

1619

1619
STANKA, V.
1946

Problems and Discussions

Hamburg Baltic University

No. 1

Hamburg, 1946

306

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The Great Age of World History

Confucius, Gautamo, Zoroaster and Pythagoras looked at from
a synthetic point of view.¹⁾

1. The out-of-schedule lecture held in the Baltic University on 19th September 1946. The connection of the origin of four doctrines with the introduction of iron and with the particularism, supposed in this lecture, must be regarded only as a conjecture or hypothesis for further examination and investigation.

I.
Let us take as a show-place the whole world, in any case the whole Old World, and as an epoch — the whole first half of world history, the whole antiquity, in any way the whole ante-Christian era, and let us ask the question, who of the persons known from this time were the greatest? Of course, greatest not by might, by the bloody victories in battles, in destructions and devastations, but great in peaceful achievements, in deep feeling, high thinking and good deeds. Then, if we start in the country of sunrise, in the Far East, we shall as the first remember the great Chinese sage Confucius, the founder of the state-philosophy of the most numerous nation of the world. Going further on with the sun toward the West and reaching India we shall recollect the name of the great teacher of mankind, Gautamo-Buddha, the founder of the first universal religion. In Iran there will emerge the shape of the great prophet Zoroaster, who called men as well as gods to struggle against the evil in the world. Finally, in Greece there will arise some difficulties: who among the great thinkers of this country was the greatest; — Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicure or Zenon? Here the spiritual splendour was not concentrated upon one person, and one can speak only about a representative of Greek spiritual force. But after some deliberation, hesitation and comparison with the first three, one will surely choose Pythagoras, the only one who can be regarded as the counterpart to the three mentioned before.

They were great, and their greatness, which can be clearly seen only from the distance of milleniums, is the first feature common to all four. But are there other features which can be found in all of them? What do we know about them?

We know, and know precisely, the place of their origin. At the first glance there is obviously nothing in common, but there exist the possibly great differences because their birth-places were separated by the possibly great distances. Of course, the places of their origin were remote one from the other, but there is some striking regularity

in this remoteness and in the distribution, each place being separated from the another exactly by 3000 km. Such preciseness may doubtlessly be regarded only as a meaningless accident. But it is hardly an accident that in each great centre of the old culture, in China, in India, in South-West Asia and in Greece, there arose a great sage and teacher, whose influence is recognisable even from the distance of milleniums. Here, in such regularity of their dispersion, and distribution, there can be evidently perceived a certain lawfulness, an indication to some important rule in the spiritual development of mankind.

Then follows the *time*, the age of their activity. Here our informations are not so precise. How paradoxily it may sound, the most accurate date of birth and death we dispose of are those about Confucius: He was born in 550 or 551 and died in 478 B. C. Not so definite are the reports about Pythagoras. But there is one date of his life, fixed with a sufficient certainty: about 530 B. C. he left his birth-place Samos and went to Italy, to Croton, where his famous brotherhood was founded and where he spent his most productive years. Starting from this date the scholars suppose that Pythagoras was born in 570 and died in 500 B. C., taken both these dates approximately. Therefore he must be regarded as the contemporary of Confucius in the strictest sense of this word. The age of Gautamo is even more dubious than that of Pythagoras as there is no certain date which can be taken as a starting point, and there were many diversities in estimating the epoch of his activity.³⁾ But now, after a most minute consideration of all available archaeological, historical and philological data, the great majority of scholars is unanimous, taking as the most probable dates 560 for his birth and 480 for his death, admitting for both the inaccuracy of plus-minus 10 years. Therefore Gautamo also lived in the same time as Confucius and Pythagoras. It cannot be denied that such a simultaneity is very striking, especially as far as it concerns Confucius and Gautamo-Buddha, and must be justly regarded as one of the most important coincidences in the whole world history.

But the synchronism is possibly even greater. Although the age of Zoroaster is entirely uncertain and the opinions of historians differ greatly, the ancient Greek authors, who believed him to live many milleniums before them, have now no credit. Even the opinion that Zoroaster lived some 1000 years before our era, must be regarded as an obsolete one, and the majority of scholars are inclined to accept the date 700 B. C. as the most probable. Even in such case, now from the distance of 25 centuries, he must be regarded as a contemporary in the wide sense of this word of the first three, belonging if not to the same generation, then to the same epoch of history.

But the date 700 B. C. may by no means be appreciated as the last word of science. For instance, one of the modern scholars, Autran, regards as the most probable date of the life of Zoroaster the span between the years 660 and 585 B. C.⁵⁾ More than this, already in antiquity the opinion was spread that Zoroaster was the contemporary of the father of the Persian king Darius; this view was, for instance, expressed by the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus.⁴⁾ The traditions of Parsees, the Zoroastrians living in India, tell the same story. Modern authors as well are inclined to accept this theory. The father of Darius was called by Greek historians „Hystaspes“. The traditional biography of Zoroaster tells that one of his first ardent followers and protectors was the king „Vistaspa“, the name which sounds strikingly consonant with the name „Hystaspes“. But the Persian inscriptions, in the first line the famous inscription on the rock of Behistun, mentioning the father of king Darius, call him Vistaspa, that is exactly in the same manner as was called the protector of Zoroaster. This coincidence is very impressing and its meaning is emphasized by the fact that in the same inscription of Darius there is found the first existing direct reference if not to Zoroaster, then to his creed: the inscription mentions the name of Ahura Mazda as a supreme being. These facts have induced many scholars to share the opinion of identity of Vistaspa of Zend Avesta with Hystaspes-Vistaspa, father of Darius. The most minute and convincing arguments in favour of this view are gathered in the article of Ernst Harzfeld, who came to the conclusion: „The analogy between Vistaspa, mentioned in the inscriptions, and Vistaspa of Zend-Avesta is complete. The name, the title, the time, the surrounding persons, all is exactly repeated. Their identity is above any doubts.“⁵⁾ If this view should be shared then, as Darius ascended the Persian throne in 521 B. C., when his father was still alive the age of the activity of Zoroaster would be the middle of the 6th century B. C., and he must be regarded as the contemporary of the first three sages in the strictest sense of the word. Then the threefold coincidence would rise up to a fourfold one, embracing four of the greatest events of the spiritual history of mankind. It is truly remarkable that the historians up till now have not noticed this most amazing constellation of the first-rate spiritual stars of mankind, in any case that they did not draw to this fact the full attention which it wholly deserves.

