

The Dialectics of Spiritual Development in *Time Must Have a Stop*

By Michelle Darnell

The maturation and spiritual development of Sebastian in *Time Must Have a Stop* is displayed in the epilogue of the novel, though evidence of this spiritual maturation is subtle. Sebastian alludes to his own spiritual development in his journal, writing that there are "...those of us...who are not content to remain in the darkness of spiritual ignorance..." (Huxley 248), and that he is attempting to "...avoid spiritual gluttony..." (Huxley 245). Sebastian's interactions with Bruno and his father at the end of the novel also indicate a definite change in Sebastian's attitude, revealing a calmer, and more confident Sebastian. For example, while early in the novel Sebastian often "...lacked the necessary courage and presence of mind" (Huxley 1) to speak to his own father, and was overcome with nausea as he crossed various "thresholds" (Huxley 21), despite his own intellectual recognition that there was "...nothing to justify that nausea" (Huxley 21), the more mature Sebastian described in the epilogue is able to make an affectionate effort to support the possibility of his father's spiritual development while remaining unchanged himself. However, what it is, exactly, that accounts for this change in Sebastian is somewhat unclear in the text. The task is to clarify the nature, and the process, of Sebastian's development in *Time Must Have a Stop*, and more specifically show the dialectical nature of his development.

One rather explicit "hint" is given to us in the text to explain the change in Sebastian, namely the allusion to Vedāntic texts in Sebastian's journal entries, with the indication of belief in the superiority and truth of the teachings of Śankara:

Sankara [sic] was as strenuously absolute as Bradley – but with what an enormous difference! For him, there is not only discursive knowledge about the Absolute, but the possibility (and the final necessity) of a direct intellectual intuition,

leading the liberated spirit to identification with the object of its knowledge. ‘Among all means of liberation, Bhakti or devotion is supreme. To seek earnestly, to know one’s real nature – this is said to be devotion. In other words, devotion can be defined as the search for the reality of one’s own Ātman [sic],’ and the Ātman [sic], of course, is the spiritual principle in us, which is identical with the Absolute. The older metaphysicians did not lose religion; they found it in the highest and purest of all possible forms (Huxley 235-236).

Bruno, who might be described as a spiritual leader for Sebastian, reiterates this teaching when he tells Sebastian “don’t try to act somebody’s else’s part. Find out how to become your inner not-self in God while remaining your outer self in the world” (242). The spiritual maturation of Sebastian, it would then seem, involves understanding what is ultimately real, the Absolute, or Brahman, which entails the gradual elucidation of his true self, his Ātman. This latter illumination, in turn, is largely epistemological, beginning with a discursive knowledge of self, i.e. knowledge that is arrived at through the use of concepts, and ultimately culminating in direct intellectual intuition of the Absolute (Ātman is Brahman).

Indeed, Śāṅkara makes it clear that the aim of man is to realize his true nature, and further treats the way of knowledge (jñānamārga) as the highest.¹ A new way of knowing is demanded if one is to discover one’s true self, since typical knowledge, which is discursive, always posits the object of knowledge, that which is known, as distinct from the knower. If one attempts to know one’s self (discursively), the self as known, and the self as knower, are necessarily distinct, and it becomes impossible to know the self as knower. According to Vedānta tradition, the self that is discursively known is only the jīva, which is ultimately māyā, or illusory.² The true self, the Ātman, can only be known through a direct intellectual intuition, which does not posit the object of knowledge as distinct from the subject, the knower, but instead is a knowledge without mediation of concepts in which the “subject” and “object” are one.³ This atypical knowledge, which reveals the true self with the elimination of the subject/object

dichotomy, is presented as a real possibility to Eustace after his death: “that within which the awareness of absence knew itself, that by which it was included and interpenetrated, was no longer an absence, but had become the presence of another awareness. The awareness of absence knew itself known” (Huxley 117) and “instead of privation there was this light. There was this knowledge of being known. And this knowledge of being known was a satisfied, even a joyful knowledge” (Huxley 118). Because “...with participation in the beauty there went participation in the knowledge”, Eustace ultimately rejects participation in this beauty or light, but immediate knowledge is presented as a real possibility for his choosing (Huxley 133).

