

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO; THE
BEARING OF THE EVOLUTIONARY THEORY
ON THE CONCEPTION OF GOD - A STUDY
IN CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS OF
GOD IN TERMS OF THE DOCTRINE OF
EVOLUTION. A DISSERTATION**

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trine of Evolution

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE DIVINITY SCHOOL IN
CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(DEPARTMENT OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)

BY

UKICHI KAWAGUCHI

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PREFACE

The one far-reaching contribution of the nineteenth century is the empirically formulated concept of organic evolution. The object of this investigation is to ascertain the bearing of the evolutionary theory on the conception of God as it is worked out in typical recent philosophies of religion.

The method and scope of the study are as follows. In the introduction, we shall briefly consider certain typical *a priori* theories of evolution, showing reasons for not including these in our inquiry. In the first part of our main study, we shall survey the problems due to the attempt to bring the evolutionary theory into relation with the traditional conception of God, indicating the content and meaning of the inductive evolutionary theory and the essentials in the traditional conception of God. We shall attempt, in the second part, which forms the main body of our work, to make a critical examination of the solutions to these problems given by typical recent philosophies of religion, namely, Royce's absolute idealism, Eucken's philosophy of life, Bowne's personal idealism, and James's pragmatism. In our discussion of these religious philosophers, our treatment of them will be limited by the subject of our study. Hence reference will be made only to those of their works which are more or less directly related to our subject-matter. In the third and the last part, we shall make a summary statement of the results and the implications of our discussion, with particular reference to the solutions examined in the second part. In this concluding part, we shall not endeavor to make an exhaustive treatment of the implications of our inquiry. We shall simply attempt to set forth the general bearing of the evolutionary theory on certain elemental problems connected with the doctrine of God.

In the preparation of this thesis, the writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to those writers who are concerned with present theologico-scientific problems. This indebtedness is indicated by the references made to their works in the following study. But he is under a special obligation to his teacher, Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago, for his valuable criticisms and suggestions.

UKICHI KAWAGUCHI.

Chicago, Ill., August, 1914.

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INTRODUCTION: TYPICAL MODERN PHILOSOPHICAL THEORIES OF EVOLUTION

The most typical modern philosophical theories of evolution are those of Hegel and of Spencer. A brief examination and critique of their conceptions of evolution forms the introduction to the main task of our investigation.

Hegel has given an elaborate philosophical expression of the historical spirit of the nineteenth century. The world of nature and of man, for him, constitute the manifestations of the underlying cosmic reason. The method by which he arrived at this conception is through the analysis of human consciousness. When we discover the laws of our thought, according to Hegel, we know the nature of cosmic reality; for the laws of human thought are identical with those of that reality. Hegel finds that we think in terms of comparison and differentiation. When I define a thing, I define it by setting over against it something which is not that thing; and after this process of comparison and differentiation, I reach a synthetic idea which reconciles the antithesis involved in the relation of being and nought, subject and object, ego and non-ego. In short, we have the Hegelian dialectic: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. This triadic process of thought is seen, for example, in Hegel's analysis of the notion of Being. We have first the notion of Being, and then over against this notion, we have that of Nought. These notions are abstract and antithetical. But their abstractness and antithesis find their concreteness and reconciliation in the notion of Becoming.¹ In this triadic process of thought, Hegel finds the nature of cosmic reality or reason. This reason objectifies itself in nature and comes to its subjective consciousness in the mind of humanity.²

Now, the point with which we are here concerned is this: whether the cosmic reality, which Hegel holds to be engaged in the processes of manifestation, is involved in a *real* evolution. From his extensive appeal to history, and from such an expression as: "Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only at the end is it what it is in the very truth,"³ it would seem that Hegel attributed to reality a real change and growth. But a closer examination shows that Hegel does not find such a change and growth in the ultimate being of cosmic reality. The cosmic reason, in his thought, unfolds in nature

¹ Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, 1892, pp. 158 ff.

² Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, Eng. tr., 1890, p. 10.

³ *The Phenomenology of Mind*, Eng. tr., 1910, I, p. 17, cf. II, p. 822.

and history what it already possesses.⁴ "Development or progress," says Hegel, "is not the making of something out of nothing, but the end unfolding, or manifestation of that which in another respect eternally is."⁵ Hegel's theory of evolution is, at best, one of thought-process, but not of time-process.⁶

God, from the standpoint of Hegel's dialectic, is the ultimate reason of the world wherein he is manifesting himself and working out his plan (*The Philosophy of History*, p. 38). "God," for Hegel, "is the absolutely True, the Universal in and for itself, the All-comprehending, All-containing, that from which everything derives substance."⁷ This God manifests himself in the different stages of religious development, and reaches his highest expression in the absolute religion;⁸ and yet he is eternally the same, self-identical God.⁹ Thus Hegel stands for a closed system of reality; in his universe, there is no real evolution.

When we pass from the idealistic evolutionary theory of Hegel to that of Spencer, we find a mechanical theory of evolution. Spencer divided reality into that which is relative and that which is absolute. The former is knowable and open to the investigations of objective sciences; the latter is unknowable, and while underlying both science and religion, it is beyond our finite knowledge. The purpose of Spencer is to synthesize the facts of the knowable region into a synthetic philosophy by means of his theory of evolution, which is expressed in the formula: "*Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.*"¹⁰ These phenomena of evolution in the knowable realm of reality are made possible by the

⁴ Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 57, 82; Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 379.

⁵ Quoted by Adamson in his *The Development of Modern Philosophy*, 1903, II, p. 303.

⁶ See Ritchie, *Darwin and Hegel*, 1893, p. 47; Baldwin, *Darwin and the Humanities*, p. 88, footnote; McTaggart, *A Commentary on Hegel's Logic*, 1910, pp. 18 ff.; Rogers, *Student's History of Philosophy*, 1908, p. 452.

⁷ *The Philosophy of Religion*, I, p. 90.

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 327 ff.

⁹ For the use made of this Hegelian conception of God, see John Caird, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, 1891, *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, 1899, esp. Lectures, III, VI, VII; Campbell, *The New Theology*, Chaps. II, III, IV; Gordon, *Ultimate Conceptions of Faith*, 1903, Chap. IX; Hyde, *Outlines of Social Theology*, 1895, Part I.

¹⁰ *First Principles*, 1900, p. 407.