CHAPTER-IV

Critical and Comparative study of the Doctrine of Ātman in Śankara and Spirit (Geist) in Hegel

In this chapter, I shall compare and contrast the doctrine of Ātman in Śankara with the doctrine of Spirit (Geist) in G.W.F. Hegel. This comparison consists of metaphysical, ontological, psychological, epistemological (including logic and dialectics), and ethical aspects. The fundamental reason of comparing Śankara and Hegel is twofold; one lies in the history of philosophy and other in the thoughts of philosophy. If we reflect on history of philosophy then it could be realized that Hegel was fully aware of the Hindu religion and the Advaita Vedanta of Śankara. As a matter of fact, European thinkers in the early nineteenth century approach to classical Indian studies with great zeal. The evidence lies in the fact that, "the ethnic Croat Ivan Filip Vesdin (1748-1806), better known under his monastic name Paulinus, a Sancro Bartholomaco, wrote the first published Sanskrit grammar Sidharuban Seu Grammitica Samscerdamic, Rome 1790. Every major university in Europe started developing a deep interest in Indology. With the efforts of German thinkers like J.W.von Goethe, J.G.Herder, A.W.von Schlegel, W.von Humbolt, special Sanskrit chairs were established at a German Universities - in 1818 in Bonn, 1821 in Berlin, 1926 in
koeingsberg (now Kaliningrad in Russia). Hegel was appointed at the University of Jena in 1801. All young scholars in Europe during nineteenth century were doing Sanskrit. A galaxy of scholars in Europe was able to read and write in Sanskrit-Schiller, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Paul Deussen, Max Muller, Ferdinand de Saussure and so on.”

The other evidence lies in the thought that Śankara was the only prominent philosopher in the East who is of one thought i.e., *Brahmavādi* along with the same claims of the *vedāntins* like Ramanuja and others. In the same manner, if we try to make out the thinkers from the West that have been regarded as philosophers of one thought, i.e., Spirit (*Geist*) and Being respectively, then they can be Hegel and Heidegger. Therefore, the comparison between Śankara and Hegel concerning the doctrine of consciousness can help us to understand a similar problem in two cultural contexts. The study of the doctrine of consciousness involves interrelated aspects, namely; metaphysics, ontology, psychology, epistemology, and ethics. These aspects are interrelated because these are the different angles or approaches of perceiving the problem of ultimate reality. We will discuss in ontological aspect the notion of absolute by emphasizing the different

---

order of existence as empirical (Vyāvahārika), Dreaming (Prātiṣṭhārika) and the absolute (Pārmatthika) in Śankara and subjective, objective, and absolute in Hegel. Epistemological aspect will discuss the different ways of knowledge as pramāṇas in Śankara and categories (Sense-certainty, Perception, Understanding, and Reason) in Hegel to realize Ātman or absolute. Psychological aspect will discuss the different stages of consciousness to experience the Ultimate reality in Śankara and Hegel. Lastly, Ethical aspect will discuss the moral values in terms of niḥśreyasa (absolute well-Being), abhyudaya (empirical well-Being) in Śankara and the whole ethical life examining abstract laws and social ethics in Hegel. On the basis of these interrelated aspects I will try to expound and examine the nature and status of consciousness, which helps in the philosophical growth of concepts and dialogue between both the systems.

4.1 METAPHYSICAL ASPECT

The problem of Ultimate reality or the notion of absolute is discussed by both Śankara and Hegel, so it is necessary to outline the concept of reality in the philosophy of Śankara and Hegel to elucidate the problem of what is really “real” or “not real”. In Śankara’s view, whatever, we see or perceive cannot said to be real, because it involves the defects of change and finitude. So, there must be some reality behind the empirical phenomena whose
nature should be that of fullness and transcendence. Therefore, that which is of finite character is not absolutely real; it is real as long as it participates in Being in its finite dimension. But in itself Being cannot subsist; it should have its own ground or Being in Being itself. It could be deduced that Being is a mixture of Being and non-Being. Hence in Śankara’s thought man could not authenticate himself unless he discovered that Ultimate reality, which is Being itself. It is exposed by Śankara as, “when a jar is broken, the space enclosed by it becomes palpably the limitless space, so when the apparent limitations are destroyed, the knower of Brahman verily becomes Brahman itself.”²

It expresses that Śankara’s understanding of the problem of Ultimate reality is non-dualistic (advaitic) in nature, that is, he conceives Ultimate reality with no distinction, whatsoever is involved. It follows that the difference between finite Beings is unreal from the absolute point of view. In case of Ultimate reality, it is free from the dichotomy of subject-object (I and thou, me and mine). So, the advaitic dichotomies between absolute and phenomenal reality, higher and lower knowledge, and the Ultimate value or freedom associated with knowledge and the bondage of action. The

² Pandit, Motilal. Śankara’s Concept Of Reality, New Delhi, Select Books Publishers and Distributors, 1981, preface xi (Vivekācūdāmanī, 565)
distinctions are assimilated into the *advaitic* thoughts of consciousness and did not uphold any kind of dualism as found in other Indian or Western thoughts. Like, in the school of Sankhya we find dualism posited between absolute consciousness or soul (*Purusa*) and matter (*Prakriti*), including phenomenal consciousness. In this system, phenomenal consciousness is a modification. It is as ontologically real as pure consciousness itself. In Western thought the instance of dualism is mainly found in Descarte in which he opposes duality between mind and matter. In case of Descarte’s metaphysical dualism, there is no suggestion on the ontological distinction between mind or mental substance and the activities of mind, or the attributes of mental substance. But Śankara’s doctrine of consciousness does not lead us to the duality between absolute and phenomenal consciousness in these two orders. The higher order of consciousness persists as an underlying, unifying, and intelligent ground of all phenomenal consciousness. The *Aitareya Upanishad* says, “Reality is consciousness” (*Prajñānam Brahma*). The non-dual reality is considered by Śankara as *Brahman* or *Ātman*. It is realized as absolute by overriding an empirical and phenomenal existence. Thus, Śankara formulates the order of existence from three perspectives that is an empirical (*Vyāvahārika*), Dreaming (*Prātibhāsika*), and the absolute (*Pārmarthika*). As far as an empirical
existence is concerned, it is real as phenomenal existence and may be referred in terms of "finite Being" or "contingency". The contingent nature of empirical world is the reason due to which it is given the status of relatively real. It could be understood with the help of a quotation as, "Every finite thing presents the contradiction that it is not only finite, i.e., confined with itself, but is also relative in the sense that it hangs on another. No object of experience is self-determined and self-contained. Every object is tending to pass away from itself to something else. The finite as such is transitory Being, ever trying to transcend itself. This character of the world is enough to indicate its nature as appearance, or Māyā... For Śankara the real is changeless...what remains identical with itself in all its manifestations are experience, the basis and ground of all appearances. The world of experiences consists of names and forms, and is bound with the relations of space, time, and cause, which endlessly dissipate themselves. Take any event, it has an endless past and an endless future, it is never-ending and nowhere-ending. The tantalizing endlessness which marks it as unreal invites the soul to press on to the absolute."³ But Ultimate reality is one or non-dual (advaita), so we cannot ascribe Ultimate reality to be of contingent nature. Since the nature of Ultimate reality is non-dual, it is

³ Radhakrishnan. The Vedanta According To Śankara And Ramamija, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1928, pp.98-99
beyond the mode of opposites, is distinctionless, and devoid of attributes. Therefore, both epistemological and ontological distinction between “finite Being” and “Being itself” is false. He says, “The statement about the Brahman devoid of qualities and those about the qualified Brahman have no element in common; for qualities such as ‘having light for one’s body’ contribute in no way towards the dissolution of the world, nor again does the latter help in any way the former. For the dissolution of the entire phenomenal world on the one hand, do not allow themselves to be combined in one and the same subject. The preferable theory, therefore, is to distinguish with us two classes of texts, according as Brahman is represented as possessing form or devoid of it.”

The objective and distinctionless reality is referred by Śankara as Brahman. The reality conceived in terms of subjectivity is referred as Ātman. Reality also conceived as “That which is the finest essence- this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is Ātman. Thou art that.” In accordance with it, the essence of the subject (Ātman) is identical with reality then why we are ignorant of this identity? On account of plurality, diversity, distinction, and difference in concern with the world; it is a mere

---

4 Pandit, Motilal. Śankara’s Concept Of Reality, etc., p.xii (V.S.B. 3.2.21)
5 Hume, R.E. The Thirteen Principals Upanishads, New York, Oxford University Press, 1971, p.246 (Ch.U. 6.8.6)
superimposition on the “Being itself” and explained by Śankara with the help of his doctrine of māyā or avidyā. Advaitins explains the phenomenal reality or māyā as, “the superimposition of what does not belong to the Self (finitude and change) on the Self, and of that which belongs to the Self on the not-self.”6 With this Śankara says, “it is true that the Ātman which is the object of knowledge is without parts; but as people have superimposed upon it several things consisting of parts such as the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect, the objects of the senses, and the accompanying pleasure and pain, the method of realizing its real nature would be to discard one after another the parts superimposed on it, by successive acts of attention. Thus, we may have the various stages in the realization of the Ātman.”7 It means the ignorance consists in the failure to discriminate between the phenomenal world, including individual Self and Brahman, the eternally real, transcendental ground of existence. Here at the same time Śankara gets involved in presenting such a system that begins by defining the reality as existence, knowledge, and bliss with the claim that self is identical with reality to which Kant was opposed the Advaitic equivalents through his

6 Devraja, N.K. Introduction To Śankara’s Theory Of Knowledge, Varanasi, Motilal Banarsidas, 1962, p.198
7 Indich, William. M. Consciousness In Advaita Vedanta, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1980, p.16 (B. Ś.S.B.4.1.2)
“speculative or rational psychology, cosmology, and theology.” In this context the point could be made that Śankara’s metaphysical attempt is to justify the phenomenal experience by the characterization of reality as Ultimate is aid to those who are in search of Brahman, but they have not realized yet.