The quotes above provide insight into spiritual enlightenment, but by (at least partially) elucidating the telos of Sebastian’s development, they also provide insight into the process of Sebastian’s development, i.e. how it occurred.⁴ It is clear that this development is not simply a result of becoming older: Eustace does not display more spiritual maturity at the end of his life than in his childhood, indeed, there is even the suggestion that he had moments of spiritual illumination as a child.⁵ Sebastian’s loss of his hand is further evidence that the development he has undergone is not physical, or a result of typical natural development, since he seems most spiritually developed when his physical body is lacking. Rather, following the suggestion that spiritual development involves epistemic maturation, the change displayed in Sebastian is one of perspective. Specifically, the change in Sebastian results from a movement within Sebastian’s perception of reality.

A running theme throughout the novel is Sebastian’s fantastic ability to weave an “...ever more complicated and circumstantial” world of thought that, at times, collides with the material world (Huxley 13).⁶ Sebastian’s fascination with a “world of thought” might be more properly expressed as an embracing of the subjective experience of reality as primary, though the

subjective is always situated within an 'objective' empirical world. Examples of the tension Sebastian encounters between his subjective experience of the world and the world as it is objectively revealed begins at an early age and continues throughout his young adulthood. At the approximate age of 11, Sebastian's epic of the Larnimans was materially situated in the local zoo (Huxley 13). Later, Sebastian was unsure of whether the "unfathomably pregnant mystery" of "his chapel" that was poetically revealed in the night or the "hideous" Primitive Methodist Chapel was the real chapel that stood next to his father's house (Huxley 27). And, of course, the physically real girl in blue became, for Sebastian, the imagined Mrs. Esdaile, whom he in turn later recognized as the incarnate Mrs. Thwale (Huxley 21-24, 99).

Sebastian finds himself continuously torn between two "realities," the subjective realm of thought and the objective realm of material substance, and through much of the novel attempts to determine which world best reflects "reality." While Sebastian is not delusional, in a significant way his subjective, poetic perspective of the world is more real to Sebastian than the empirical world; Eustace points out to Sebastian that "...you could always argue that you live more intensely in your mental world-substitute than we who only wallow in the real thing" (Huxley 110). On the other hand, Sebastian is quite aware that the empirical world reveals the illusory nature of his imaginative world, recognizing that "his pleasures...were only those of phantasy. When reality presented itself, he was merely terrified" (Huxley 102). For example, "the Mary Esdaile of his daydreams had always dropped her eyes when he looked at her. And how unwaveringly he was able to look in his dreams, how firmly and commandingly! Like his father. But this was not dream, but reality. And in reality he was still as shy as ever..." (Huxley 99). The truth Sebastian ultimately discovers, however, is that both worlds or realities, the subjective, imaginative or mental, as well as that which is revealed objectively or empirically, are realities,

though neither alone composes ultimate reality. The process of this discovery is dialectical in nature, as Sebastian moves between opposites (the subjective and objective) to ultimately discover a synthesis of the two in the Absolute.⁷

A dialectical movement is perhaps most generally (and crudely) understood as beginning with the positing of a particular thesis, which, when explored in depth, ultimately is unacceptable, containing within itself its own seed of destruction. One then moves to posit the opposite of the original thesis, which may be described as the anti-thesis. However, when this anti-thesis is explored in depth, it too is revealed to contain its own downfall and be unacceptable. The final movement is to “synthesize” the thesis with the anti-thesis, in such a way that both thesis and anti-thesis are, in some way, acceptable, though with the recognition that a new thesis must be posited which partially incorporates each of the previous theses.⁸ Various philosophers have modified interpretations of the nature of a dialectical movement, though one of the most historically influential writers is G.W.F. Hegel, whose epistemological emphasis on dialectics fits well with Śankara’s emphasis on jñānamārga.⁹

Hegel argues that we are to understand past philosophical efforts, which would include perceptions of reality, as partial truths, which are to be incorporated into a continuously developing and comprehensive philosophy. In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel more specifically discusses how mind, or spirit, comes to a true self-consciousness, which ultimately amounts to the realization of what he refers to as Absolute Spirit. This ultimate realization is arrived at, according to Hegel, as a dialectical resolution of oppositions found in past thought, oppositions which include mind/body, idealism/materialism, and God/man. This dialectical movement itself is explained in more depth in Hegel’s *Science of Logic*, which ultimately argues that any attempt of categorization of things, and thus discursive knowledge, ultimately depends on the distinction

between appearance and essence. With consideration of these most general teachings of Hegel, it may be shown that Sebastian's spiritual development in *Time Must Have a Stop* is itself dialectical.