The synchronism of the four great sages of mankind makes the 6th Century B. C. truly a Great Age. But its greatness can be wholly appreciated only by consideration of the *influence* of their doctrines on the following generations. The slightest was the influence displayed by the teaching of Pythagoras, in any case by estimating from the exterior side. Nevertheless he has gathered a circle of

attached followers in Crotona and in other cities of Italy, who formed the sect or brotherhood, devoted to the person of their teacher. After the dispersing of the sect and expulsion from Crotona and after the death of Pythagoras, his sect existed some 150 years and disappeared only on the close of the 4th Century B. C. But even then the spell of the spiritual impulse of Pythagoras and the charm of his personality did not perish finally: in the last Century B. C. and in the first Century of our era the Pythagoraism resurected in the shape of the Neo-Pythagoraism; it has greatly influenced the Neo-Platonism, and under its cover lasted till the 6th Century A. C., that is thousand years after the death of its founder. Even after its final disappearance its traces can be found in Christendom: one must not forget that Pythagoras was the first in Europe who taught the immortality of the soul.

Much greater was the personal influence of Zoroaster. His preaching created a new religion, which was dominating in Iran till the conquest by Mohammedans in the 7th Century. But even after Persia was conquered, the most atrocious persecutions from the part of the new rulers were not capable to outroot wholly the Iranic national creed and to trace out the reminiscences of its prophet. Small groups of his followers exist up till our days in Persia as well as in India, and in these groups the memory of Zoroaster has reached us, preserved throughout the course of twenty five centuries. The same, but to a much greater extent, happened with the doctrine of Confucius, which, after the interruption of some centuries, became a dominating state-philosophy, or even state-religion of China, and the veneration of the name of Confucius is preserved by the whole Chinese nation. The influence of Gautamo is even greater: Buddhism has conquered the hearts and the souls not of one single nation, but of many different nations in the remotest countries of the whole of Asia and became the first world-wide universal religion. This peaceful expansion of Buddhism and its „true conquests“ of different, great and small, nations is one of the most astonishing events of world history and shows how irresistible was the spiritual influence of the sermons held by Gautamo. Omitting the question about the possible influence of Buddhism on the origin of Christendom,)* 500 millions of followers of this religion in our times, together with the signs of its revival and its increasing influence even in non-Buddhist countries — is the best evidence of the tremendous vitality of the teaching of Gautamo.

Summing up this short survey of the influence of the great sages, one is compelled to admit that of all men of antiquity only these four, in any case three of them, were not forgotten by mankind, and generation after generations have preserved in esteem and veneration the vivid memory of them. This fact shows their real

greatness and the greatness of the age they were living in. On the other hand this influence reveals the main features of the human soul, which was so deeply impressed by these teachings that the echo of them sounds during two and a half milleniums. It must be admitted that there existed a deep consonance between them, and therefore the understanding of these doctrines means, to some extent, an understanding of the essence of the human soul.

2.

In order to understand these doctrines one must turn to their sources, and here great disappointments and nearly unsurmountable difficulties are awaiting. Sometimes the cause of these troubles lies in the utmost scarcity of sources. This is the case with Pythagoras, from whom no written line has remained, not to speak about the written work, and the scholars disagree whether he has written anything at all. The works of his disciples are lost as well, and the first written sources are references from other authors, not belonging to Pythagoreans, beginning with the historians; Herodotus, Diodorus, and the philosopher Plato and Aristotle. The most minute informations can be found only in the works of Neo-Platonian writers, Iambichus and Porphyrius, or in the work of Diogenes Laertius. But these works were written some 7 or 8 centuries after the death of Pythagoras, and an utmost cautiousness is necessary in relying on these dubious sources. The difficulties concerning the sources of the origin of Buddhism are of an opposite character: the scholar has to struggle not with the scarcity of sources, but, on the contrary, with their limitless verbosity and tiresome prolixity. On the whole there are some three or even four systems of Buddhistic canonical writings: the Pali, the Sanscrit and Chinese canons, and, as the fourth, — the Tibetan canon of Lamaism. The shortest of them, and evidently the most historical, one, is the Pali canon of the Southern Buddhism, but even this is at least three times longer than the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments taken together. The Sanscrit canon is much longer. The Tibetan canon consists of 1083 works exposed in 108 volumes. But all of them are overshadowed by the Chinese canon, which, according to the informations of competent parts, is composed of 1662 works in 6,700 volumes! Of course, who would be able not to lose the way in the thickets of these texts with the innumerable contradictions not only between the several canons, but even in each canon, taken separately. The difficulties with the Zoroastrian texts are of a wholly different nature. These texts are found mainly in Zend-Avesta, the Sacred Books of Zoroastrianism. Many hopes had been laid on the discovery and the publication of these books. But as the French scholar, Anquetil Duperron, has published these works*) — the disappointment was universal. Instead of inspired preaching

and the picture of the struggle between the Good and Evil in the world, Zend-Avesta contained innumerable meaningless prayers, senseless incantations and magical formulae. The disappointment of readers found a rather strong expression in the words of the famous English orientalist, Sir William Jones, who could not help exclaiming: „Either Zoroaster has not written this book or he was bereft of reason; in both cases this book is not worth of being printed.“ Of course, this criticism was going too far, and the scholars, after an assiduous research, were able to discover unmistakable traces of the former spiritual splendour. But these traces were covered by a thick stratum of subsequent additions, misrepresentations and forgeries, which have accumulated in the course of centuries and have made the original texts unrecognizable.

In spite of everything, the impression, made by these sages on the minds of mankind was so deep that their shapes shine distinctly through the darkness of the passed ages and the mist of mutilations.

Confucius is often called the founder of the national state-religion of China. But the word „religion“ must be accepted here with some reserve. In any case, it does not mean any form of worship or cult of a certain deity, the notion of „god“ being wholly alien to Confucianism. All we find there is the word „Heaven“ with quite a nebulous meaning. But even in this direction Confucius stood firmly on the earth and said: „The Heaven does not speak. Its will reveals itself through the deeds of men. That is all.“ To the question, how the supernatural spirits must be served, he answered: „We do not know, how to serve the men, how can we know, how to serve the spirits?“ In the same manner he declined other metaphysical questions. To the question, what is death, he answered reluctantly: „We don't know, what life is, how can we know, what death is?“

In a close connection with this realism of his views and his lack of interest for all sorts of metaphysics, his method of research was strictly rationalistic: the thinking, the studying, the searching. In any case no revelation from above, nothing supernatural, nothing transcendental.

