Subhas Bose is a digression from the course of political thought set by Vivekananda and culminating in Gandhi. Despite his firm moorings in Indian spirituality, he retained considerable elements of Hegel and Marx in his political philosophy. But as regards Aurobindo, Tagore, and Gandhi, the resemblance between them and the dialectical schools is only superficial. Indian philosophers differ fundamentally from Hegel and Marx as well as from all the Western systems of thought which grew under their influence.

Hegel views the nation as the ethical substance of state. A state comprises one nation only because national consciousness is the moral thread which binds the people together. The national state is the realization of Reason, the embodiment of absolute Will and hence the root of all social progress. In every phase of historical development only one state embodies the Absolute Will more truly than others. This is the world-historical state which carries the banner of progress. With its superior civilization this nation-state is destined to guide and rule the backward nations. To guide world-historical nations along the path set for them in history appear world-historical individuals such as Caesar, Alexander, and Napoleon. These political leaders and heroes are the vehicles of world history and bring forth the will of God into actuality.

Hegel further holds that sovereignty does not reside in the people but in the king and aristocrats who are the rational custodians of the state. The irrational mass who are guided by passion must obey the law which emanates from the sovereign because it is the dictate of Reason itself. Law is the rational will of the community, the universal form of morality.

Indian thinkers admit the nation as the bearer of the vitality of the race. But this nation is not the military-economic-political entity as Hegel conceives. On the contrary, it is the psychological unit, the soul which unites a people. It can enrich itself not by
domination over, but by absorption of the good of others. The organized nation which is the state is not a living organ but a soulless machine or "a huge beast of prey" whose dharma is self-protection and self-expansion. The Indian ideal rejects the Hegelian theory that the banner of progress is always carried forward by a world-historical nation. Moreover, domination of the world by a great nation-state is an absurdity under modern conditions.

The state, nonetheless, is a perfection of reason. But reason is not the ultimate guide of humanity. Man must surpass the world of reason in order to enter the world of truth. Hence the heroes who are the vehicles of political progress cannot lead towards the ideal. The hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realize the brotherhood of man and the truth of human unity, who will live in the Spirit and discover the soul of the nation which is but a fractional expression of the Spirit.

With Hegel and Marx, strife is the law of nature and of society. They subscribe to the position that social progress is attained by the swallowing up of one by the other, of nation by nation or of class by class. Indian philosophers accept the dialectical law of strife to a great extent, strife between the old and the new, between individualism and collectivism, between liberty and law. But strife over material interests leads to extinction or compromise but not to fusion which is Nature's ultimate plan. There is no inherent contradiction between the opposites which are at bottom one. Law, for instance, does not contradict liberty; it is the child of freedom. Liberty is the freedom to obey the law of one's being. The law which enforces the rule of an individual or of a class, even if it be in a majority, is stultifying and the negation of liberty.

In many respects Indian philosophers are nearer to some of the Left Hegelians than to their master. They have a closer affinity with Max Stirner and the philosophical anarchists who denounce the monstrous machinery of state, although none of the former share the extreme individualism and amoral hedonism of the latter. Indian philosophers will not destroy the state and will wait for the superior nature of
man to assert itself and render the state unnecessary. They also bear likeness to the philosophical socialism of Moses Hess and to the humanism of Feuerbach. Theirs is an objective philosophy which, like Hess' and Feuerbach's, is true for all men irrespective of nations and classes, in which man as such is the measure of truth.

Indian philosophy is an identification of ends and means. The aim of Nature in Human life is not the exploitation of the many by the few, nor even of the few by the many, nor the perfection of some at the cost of the rest, because progress and freedom cannot survive in a welter of poverty, ignorance and slavery. So the goal is social elevation of all. Thus there is little difference between the Indian and Marxist ideals. The difference lies in method. For Marx, the goal of human equality and perfection is reached through struggle between classes fighting with the economic motive. For him, a material phenomenon is leading towards an ideal society. Here Hegel, although an idealist, does not differ much from Marx. For him, history reveals the process of Spirit but the process is carried on through the selfish strife of nations. Thus while the two Western philosophers insist on the material means for realizing an ideal goal, for Indian philosophers means are not different from the end. Truth, non-violence and love are the moral weapons of the fighter for human unity. A society will be formed at the end of the journey when all laws of the state imposed on man will prove futile. Man will obey no law except the law of love which is the inner law of existence.

Fries decried Hegel's philosophy as a stuff which "had grown not in the gardens of science but in the dunghill of servility." He would have been surprised if he had lived to observe that more than half the world follows today willy-nilly Hegel's much-ridiculed glorification of state power. The fascists carried it to the logical excess. The communists have borrowed this principle although professedly as a transitional measure on the way towards the ultimate dissolution of the state. The democracies, not excluding the USA, haunted by the spectre of war have

1. Ernst Cassirer: The Myth of the State, p. 250
fallen in line and started with intensification of authority and cur­
tailment of civil rights. Hegel is very much alive today but without the general advance towards rational freedom which he thought, was the condition and justification of state power.

As a reaction against this wave of totalitarianism anarchist ideas have begun to appear, particularly from the East, not with an appeal to extreme individualism but with the plea of society's survival against the tyranny and violence of the state. New anarchism is an idealistic revolt against a materialistic political philosophy. It is also a revolt of a spiritually conscious society against an arrogant and power-loving state. Hegel's dialectical law rules today the acute conflict and polarization of thought all over the globe. A powerful thesis, by its very strength, generates and strengthens its correspon­ding antithesis. The more one-sided a movement is, the greater is the vitality of a correspondingly one-sided counter-movement. A synthesis is likely to come out of this conflict whose outlines are not yet clear. The basic question that awaits to be solved is the conflict between authority and freedom, between the state and the individual.

All political ideals, apart from reducing social anomalies, have to move inevitably towards a synthesis of these opposites. A new liberalis­

Hence the ideals and systems of the present age are necessarily of the nature of trial and experiment. Democracy, socialism and spiritual liberalism are all groping in the dark for a goal yet un­known to them. There are utopias but these are kept at safe distance and amended in the face of hard realities that have to be tackled. Yet, after all, utopias can never be dismissed from our mind because in the midst of prevailing uncertainties they hold out the vision of the goal and the utopia of one century may well be the reality of its successor.