According to Hegel reality can be emphasized in its most immediate and abstract form only as ‘Being’. It stands for an elementary knowledge about an idea. Being is only ‘isness’ of everything. Being is defined as “is pure indeterminateness and emptiness. There is nothing to be intuited in it, if one can speak of intuiting or it is only this pure intuiting itself.” It means it is devoid of all determinations, and content. It is mere an abstraction which is an emptiness of all that exists. So, Being passes into its opposite stage called as ‘nothing’ or Being is equivalent to nothing. Hegel says, “Nothing is simply equality with itself, complete emptiness, absence of all determinations and content, undifferentiatedness in itself.” It refers that it is not a stage of non-entity, but an emptiness that devoid of all determinations like size, shape, weight, colour, etc. Thus, the Being of an object comprehended as nothing. But Being and nothing only affirm its

10 Ibid., p
‘isness’ and not able to reveal anything in concern with reality. This shows that the thought of Being and thought of nothing are identical. It means Being and nothing are equal and reversible as the two sides of equation. If Being=Nothing, then Nothing= Being. They are interchangeable and pass into each other, to which Hegel termed as ‘becoming’. It is a unity of Being and nothing, because it involves identity and difference of Being and nothing within it. It reflects that Being and Nothing are still different and implies that something becomes something different from itself. Thus, becoming includes the identity as well as the difference of Being and Nothing. On the basis of mutual dependence the category of Becoming passes into its sub-categories origination and decease. Hegel explains origination as nothing into Being (coming-to-be) and decease as Being into nothing (ceasing-to-be). The idea of Becoming is a mere indeterminateness and in a state of flux. But it will soon find itself in the state of rest. It is a state in which Being does not passes into its opposites, namely, Nothing. Hence, the Being now is definite and Hegel calls this category determinate Being. It is a category which prevents a thing from disappearing into nothing and appears identical with the actuality of Being. The destruction of it would mean the destruction of the Being of a thing. “Spirit, therefore, has for its object in this sphere, nothing else than Spirit itself. Absolute Spirit,
therefore, is the Spirit’s contemplation of itself.” Thus, Hegel deduces the metaphysical nature of Spirit by applying his dialectics operating in human thought and in the objective world of existence.

The comparison could also be examined on the basis of method adopted by both Śankara and Hegel for deducing the metaphysical reality of the universe. Like Kant and Hegel, traces of dialectics too can be derived out of Śankara’s epistemological description for resolving the metaphysical problem of reality. Now let us see what are the major innovations in Śankara’s Advaita? The major innovations have been obtained by leveling the charges against him imposed by his opponents. These innovations are “dialectic or jnānamārga, emancipation of Vedanta and repudiation of pseudo-Vedanta, the theory of adhyāsa and the doctrine of māyā, the doctrine of provisional truth and the final truth.” Out of these the most important and pivotal innovation is the development of Advaita dialectic, because all aforesaid innovations are the logical consequences of the Advaitic dialectic itself. It can be proved by certain facts provided in support of Śankara Being as a great dialectician of Indian tradition. Padmapada, one of his immediate disciples, says that half of his personality is constituted by

---

11 Stace, W. T. A Critical History Of Greek Philosophy, Delhi, Macmillan India, 1982, p.111
reason (*Anumānārdhanigrāhama*). Vacaspati Misra, the author of the Bhamati and founder of the Bhamati school of Advaita says that Śankara is the very embodiment of pure reason. Ramanuja calls Śankara as a crypto-Buddhist because of the latter’s view that reason (*jnānam*) alone is the Ultimate value or reality. Śankara’s commentary on *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyana also demonstrates conclusively that he is giving a philosophy which does not conflict with any system of philosophy (*Anirodhavādah*) and which is presupposed by all systems of philosophy simultaneously. Śankara’s introduction to this commentary lays down the theory of *Adhyāsa* to transcendental illusion which may be regarded as his prolegomena to all future metaphysics.\(^{13}\) So, *Advaita* is not only a technique or doctrine but also a dialectic developed by Śankara, which is as old as Vedas.

In the epistemological scheme of Śankara Advaitic dialectics is known as *jnānamarga* or *jnānayoga*. It is considered as the only pathway of reality other then *karmyoga*, *Bhaktiyoga*, and *Rājayoga*, because these paths only mislead man from the path of knowledge. *Jnānayoga* is an independent path of knowledge that does not require other path, because reasoning distinguishes it from other paths, as other paths have no use of reason. Hence, *jnānayoga* is the path of reason. In this way, Śankara brought

\(^{13}\) Ibid. p.101
reflection or reason to the centre of dialectics by declaring that Ultimate reality can be known by reason independently of the Sruti. As the meaning of Sruti is known clearly only when it is explained by reason, otherwise it simply remain meaningless. So, dialectic is a method employed by Śankara for an interpretation of Upanishads that makes it consistent. Its example lies in his comments on the state of Ānandamaya in the Brahmasūtra, which shows his views and the views of Upanishadic seers that dialectic is much more important than actual words of Upanishads in order to preserve the logic of the Upanishads.

Knowledge for Śankara is informative (jnāpakam) in nature rather than creative or formative (kārkam), because he holds that there is only one thing that is self, so for him knowledge means nothing but self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is the witness (sāksi) of all experiences. Therefore, ‘I’ is considered as an integral nature of consciousness to which Śankara called as reason or vijnāna. This nature of reason is concealed by the ignorance. The projection of ignorance on self is by reason itself. So, until projected ignorance is not removed the real nature of reason itself cannot be known. It follows that knowledge is negative in function (Nivartakam), because it negates whatever it projects. Thus, projection (Adhyārūpa) and negation
(Āpāda) are the two moments of Advaita dialectic by which self-knowledge is attained.

Śankara has made a distinction between dialectic and logic. He holds that dialectic is uniform and an immediate knowledge, which is beyond the limit of logic, while logic is mediate knowledge. However, the modern logician and Śankara himself deals with the uniform and an immediate knowledge of the absolute. Like Kant, Śankara maintained the distinction between reason and knowledge or logic and dialectic in consciousness.

Śankara’s dialectic is the unity of thought or consciousness which is an instance same as Kant’s transcendental deduction for the transcendental unity of apperception. In Advaitic dialectic Ātman or self or consciousness is the presupposition of all knowledge objects. The unity, existence, and value of objects is in reality is the unity of self. The consciousness or self is at the ground of an absolute. The advaitic held that Ātman is the absolute or Brahman. The arguments for the proofs of existence are either mystical or mythological, or cosmological, but Śankara provided the logical and epistemological proofs for it and made it an epistemology by proving consciousness as apriori. Śankara also admit “that his theory of self cannot conflict with any other system of philosophy. He has examined nihilism, materialism, spiritualism, subjective Idealism, atomism, deism, theism and
Mimansa pragmatism or activism and proved conclusively that all of them cannot but accept his theory of consciousness.”\textsuperscript{14} Conclusively, Śankara’s doctrine is based on the principle of unity, which is operating in all the objects of world in them from within.

At this stage of discussion it is clear that the dialectic of Śankara is a critique of pure reason, but the significance of method has different implication in Kant and Śankara. Śankara’s dialectics is a kind of synthesis in criticism, while in Kant dialectic is the transcendental method or transcendental logic.

The synthesis in \textit{advaitic} dialectic is likely to be mistaken and confused with the Hegelian dialectic.\textsuperscript{15} In actuality the Hegelian dialectic is essentially different from \textit{advaitic} dialectic. It is different in the sense that “Hegelian dialectic involves the common presupposition of a thesis and sublation, is progressive in the sense that from the common presupposition it goes further to another thesis, its sublation and their common presupposition. Thus, it traverses along a number of triads of thesis, sublation, and synthesis and makes a ladder, a hierarchy of all synthesis that is thus discovered. As opposed to this, \textit{Advaitic} dialectic is strictly regressive. It points out to only one presupposition of all thesis and antithesis and does not go from one presupposition to another or from one synthesis to another. It has only one

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. p.115
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. p
synthesis which is that consciousness is the presupposition of all objects, categories, principles and theories. Thus it has discovered the minimum of assumption which cannot come into conflict with any system of philosophy." It suggests the difference of approach to the method of dialectic adopted by Śankara and Hegel. Śankara’s dialectics has only one presupposition of all objects in consciousness with one synthesis due to which it does not come into conflict with any other system of philosophy, while Hegel’s dialectic is strictly regressive because it has common presuppositions with different synthesis of every triad to maintain a hierarchy of all discovered synthesis.

With this interpretation Hegel also formulates the concept of absolute by exhibiting dialectical laws operating between thought and objective world in his words as, “Everything that surrounds us may be viewed as an instance of dialectic. We are aware that everything finite, instead of Being stable and Ultimate, is rather changeable and transient; and this is exactly what we mean by that dialectic of the finite, by which the finite, as that which in itself is other than itself, is forced beyond its own immediate or natural Being to turn suddenly into its opposite.. All things, we say - that is, the finite world as such - are doomed; and in saying so, we have a vision of

\[16\] Ibid. p.116
dialectic as the universal and irresistible power before which nothing can stay, however, secure and stable it may deem itself. We find traces of its (dialectic’s) presence in each of the particular provinces and phases of the natural and the spiritual world. This moment the planet stands in this spot but implicitly it is the possibility of Being otherwise the planet brings into existences dialectical... It is the same dynamic that lies at the root of every other natural process and as it were forces nature beyond itself.”\(^{17}\) The passage demonstrates that the laws of dialectics operating in human thought and simultaneously in the objective world. So, Hegel formulates first the principles of dialectics in logic (concepts and categories) and then externalizes those laws of dialectics to the world. It is a process of ‘externalization’ of the Spirit, because it is Spirit that gives rise to the laws of dialectic. Hegel holds that it is Kant who exhibited dialectic as “a necessary function of reason.”\(^{18}\) Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason* holds that the essence of dialectic does not consisted of reason as such but in the exposition of the antinomies or in contradictions, which arises when reason is applied to the transcendental questions about the origin of the world, causality, and substance. According to Kant, dialectic is the necessary


\(^{18}\)Hegel. *The Science Of Logic*, trans.A.V.Miller, etc., p.56
negation of reason by itself by inventing the antimony of its initial position. It reveals the truth when it goes contradictory on passing the judgments about the noumenal. He also admits that the dialectic can only expose the contradiction of reason but can never resolve it.\(^{19}\) Hegel at the one hand appreciating Kant for recognizing dialectic as the intrinsic negativity of the self-moving reason, but on the other hand Hegel criticizes Kant for denoting the negative aspect of dialectic and made reason incapable of knowing the infinite as reasonable. So, he brings Kantian transcendental dialectic extended to the world of objects (phenomena) and tries to resolve the antinomies of Kant by the dialectic of speculative reason.