The main problem of his studies was ever man himself, sometimes even the separate man, an individual. „All say: the empire, the kingdom, the family. The foundation of the empire is kingdom, the foundation of the kingdom is family, and the foundation of the family is the man.“ But such individualistic approach is rather a rare exception. As a rule Confucius was a collectivist, and his main task was to settle the relations of men in collectives: in the family, in the state, in mankind. In which direction did he seek the solution of this problem? Doubtlessly, in the family. The family was the

starting point of his whole social and political philosophy. His biographers tell that the splendour and the solemnity of the burial ceremony with which he honoured the remains of his mother struck his fellow-citizens with astonishment and made him famous. After this burial he spent three years near the burial place dedicating this whole time to philosophical work and meditations, and thus his doctrine attained its full ripeness. In the veneration of the family lies the source of his affection for the historical studies. Here was the source of his traditionalism too, if we do not choose the word conservatism or even retrogradism for his ideal of paternal despotism in relations within the family as well as in the relations within the state. But it is only natural that the same affection to the family was the source of the progressive and even revolutionary elements in his views and teachings. The positive contents in the relations of a family ought to be extended on the great collectives, on the state, empire and even on the whole mankind. When one of his disciples said mournfully, he had no brothers, Confucius answered: „All men in the whole world must be regarded as brothers. Then one will not mourn that he has no brothers.“ To the question what is humanity, he answered: „Love,“ the answer which sounds like a Christian command. But let us not be cheated by the outer consonance of the words. The overwhelming rapture of ecstatic love in the Sermon on the Mount was wholly alien to the cautious, sober mind of Confucius, firmly attached to earthly things. To the question, whether one may retaliate the evil with good, he answered: „How shall we then retaliate the good?“ His idea of the conduct towards the fellow-men was expressed in his „Golden Rule“: „What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others,“ a rather shallow rule with which Confucius foreran Kant by 25 centuries.

When, in spite of everything, one would insist on seeking in the founder of a religion some pathos, then, in the case of Confucius there was the pathos of the sobriety, of the cautiousness, the pathos of the rationalistic and practical traditionalism. Nevertheless it was a real pathos. Confucius himself has proved it by his own life. It is known that he has conceived a programme of social and political reforms, which would bring happiness to the whole world. „If any ruler would submit to me, as his master, for 12 months, I should accomplish something considerable; in three years I should attain the realisation of my hopes.“ Being compelled to leave his native state Lu he travelled during the rest of his life from one state to another seeking the ruler who would be willing to let him carry out his programme. He found in the best case an honourable, but cold and unpromising reception, sometimes an open animosity and even imprisonment. But he could not find the ruler he wanted. Feeling the approach of his end he said: „No intelligent ruler arises to take me as his

master. My time has come to die," — these were his last words we know. The first and the greatest rationalist was in the same time the first and perhaps greatest Don Quixote in the best sense of this word.

The word „pathos“ applied to Confucius sounds somewhat strange and unusual. But this word in its pure and highest sense is fully on the right place if applied to the teaching of *Gautamo-Buddha*, which from the beginning to the end is imbued with the deepest pathos of the noblest human feelings. Gautamo was born in the country of the southern spurs of Himalaya, and as the mounts of Himalaya overshadow the highest mountains in any other part of the world, thus the teaching of Gautamo in its unrivaled beauty, dignity and depth overshadows all other systems of human thought. It is not super-human, it is human, perhaps too-human, but in any case it is super-European.

For Confucius the family was the starting point of his doctrine, of his whole ethics and politics. In contrast to it Gautamo began with leaving his family. The legend is well known, how a prince, shattered by the sight of illness, old age and death, decided to seek salvation from pain of life and left in darkness of a night his gorgeous royal palace and his beloved family in order to enter the homelessness and poverty of a life of a beggar-monk. This legend belongs to the most beautiful creations of the whole world literature. In a simple, naive, but impressive and unforgettable form, — one must read the original, — nearly as a children's fairy tale, there is given the deepest meaning of the contents, which with the merciless sharpness of a knife-edge puts the most tragic question of our life. Really, what a meaning has our whole life, if old age and death with their implacable inevitability await us? The northern traditions believe this legend to be a part of the biography of Gautamo himself. In the southern texts it is told by Gautamo, referring to one of his predecessors, to one of 24 Buddhas, who lived before him. In any case, if not strictly biographically, then psychologically the legend tells the true motives of the searching and teaching of Gautamo. Here, in his striving to reach the delivery from pain and death, is the second point of difference with Confucius, who declined even to speak about death.

The tradition tells that Gautamo not only put the question, but that he found the way to solve it and finally — the solution itself. From his biography we are informed about two ways of seeking the truth: a wrong one and a true one. In the beginning Gautamo tried to follow the paths of the traditional creed and of ascetism, as it was the custom in India of those days. During six long years Gautamo exercised the most severe ascetism with the most ardent devotion and fervour, which brought him to the verge of starvation. His body was

reduced to a heap of dried skin and bones and he was near to death, but it had not compelled the spirit to catch the truth. Then Gautamo understood that this way was cheating and deceiving, he left his terrible fastings and chose another way, — that of deep meditation and of self-contemplation. This abandonment of the traditional creeds is by itself not less important than the departure from the family and ancestral home, because it meant the breach with the old beliefs, with Brahma and the host of other traditional gods. Buddhism, as well as Confucianism, has no notion of supernatural beings, no gods and no god. Gautamo understood: the human spirit puts the questions of life, the human spirit alone is able to give the answers. The Northern canon tells that in this new way, during a stormy night, sitting under the sacred Bodi-tree, sunk in the deep meditations, Gautamo passed all „four stages of wisdom“ and reached the highest and last knowledge. Thus he became „The Awakened“, „The Enlightened“ or „Buddha“. The Southern canon gives a different and a more realistic colouring to this event, telling about meditations amidst peaceful fields under the blossoming trees. In this version the attainment of the truth was not attached to a short time, but might have lasted months or even years.

Tradition believes Gautamo has found the way to the salvation from all pains of life, from old age and death. What was this solution? To our astonishment, in reading the Buddhist books we find not one answer, but at least two. One answer, which to-day is proclaimed by the traditional dogmatic Buddhism as being the true one, says that pain and life are identical. Therefore, the source of pain lies in our attachment to life, in the dark, irrational, unconscious thirst or will to exist. Hence, the salvation from pain can be reached only by the overcoming of this thirst, the breaking down of the bounds which attach us to life, the suppression of the craving for existence. Only where there is no new birth, there will be no death. Therefore the highest bliss is the final dissolving in naught, the irretrievable disappearance, the state of Nirvana, without any re-birth and therefore without any death. This system of thought, expressed in Four Sublime Verities, represents the utmost pessimism in conception of human life, the summit of human disappointment and despair. It must be noticed that in this respect Buddhism is super-European as well. It is sufficient to read the texts, where the denial of life is expressed, to realise its overwhelming, irresistible force. One would stand helplessly before this elementary, all destroying impact of all crushing despair and ultimate hopelessness, — helplessly, if in the same texts there would be no antidote against this deadly spiritual poison: in other texts, in closely following sermons of Gautamo, sometimes even in the same sermon, like a red thread there passes another, quite opposite conception of the world. Not the denial, but a full ascertain-

ment of life, the highest esteem and care for life, not only for life of human beings, but other living creatures too. The Eight Things of a True Path and Ten Moral Precepts express to some degree this contrastive conception. One asks with surprise: which of these two conceptions of life is true? In the texts themselves there is no answer for this question. What is given in texts is only the warning against the wrong conception. In one of his beautiful sermons Gautamo has compared his teaching with a serpent. When a hunter meets the serpent and grasps its body or its tail, then the serpent goes up, stings the hunter and he will die or suffer deadly pains. „And why? Because he has wrongly grasped the serpent.“ Another hunter, when he meets the serpent, grasps it with a fork-shaped stick at its throat and forces it to the ground. So the serpent is not able to sting and the hunter has no cause to fear death or pains. „And why? Because he has rightly grasped the serpent.“ Now the question arises, which is one of the most important in the whole human history: has the traditional, dogmatic Buddhism grasped the doctrine of Gautamo rightly? The gloomy lethargy of the present Buddhism, which has replaced its former glamour of limitless expansion, compels to have serious doubts about it. But let this question for a while remain open.