Although perhaps unconventional, an appropriate place to begin a defense of Sebastian's development as a dialectical development is with the ultimate spiritual "goal," which is comparable to the so-called synthesis of the dialectical movement. It is unclear that Sebastian himself has achieved complete spiritual maturation, but given that Sebastian's struggle has already been suggested as a struggle for knowledge, Śankara's definition of truth is an appropriate, although arguably limited, description of the dialectical resolution. Vedānta teaches that man is rooted in ignorance, an illusory dimension of being which is referred to as māyā, and is born with ignorance (avidyā). Truth cannot be found in māyā, for māyā is ignorance, which is displayed, in part, by the many contradictions that are uttered to explain māyā throughout time. Rather, Śankara argues that truth can only be Brahman, because the criterion of truth is uncontradictability. Chapters 13, 15 and 17, which describe Eustace's experiences after death, echo this teaching of Śankara. "An eternity of radiant knowledge, of bliss unchanging in its ultimate intensity" (Huxley 118) is compared to Eustace's own "...contingent knowledge, a conditional awareness..." (Huxley 120).

If truth requires uncontradictability, it is clear that the young Sebastian is not in possession of truth. The imaginative world that Sebastian creates is filled with contradictions, as he implicitly describes objects as being both one thing and not that one thing,¹⁰ and yet this is the world in which he claims humans ought to be living, since, according to Sebastian, the imaginative world was filled with "...order and intention, significance and beauty" (Huxley 113) while "...man's world (the empirical world) was chaotically ugly and unjust and stupid" (Huxley

124). The empirical world is also filled with contradictions; though one desires to accept that “facts are facts” (Huxley 58), it is often a struggle to “...try to keep the two sets of facts from colliding” (Huxley 49), and ultimately “...one accepts the inference drawn from one particular set of facts, and ignores the other facts from which different inferences might be drawn” (Huxley 91).

These two worlds, the objective, empirical world and the subjective world of thought comprise, respectively, the thesis and antithesis of a dialectical movement towards understanding reality. The first moment of the dialectic involves an acceptance of the given as real, namely the empirical world as revealed through unreflective thought and simple sense perception. The objective world is presented to the individual, and in this early stage of epistemic, and by extension, spiritual development, the objective world is accepted as an entirely given reality. Eustace’s characteristic focus on sensual delights demonstrates a personality that remains at this first stage of spiritual development, despite his occasional awareness that there is more.¹¹

Alice Poulshot’s description of Eustace as “...a bit of an old pig...” demonstrates his acceptance of the physical as constituting reality, and is a description that is easy to substantiate (Huxley 45). Eustace is rarely described as without a cigar, drink, or reference to some sexual content, either a woman in the flesh, sexually charged limericks, or sexually suggestive art. Eustace does, however, have some awareness of there being a “...more real order of existence” than the merely physical (Huxley 135), both in life and after his bodily death. But in both he refuses to accept the deeper reality, as a youngster choosing to divert his attention by joining his friend Timmy Williams, with whom he liked to talk smut (Huxley 135), and after death by focusing his attention to the claret-colored dressing gown of Mimi, one of his lovers (Huxley 133-4). One of the reasons he apparently refuses to explore the “more real” level of existence is

because of his perception of having to choose one or the other, but not both. This is indicated in his after death consideration of joining the light, which he ultimately rejects because, he claims, "...better this pain than its alternative; better this knowledge of his own hatefulness than the extinction of *all knowledge* whatsoever" (Huxley 147, my italics). Eustace is fully aware that the light is itself blissful knowledge without limits, which shows that he continues to accept reality, and with it the possible knowledge of reality, in a limited way (Huxley 118). Eustace attempts to maintain that there is either knowledge (as an existing individual) or no knowledge (at all), but even his own experience of the light shows this dichotomy is a false dichotomy. Eustace chooses to believe in the dichotomy, presumably in an attempt to keep the true reason he ultimately rejects the light hidden from himself, namely, the desire to maintain his own personal identity, which is inextricably connected with bodily sensations (Huxley 148).