Fichte uses the dialectic in explaining the world in a triadic process as, Reality-Negation-Determination. Hegel contends that the Fichte’s dialectic does not involve a determinate unity of the thesis and antithesis but a mere juxtaposition of the two.\(^{20}\)

Schelling also uses dialectic as a unity of action and reaction and holds that there is dialectical law of triplicate working through the world, organic, and inorganic. Hegel holds that Schelling has presupposed the world as the

\(^{19}\) Kant, *Critique Of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, etc., p. 162, 217, 219, 221

synthesis of action and reaction but fails in exposing it as the only truth.\footnote{Ibid. pp.525-26}

For Hegel the dialectic is the “only true method” to comprehend the absolute and speculation of grasping the opposites in their unity.\footnote{Hegel, \textit{The Science Of Logic}, trans. A.V. Miller, etc., p.54,56} It also describes the Spirit of contradiction that distinguishes the true from the false.

The exposition of Hegel’s doctrine of Spirit and dialectics is situated in the movement of Spirit in three phases.

1. Subjective Spirit: the Spirit’s relation to itself, an only ideal totality of the idea. This is Being-near-to itself in the form of only internal freedom.

2. Objective Spirit: as a world to produce and produced in the forms of reality, not only ideality. Freedom here becomes an existing, present necessity.

3. Absolute Spirit: the unity, that is in itself and for itself, of the objectivity of the Spirit and of its ideality or its concept, the unity producing itself eternally, Spirit in its absolute truth-absolute Spirit.\footnote{Singh, Raghwendra Pratap, edited by D.P.Chattopadhya, etc., pp.312-313}

The above exposition of three phases of doctrine of Spirit sums up the notion of absolute, as a progressive phenomenon of world until it reaches to realize the absolute. Thus, Hegelian philosophy proposes a new dimension to the
thoughts about consciousness, which builds on the foundations of Kant. Hegel first of all brought the fact that consciousness is a developing process and development is historical. The history of consciousness involves different forms of consciousness that give shape to the world; each and every form of consciousness is overcome dialectically for the next appearance described in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In Hegel’s view, it is a process that is meant for preparing ground for the appearance of the absolute Spirit in concrete human context in which dualism of subject and object of prior forms of consciousness get reconciled.

4.2 ONTOLOGICAL ASPECT

At the ontological level, comparatively both Śankara and Hegel shares an approach to the problem of ultimate reality. Śankara initially did not deny the existence of phenomenal or empirical world; so far it appears to be real to us, but consider it as temporary in nature. In empirical condition, the *Jīva* has an outfit of three coats as; the outermost is the physical body and the *Jīva* is associated with it in the waking state; just inside it is the *antahkāraṇa* which is associated with *Jīva* in the dream-state; and still more inside there is *avidyā* which is associated with the *Jīva* in the state of dreamless sleep. These three vestures are spoken of as the gross (*sthūla*), subtle (*sūksma*), and
causal (kārana) bodies of the Jīva. These three bodies are further identified with the five sheaths (kośas) mentioned in the Taittirīya Upanishad corresponding to the three states of modified consciousness found in the Māndūkya Upanishad. They are the sheath of food (annamaya kośas), the sheath of the vital airs (prānāmaya kośas), the sheath of mind (manomaya kośas), the sheath of self-consciousness (vijñānāmaya kośas) and the sheath of bliss (anandamaya kośas). The physical body is identified with the sheath of food, the subtle body with the sheath of vital air, the mind and self-consciousness and the causal body with the sheath of bliss. The relationship between the states, the body and the sheaths may be set forth as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waking state</th>
<th>Physical body</th>
<th>Sheath of food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dream-state</td>
<td>Subtle body</td>
<td>Sheaths of vital airs, the mind and self-consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep-sleep state</td>
<td>Causal body</td>
<td>Sheath of bliss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Relationship between the states, the body and the sheaths

---

25 Ibid. p
The envelops or sheaths indicates the many phases of manifestation of the self. According to René Guénon, the first sheath, namely, the Ānandamayakośa—the sheath made of beatitude—“is none other than the totality of possibilities of manifestation” of the Ātman.26

For Śankara this sheath, which abounds in bliss, can also by transposition, mean the absolute non-differentiated state of the supreme Brahman.27 In this state the Being that was in formal manifestation of self, attains the state of formless. It is a state of supra-individual order that opens the way to experience the state of absolute non-manifestation. We read: All these creatures go day after day into the Brahma-world and yet do not discover it.28 According to Upanishads, an individual foretaste the metaphysical union in Ānandamayakośa in accordance with his nature that calls to experience the nature in the state of deep-sleep. The second sheath of Ātman is Vijñānamayakośas, it is a state manifested as the light of the intelligent Brahman in the higher intellect of man. Śankara declares that the one unmodified Brahman is made of a plurality of intellects (būddhi). Thus, Ātman manifests itself through the reflection of its intellect upon the intellect.

26 Guénon, René. Man And His Becoming-According To The Vedānta, London, Luzac and Co., 1945, p.75
28 Deussen, Paul. Sixty Upanishads Of The Veda, trans. V.M.Bedekar and G.B.Palsule, N.Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1980, p.178 (Ch.U. VII.3.2)
of man. The third sheath is the manifestation of the self in the Manomayakoṣa-the sheath of mind of man. Manomayakoṣa means sheath of mind that belongs to the individual and is made up of the internal faculty of cognition known as mānas, which is of subtle order. It is sheath that gives rise to the ego-sense (ahānkāra) in the thinking Being and makes aware of one as an individual Being. Thus by means of the mind-sheath in man the Ātman manifests itself in its individualized and subtle form. The fourth sheath is the manifestation of self as the Prāṇamyakoṣa. It is consisted of aggregate of the organs of action, perception, and the five prāṇas of the physical constitution, namely, aspiration (prāṇa), inspiration (apāna), the intermediary phase between the preceding ones named as vyāna, expiration (udāna), and inner assimilation of food (samāna). This fourth envelop together with the Vijnānamayakoṣa and the Manomayakoṣa make up the subtle form (sūkṣmasarīra or lingaśarīra) of the individual Being. The Prāṇamyakoṣa indicates the subtle manifestations of Brahman as the life-giving principle of the physical nature in man.29 The fifth sheath is known as Ānnamayakoṣa refers to the gross or physical part of man that manifested in self. It is realized when attention is concentrated on his body and realized as

the whole world is *Brahman*. His body reflects the presence of *Brahman* and also forms part of the formal manifestation of the *Brahman*.

Śankara remarks that *śruti* gives an account of the five sheaths for the purpose of revealing the nature of *Brahman* as the inward self by following a process of eliminating the five sheaths just as rice is extracted from the grain by removing the layers of husk.\(^\text{30}\)

Hegel emphasizes doctrine of Spirit in a triad of subjective, objective, and absolute truth. Subjectivity and objectivity are two independent extremes and for Hegel the perceptual existence is totally real, because it is a product of sense-certainty, so it can not be false. It means logically derived knowledge is difficult to refute, because it is a conclusion made by categories (perception and understanding) in the presence of consciousness as an inward reality i.e. self-consciousness. The subjectivity, as self-consciousness is a nature that is neither conflicting nor contradicting with the external world of immediate perceptions nor with the internal world of our passions, desire, emotion, and thoughts. Hence, the objective Spirit and subjective Spirit transcend itself to the absolute Spirit. Absolute Spirit can be realized in three forms viz. art, religion, and philosophy in Hegel’s view. In art, the form and beauty are modes of absolute in immediacy. The form is

\(^{30}\) Balasubramanian, R. *Advaita Vedānta*, New Delhi, Centre for studies in civilizations, 2000, p.80 (*Tai. U*. 2.2.1)
the external immediacy of sense-objects manifested in the absolute. Therefore, beauty in art is realized in two distinct forms: subjectivity or unity, objectivity or plurality. Subjectivity denotes the content and objectivity denotes the form. It means subjectivity is an internal activity in terms of consciousness, while objectivity is an external activity in terms of sense-objects. The former gives spiritual significance; the latter provides the sensuous or material form through which subject reveals itself. Therefore, both Śankara and Hegel ontologically did not deny the existence of phenomenal world in the initial stages of knowledge and existence. It validates that in both Śankara and Hegel a subjective consciousness has more value over an external and phenomenal existence, because a subjective Spirit helps to realize the truth in terms of Ātman or Brahman in Śankara and absolute Spirit (Geist) in Hegel. Hegel also depicts that the Spirit is present in both subjective and objective forms, which is transcended to the absolute Spirit. It verifies from his dialectical progression: Idea-Nature-Spirit. It shows that there is a difference in the approach to the problem; Śankara always tries to distinguish rationality from spirituality and leaves rationality far behind in search of absolute, while Hegel conceptualizes absolute through rationality, which can only be experienced in phenomenology. It means the culmination of thought process in absolute
knowledge emerges as the Spirit in and itself, which is a rational knowledge derived through systematic approach at the preceded stages of knowledge. Therefore, the process of development or growth of consciousness to absolute consciousness in Hegel’s system is called as absolute knowledge or Philosophy, “as it is the reconciliation of Spirit in itself with Spirit for itself and the revelation of Spirit as the in and for itself.”31 Hence, it could be interpreted that the consciousness in Śankara is spiritual or divine in nature, because according to him Brahman is absolute, real, and blissful, which is also asserted by Śruti. Hegel’s Spirit is totally rational and realizes absolute in practical experiences of art, religion, and philosophy. These three stages have different categories, but it transcends to absolute only when there is perfect balance in between content and form. The perfect balance of content and form is realized in the stage of philosophy. Here the absolute Spirit is self-knowing and infinite that is freedom. The mind is objective as well as subjective in form of knower and known as an idea in itself. The rift between them is transcended to absolute.