Gautamo has sought in the knowledge the way of salvation from pain. Zoroaster was more dynamic: he wanted to overcome pain and all what is evil in the world, and to destroy and annihilate their very source. If Confucius was the embodiment of rationalism, Gautamo the embodiment of human feeling, Zoroaster must be regarded as the embodiment of human will. He does not clasp on the family, he does not need to plunge in deep meditations, all he wants is to act. The deed that is the true centre round which the world moves: Zoroaster is no thinker, no enquirer, or searcher. He is a poet and a prophet. He does not need any assiduous studies. To him speaks the poetical inspiration, the celestial visions, the divine revelation. And he knows: the world is created by the force of two principles: of the Good and of the Evil. The first principle he called Ormuzd, or more precisely, Ahura Mazda or the White Lord, and his opponent is called Ahriman, precisely Angra Maniu, or the Evil Spirit. The first principle is the source of light, of life, of all what is beautiful, bright, life-giving, useful, true, salvatory and peacemaking. The other creates darkness, death, illness and pain, all what is gloomy, sinister, disastrous, cheating, ugly and wrong. Both forces are in the everlasting struggle one against the other for the rule in the world. The task and the sense of human life is to join in this struggle against Evil. This struggle may not be understood as a primitive bloody war and physical destruction. No, Zoroaster was against war, he was a peacemaker. The embodiment of the Good, Ahura Mazda was called „unbuckling the sword and taking away the weapon“, and his followers

were obliged to take the oath „not to wage the wars and not to rob the villages“. The struggle was understood rather from its moral side. The way of this struggle leads through „good thoughts, good words, and good deeds“, — the threefold motto of Zoroastrianism. The first place in this struggle was assigned to the creative, productive work, which provides plenty, welfare and prosperity for mankind. No other religion has so many texts which concern the work of man, extolling it as the source of blessing and joy. In spite of the fundamental dualism in the conception of world, Zoroaster, in accordance with his active nature, was an optimist. In his energetic desire of action and strenuousness he is full of hopes and believes, a day of final victory shall come, when the Evil will be annihilated and the Good will remain as the sole ruler of the world. Then man will reach perfection, and the world its Golden Age, when the „Good Kingdom“, „Wished for Kingdom“ or „Kingdom of Desire“ will be established, „where there will be no cold and no arid winds, no diseases, no death, where the earth will be full of men and domestic animals, and everywhere will be joyous fires, and among the men there will be no rulers, no beggars, no enemies and no cheaters, who induce to go on the paths of evil“. Here shines brightly the pathos of enthusiastic activity and true heroism, striving to perform the highest, universal, even cosmic tasks.

In the foregoing schematic survey of the doctrines a watchword or motto was sought for by every of the three sages. It was „family“ for Confucius, „salvation from the pain“ for Gautamo, and „deed“ for Zoroaster. The easiest task is to find such a watchword for Pythagoras: this word is undoubtedly „harmony“.

Pythagoras was the first in Greece, and therefore in the whole world, who called himself „philosopher“. The task of philosophy was for him the revealing and disclosing of the inner harmony residing in all things in the world. He was the first mathematician in Europe who addicted himself eagerly to mathematic studies. He has considerably contributed to the progress of this science, for instance with his famous theorem bearing his name till to day. The great thing about this theorem is not its contents, but the method of its solution, the mathematical demonstration, which laid foundation to the whole geometry of Euclides, and must be regarded as one of the greatest inventions of the human mind. He has annunciated some other theorems, among them the summing up of the angles of a triangle. But mathematics as a whole, with its basis, the number, was for Pythagoras in no way a dead, formal thing, the subject of dry computation, but the representation and embodiment of the living harmony of the world. In consonance with this view he regarded the number as the essence of all things, and this conception of the world is wholly adequate to the modern mathematically founded, scientific natural

philosophy. He was the first astronomer, whose ideas about the structure of the world were congruous with the modern views, in any case he understood that the earth is a globe moving round its axis and in space. But even in cosmology he searched for inner harmony, and was convinced that the celestial bodies move harmoniously, producing the „music of the spheres“, which is not heard only because it sounds continuously. He was the first physicist, in any case the first experimental physicist in the modern sense of the word. Among other, he has experimentally proved that the variety of harmonious sounds of a string depends on the harmonious relations of its length, a fact which gave a strong support to his belief of the inner harmony, reigning in the world. He was the first in Greece who preached the immortality and transmigration of the souls, but in this doctrine he found the source for his belief in the harmony and kinship of men and animals. He sought the ways to improve the relations of men, and for this aim he founded the brotherhood of his disciples, which displayed a considerable influence on the politics in Crotona and other cities of Italy. His task was to establish virtue, which by itself was for him harmony in the human relations. To understand the universal harmony and to establish it in human life, — that was his noble task. The systematical and rationalistic studies of Confucius, the sharpness of the feelings of Gautamo, the dynamism of will of Zoroaster, completed by scientific searching and experimenting of the modern scholars were embodied in Pythagoras in a beautiful, unparalleled unity. With his pathos of striving for harmony he was an excellent model and paragon not only for the Greeks, of whom possibly nobody has attained such a many-sided accomplishment, but even for the whole of mankind.

3.

In spite of the shortness and the utmost schematism of the foregoing portraying of the four sages, — their greatness is clearly seen and can be appreciated and admired. Even in looking at each of them separately they are truly overwhelming. Everyone of them has his own region, his own spiritual kingdom, where he yields majestically. But are we compelled to regard them only separately? Could they not be united in a higher oneness, as for instance the colours are united in a rainbow, the strings — in a musical instrument, and several instruments in one orchestra? It was already noticed that three of them can be regarded each as the embodiment of one side of the human soul: thinking, feeling and acting. But these three sides form one human soul. Each of them had his own method of searching for truth; but the reasoning of Confucius, the deep concentration and self-contemplation of Gautamo, the intuitive inspiration of Zoroaster and the scientific, systematical searching of Pythagoras repre-

sent all possible methods of attainment of knowledge, and in the whole they must be regarded as an unity of all powers of the human mind.

