the two dividend explored opposites. This may not be
404 the fact in Indian thinking that we can find the sparks of the thinking of something in the ??nya of N?g?rjuna and
405 the sparks of the thinking of nihil in the Nirguna-Brahman of Advaita, though both of these thinking represent
406 somehow the hermeneutic of nihil and something respectively. Hence we find the ??nya of N?g?rjuna as well as
407 the absolute reality of Advaita go beyond the reach of all concepts, conventions and remains un-contradicted.
408 For this uncontradicted absolute the Madhyamakas use the term 'advaya', whereas the Advaitins use the term
409 'advaita' and both surprisingly enough mean that the absolute is 'non-dual'.

410 Hence the nihilism emerges itself as the concealing of Being in the thinking. In Heidegger's thinking Being
411 is understood as 'something' as well as 'nothing', and subsequently is characterized with 'revealing' (*entbergen*)
412 as well as 'concealing' (*verbergen*). Hence the exploration of ??nya in the thinking of N?g?rjuna is ontologically
413 similar to Heidegger's understanding of nihilism. The term reality is considered to be 'something' that shows

7 CONCLUSION

⁴¹⁴ the essence of existential certainty, where the counterpart of the same is also inherent. Ontologically this comes
⁴¹⁵ closer to the understanding of the revealing and concealing of '?-??????'. ¹ ² ³ ⁴ ⁵

¹ Martin Heidegger, Über den Humanismus, (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2000), 23.9 Heidegger, Sein und Zeit, 334. 10 Martin Heidegger, Holzwege: Nietzsches Wort 'Gottisttot' (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1980), 250 f.

² 11 Martin Heidegger, Die Fragenach der Technik, (Pfüllingen: GüntherNeske, 1962), 11.12 Martin Heidegger, The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays, Translated and with an Introduction by William Lovitt, (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1977), 10.13 Martin Heidegger, Nietzsche: Wille zur Macht als Kunst, (Frankfurt:

³ The Hermeneutic of Concealing and Un-Concealing of Being in Madhyamaka -Buddhism and Advaita-Ved?nta

⁴ Year 2017 © 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US) The Hermeneutic of Concealing and Un-Concealing of Being in Madhyamaka -Buddhism and Advaita-Ved?nta

⁵ Potter, Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy -Advaita Vedanta up to Samkara and his pupils, 07.

416 According to Heidegger, the comparisons as well as Translations are always the explanations, i.e., they are the
417 modes of transmission or deceptive appearance; therefore this attempt as any other comparative study is also
418 not free of any such transmission, especially, when we discuss the thinking ?ankara and N?g?rjuna under the
419 set standards of western ontology and metaphysics. It is also to be noted, that any distinctive attempt to set a
420 thinking under given standards and subsequently to compare with another thinking gives the impression that is
421 still metaphysical. Likewise if we ask, what is the recognizable distinction between something and nihil, between
422 Brahman and ??nya, then between Being and thinking, it is still metaphysical, because, to assert the distinction
423 means to categorize under distinctive order; and the ontological research on 'belonging-together' must go beyond
424 any such attempt. Here the concept of ??nya emerges having tremendous significance, as an attempt to go beyond
425 the apparent metaphysical tendencies in ?ankara's thinking. This work is evidently not an attempt to compare or
426 to classify two different thinking, but to understand the hermeneutic of the thinking of Being in its intercultural
427 context and depth. In such an understanding the metaphysical distinction gets dissolved; the hermeneutic of
428 'belonging-together' stands beyond the terms, language and culture. This hermeneutic of 'belonging-together'
429 provides the foundation to ask the question of Being in Indian thinking, even if, there is no specified synonym
430 similar to its western ontological counterpart. However, the hermeneutic of Being as 'one' and 'the same', as 'nihil'
431 and 'something', which goes beyond any categorizations of time and space or the subject-object relationship plays
432 a central and pervasive role in Indian thinking, especially in Madhyamaka school of N?g?rjuna and in ?ankara's
433 understanding of Advaita-Ved?nta. Considering that the thinking of N?g?rjuna expresses the hermeneutic of nihil
434 of Being and the thinking of Sankara holds a position similar to the understanding of Being in its very beginning,
435 they are not two opposite poles in thinking, but the two different sides of the one and the same thinking. In
436 the realm of the hermeneutic of Being, it is a sabotaging Brotherhood, and in this sabotaging Brotherhood, the
437 un-spelled thinking of Being as 'one' and 'the same' is asserted in the understandings of Brahman, likewise the
438 exploration of ??nya explicitly expresses the nihil of Being.

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