Further, Śankara’s notion of god is just a religious demand of evolving humanity that there should be conception of god in form of ‘personal god.’ But this conception of god is limited to the empirical world; from the point

of view of absolute it has no existence. Śankara solves this problem by making distinction between the *saguna* (qualified) *Brahman* and the *nirguna* (attribute less) *Brahman*. The former is also referred as *Īśvara* (god). The difference in *nirguna* and *saguna* *Brahman* is that the latter is associated with the power known as *Māyā*, whereas the former is not. “The idea of personal god is due to *Māyā*.”\(^ {32} \) It can also be represented as “*Īśvara* or the *saguna*-Brahman represents one reality, and that is personal god who is supposed to be all-knowing, omnipresent, as well as the originator, destroyer and the sustainer of the world whereas the *nirguna* Brahman represents the ultimate reality, the absolute.”\(^ {33} \) Thus *Īśvara* is real so far as reality is perceived from empirical viewpoint. *Brahman* posses double nature because it is an object either of knowledge or Nescience (*avidyā*). In scriptures the conception of the world is denoted by the terms as *Māyā*, *Prakriti*, *Swabhava*, and *Kṣetra*. *Prakriti* is not only a life less matter, but it includes an intellectual, emotional, and volitional phenomenon of human experience. In *BhagwadGītā* it is narrated as “the great elements *ahankāra* (egoism), *buddhi* (willing), the *avyakta* (the principle connected with *buddhi*), ten senses, one mind, the five objects of sense; desire, hatred, pleasure, pain the

---

\(^{32}\) Buch, Maganlal A. *The Philosophy Of Śankara*, Baroda, Good Companions, 1988, p.4 (*BG*. VII.25)


244
aggregate, intelligence, firmness; this here described in brief, is the Kṣetra with its modifications.\textsuperscript{34} It refers that the modifications are the outer and inner sides of the consciousness, which is gross matter; it does not have a principle of life, activity or intelligence in it. It is just an object for a subject in form of an instrument through which the soul works and having no existence on its own part. At the inner side of consciousness, it is called as Kṣetragña or the soul in man. It is the subject and main source of all knowledge and activity. It is one which is permanent and unchangeable. Either of them (subject or object) is removed the world get vanishes. It means objective world has no existence apart from the existence of subjective world, vice versa. The empirical world has existence due to prakrti or due to the power of Māyā. Hence, both object and subject are mere manifestations of the absolute. Māyā and prakrti has no existence even an individual soul has no existence apart from Brahman. On the other hand, “Hegel equates absolute spirit with the god, since it endowed with all the qualities of the absolute.”\textsuperscript{35} It is the one absolute that is realized in all individuals and all individual selves get unified transcendentally and ontologically in the consciousness of absolute. Later Hegel says, “God is

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. p(BG.XIII.6-7)

\textsuperscript{35} Devi, B.Nirmala. A Study Of The Dialectic Of Hegel, Delhi, Eastern Book Linkers, 1995, p.117
God only so far as he knows himself.” However, this self-knowledge that god has is “man’s knowledge of god.” In other words, it is our knowing that constructs God. Hegel was also fond of Meister Eckhart’s claim that the “eye with which God sees me is the eye with which I see him; my eye and his eye are one and the same...If God did not exist nor would I; if I did not exist nor would he.” In Hegel’s view God is our construction. It means mind is involved in the formation of this concept, which is under the impact of culture that has been fundamentally formed, moulded, perhaps even created. It refers that the construction of God is a matter of self-knowledge or consciousness. Culture and religion portray God to exist absolutely in and for itself.

Finally, it can be distinguished that Śankara’s conception of god is an emergence condition on an account of religion to relate with philosophy of life. In advaitic tradition, the entity of god is remaining as long as the empirical world reveals to be real. It is introduced on an account of practicing morality, as morality has value so far as it leads to knowledge of ultimate reality. So, the conception of god for Śankara is only having an instrumental value to regulate the ethical values among people. It is a temporary notion and remains as long as the empirical world has existence.

36 Kain, Philip J. Hegel and other, New York, State University of New York Press, 2005, p.15
At the end, the knowledge of ultimate reality leads to realize the true nature of Ātman as Brahman. In comparison to it, in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel says, “The true is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development. Of the absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only in the end is it what it truly is; and that precisely in this consists its nature, viz., to be actual subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself.” It construes the fact that the knowledge of absolute is the absolute Spirit, as Spirit exists only in human consciousness. For Hegel the self-knowing absolute Spirit is equated with the necessary content of human mind, which is freedom. Absolute Spirit is freedom, which is infinite and self-determined. Hegel’s classification of religion in natural, spiritual, and absolute seems to be the parts of a whole concept; it is all due to the fact that he tries to pass each notion with the check of rationality through his dialectics. It can be understood as, “The self of existent Spirit has, as a result, the form of complete immediacy; it is posited neither as something thought or imagined, nor as something produced, as is the case with the immediate self in natural religion, and also in the religion of art; on the contrary, this god is

---

sensuously and directly beheld as a self, as an actual individual man; only so is this god self-consciousness.\textsuperscript{38}

In brief, ontological aspect reveals the fact that both the systems have astonishing similarities in adopting the problem, but there is a contrast in the approach of realizing the absolute. Śāṅkara’s approach for the problem of consciousness is spiritual or divine, while Hegel’s approach to the philosophy of consciousness is totally rational. Hegel tries to realize the absolute in the phenomenal world itself through his laws of dialectic. Śāṅkara discard and disown the fact of phenomenal world in his doctrine of Māyā. The superimposition of subject and object is due to power of Māyā. It is depicted as “an illusion, a dream, or a castle in the air.”\textsuperscript{39} Conclusively, the whole cosmos is the result of illusion. It means every individual soul is responsible for its own cosmos, and the world is their imagination. The individual soul is a part of universal soul, which merges in it through the practice of meditation or samādhi and realizes the true nature of a Ātman as one that is Brahman. It is a realm of non-dualism. Śāṅkara and Hegel both propose to realize an inner consciousness either in form of self-consciousness in Hegel or as Ātman in Śāṅkara. It refers that both gave importance to the subjectivity rather then objectivity, as objectivity is of

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid. p.459
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. p.7 (BG.II.31)
temporary in nature. The subjectivity is always strives to experience the ultimate and that tendency assimilates everything and transcends itself to realize absolute in diversity and identity. In this way, theory of reality presupposes the theory of knowledge. So, a better way to deduce the ontological reality is by analyzing the psychological aspect of doctrine of consciousness.

4.3 PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT

An enquiry to the psychological aspect of consciousness leads to reveal about the true nature of Ātman in Śankara and Spirit in Hegel by putting reflection on the different stages of consciousness. This aspect will expose the rationalistic attitude of knowledge with intuitive experience at par. The description of different states of mind in relation to the consciousness is mainly described in the text of Māndūkya Upanishad. Śankara wrote a commentary on it to enunciate the stages of consciousness. The text only contains twelve verses and every verse contains a different mood of our knowledge. Its theme is the three stages of consciousness in experience. But the text begins with three syllables A, U, M or “OM”. The symbol “AUM” denotes the three “states” of consciousness and also that which is not a “state”. “It is distinguishable, as the space is distinguishable into ‘Quarters’, the four quarters and Time which is distinguishable into past, present, and
future"\textsuperscript{40}, consciousness is empirically distinguishable into ‘states’, waking, dreaming, and sleeping. Each ‘state’ has a one-one correspondence with one of the three distinguishable but indivisible elements of ‘A U M’. A U M is the original word \textit{aksara}, the symbol of the imperishable and the infinite. “‘A U M’ is a three sound symbols denoting the gross, the subtle and the causal aspects of infinite have been equated with three states of consciousness, which contains the totality of man’s experience.”\textsuperscript{41} Hence, “\textit{Om is Brahman}” (Tai. U. I.viii.1). Similarly, levels of consciousness on the basis of Hegel’s subjective Spirit can also be divided into anthropology, phenomenology, and psychology. At the level of anthropology the Spirit is in the state of sleep or in semi-conscious state. At the level of phenomenology it is conscious or waking and at the level of psychology it is self-consciousness.\textsuperscript{42} The description and division of the levels of consciousness by Śankara and Hegel at the psychological level is showing astonishing similarities.

However, the mental function of soul is also categorized by Śankara as \textit{Viśva} (the waking state), \textit{Taîjasa} (dreaming state), \textit{Prājña} (\textit{susupti} or the state of dreamless sleep) and \textit{Turiya} which is same as \textit{Brahman} or \textit{Ātman}. The

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{40} Nikhilananda, Swami. (trans. and annotated), \textit{The Māndūkyaopanisad} With Gaudapada’s Commentary, Mysore, Sri Ram Krishna Ashram, 1955, p.9 (Ma. U.1.1)
\item \textsuperscript{41} Ibid. p
\item \textsuperscript{42} Devi, B. Nirmala, \textit{A Study of the Dialectic of Hegel}, Delhi, Eastern Book Linkers, 1995, p.95
\end{itemize}

250
corresponding different levels of consciousness in Spirit are also categorized by Hegel in waking (conscious), sleeping or dreaming (semi-conscious), and self-consciousness. It indicates that the psychological parameters are nearly same in both the systems in order to deduce the mental process involved in attaining knowledge, so as to realize absolute or the Supreme Being in relation to self.

At the psychological stage of consciousness, Śankara analyze the states of mind as the different stages of consciousness. Waking state is an outward looking consciousness, it posses the nineteen mouths (the five senses of perception and the five organs of action make up ten, the vital forces-ṇa and the rest- make up five, and (there are) mind (the thinking faculty), intellect, ego and mind-stuff), which are the gates of experiences that keeps up the life process. These aforesaid entrances are termed as Vaiśvānarāh, thus constituted to enjoy gross objects. Hence, if we reflect on our consciousness then we find it an intentional. It means that either it is in form of an intended objects of an external world or the subjective experience of one’s own in form of pleasure and pain. The mind and senses which function in this state are the instruments through which Viśvā, experiences all kinds of external “gross” objects. In this way, the phenomenal world leaves an impression of gross objects, which is a matter of experience, either in form
of pain or pleasure subjectively and correspondingly perceptual in the state
of dream. In this state of mind the consciousness has been experienced
internally (antah), but the dream objects seen not as a memory of past. They
are the creations of mind, so they are non-relational to self but appear to be
relational. The dream cognitions are seems to be relational because they are
manifest in mind as pleasurable or painful cognitions due to ignorance and
desires. Hegel used the term, “soul” as the substance of Spirit; not only this
he also try to analyze the Spirit as different states of soul. The different
states of soul are discussed by Hegel as “alterations”. According to Hegel,
the different states of soul are just the alternating states of one going in other
state. Like, waking is the state of the soul in that it entered in the opposition
with universal “Being”. Sleep, according to Hegel is the state of the soul’s
sunkenness in its undifferentiated substantial unity or universality. Sleeping
and waking, however, are not only the mere alterations but the alternating
states of one going on other. Hence, according to Hegel sleep is not merely
rest as cessation of an activity. It is the soul’s return within itself in its
simple universality, the restoration of its wholeness from its dispersion in the
particulars of waking life.43 In sleep those organs and functions that are
outwardly attuned, such as the senses, become inactive or subdued, while

43 Greene, Murray. Hegel on the Soul, etc., p.78
those concerned with the soul’s concentration “within self” proceed with their work. Finally, Hegel defines “alteration” logically as, “In so far as something alters, the alteration falls within its constitution; it is that in the something which becomes another. The something itself preserves itself in the alteration, which affects only this unstable surface of its otherness not its determinations.”\textsuperscript{44} It reflects that alteration is a process in which something alters to another, but it preserves something in itself that does not affect the others. In this way there are two types of alterations viz., essential and accidental. The essential alterations are the changes in childhood, youth, manhood, and old age. The accidental alterations are the changes in sexual relations and those we experience in sleeping and waking states.