We can approach the problem from the other side. It can be asserted that the European philosophy, in the course of its history, has passed many stages in its views upon the world. In ancient Greece the starting point was the cosmocentrism, based on the belief in the existence of everlasting laws, ruling in the world; in the Middle Ages this cosmocentrism was replaced by a theocentrism, as God was acknowledged to be the final highest source of all existing things and laws; then in the Age of Renaissance and of later Rationalism this point of view was superseded by the rationalistic anthropocentrism; newly, in the philosophy of Schopenhauer, Bergson and especially of Nietzsche the somewhat shallow rationalism of the primitive anthropocentrism was opposed by the understanding of the importance of the unconscious side of human nature, of its dark inner drivings and forces.⁸⁾ It is immensely interesting that in the Great Age — a whole gamut of these ideological comings and goings could be disclosed by regarding the changes not in the time, but in the space: in Greece — the cosmocentrism has found its most accomplished form in the teaching of Pythagoras about the harmony reigning in the whole world; in Iran at the same time there ruled the theocentrism in its very interesting and notable dualistic form;⁹⁾ in China there was represented the rationalistic anthropocentrism of Confucius, and, finally, in India the counterpart of the modern voluntaristic philosophy of unconsciousness, only in an incomparably deeper and perfect form with two ways of approaching the problems, which arise in such contemplation of the world. In this manner the teachings of the ancient sages mutually complete each other and form a higher unity. Truly, they were only separate instruments in one great orchestra producing the harmony of one symphony of the human spirit.

The consonance and harmony of the melody produced by an orchestra depends on the leading of a dirigent. But who has secured the harmony of the doctrines of the four sages of antiquity, who was the dirigent creating the unity of the most splendid spiritual symphony of mankind? Must their consonance be regarded at only as a mere accidental coincidence, as a capricious play of history, or as a consequence of some deep inner social and historical lawfulness? It seems that already from the aprioristic point of view it would be hardly possible to believe in the simple accidentality of such coincidence. Pythagoras, two and half milleniums before our days, was able to see and to hear the harmony even in a dead string and in a dead geometrical figure, why then should we not be able to discover the lawfulness of the harmony in the greatest and deepest achievements of the human spirit?

This aprioristic and intuitive postulate is strongly supported by historical argument. We are generally saying that Buddhism is founded by Gautamo or Zoroastrianism by Zoroaster. But in essence such great events of history, as the foundation of a new universal religion can not be assumed to one person, how great he may be, but must be regarded as a collective work of a whole generation, if not of many subsequent generations. In fact, we know that Confucius was preceded by many other philosophers, the greatest of whom, Lao Tse, was still alive at the beginning of the teaching activity of Confucius; Confucius himself was constantly surrounded by his disciples who did not leave him even in the time of his misfortunes. After his death the disciples and followers carried on his work, carefully preserving every word he had said. The same was with Gautamo, whose preaching was prepared by the foregoing spiritual development, beginning with the Vedic Age and ending with many sects of all kinds which have induced him to leave his home. Since his first sermon at Benares the number of his disciples ever increased, and on his travels from one place of India to another he was always surrounded by a crowd of his adherers, who left their homes and families in order to follow him and who were not only his listeners, but his true collaborators in the foundation of a new creed. Zoroaster rejoiced the protection of a king and of his suit, and the immediate dispersion of the new doctrine in Iran is the best testimony of the active contribution of a great number of persons. In Greece Pythagoras himself was not so well known as the Pythagoreans: many authors mentioned only the school, and not its chief, obviously because there was difficult to say what had been done by the founder and what by his disciples. Therefore each of these great doctrines must be regarded not only as the result of the individual work of one great person, but rather as the work of a great generation. Then the question which must be solved is not about the simultaneity of four great sages, but about the simultaneity of four great generations, which were coexisting in the sixth Century before our era. Is it possible to admit that such coexistence of great generations can be explained only as an accident, without any inner connection? It is obvious that from this point of view the historian is compelled to regard the four separate local events from a common standpoint as being only four sides of a greater unity, of one great universal event.

The remoteness of the separate events from each other is by no means a deciding point. There are many examples, archaeological as well as historical of a *unity of the events* in the most distant parts of the world. The Neolithic age in the Far East has had not only the same main features as the corresponding age in Europe, but it obviously belongs to the same period of time. The agriculture as well as the cattle breeding were introduced practically simultaneously in the

countries of China and in the Far West of the Old World. In any case already in the second millenium B. C. the agriculture was wide spread in China and, taken practically, stood on the same level as in Iran. The bronze has appeared synchronically in the most remote parts of the world. The so called „megalitic“ constructions, dolmens and menhirs, were built on the shores of the Atlantic and on the shore of the Pacific just in the same time (the beginning of the 2 nd millenium B. C.). The iron weapon and tools were introduced in Europe and in China in the same epoch, in the end of the second or beginning of the first millenium B. C. Apparently there were existing some ways, which united the mankind of the Old World long before the age of railroads and telegraphs. In the light of these facts, the coincidence of a stage of spiritual development would not appear as a strange and paradoxal exception, but rather as a natural consequence of the synchronism reigning throughout the whole history of the human culture.

If some common cause of the simultaneous origin of the great doctrines of mankind must be supposed, then this cause can be discovered only in the great events which were closely foregoing them. The next such event of sufficient great and deep importance was the *introduction of iron*. How dreary materialistically it may sound, it must be supposed that nothing else as iron can be regarded as the common dirigent in the great symphony of these great doctrines. The spreading out of iron undoubtedly revolutionised the ancient life. If its predecessor, the bronze, was a rare metal and if throughout of the whole bronze age the stone tools were in use everywhere too, the widespread and easily obtainable iron replaced stone as well as bronze and became a real basis of the whole material life of mankind. The plenty of beautiful, strong, reliable and handy utensils, convenient and well adapted to any purpose, created a truly new era in the material culture, influencing every branch of work: agriculture, stone cutting, architecture, ship-building and warfare. The work of men, disposing of the iron tools, became more productive and provided such plenty and prosperity, which were never seen before. The widespread material security has created the conditions for the display of the higher creative forces of the human spirit. In this way the identity of the material culture of the whole world in the age, which followed the introduction of iron, was the first common cause in the identity in spiritual life.