It should be noted that the embrace of one option, at the expense of rejecting the remaining option, of the dichotomy raised above, choosing between the physical (limited, discursively known) dimension of reality and the non-physical (infinite, immediately known) dimension of reality, is not excluded to Eustace. Each of the characters presented in *Time Must Have A Stop*, with the possible exception of Bruno, also attempt to live in only one of the dimensions of reality, with varying degrees of success. Although Eustace focuses on the empirical world through sensual pleasures, other characters attempt to accept reality as the empirical, physical world in diverse ways. For example, Mrs. Ockham, who is described as consistently engaging in "...deplorably good works..." (Huxley 60) and would likely find Eustace's art work "...too indecent to hang up in her drawing room, in case her Girl Guides, or whatever they were, should see it and get ideas into their heads" (Huxley 108), is in many ways quite the opposite of Eustace. Yet, she is very much like Eustace in that she accepts empirical

superficialities as indicative of reality, most obviously, by viewing Sebastian's physical features and pink pajamas as indicative that her dead son has been returned to her. Of particular interest with regard to Daisy Ockham is that she, like Eustace, strives to perceive the world as she wants to perceive it, and then accept *her perception* of the world as ultimate reality. But such a position contains its own downfall, for it is precisely *Daisy's* perception, or *Eustace's* perception, that is constituting reality, and thus an attempt to accept the empirically given world as an exhaustive account of reality ultimately betrays the subjective element of reality. More specifically, there is a need to interpret or give meaning to the physical substances and events that are given; "facts are ventriloquist's dummies" and can be made to say whatever one *wants* them to say (Huxley 254). The thesis of reality consisting entirely of the empirical gradually gives way to its antithesis, that reality is subjectively constituted.

M. Weyl, at first glance, shares many similarities with Eustace, given that his life revolves around an appreciation for objects he finds stimulating, but is very much distinct from Eustace in the manner in which stimulation is achieved. Gabriel Weyl, unlike Eustace, continued his youthful ambition of being a poet into adulthood (Huxley 161), choosing to focus his attention on the intangible qualities of what is physically presented. His understanding of reality is expressed in his description of works of art with "nonsense phrases" such as "'tactile volumes,' 'rhythm,' 'significant forms,' '*repoussoirs*,' 'calligraphic outline'... 'four-dimensional volumes,' '*couleur d'éternité*,' and 'plastic polyphony'..." (Huxley 66). Reality, for M. Weyl, is not the merely physical events and substances that surround him, demonstrated to the greatest degree in Eustace's vision of Mme. Weyl being killed and M. Weyl's strong reaction over, not his wife's death, but artwork that was broken during a military convoy's advancement (Huxley 223-4). However, despite Gabriel Weyl's attempt to reside in a world of ideas, which

nonetheless are suggested by, but in no way limited to, the empirical realm, Weyl uses his ideas and infatuation with art to create a physical surrounding that is empirically suited to his tastes. For example, Weyl buys the Degas drawing from Sebastian, but only for 2200 lire (Huxley 161), while he insisted on selling the same drawing to Eustace for "...not a centesimo less than eight thousand" (Huxley 68). Weyl, despite his artistic ideals, is a crafty businessman, clearly looking out for his own empirical well being. Residing in a subjectively constructed artful world of ideas is insufficient for Weyl, who betrays his constructed reality of ideas with his struggle against such empirical contingencies as wealth and prestige.

Each of the remaining characters may also be shown as attempting to accept as reality either their own world of ideas or the material world that is given (not both), though it will quickly become apparent with consideration of more characters, and more in depth consideration of the characters, that each is unable to fully accept only one horn of the dilemma presented above, for each option ultimately gives way to the other. For example, the first moment of the dialectic includes the body, the world, that which is common and vulgar, the social, and the (socially demanded) ethical. But the body is subjectively experienced, the world is subjectively construed with meaning, and the individual must choose to act on the ethical demands that are placed before one. Alternatively, the subjective reality of ideas is the realm of mind, private experiences, poetry and beauty. Yet, each of these subjective realities is inspired by, and connected with, the empirical world. In fact, Sebastian's struggle to understand reality is unlike the attempts of the other characters because of his ever-growing awareness of the dependence of each 'reality' on the other.