Moreover, the state of dream is analyzed as the inner world of feeling-subjectivity knows in an immediate manner of dream and presentiment, not only comprises of natural soul, but also has deep-rooted ties with the conscious life and with his inner substance. The feeling-subjectivity or man’s feeling world is a manifold against the simple unity of soul. But it is neither apart from soul nor is soul apart from it. It is a substantial Being of concrete life and substance. Its manifold passes in the form of dream world. Dream world is a manifold of natural soul where its content entirely may be

\textsuperscript{44} Hegel. \textit{Science of Logic}, 1969, etc., p.124

253
or may not be contingent. So, Hegel said that often soul in dreams attains to a “deep and powerful feeling of its entire individual nature,” of the whole compass of its past, present, and future.\textsuperscript{45} Hegel also considers that the subjectivity in dream is sublated in higher subjectivity of ego, which is in the sense two subjectivities in one. It means two subjectivities existing in the same selfhood in form of natural basis as living in one another and as waking consciousness that is one controlling power over the other. Its immediate example is the relation of foetus and mother. In the foetus-mother relationship according to Hegel, the Being-for-self of the individual soul (the foetus) and its Being-in-self are divided between two individuals in a “psychical unity” (\textit{Seeleneinhell}).\textsuperscript{46} He depicts this unity in terms of “unity of the distinguished”, because this kind of unity is “distinct” and incomprehensible in its spatial and material sense, so it constitutes the essence of Spirit. It develops into feeling subjectivity when the inner feeling get individualized as his own particular, to which Hegel termed as “genius.” It is something according to Hegel that marks us as distinguished from others. In light of this view he also says, “I am within myself a “twofold Being” (\textit{ein Zweifaches}).\textsuperscript{47} Here he intends to say that he is an individual

\textsuperscript{45} Greene, Murray. \textit{Hegel on the Soul}, etc., p.107
\textsuperscript{46} Hegel. \textit{Philosophy of Mind}, 1971, etc., p.94
\textsuperscript{47} Greene, Murray. \textit{Hegel on the Soul}, etc., p.109
known to him in everyday world and known to his fellows but there is also
an inner Being with particular genius nature, which is responsible for all the
activities and having last say in the decisions that provides to reason.
The comparison depicts different avenues for the same psychological state
of consciousness or mind in both the systems. On one hand for Śankara, it is
a nineteen mouth entrances, which keeps up the life process and through it
experiences the gross objects of phenomenal world. In waking state the soul
comes in contact with gates of experience as an outward looking
consciousness. On the other hand for Hegel, the state of waking is an
entrance of soul in the opposition of universal “Being” for Hegel so, both the
system talking about same psychological state with different set of words.
In case of other stages of consciousness, Śankara consider state of dream
and deep-sleep as different stages of consciousness. According to Śankara
deep-sleep is a state in which mind does not function, but absence of stream
of consciousness does not mean extinction of consciousness otherwise, how
we could claim that “I slept well” or “I slept well without seeing any
dream.” Śankara’s state of deep-sleep is not only a conscious process but
also a phenomenal characteristic of bliss (ānanda). It is a sphere of Prājñā,
who remains one and undifferentiated as a mere mass of consciousness,
which is bliss. It is explained in Brihadāranyaka Upanishad as, “While one
does not see anything there, one sees everything there. Seeing, one sees not; for there cannot be any absence of the sight of the seer, owing to the imperishability (of the seer); there is not that second entity differentiated from it which it can see.” In deep-sleep the soul leaves the phenomenal world far behind and becomes one with that whose self is pure Being. Hegel discusses the state of dream and deep-sleep as one states of mind or consciousness, however, for Hegel feeling-subjectivity or man’s feeling world is a manifold against the unity of soul. But it is not apart from soul and soul is not apart from it. Its manifold passes in form of dream world. Hegel also said that sometimes dreams are so powerful feeling and deep rooted to show it is an entire individual nature. Successively, sublated to higher subjectivity of ego, it means two subjectivities reside in one. One is the same selfhood and other is the powerful feeling govern through it. As a result, Hegel’s state of dream is an inner feeling-subjectivity which in its entirety get deep rooted to sublate in higher subjectivity of ego that may be or may not be the state of bliss, because it is manifold of natural soul so entire content may not be or may be contingent.

Comparatively, it can be concluded that the state of dream is analyzed in same context but in different pattern by both the systems. The state of deep-

---

sleep is a conscious process with phenomenal characteristic of bliss in Śankara, but in Hegel it can be a dream world sublated in higher subjectivity of ego. So, it is not categorized separately as a state of mind or consciousness. There is also a fourth sphere of consciousness in Śankara i.e. Turīya, which is a state indescribable through words neither conscious nor unconscious nor graspable in an empirical dealings nor inferable nor thinkable; whose valid proof consists in the belief of single self as a Being; which is auspicious and non-dual that is to be known as infinite consciousness and bliss. It is depicted in Māndūkya Upanishad as, “The partless Om is Turīya- beyond all conventional dealings, the limit of the negation of the phenomenal world, the auspicious, and the non-dual. Om is thus the self to be sure. He who knows thus enters the self through his self.”49 It is a divine state about whom Hegel has just interpreted as “immediacy” of a feeling soul. According to Hegel, there is an immediate knowing of outer objects without any mediation of external sense organs. To such cases he called as diviners or the persons who experiences outer objects by virtue of some sensitivity. It is a state in which organs are not mediate to sensitize an object. By comparing both the views, it can be derived that the fourth state of consciousness is perceived with different outlook and sense in

49 Gambhirananda, Swami. (trans.), Māndūkya Upanishad, Calcutta, Advaita Ashram, 2000, pp.55-56
both the systems. In Śankara, it is a highest state of soul which is to be realized to experience the infinite as bliss, while Hegel’s “immediacy” of a feeling soul is an outcome of an intellectual treatment applies on the experience of an external objects without the mediation of sense-organs to whom he termed as diviners, but it is not similar to the state of turīya as in Śankara; it can be refers as an intuitive experience rather than divine experience. The divine lies in the belief of single self, which is non-dual and perfect state of bliss. The Upanishads unanimously highlight the following characterizations of Ātman or consciousness:

1. Consciousness, although the basis of the all knowing, is different from the object known. It is implied in every act of knowing. It is the ultimate subject; it can never become an object of knowledge. It is one, immutable, indivisible reality.

2. It is different from the I-consciousness or the empirical individual (jīva), who cognizes and enjoys. In other words, it is different from the empirical individual who is caught up in the triple states of waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep.

3. Consciousness, although it continues in the three states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, is not identical with any of them.
4. It shines in its own light; it is self-luminous.\textsuperscript{50}

Thus, consciousness or \textit{Atman} is characterized in different ways with same point that the self or consciousness is lies beyond empirical knowing, eternal, and non-different from \textit{Brahman}.

Conclusively, both the systems shares and acknowledges a stream of consciousness as different states of mind, which transits from one state to other, but the soul or self remains throughout in all the stages of consciousness as a fish that swims in water from one bank to another bank without Being affected by the current of water, even so the self moves from one state of mind to another as the case may be. It means soul has different stages of consciousness in accordance to inner feeling subjectivity, which is recognized in different psychological activities in relation to an internal or external world. Hence, it is proved that both the systems admit the presence of consciousness in all the psychological states of mind. Therefore, in order to maintain psychological validity it is necessary to establish an epistemology.

\textbf{4.4 EPISTEMOLOGICAL ASPECT}

The doctrine of consciousness is closely related with knowledge. In other words, knowledge means truth, because the only means for the revelation of

\textsuperscript{50} Gupta, Bina. \textit{Cit Consciousness}, etc., p.25
truth is knowledge. So, knowledge is a process through which we realize or experience truth. In absence of knowledge we could not able to analyze the nature of truth as ultimate reality. Therefore, to apprehend reality it is essential to analyze an underlying process of knowledge. In the system of Śankara and Hegel, the process of knowledge is analyzed through different stages of consciousness. On the one hand, Advaitins believes in all those categories, which are considered by Indian philosophy in general as pramāṇas i.e. perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumāna), verbal testimony (śabda), analogy (upamāna), presumption (arthāpatti), and non-cognition (anupalabdhi). On the other hand, Śankara broadly divided knowledge into empirical and trans-empirical or transcendental following the basic distinction between self and the not-self. The entire not-self constitutes the empirical realm. The mind, the senses, and the body also are the objects of the external world, i.e. not-self. They can be known only through pramāṇas. The knowledge, which we acquire through pramāṇas, is the empirical knowledge. According to Śankara, the self can only be known through Śruti; so Śruti is the source of trans-empirical knowledge. But it should be understood in this context also, “Nor must you think that the texts stating the cooperation of works of the aśramas towards knowledge refer to the fruit of knowledge… for knowledge is not characterized by injunctions, and the fruit
of knowledge is not to be effected by means... Therefore texts stating the co-operation of works (with knowledge) have to be interpreted as stating works are means for the origination of knowledge."\textsuperscript{51} It refers that scriptural works prepare man for deliverance but not for liberation because deliverance is fundamentally characterized as intuitive experience or realization of an inward self, which is different from the empirical self, is identical with "Being itself." In comparison to it, Hegel’s epistemological approach to the problem of the doctrine of Spirit (Self-consciousness) passes through three stages of consciousness viz. Sense-certainty or sensuous-consciousness, Perception (\textit{Wahrnehmung}) or sense perception and Understanding (\textit{Verstand}) or intellect, and Reason. Hegel deduced the notion of Spirit in the beginning as ‘sense-certainty’. Hegel writes, “Because of its concrete content, sense-certainty immediately appears as the richest kind of knowledge, indeed a knowledge of infinite wealth for which no bounds can be found, either when we reach out into space and time in which it is dispersed, or when we take a bit of this wealth, and by division enter into it. Moreover, sense-certainty appears to be the truest knowledge; for it has not as yet omitting anything from the object, but has the object before it in its

perfect entirety.\textsuperscript{52} Sense-certainty is a non-mediate or a kind of pure receptivity, which is immeasurably rich in comparison to conceptual consciousness, because nothing has been abstracted out of it. Hegel’s view rejects the Kantian distinction between appearance and thing-in-itself at the level of sense-certainty. According to Hegel to know something means to know truly what it is. It is not something to know only in appearance as it then fall short in knowledge, because no qualities is attributed to it, that makes thing-in-itself unqualified. So, which cannot be qualified or determined is a mere abstraction. Thus, we cannot have knowledge of thing-in-itself; as nothing is known about it. It is an empty concept. Hegel’s sphere of sense-certainty describes world as the multitude of determinate things, each of which is differentiated from other, but one determinacy exclude one another or one disappears to take place as another. So, one is not the other and can never become the other. Thus, the knowledge acquired through sense-certainty is limited that makes it meaningless. The categories of knowledge in both the systems indicate the same meaning but expressed in different modes or frames. It could be analyzed on the fact that Śankara considered \textit{pratykṣa} as an immediate knowledge, while Hegel depicts perception as mediate knowledge. The category of mind (\textit{antahkāraṇa}) in