The ways of the influence of iron on the spiritual life can be traced more closely. Especially obvious is its influence in the region of politics. The bronze, as a rare metal, was not available for tools of every-day life, and could be used only for the ornaments and in the first line for weapons. But in these ancient times it was nearly as

difficult to get a bronze sword as it would be now to possess a silver or even a golden sword. Only wealthy and mighty people could afford it. But on the other hand, the possession of a bronze sword was the source of might and wealth, making the position of its possessor truly exceptional. Therefore the bronze was a factor of creating the social and political inequality, of building up an aristocracy within the states in national relations, and the state-conquerors or great empires in international relations. Contrarily to bronze, the iron was from the very beginning of its using wide-spread and was practically obtainable everywhere. Everyone could have an iron sword, each town could have armed forces. Therefore its influence was directly opposite to that of bronze: it was a factor of equality, of democracy. Besides, the manufacturing of iron, the new industries and new trade with iron tools and weapons created the basis of the wealth and economic prosperity of towns, which appeared everywhere in a great multitude. Each town being a centre of the iron industry and trade had no difficulty to provide its citizens with the best weapon, and this fact enabled them to struggle for their independence even against the mighty empires. If in the age of bronze there appeared the first great empires, the age of iron commences with the dissolution of those empires and with the creation of a great number of independent state-towns, and can be justly called the *age of particularism*. This particularism was especially striking in Greece, where each town has regarded itself as a wholly independent state, — the number of such states, though unstable, must be estimated as exceeding hundred.¹⁰⁾ The political conditions of Greece were by no means an exception, but rather a rule for this epoch. In the Near East, which in the age of bronze during the whole second millenium B. C. had been united by the empires of Babylonia and Egypt, in the first half of the following millenium, that is closely after the introduction of iron, there arose many little Phoenician town-republics, two Judaic states, Izrael and Judaea, and innumerable other state-towns, with their own rulers, own constitutions, own systems of administration, own culture, own creeds, own international policy.¹¹⁾ In India in the time of Vedas as well as in the time of Gautamo the area was divided into many independent states: only between Himalaya and the river Nebrada there were sixteen greater states, not to count the semi-independent small cities and communities.¹²⁾ But the most striking example of such particularism can be found in China. Although in the second millenium B. C. China, as well as South-East Asia, was united in a great empire ruled by the strong hand of the first two dynasties, the third dynasty, Chou, dominating from 1222 to 249 B. C., ruled only nominally. Practically there was no central power at all. Each province, even each more or less important town were wholly independent. The journeys of Confucius with the aim of find-

ing an „intelligent ruler“ form the best alive illustration of this particularism. There were some 16 important mighty states; the number of all states is estimated by some scholars as reaching 150. In such a way after the introduction of iron practically the whole Old World, from the shores of the Atlantic to the shores of the Pacific, was divided into small territories of independent state-towns. Never before and never afterwards the particularism was as strong and as universal as in this epoch. In this identity of political system, dominating throughout the whole world, there lies the second cause of the similarity of the spiritual life.

It must be emphatically pointed out that the separatism and particularism can in no way be regarded as an obstacle precluding the spiritual progress. Contrarily, it was ever immensely favourable for the development of the culture in all its forms. It is enough to mention the Greek culture which was both the most particularistic and the most creative one, a true period of blossom of mankind. The inheritance of the small Phoenician towns is much greater than of great Assyrian and Median empires taken together. The influence of the small Judaic states on the fate of mankind is up till now much more essential than of all great empires of antiquity. All great philosophical systems and religious dogmas in India were created in the age of particularism. In China the period of the dynasty Chou is memorable and unique by the flourishing of arts, by the progress of sciences and by the great achievements. The cause of such influence of the particularism on the spiritual development can be easily found in the competition between small states, in the opportunity to compare different systems of government of various states, and especially in the comparative inner freedom of the citizens of small states. Any problem, which was put before the contemporaries, was attempted to be solved by various communities in various ways and the comparison of the results was a stimulus to avoid the bad, to improve the good, and to imitate the best. The spiritual forces of men, which in great states, as a rule, have been lost and dissipated in the outer growth, in outer expansion, in the small states seek their way in the high and deep. In the great empires the citizens are always overwhelmed and suppressed by the splendour of the power of their rulers and are not able to compare the administration of their own country with the administration of other states, and have no other choice, as to subdue to their rulers or to perish. Contrarily, the citizens of a small state can not be much impressed by their petty rulers, and in case of an open conflict everyone has an easy opportunity to find the security in the nearest adjacent town-state with a more adequate form of government. Therefore the citizens are spiritually independent and free. It can be said that, *ceteris paribus*, the greatness of a state and that of its citizens stay in the inverse relation: the greater is the

state, the smaller is the citizen, the smaller the state, the greater the citizen. The identity of the conditions of the spiritual life which existed in this epoch, is the third cause of the similarity of its achievements.

The conditions of life, — material, political and spiritual ones, were identical. Identical as well were the problems which were put before these generations. The main problems were religious, political and ethical. The old traditional religions, created unconsciously by the former generations, living under completely different material conditions, were evidently obsolete and had to be thoroughly reformed or even replaced by the new ideological systems. The political problems were by no means less acute. How favourable the particularism might be, nobody could regard the dominating separatism as the best and final form of human organization. If the struggles of the mighty empires with their apocalyptic devastations were ever regarded as the punishment of gods and the irresistible disaster of mankind, quite different was the impression made by the petty quarrels, conflicts and warrings of the small rulers of the little states, especially when these states were of the same nation, with the same religion, the same language and culture; a war between them ever had to be regarded as a fratricid one, as the result of the folly of men, of the wrong policy of rulers and of the inefficiency of the political institutions. Hence arose the problem of replacing the wrong forms of government by an ideal organisation, which would be able to establish happiness for mankind. And the third, perhaps the most important problem, in essence prevailing the first two, was the creation of new ethics. Man in his march toward higher forms of life has passed three most important stages. The first stage was the creating of harmony between the man and the anorganic nature, — stones, ores and metals. As our ancestor living in the dark, remote antiquity, first took the stone into his hand and used it as a tool or weapon, creating the unity of his body with the anorganic material, then occurred an event of tremendous importance, which for ever established the predominance of man over the earth. The second step was the creation of harmony between men and plants, which is embodied in the agriculture, with all great consequences of its introduction. The third step was the domestication of animals, which also can be regarded as the establishing of harmony between men and useful beasts. These three steps of culture, with their threefold harmony, created wholly new conditions of life and opened the brightest perspectives for the future, especially after the introduction of iron. No rapacious animal, no hunger caused by the lack of food, no death caused by the lack of shelter are menacing mankind any more. The only and last danger, which remained, was the danger from man himself. The last and the greatest problem, — the creation of har-

mony between men, — was left yet unsolved. And the mightier man became, the greater was the danger. The iron, which splendidly serves the men as a tool, but could as well be used as a sword, spear and other deadly weapons, has unfolded this question in its full meaning and with all consequences.

4.