The young Sebastian, unlike Eustace, is aware of, and willing to accept, a hidden depth to empirical reality, a depth which is revealed in thought. Accordingly, while Eustace attempts a

full embrace of the physical world, Sebastian often attempts to reside in a purely subjective world of thought. Eustace at one point tells Sebastian that “people like you aren’t really commensurable with the world they live in”, that his “...business isn’t doing things...” or “...even living...”, but that Sebastian’s business was rather to be “all the voices in the world” impartially (Huxley 110). While it becomes clear that Eustace’s spiritual development is lacking, Eustace does provide us insight into the Absolute, i.e. ultimate reality, despite Eustace’s own confusion about that reality, both in his after death experiences as well as his living words. The significance of what Eustace communicates to Sebastian in the above quotes is perhaps misunderstood by Eustace himself, as well as the young Sebastian,¹² but there is a dimension of truth to what Eustace has said. Namely, Sebastian must recognize his true self, Ātman, and that Ātman is Brahman, which is, qua being itself, all the voices in the world impartially. Eustace perhaps recognizes, at a very basic level, that Sebastian is capable of this task, as he notes that Sebastian is not “commensurable” with the empirical world (Huxley 110) .

Despite Sebastian’s emphasis on the realities created by thought, and implicit desire to be all voices impartially, Sebastian is, and recognizes himself to be, an empirical being, and continuously fails in his attempts to live completely in his subjective world. These attempts, which include drawing others, most obviously Susan, into his subjective world, ultimately fail because Sebastian is continuously confronted with the objective world, a confrontation that he, as a spiritually immature being, finds nauseating. John Barnack forces Sebastian into facing the social, political, and economic reality of the empirical world, Mrs. Thwale forces Sebastian into facing the empirical reality of sexual relations, the (probable) slums of Florence interrupt Sebastian’s appreciation for the garden outside of Eustace’s villa in Italy, Bruno forces Sebastian

into honest reflection about his participation in empirical events, and Sebastian questions himself how a single individual voice can at the same time be all voices.

Sebastian responds to Eustace's comments about "his business" by noting "...that was exactly what he'd been trying to think about himself, but had never quite succeeded..." which shows his struggle with two apparent realities, the subjective realm of infinite mind/thought and the physically limited objective realm (Huxley 110). It is this struggle that differentiates Sebastian from not only Eustace, but also M. Weyl. Sebastian's interest in himself being all voices, impartially, clearly references the epistemological dimension of spiritual development, as he attempts to reconcile the dichotomy of self considered as both one finite thing (self as the object which is known/thought) and self as infinite, or containing all voices (self as knower/thinker); thus, while Sebastian has undertaken the struggle for spiritual development, Eustace and M. Weyl reject the possibility of development.

Eustace, Weyl, and many other characters in *Time Must Have a Stop*, maintain a perception of the subjective world of creative thought, literature, poetry, and art, as utterly distinct from the objective world of body, sensual pleasures, and money-making. The young Sebastian comes very near to adopting such a limited perspective on reality as well, but, with the help of Bruno, eventually comes to accept that the subjective and objective are not opposed in such a way that one is real and the other mere appearance; they are both, at the same time, partial realities that must be dialectically synthesized. That this synthesis is not achieved by the majority of characters in the novel gives indication that the intellectual synthesis, and by extension spiritual development, is not easily achieved. The suggested reason for the perpetuation of a limited perspective on reality is psychological.

To break free from the false dichotomy of the objective against the subjective, which ultimately is just the dichotomy of appearance against essence, it must be understood that the dichotomy is established by one's self, thus Bruno's noting that "...every human being was always his own worst enemy" (Huxley 87). A rejection of the false dichotomy involves a surpassing of discursive knowledge, but discursive knowledge is all that most humans have ever experienced, and additionally appears to constitute one's own existence as human. Accordingly, this type of knowledge is reassuring, ultimately reassuring because it posits the self as having a particular identity that is, or is other than, --- x.¹³ This is why Eustace desired to return to the "...comfortable world, where time is a regular succession and place is fixed and solid..." (Huxley 222), to an awareness that will permit him to be "...concerned with himself, with his own beloved and opaque identity" (Huxley 148).