Sankara is a key to perception, because without any intention or an attention of mind one could not perceive or discern the things of an external world, as perception is an apprehension of sense-objects. Prof. Hiriyanna in this connection writes, “The primary aim of perception, like that of the other pramāṇas, is according to Śankara, to serve empirical purposes. It gives no guarantee for metaphysical validity, so that what we commonly hold real may not be truly so. Common knowledge is true so long only as the identity of oneself with Brahman is not realized, as dreams are until one does not awake. In other words, the transcendental ideality of the world does not exclude its empirical reality.”

Hence, mind or consciousness is considered as a fundamental condition for experiencing the empirical existence. It is a faculty that can infer, postulate, compare, and apprehend the things. Śankara’s view of pratyksa equates with the view of Hegel’s notion of sense-certainty, but by putting reflection on sense-certainty Hegel deduce the fact that it is lacking in a concept, which is a foremost condition for Being submits as knowledge. Sense-certainty appears to be grasped by the subject or “I” directly, without any conceptual activity Being required. It is depicted in passage as, “Consciousness, for its part, is in this certainty only as pure ‘I’; or I am in it only as a pure ‘This’, and the object similarly only

as a pure 'This'. I, this particular I, am certain of this particular thing, not because I, qua consciousness, in knowing it have developed myself or thought about it in various ways; and also not because the thing of which I am certain, in virtue of a host of distinct qualities, would be in its own self a rich complex of connections, or related in various ways to other things. Neither of these has anything to do with the truth of sense-certainty: here neither 'I' nor the thing has the significance of a complex process of meditation; the 'I' does not have the significance of a manifold imaging or thinking; nor does the 'thing' signify something that has a host of qualities. On the contrary, the thing 'is', and it 'is', merely because it 'is'. It is; this is the essential point for sense-knowledge, and this pure Being, or this simple immediacy, constitutes its truth. Similarly, certainty as a connection is an immediate pure connection: consciousness is 'I', nothing more, a pure 'This'; the singular consciousness knows a pure 'This', or the single item."\(^{54}\)

In so far as the sense-certainty maintains Being of an object through individuality, this shows that sense-certainty naturally holds that knowledge should be conceptual then only such a knowledge considered as 'richest' and 'truest' kind of knowledge. It leads to give rise another category of

knowledge i.e. perception. Hegel tries to analyze this category from the point of view of universality, it is an extremely limited conception, because it treats universals as simple sensuous properties on the basis of colour and shape, it leads to reduce the object to a plurality of unrelated attributes. With all these difficulties Hegel analyzed it as, “Thus the object in its pure determinateness, or in the determinateness which were supposed to constitute its essential Being, is overcome just as surely as it was in its sensuous Being. From a sensuous Being (at the level of sense-certainty) it turned into a universal (at the level of perception); but this universal, since it originates in the sensuous, is essentially conditioned by it, and hence is not truly a self-identical universality at all, but one afflicted with an opposition; for this reason the universality splits into the extremes of singular individuality and universality, into the One of the properties, and the Also of the ‘free matters’...The sophistry of perception seeks to save these moments from their contradiction, and it seeks to lay hold on the truth, by distinguishing the ‘unessential’ aspect from an ‘essence’ which is opposed to it. But these expedients, instead of warding off deception in the process of apprehension, prove themselves on the contrary to be quite empty; and the truth which is supposed to be won by this logic of the perceptual process proves to be one and the same respect the opposite (of itself) and thus to
have as its essence a universality which is devoid of distinctions and determinations." Thus, Hegel encountered the problem of connecting the properties with universal in its conation with the individual merely as a common element externally. The two equally unsatisfactory accounts of 'the Thing' as 'One' and as 'Also' resulted from the conception of universal. So, he abandons ontology when an internal organ (i.e., mind) starts contradicting with perception then it leads to give raise a new category of knowledge i.e. understanding. The way has been found to overcome the one/many problem that was faced by perception; Hegel says, "Within this inner truth...the absolute universal....has been purged of the antithesis between the universal and the individual and has become the object of the understanding." But it starts contradicting between objective and subjective consciousness in form of ego or 'I'. Hegel accepts and further develops the distinction manifested in Kant's philosophy between 'understanding' and 'reason'. In Kant 'reason' is not having an immediate relation with object; it 'understands' that persuades in his epistemology. By 'understanding' Hegel means that it is a capacity of reflective interpretation, separates unrelentingly identity from difference, particular and universal, one from many, and form from content so on. It means 'understanding' restricts itself to the finite as thinking is

55 Ibid. pp.76-77
56 Ibid. p.87
always finite thinking to which Hegel calls as ‘finite reason’; he also uses the expression ‘isolated reflection’ for the explanation of various polarities which emerges out of the ‘understanding’ in the process of thought. However, it reflects the fact that Hegel tried to establish categories of knowledge in a more scientific fashion. It demonstrates a similarity that mind or consciousness is an underlying element in the analysis of the theory of knowledge in both the systems to discover and experience the external world.

The comparison suggests that the epistemological stages of consciousness in both the systems believe in the immediacy of sense-objects. In contrast, there may be categorical differences in experiencing the objects in both the systems either in form of pramāṇas or in form of sense-certainty, perception, and understanding. But all these categories of knowledge give only the knowledge of an empirical existence. These ways of knowledge are instrumental to the knowledge of truth as reality.

With this in Śankara’s view, pramāṇas are the source of valid (pramā) knowledge as long as these are not sublated and established by any other means of knowledge. The knowledge, which can be sublated and established by any other knowledge is termed as invalid (apramā), while in the case of Hegel the categories of knowledge sublates and cancels the previous stages.
of knowledge to establish the next category. For instance, he realized the initial knowledge in an immediacy of sense-objects as "is" in sense-certainty and finding it lacking in terms of concepts leads to sublate with the perception. When perception begins conflicting with mind then it sublates with understanding. At this point, it is engulfed with dichotomy of subject and an object in terms of ego or "I". At this point, an outward journey of knowledge turns inward to achieve knowledge in both the systems. The shift from the world of object to the world of subject would able to conceive a process in which consciousness moves into its actual form i.e. self-consciousness. It is depicted by Hegel as, "Consciousness, as self-consciousness, henceforth has a double object: one is the immediate object, that of sense-certainty and perception, which however for self-consciousness has the character of a negative; and the second, viz. itself, which is the true essence, and is present in the first instance only as opposed to the first object. In this sphere, self-consciousness exhibits itself as the movement in which this antithesis is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit for it."57 It means it is a shift of "consciousness" to "self-consciousness" in Hegel's view, and moving inward to realize self in Śankara. The transition of consciousness to self-consciousness in both the

57 Ibid. p.105

268
systems reveals the fact that reason leads to revelations in Śankara and Hegel. It focuses the object as the subordinate of subject or in other words, it starts putting reflection on the concepts in such a manner so it counts as knowledge to which Hegel interpret it as self-consciousness; it means conscious of our self-consciousness in itself. In case of Śankara, it has a more advanced meaning, because in his view the empirical facts can be known by sense-perception and by all other means of knowledge, but transcendental truth can only be known through Śruti, as Śruti is only a valid source of knowledge. Its purpose is not to contradict the findings of all other means of knowledge, but it is an authority of revealing the super-sensuous truth, which can only be known through the Śruti and is beyond the reach of other means of knowledge. The acceptance of Śruti by Advaitins does not mean denial of reason, because truth only reveals by applying reason. It means reason inherited the revelation. Śruti itself conveys this idea when it says: “the self, indeed, is to be seen, should be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon.” In this way, Śankara starts moving toward the realization of Supreme Being by unlocking the facts of revelation emphasized in Śruti through reason, while the notion of self-consciousness in Hegel is a step towards the realization of Spirit (Geist) through reason. Hegel makes it clear,

58 Balasubramanian, R (ed.), Advaita Vedanta, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, Vol. II, Part.2, 2000, p.87 (Br.U.2.4.5)
when the self-conscious subject is able to ‘see itself in other’ then it provides us more balanced outlook in the words as, “A self-consciousness, in Being an object, is just as much ‘I’ as ‘object’. With this, we already have before us the notion of Spirit. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is-this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: the ‘I’ that is ‘we’ and the ‘we’ that is ‘I’. It is in self-consciousness, in the notion of Spirit that consciousness first finds its turning point, where it leaves behind it the colourful show of the sensuous here-and-now and the night like void of the supersensible beyond, and steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present.”

As a matter of fact, reason is a key to knowledge in both the systems. Though the categories of knowledge have different ways to prove the things of human experience but they end up in controversy over the category of non-Being. Śankara established the category of non-Being as one of the means of knowledge. The super-sensuous knowledge of truth can be realized by unlocking the scriptural knowledge through reason. But after revelation even the scriptural means of knowledge does not have any importance, because then it realizes the true nature of Ātman as Brahman. Hegel totally rejected the category of

59 Hegel. *Phenomenology Of Spirit*, etc., pp.110-111
non-Being, because in his views at this level, knowledge is only the tool that can open the mysteries of absolute, even on the basis of it, we can conceive an analogy of Supreme Being. So, here he commits the error of identifying human consciousness with divine consciousness. To a certain extent Hegel is appropriate in asserting the identity of human consciousness with divine consciousness, as long as it is considerable that the concept of Supreme Being cannot be formed apart from human experience. If the conception of Supreme Being is formed on the basis of ideal possibilities of human nature then human knowledge would never be condemned as erroneous at any instance of knowledge. Hence, every instance of knowledge will become real. Therefore, both Hegel and Śankara depicts the means of knowledge in a progressive form until reason is considered as an essence of knowledge. It suggests that both the systems shares a rational approach to the problem of consciousness, but Śankara’s theory of knowledge utilizes the category of reason to purify the self so as it get merges in the supreme Being to realize the true nature of self as Brahman, while Hegel’s theory of knowledge realizes consciousness in rationality in itself.