Such were the three questions which the epoch after the introduction of iron put before the generations who lived then. Doubtlessly, these questions were evident and urgent in all parts of the world. Therefore already a-priori one must expect that each great cultural centre, which was known, has tried to solve them. From this point of view the four great doctrines, origin of which we are tracing, must be regarded as the *four answers to the same questions*. Even if the answers would have been entirely different and opposite, even then the identity of problems joined them into a unity. We saw that each of the great sages had his own way, how to seek for truth. If these various methods were applied in order to solve the same problems, this can be regarded as one process of searching, and the differences and contraversities of answers may be instructive and conclusive for the appreciation of these methods. But were the answers really different and opposite? A closer examination reveals more similarities and identity, than it could be expected. Even the coincidences in the second rate questions are sometimes striking. For instance, the scholars have drawn the attention to the remarkable analogy between two most remote philosophers, Pythagoras and Confucius, concerning mathematics: both were convinced that there exists an inner connection between the numbers and the essence of things.¹⁸⁾ Two other striking facts, the prohibition to use flesh and the community of property, were a rule for the Buddhists as well as for the Pythagoreans. The similarities were striking in the main points of the doctrines too. For instance, the first main problem, that of relations with religion, was identically approached by Confucius and by Gautamo, who spiritually was the most remote to him: both have rejected the traditional cult and have not replaced it by the cult of other gods or god. The prohibition of the Pythagoreans to take an oath indicates that they were tending to the same direction: in any case the idea of gods did not play any part in the philosophical system of Pythagoras, and in his views there is no trace of belief that the harmony, ruling in the world, might be created by or be dependent from any deity.

But the most important and conclusive uniformity is evident in the ethics. Here the identity is full: charity, forgiveness, generosity, kindness, humanity, brotherhood, love — are common requirements of all doctrines in the sphere of ethics. Of course, it cannot be ex-

pected that in China, in India and in Greece there would have been used the same words for expressing the same thoughts and feelings. But there are only differences of words, with the full identity of the essence, which can be regarded as an establishing of harmony between men. Hence the identity of conclusions. For instance, all four doctrines were outspokenly pacifistic, if this modern word may be applied to the relations of antiquity. It was already mentioned referring to the teaching of Zoroaster. The peacemaking of Buddha up to the principle of retaliation of the evil with the good, is preached in most of his sermons and parables. There are no doubts about the pacifism of Confucius, who said: „In delivering a battle for conquest of the territory, the bodies of dead soldiers cover the fields; in delivering a battle for capture of a city, the bodies of dead soldiers fill the town. That is what is called to nourish the earth with human flesh. Such a crime cannot be expiated even with death.“¹⁴⁾ The same antimilitaristic attitude is expressed in the songs of soldiers in the collection of ancient poems, which is attributed to Confucius.¹⁵⁾ Finally, the war was evidently not compatible with the harmony in the relations of men, which was the main aim of Pythagoras. And one conclusion more: all four were convinced that the new relations between men will introduce a general and common happiness. This is eloquently expressed in the hopes of Zoroaster in the final victory of good over the evil, when a Golden Age or the „Kingdom of Good“ will be established. Confucius, in spite of his sobriety and cautiousness, firmly believed that the common happiness can be created in the course of one generation. Even Gautamo, in direct contradiction with his believed pessimism, has had the same visions, as, for instance, it can be found in the beautiful sermon, called „Kutadanta“,¹⁶⁾ where a story is told about the good king Mahavijitta, whose good government created the happiness not only for men, but even for animals, — the most realistic and in the same time the most eloquent picture of the perfect government, which world literature knows till to-day. In reading these texts all doubts will be dissipated: the origin of the four doctrines were not four separate events, but only one event, evidently, the greatest in the whole history of mankind.

It is quite possible that the identity was originally by far more complete and deep, but this similarity is lost in the course of time, in the misrepresentations, misunderstandings and mutilations of the following ages. In many cases the lost can not be recovered, the mutilated cannot be restored. But to some extent, in some cases, the confrontation itself can be used as a method of searching, and sometimes it can effectively assist in solving the inner controversies in each teaching. In any case, if within any of the present dogmas there are two opposite and non compatible views, then they must be com-

pared with the views expressed in other doctrines and the most consonant with them can be regarded as being probably true. For instance, the passive and submissive piety of the modern Zoroastrians and their primitive adoration of the innumerable hosts of good spirits and helpless curses for the even greater hosts of the evil ghosts¹⁷⁾ stay in an open contradiction with the former high spiritual level of this doctrine. The modern scholars, tracing the most ancient sources of Zoroastrianism, are unanimous in regarding the crowds of the good and evil spirits as a mere subsequent mutilation and barbarisation of the ancient doctrine, and some suggest that even Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainu were originally no personified gods, but only the expressions of two main moral principles, struggling in human heart. The comparative confrontation with the three other doctrines, created in the same epoch, which did not mention any personified gods at all, can be justly regarded as a strong evidence for the admissibility of such interpretation.

The second, by far more important example of the use of such method, can be shown in the interpretation of Buddhism. It was already pointed out that in the texts of Buddhism there are two conceptions of the salvation from pain: one, the denial of life itself, the other one — the esteem and care for the life. Which of these conceptions is true? The comparison with the three other systems leaves no doubts: of course, not the denial, but the assertion of life, because only this is consonant with the optimism of Zoroaster, with the utilitarianism of Confucius and with the harmony in life, which was so obstinately emphasized by the philosopher of Samos. At the first glance such an application of this method might appear rather hazardous, if not wholly inadmissible. But as far as it concerns the Buddhism the correctness of this method can be proved by the evidence provided by history itself. The modern canonical books, written in accordance with the modern dogma of Buddhism, have reached our times in the shape they got some 1000 years ago, or even later. But there exist much more ancient Buddhist texts, namely the Edicts of the king of ancient India Asoka. King Asoka was for Buddhism the same what for Christianity apostle Paul and Emperor Konstantin would be, if they both were united in one person. In any case the first great expansion of Buddhism started in his time and was caused by his activity.¹⁸⁾ In his Edicts, which were engraved on the stone pillars and on the rocks in many parts of India, and which must be regarded as his spiritual autobiography, he openly confesses his wrongs and tells about his striving to find the true path of the „true Conquests“ of peaceful victories of the „Dhamma“ or Good Law. In these Edicts, which are the most ancient texts of Buddhism, written only some 250 years after the death of Gautamo, in the place where he preached and where his traditions were yet living, no word can be found about the denial of

life or about Nirvana. Contrarily, the Edicts are full of care for the life of men and animals, of enthusiasm of activity for the welfare of all living beings, and are entirely consonant with the creative heroism of Zoroaster, with the wise practicism of Confucius and with the warm belief in the harmony of the universe of Pythagoras. It must be supposed that king Asoka, the second co-founder of Buddhism, had a clearer idea about the essence of the teaching of Gautamo, than the modern Buddhist monks, who can perceive only the remote, mutilated echoes of his sermons. And remembering the comparison of Gautamo's teaching with the serpent, one must say: modern Buddhism has wrongly grasped the „serpent“. Perhaps here lies the main cause why Buddhism has lost its living force of expansion, which was so amazing in its great heroic past.