Most of the characters in the novel are charmed with life, "and the charm of life consisted precisely in the inconsistency between essence and appearance..." (Huxley 158). But the spell must be broken, and to be broken it must first be acknowledged. With Sebastian there is an eventual understanding that there is a spell, even if he cannot yet fully comprehend the details of the reality that underlies the spell, or illusion (māyā):

...it's not oneself. – Not human, but a part of the cosmic order. That's why animals have no metaphysical worries. Being identical with their physiology, they know there's a cosmic order. Whereas human beings identify themselves with moneymaking, say, or drink, or politics, or literature. None of which have anything to do with the cosmic order. So naturally they find that nothing makes sense (Huxley 262).

Sebastian eventually understands that it is precisely the condition of being human that gives rise to the false dichotomy, but it is not just understanding that the problem is being human that indicates his maturation, but rather his growing maturity is expressed in understanding how to resolve the problem. A young Sebastian also recognizes a problem with being "only human,"¹⁴

believing at the time that his only choices were apotheosis or deification (but not both): “apotheosis and deification – the only roads of escape from the unutterably wearisomeness, the silly and degrading horror, of being merely yourself, of being only human” (Huxley 214). In his spiritual youth, Sebastian is caught in a false dichotomy, but ultimately all dichotomies must be overcome, eventually permitting even the existence of the “gaseous vertebrate.” Over time Sebastian begins to grasp that he is human, but he is also Ātman, that is, he is also Brahman. One need not pursue apotheosis, exalting and intensifying one’s purely human personality until it becomes perceived as god-like, nor need one pursue deification, complete annihilation of personality. What is needed is an embrace of both one’s human personality and one’s simultaneous nothingness as a separate individual and existence only in union with Brahman.

While one’s existence as human perpetuates the belief in a false dichotomy, it is also through one’s existence as human that the dichotomy can be overcome. Although perhaps a bit cryptic, Śankara defends this claim when he comments that “...the means of right knowledge cannot operate unless there be a knowing personality, and ...the existence of (a knowing personality) depends on the erroneous notion that the body, the sense, and so on, are identical with, or belong to, the Self of the knowing person” (Śankara I.i.1). Sebastian ultimately understands this teaching, that the limited reality one encounters is māyā, but despite one’s desire to escape māyā, it is precisely the constructs of māyā which make enlightenment possible: “hateful experience! But it had at least one good point; it made it impossible for one to cherish the illusion that one was identical with a body...” (Huxley 231). Physical experience as well as reflective thought about life is “all quite true, so far as it goes; but false if it goes no further” (Huxley 250). Māyā, the physical world as well as discursive thought, need not be rejected as entirely false, it need only be dialectically developed.

Having undertaken a dialectical development himself, the Sebastian revealed in the epilogue of *Time Must Have a Stop* is very different from the young Sebastian introduced in the beginning of the novel. However, while the differences are indicative of Sebastian's development, if the mature Sebastian were completely different from the young Sebastian, the spiritual development would not be dialectical and Sebastian would not have followed Bruno's advice not to act someone else's role in life (māyā).¹⁵ Sebastian's spiritual maturation entails Sebastian being himself, not, for example, a young Bruno. Accordingly, it is appropriate that Sebastian continues to produce works of fiction, and even more appropriate that he finds his physical sustenance from the selling of plays.

Nonetheless, while Sebastian's appreciation for words continues into his more spiritually mature existence, his perspective on words changes: "but those long silences...affirmed realities which a vocabulary invented to describe appearances in time could only indirectly indicate by means of negations" (Huxley 241). Sebastian is explicitly aware that language, which is grounded within discursive thought, presents only a limited dimensionality of reality. This explicit awareness was presumably implicitly present within a young Sebastian, whose poetry often attempted a reconciliation of contradictions and description of the empirical world as something that it is not. It is only the more mature Sebastian, however, that is able to accept both the value of words and the value of the limitations of words simultaneously.