Conclusively, it could be interpreted that the status of consciousness is analyzed by both the systems in a similar fashion, but one try to realize highest degree of knowledge in terms of an absolute in the phenomenal
world itself, while other utilizes knowledge as an instrument to go beyond the phenomenal existence so as to experience the divine consciousness. Sankara took knowledge as a means to awareness of super-sensuous truth that step in to realize the true non-dualistic nature of self as Brahman. It could also explained in terms of anūbhuti as, “an immediate awareness of the existence of the self, in non-dualist doctrine; the self is thereby recognized as Being implicit in all experience, though it cannot be an object of experience, but only the subject. Hence this immediate intuition is distinguished from all cognitive experiences, which involve a subject-object distinction.”\(^6^0\) The theory of knowledge of Hegel is an intellectual excursion to discover and sums up the facts of knowledge so as to experience the reality in itself. In this way, an epistemological approach to the problem of consciousness needs to also analyze the ethical aspects to establish the validity of knowledge.

4.5 ETHICAL ASPECT

The epistemological validity of consciousness depends on principles and values to attain universal satisfaction that is freedom, which could only be realized by externalizing the subjectivity in the form of objectivity for enquiring the status of consciousness in relation to ethics in both the

\(^{6^0}\) Smart, Ninian. *Doctrine And Argument In Indian Philosophy*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1964, p.226
systems. The ethical aspect will analyzes and generalizes the status of consciousness in human actions, because it helps in regulating moral actions to experience the freedom as self-knowledge.

The notion of freedom as self-knowledge is analyzed and generalized by both the systems in their respective fashion. The human actions are governed by certain morals laws. These value oriented human actions are divided in *nīhāreyasa* (absolute well-Being), and *abhuyudaya* (empirical well-Being) by Šāṅkara; Hegel also followed two forms of laws-human laws, and divine laws. These moral laws are either self-imposed or self-conscious laws. Šāṅkara following *Vedic* tradition conceives the meaning of term value in two forms-one as a phenomenal i.e. *dharmas*, and other as a noumenal i.e. *Brahman*. *Brahman* is man’s either real or noumenal Being that constitute highest value to it, due to the attribute of freedom. *Dharma* on the other hand, is the law of phenomenal actions, experiences and is revealed as a system of prescriptions and prohibitions. So, *Brahman* has to be known, *dharma* has to be practiced.

Comparatively, Hegel’s formulation of moral laws is deep-rooted in the synthesis of gaps led by Kant through reason in morality. Hegel’s social ethics is built on the basis of defects drawn out of Kant’s distinction in the sphere of epistemology and ontology. The Kant’s distinction between
noumenal, thing-in-itself, and phenomenon constitutes the basis of the gulf between epistemology and morality that leads to the dichotomy between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ in his philosophy. Hegel when emphasizes the unity of moments in opposition he was well aware of Kantian defects and try to overcome them in his own philosophical system. The gulf between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ remained unbridgeable in German Idealism, until Hegel applied his dialectical insight into the problem to resolve it. Before it, Fichte tries to remove the gulf between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ by rejecting the kant’s distinction between the transcendental knowing self and nominal acting self that is the ‘will’. According to Fichte, there is only one active and moral striving self for the moral-realization. Hegel tries to resolve the gulf between ‘ought’ and ‘is’ on the basis of dialectical method. In his view, ‘what ought to be’ has to be applied to the sphere of ‘what is’ within its possibility. The Kant’s maxim ‘one ought to act......’ is meaningful and significant, according to Hegel only when the situation is clearly visualized and in demarcating the situations where it can be possibly obeyed. Therefore, according to Hegel in this situation ‘ought’ and ‘is’ can go together, enrich each other by dialectically supplementing to each other. In this way both ‘what ought to be’ and ‘what is’ can maintain their self-identity and it is by virtue of their
self-identity that they dialectically interact with each other and thereby help towards the growth of each other.\textsuperscript{61}

Thus, the formulation of ‘ought’ is another attempt to apply dialectic in the field of morality. The main concern of Hegel in morality is the concept of ‘freedom’. ‘Freedom of will’ is central to Kant’s moral laws too.\textsuperscript{62} It depicts that Kant uses ‘freedom of will’ within the limitation of ‘will’ alone, whereas Hegel uses the same term in two mutually interrelated spheres—outward and inward. Outward objectification of freedom is called by Hegel as Abstract Right. In it freedom embodies in a thing- property. Inward freedom is manifested in the interrogation of motive, intention, goodness, and wickedness etc. It is a concern of individual’s inward conscience. The basic difference between Abstract Right and Morality in accordance with Hegel is that former has its embodiment in the external world, while the latter is an affair of the internal consciousness. But in between Abstract Right and Morality there is no such unbridgeable gulf, as we find in Kant between ‘what is’ and ‘what ought to be’. In Hegel ‘ought’ is the sphere of obligation in morality, which attaches to the inward Being of the subject, because “only in the will as subjective can freedom or the implicit principle

\textsuperscript{61} Singh, R.P. \textit{Kant And Hegel}, New Delhi, Galaxy Publications, 1990, p.89

of the will be actual." So, Hegel applied his dialectical method even in morality as he used it in sphere of ontology and epistemology. The freedom is consisted in the universality of will, posits subjective will and in an attempt to overcome the subjectivity formulates moral laws. Conclusively, it can be said, the only remarkable thing about Hegel’s philosophy that there is no gulf between knowledge and morality as it is in Kant.

Thus, Hegel was indebted to Kant in the realm of morality as in the field of epistemology. Though Kant and Hegel both agree on the fact that formulation of moral laws presupposes freedom of will and moral laws must be universal and essential. Kantian duty for the sake of duty is nothing but abstract indeterminacy from which no transition is possible to specification of particular duties. Kant’s emphasis on the formalism of moral laws and duty for the sake of duty are certain issues, which are of least importance in Hegel’s discussion on morality. Hegel discusses these issues in his book *Philosophy of Right*. This book is divided in three parts-Abstract Rights, Morality, and Ethical life. Abstract rights are of objective nature, morality is discussed in relation to subjectivity, and ethical life is discussed in terms of absolute. These three stages are mutually interrelated and interdependent then also able to retain their self-identity and autonomy.

---

By above discussion we come to know that the basis of Hegelian social ethics lies in the defects or shortcomings of Kantian ethics. So, Hegel’s ethics is a kind of remedy to the defects of Kantian ethics. There are certain gaps in Kant’s philosophy to which Hegel swiftly bridge by applying his dialectical method. Now I can sum up the fundamental ethical issues involved in the Kant and Hegel. Kant’s contention, that knowledge and morality are two separate realms, which is unacceptable to Hegel. In Hegel’s view knowledge and morality go together to enrich one another and supplementing each other, but then also maintain their self-identity. Kant contention that the statements of ought not to be formulated on the basis of factual statements, which Hegel rejects it in his moral philosophy from the beginning. In view of Kant moral laws are formal and ought to be obeyed for their own sake; for Hegel it is something that is completely empty so no concrete duty can be prescribed, because categorical imperatives also did not assert any duty. In spite of these differences Hegel and kant agrees on the fact that freedom of will is at the centre of moral laws, but for kant it is an empty notion, and for Hegel it is subjective and objective both. Subjectively freedom of will consists of purpose, intention, goodwill etc. Objectively it is manifested in abstract rights and social ethics. Thus, for Hegel freedom is “consists in the appreciation of the necessary law operating in the spheres of
abstract rights and the social ethics. Hegel’s morality, based on his own interpretation of freedom, is thus more advanced than what we have in Kant.64

Hegel’s views on morality are an attempt to resolve the various dualities involves in Kant’s philosophy, because it is a jumble of dualities between sensibility and categories, categories and reason, a-priori and a-posteriori, the transcendental and the practical. The crux problem is the issue of the relation between Reason and Will. It is a debatable issue because Kant was not able to make clear the connection between Reason and Will. This negligence on the part of Kant led to formulate six theories concerning the relation between Reason and Will. Firstly, there is a theory which propounds supremacy of a Pure Reason that is termed as Rationalism; secondly, some commentators maintain the supremacy of Practical Reason that is termed as Moralism; thirdly the supremacy of Judgment is examine under Aestheticism; fourthly the parallel relation between Reason and Will is discussed as Parallelism; fifthly Reason and Will are discussed as the functions of mind is Functionalism. Lastly, the Bridge theory is examined ultimately as the best of all theories of relations.65 But Kant’s theory of

64 Singh, R.P, A Critical Examination Of Immanuel Kant’s Philosophy, etc., p.106
relation between Reason and Will is a valuable issue not only in historical perspective but also has its wide impact on future ontology, epistemology, and ethics. His immediate successors like Fichte, William James, and Schopenhaur maintained the supremacy of Will, while Hegel maintains the supremacy of Reason.

Dualism may be resolve only when the one element conceives in another to comprehend the dual elements as a whole. Hegel was the foremost in resolving these resolutions successfully. Hegel agrees with Kant on the fact that philosophic theory should be critical; it is the mind that makes the nature. Soul is not a substance but it is an element that knows. In spite of all these agreements with Kant, Hegel does not move towards agnosticism, but he contradicts on the point that all the things are knowable, because nothing is beyond the reach of mind. In Hegel’s system there is no distinction between the practical and the transcendental, or between the sensibility and the categories of understanding.