The last conclusion touches the last important identity of all four doctrines: their *failure* to accomplish the task they had put before them. The causes of this failure are too complicated and too deep for being discussed even briefly in the frame of this lecture. It may be only pointed out that the main causes of the failure lie in the relation between these doctrines and the state. Sometimes the cause lies in the persecutions from the side of the state or the prevailing political parties. From such persecutions have suffered to a certain degree all doctrines: Pythagoras on the close of his days, Confucius some 300 years after his death, Gautamo some hundreds years later, and Zoroaster — almost 1000 years after his death. But perhaps even more disastrous was the influence of the state, when it granted its protection and support, the conditions of this benevolence being usually equivalent with the rejecting of the essence. The cause and the ways and the inner inevitability of these failures, how different and various they might be, represent the most interesting and most important problems, which can be learned from history. The real contents of history since the Great Age is the story of the struggle of these attempts to improve human life and to make mankind able of attaining the fullest harmony and happiness, with the obstacles which mankind has obstinately put on this way. It was truly said: „Thy fruits are ripe, Zarathustra, but thou art not ripe for thy fruits.“

These problems do not refer only to the past. They are the most burning and urgent questions of modern times. All great problems of antiquity remain unsolved till to-day. Mankind has not a satisfactory view of world, it was not able to create adequate forms of collective life, and the main problem, how to establish harmony between men, remains open to-day as it was open two and half thousand years ago. The problems are the same, but their meaning has tremendously increased. The might, the force and the wealth of mankind have grown immensely compared with those of antiquity. The harmony

with the anorganic world, with plants and animals is displayed to full size and has provided mankind with limitless possibilities, which, connected with the marvellous perfectness of the modern methods of government, enable to reach the real Golden Age within few years. But the disharmony between men themselves destroys all these blessings of culture and makes out of them an imminent, deadly danger not only for men, but for all living creatures of the world. These dangers can be faced only by the creating of new efficient ethics. In this task, the importance of which is really cosmic, the first step is to understand the attempts made in antiquity to solve these problems. The best way to this understanding is the synthetical approaching and disclosing of their inner consonance. In the contemplation of their harmony there can be found an everlasting source of creative inspiration which our generation so greatly lacks and so badly needs.

Notes.

1. The out-of-schedule lecture held in the Baltic University on 19th September 1946. The connection of the origin of four doctrines with the introduction of iron and with the particularism, supposed in this lecture, must be regarded only as a conjecture or hypothesis for further examination and investigation.

2. The main problems referring the age of life of Gautama are discussed in the standard work E. J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha*, London 1927.

3. Charles Autran, *Mithra; Zoroaster et la préhistoire aryenne du christianisme*, 1935, pp. 148—9.

4. Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum Gestarum Libri qui supersunt*, XXXIII, 6, 32. The words of this text: „... addidit Zoroastres, deinde Hystaspes rex prudentissimus, Darei pater“ evidently indicate a certain personal connection between both.

5. Ernst Herzfeld, *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, Bd. I, 1929—30, p. 185.

6. The problem of the influence of Buddhism on Christendom is largely discussed by many scholars (Arthur Lillie, Rudolf Seydel, Alfred Bertholet, Burrett Hillman Streeter, Albert J. Edmunds, D. Goddard a. s. o.) and now there must be put not so much the question, whether Buddhism has influenced Christendom at all, but only how far and in which way this influence has been brought forward.

7. Anquetil Duperron, *Zend Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre*, Paris, 1771.

8. This change of views was the subject of a lecture of Prof. T. Celms, held at the Baltic University, in Hamburg.

9. The theocentrism in its monistic shape could also have been found in this epoch, — in Jewish states, Judaea and Israel, where lay the true sources of the whole Mediaeval European theocentrism.

10. The number of independent Greek states in antiquity, including Greek cities in Asia Minor, Italy and their colonies, has in any case exceeded hundred. Aristotle in his „Politica“ mentions more than 100 separate Greek cities-states; his collection of constitutions has contained 158 state-constitutions.

11. In his inscription of Behistun Darius mentions that at the beginning of his reign he was obliged, in order to establish his rule, to deliver 19 great battles and to take nine kings as prisoners. These data give some idea how strong particularism in Iran was. It must be mentioned that the policy of Darius' great predecessor Cyrus, who protected the provincial self-government and obviously aimed to the federal structure of his empire, was more adequate than the centralisation of Darius, which in the first line was responsible for the disasters awaiting Persia in the near future.

12. Arrian in „Indica“ (Chapter VII) quotes the report of Megasthenes that in India there existed 118 separate nations. It may be admitted that many, if not all of them, were wholly independent. In any case from the first-hand sources about Alexander's conquest of India (Diodorus, Plutarch, Quintus Curtius, Arrian) is seen that in India he had met with at least 20 independent political bodies, though his expedition has only crossed the valley of Indus and he has not touched the major regions of this immense country. In areas, he has penetrated, every nation and even every town were politically wholly autonomous, they had their own constitution and freely decided about war and peace. If the rest of India had the same political structure, the number of her states must be estimated in hundreds.

13. *Yi-King or Book of Changes*, especially Appendix III, Chapter IX with its symbolism of numbers. See „The Chinese Classics“, Chinese texts with translations and explanations by James Legge.

14. *Analecta*, 340.

15. *She-King or Book of Poems*, where many soldiers' songs are given, all antimilitaristic. For instance:

„At first, when we set out,
The willows were fresh and green;
Now, when we shall be returning,
The snow will be falling in clouds.
Long and tedious will be our marching;
We shall hunger; we shall thirst.
Our hearts are wounded with grief
And no one knows our sadness.“

16. „Kutadanta“, No 5 from the collection of the long sermons (Digha Nikaya).

17. The scholars assert that the modern Zoroastrianism knows 100 000 good spirits and 2 billions of evil spirits.

18. The king of ancient India Asoka ruled 273—232 B. C. His biographies: V. A. Smith, *Asoka, the Buddhist Emperor*, 1920, and D. H. Bhandakar, *Asoka*, where the translations of all his Edicts can be found. Besides: „Inscriptions of Asoka“, new edition by Hultzsch, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, 1925, original text and translation. These inscriptions are, undubiously, the highest point of statemanship and witness about the unmatched greatness of king Asoka. It is one of the strangest facts in our modern culture that only the English speaking nations possess good and available translations of these texts. The attempt to show their historical importance is made in my publication, V. Stankevič, *Der Stern vom Morgenlande* 1937, where the introductory legend of Gospel is explained as the remote echo of the embassies sent by the king Asoka.