Such a limitation of language, and thought, not only denies the ability to exhaustively describe what spiritual maturation amounts to, but also denies the possibility of a logical argument for its complete defense or a recipe for how development is brought about. Eventually the attempt for discursive knowledge of self, the world, and reality must be replaced with an immediate intuition of being self (Ātman), being Brahman (Self), and being reality. This is why

“...Bruno could somehow convince you that it all made sense. Not by talking, of course; by just being” (Huxley 262).

With the recognition of the limitation of discursive thought, Sebastian also begins to understand the entirely individualistic nature of spiritual development. So, while he personally rejects organized religion and “blue-domeism,” he does not reject it as necessarily bad, noting instead that of those who participate in organized religions, with their working hypotheses, only “...a passionately persistent few continue the research to the point where they become aware of the Intelligible Light and are united with the divine Ground” (Huxley 248). In fact, Sebastian himself adopts a number of working hypotheses, despite his rejection of organized religion.¹⁶ The message Sebastian’s journals communicate is that working hypotheses only serve as motivation and guides, and that the Absolute is revealed not through discursive research, but through one’s own life: “knowledge is proportionate to being...” (Huxley 211).

While the spiritual development described in *Time Must Have a Stop* is dialectical in nature, there is no implication that a more lengthy, and personal, exploration of the novel’s suggested manner by which one may become more spiritually mature is not needed. Rather, the novel instead suggests that any point one believes to be a resting place of sorts, a point at which one can say ‘at last, my spiritual education is finished,’ one need only reconsider the text at hand: “‘Finished,’ he whispered, ‘finished?’ And his eyes, as he opened them were bright with inner laughter. ‘But it’s only just begun!’” (Huxley 243).

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Notes

¹ See P.T. Raju's *The Philosophical Traditions of India*. Jñānamārga literally translates as the path or way (mārga) of knowledge (jñāna).

² Jiva may be considered as an embodied soul that is subject to transmigration or "rebirth". Śankara comments that the self is not the soul (jiva), which is embodied, acts and enjoys, and is the product of ignorance (Śankara I.ii.8). Māyā may be described as illusion or the power of Brahman to present being in particular form(s). Humans are, and exist in, māyā, which often leaves humans ignorant of the truth, that all that is, is ultimately Brahman, the Absolute.

³ Ātman is the true self, which is Brahman.

⁴ It must be noted that the process of development cannot be properly described in causal terms, and this is not the goal of the paper. Causation is described by Śankara as part of Māyā, which is possible only within the temporal realm, yet ultimate reality, the Absolute, is not limited by temporality and thus causal descriptions are inadequate.

⁵ Eustace describes his experience of "a lava gush from some other, more real order of existence" (Huxley 135).

⁶ Sebastian is not the only one who struggles between an imaginary world and the material world, as will be discussed later. Indeed, each character that is developed in the text is torn between an entirely subjective world of ideas or feelings and the physical, material world.

⁷ It is questionable whether Sebastian fully understands the depth of this discovery in the novel, though his journals reveal, at minimum, an elementary comprehension.

⁸ The most proper description of the third movement in dialectics is the German term Aufgehoben, which translates simultaneously as "to cancel", "to preserve", and "to raise up".

⁹ It is the author's belief that Hegel is useful in beginning efforts to understand Vedānta, though Hegel's philosophy will perhaps need to be altered to provide a more "religious" interpretation of spirit. Satisfactory clarification, as well as a defense, of this position is well beyond the scope of the current project, as is exploration of Kierkegaard's dialectics as a more appropriate western philosophical point of departure for a more sophisticated exploration of Vedānta.

¹⁰ For example, Sebastian poetically describes Eustace as "Old but an infant..." (Huxley 44).

¹¹ A related theme throughout this novel is the tendency for characters to lie to themselves about reality.

¹² "His uncle's words came to him through a kind of fog that thickened and then thinned again, permitting the significance to shine through for a little, then rolled in once more obscuring everything" (Huxley 110).

¹³ See Huxley 121, 135.

¹⁴ Sebastian frequently alludes to Nietzsche, including his description of man as "all too human" (Huxley 39).

¹⁵ Vedānta teaches the necessity of understanding svabhāva, one's own nature, in order to further understand svadharma, one's duty or role to play in life.

¹⁶ See Huxley 248.