Kant’s ethics is considered to be formal in nature, because it has form but lacks in content. It is reflected, when putting reflection on his moral maxims for moral conduct. It is difficult to discern what ought not to be done but not what ought to be done. It can be understand when he said, every act should be done by the motive purely of duty. But he proposes the concept of duty as
a universal law and fails to specify the roles and rules for an individual in
different situations and conditions. It shows that Kant’s formalism is
basically theoretical in nature rather than practical. On the other hand Hegel
criticizes Kant’s formalism by emphasizing the ethical life in terms of
abstract laws and divine laws to guide self-conscious substance for leading
an ethical life. This Hegel interprets as the ethical consciousness of an
individual knows in itself what one has to do and decides naturally to which
law he has to belong. The immediate decisions regarding one’s deed is
something natural not an accidental, because it is implicit in the significance
of natural Being. One could assess his action of interest on the basis of
abstract laws, morality, and nonetheless, the ethical consciousness. It is an
argument given by Hegel against Kant’s faulty psychology. In Kant’s
psychology the action performed in accordance to duty has no moral worth
if it is vested with the character of generosity or self-interest. With this
drawback to his moral philosophy, Kant also makes the concept of good too
narrow by restricting it to virtue and happiness, while Hegel reasons to adopt
the notion of good to realize the absolute. It is depicted by Hegel as, “The
good is the idea as the unity of the concept of the will with the particular
will... the good is thus freedom realized, the absolute end and aim of the
world." For Hegel absolute lies in the realization of subjectivity and social morality. When an individual acts with his self-determining rational will without the help of external agency then it is subjective morality or the ‘good’ lies in one’s own consciousness which is autonomous and infinite, while the ethical systems or institutions which are the identity of subjective and objective good. Thus, obeying the laws of institutions is in turn obeying oneself. Freedom is not an autonomous principle of individual freedom. It is a principle of realizing rationality or universality that exists in its immediacy and feeling of love, which passes through the institution of marriage, family, and civil society. Therefore, it can be deduced that the criticism of Kantian dialectic is the basis of Hegelian dialectic.

According to Hegel an ethical substance is a form of an existential consciousness, which is realized by all in common. The reflected consciousness in plurality is an underlying thread of self-conscious actuality. The self-conscious actuality of spirit can be called as human law or abstract or formal laws. With this, an ethical substance can also reveal itself in another law i.e. divine law. It is a law that expresses ethical substance in an immediate and simple essence that extends down to the inner essence of the individual in opposition to the fully conscious action, because an actual

---

universal will work as a force actively in opposition to an individual Being-for-self and the ethical power of the state. Hence, the comparison indicates that both systems follows the ethical substance as an existential consciousness in common, which reflects the consciousness in self-conscious actuality as ‘will’ that makes it ethical personality. Hegel says, “Everyone has the right to make his will the thing or to make the thing his will or in other words to destroy the thing and transform it into his own, for the thing, as externality has no end in itself, it is not infinite self-relation but something external to itself.”67 In addition to it both the systems conceives concept of value, which helps the self to perform actions in accordance to his ‘will’ to achieve the highest value in form of Brahman of Śankara and divine laws of Hegel. Śankara did not agreed on the necessity of moral actions or ethical substance, because in his view any kind of action leads to an attachment with empirical world that in turns obstruct the path of realizing nominal reality i.e. Brahman. It is for those who have realized the true nature of Ātman. It is depicted as “For him who has realized the Ātman, no further work remains to be done.”68 Therefore, the “abandonment of works” is meant only for the ‘Ātma-vida,’ i.e., for those who have already

67 ibid. p.236
68 Vidyaratna, kokileswar sastri, An Introduction To Advaita Philosophy, Delhi, Bhartiya Publishing House, 1979, p.227 (B.S.S.B. 4.1.2)
realized the final end, which is completion of desire. As knowledge of Brahman results in nihśreyasa or absolute well-Being that does not depend on the performance of any actions; the knowledge of dharma leads to abhyudaya or empirical well-Being, but it depends on the performance of the duties, while Hegel logically believes in the unity of both the forms of law as an ethical substance.

For Śankara, the dharma is constituted by both nihśreyasa and abhyudaya. "Nihśreyasa is characterized by freedom from desire, seeking pleasure, and pain. It is beyond the dialectic of action and experience, good and evil. Abhyudaya, on the other hand, is of the nature of satisfaction which is necessarily limited in duration, scope and degree. It belongs to a process of seeking, activity, and experiencing. If nihśreyasa is autonomy then abhyudaya is necessarily heteronymous, a binding and tempting chain. To attain nihśreyasa, it is necessary to retreat from external activity into self-knowledge. This is the path called nivr̄tti-laksāna dharma. To gain abhyudaya it is necessary to follow the path of virtuous action and religious worship. This is the path called pravṛtti-laksāna dharma."\(^{69}\) As far as, it conceives the fact that corresponding to the two types of reality i.e.

\(^{69}\) Pande, G.C. *Life And Thoughts Of Śankarācārya*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidas, 1994, pp.220-221
noumenal and phenomenal there are two values i.e. *abhyaudaya* and *niḥśreyasa*; corresponding to them there is two kinds of *dharmas*, one is guided by law of activist life (*pravṛtti-laksana dharma*) and other is guided by law of retreat from activity (*nivṛtti-laksana dharma*), as prescribed by *Vedas*. As stated in *BhagwadGītābhāsyā*, “*dharma* is that which is the cause of the maintenance or stability of the universe and directly instrumental to the relative and absolute good of living Beings. It is practiced by the estates (*varnas*), stations (*āśramas*), debts (*rinas*), and moral ideals (*purusārthas*) in so far as they seek their good.”\(^{70}\)* In case of Hegel, rights and duties are matter of persons, as persons are only self-conscious Being who enjoy and perform formal rights and duties. These rights are exercised through an imperative: “*Be a person and respect other as a person.*”\(^{71}\)* It means freedom of one’s presupposing the freedom of other, because violation of one’s right leads to infringe the rights of other. In this way, rights comprises of freedom in an immediate way as property possession, contract, and doing wrong. Here the freedom is in form of abstract will and actualizes subjective will either in itself as single or himself as another in contract. When a particular will is explicitly at variance with universal and assumes a way of looking at things in volitions that is in an opposition to the principle of rightness,

\(^{70}\) Ibid. p.221

\(^{71}\) Hegel, *Philosophy Of Right*, translated by T.M.Knox, etc, p.37

284
termed as “wrong”. Thus, subjective will implicitly expresses explicit objective will in form of rights, because rights are comprises of duties in form of an imperatives. Therefore, rights presuppose the freedom as universal will. It can be deduced that Hegel’s ethical substance realizes its subjective will in form of an objective will explicitly in the obedience of rights and performance of duties in form of an imperatives as universal will, which is freedom in moral sense. Freedom as ethical substance is an actual substance that is realized in the plurality of existent consciousness as an absolute spirit.

However, both the systems share an entirely different approach to formulate the moral process of existent consciousness. On the one hand, Śankara’s concept of value is constituted of rights and duties (dharma) as abhyudaya, and freedom as nihşreyasa; former is characterized as empirical well-Being, and latter as an absolute well-Being. Abhyudaya is practiced through well defined duties and moral ideals as emphasized in scriptures, which is directly instrumental to the relative and absolute good of living Beings. But according to Śankara, real freedom is only realized in an absolute well-Being by renouncing self from desire for seeking pleasure or pain. It is the realm of experiencing the Supreme Being i.e. Ātman as Brahman which is highest moral ideal (mokṣha). On the other hand, Hegel tries to realize
ethical substance in the form of self-conscious actuality through objective will in terms of rights as absolute Spirit. For Hegel, moral laws are followed by individuals as a universal will, but at the same time they are enriching and supplementing each other to obey moral laws. This Hegel interprets as the ethical consciousness of an individual knows in itself what one has to do and decides naturally to which law he has to belong. The immediate decisions regarding one's deed is something natural not an accidental, because it is implicit in the significance of natural Being. But it leads to a problem that how it could be determine which laws are of our interest. Hegel suggests determining firstly on the basis of abstract rights, because it protects individual pursuit of their interest; secondly on the basis of morality, because it allows us to be responsible for our own interest; finally on the basis of ethical life (Sittlichkeit), because it tells us which interests are rational. Thus, Hegel considered the ethical life as the best alternative of morality, because it is constituted by the mores, customs, and laws of society, which are also the forms of freedom. It means the individuals can liberate from the erroneous pursuit of subjective motivations for an action. With this, Hegel emphasizes ethical life as the only alternative to abstract rights and morality that protects the action of interest, and rationality. In fact, Hegel rationally tries to prove that an individual can experience freedom in
the different forms (mores, customs, and laws) of ethical life. So, ethical pursuits are the means of freedom in rationality that also safeguards the interests of individual. Therefore, the sense of freedom varies with both the systems, as ethical life is an essence of individual interests reflected rationally in Hegel.

In Śankara ethical life has only instrumental significance not necessary for realizing the absolute freedom. Ethical actions can only be serving as an instrument to improve or provide reason for self in achieving a particular mental state that helps in experiencing the highest reality, but it is not essential. Śankara discard the mediacy of objective world in experiencing the subjectivity as freedom. Hegel expressed the meaning of freedom through the mediacy of objective spirit that reflects the pure nature of subjective spirit in rationality. Resultantly, the objective will supersede pure nature of subjective will that create hindrances in realizing true nature of self. It happens when Hegel considered faith and culture as the negativity due to ignorance and superstition involved in it and alienated as pure insight conceived in enlightenment. Faith is consciousness and enlightenment is self-consciousness. Therefore, when actuality lost its substantiality and nothing left in it as intrinsic Being; both the realm of faith and actual world is overthrown. This insight gives rise to absolute freedom. According to
Hegel, Spirit knowing itself in all its uses is an absolute freedom, which sees nothing sensuous or supersensuous beyond itself. But in spite of these differences, the real essence of ethical life in both systems seems to reach at a point from where the self only perceives itself as self-consciousness. Hence, the concept of absolute freedom has similarity in its essence with the absolute well-Being of Śankara in form of realization of Ātman that is a merger of ethical thread in absolute by canceling the empirical realm.

Conclusively, after critically and comparatively examining the doctrine of consciousness in its interrelated aspects, we can conclude that both the systems share an approach to the problem of consciousness in its own fashion. Śankara philosophize this problem by interpreting and examining the Hindu scriptures and propose his doctrine of Ātman as the metaphysical, ontological, psychological, epistemological and ethical element of consciousness, which helps in realizing the highest i.e. Brahman. On the other hand, Hegel establishes the doctrine Spirit (Geist) by giving utmost importance to reason. Basically Hegel builds his philosophy by the criticism of all other philosophies. His works in establishing doctrine of Spirit is mainly a criticism of Kant’s idealism. The questions and gaps that Kant left without resolving it, Hegel bridges all those epistemological and ontological
gaps by validating the existence of consciousness as self-consciousness that transcends to acquire self-knowledge.