

Sangsara, Nirvana, and Paranirvana

Part 1 of 2

Franklin Merrell-Wolff

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Participant: This is a brief meeting held at the Briggs' residence on Wednesday, October 22nd—a brief memorial service for Guenther Scraggs followed by a philosophical discussion by Franklin Wolff.

Thus I have read, that the Blessed One has said do not assert anything as true merely because you have heard it even though it is said by the ancients, by the supposed authorities, by the gods or *devas*, or by myself. Always say when you speak of these things, "Thus I have heard." And so it has become a rule in the Buddhist *Sutras* that they always start with that phrase, "Thus I have heard." Speak only in terms of your own knowledge when you, yourself, know. This is part of it. It's also implied. Thus, if you have an experience, such as seeing a lake, you may report that as your own knowledge as a sense impression, provided you don't interpret that sense impression. The experience of a mirage is authentic as sheer experience. It is no longer authentic, or may not be any longer authentic when you make the judgment it is a lake. Again, if you read a mathematical theorem and go no further, you can say, "Thus I have heard." But if you read the theorem, go through the proof or devise a proof, then you may say, "This I know to be true," if the fundamental assumptions of that mathematical system are also true. This is in the ordinary field of speech; and most of the things we speak of in our daily conversation and in our thinking is of the order, "Thus I have heard." Every bit of history that we have read is, "Thus I have heard," unless you went back there and had the experience yourself—incidentally, something that can be done.

Now, we are concerned with not this ordinary field of sensuous perception and conceptual cognition, but with another zone. Long ago, while sitting in seminars in the Graduate School of Philosophy at Harvard, I became convinced that there must be a third organ of cognition that would lead to the resolution of the problems that could not be finally resolved by the use of only the two organs of sense perception and conceptual cognition. It led to the decision to abandon an academic career if that was necessary, and it proved to be necessary, and make the search for this possible third organ of cognition. Ultimately, success was achieved, but it took twenty-four years and a considerable doubt during that time as to whether I had made a wise choice.

The basis of this other way of cognition is in a function which I have called, and Sri Aurobindo has called, "Realization." I've also used a synonymous term called "Recognition," in the sense of re-cognition. I've had, during the period from 1922 to 1936, five progressively inclusive Realizations. These are—and they were reported in *Pathways*—these are: first, I am *Atman*. Now, of course in the philosophic sense I was familiar with the conception. I fully accepted it in the ordinary conceptual sense. It is the result of self-analysis, which is so highly developed in the philosophy of Sri Shankaracharya. But on one night on one occasion when a friend of mine was going

through the same analysis I suddenly had that which is Realization, which contrasts with merely a conceptual acceptance. It's a sense, "This I know." Not only that, with it, a sense of delight, exaltation—another dimension of consciousness superimposed upon this ordinary conscious. It becomes a cornerstone of your fundamental conviction; you say, now, "This I know." Before, all I could say was, "This I believe because it appeals to me as reasonable."

Later, on the occasion of being introduced through Brunton's book *A Search in Secret India* to a certain yogin known as Maharishee¹—not the one that's known today as Maharishee, another one took that name; this one was in southern India. He was really an orthodox, traditionalist yogi, essentially following the line of Shankara. I developed through my concentration up him—I was very much interested—a certain inner rapport, and out of that grew this Realization, again with the sense of assurance and delight: I am *Nirvana*. It rather surprised me.

Third, in 1936, when standing on the banks of the Eldorado Creek, I was looking up at the sky and all of a sudden it dawned upon me that reality was there where there seemed to be naught and that where there seemed to be fullness—the mountains, the creek about me, the cabin, and all that—this was emptiness—a relative emptiness. Out of that grew the formulation: *substantiality is inversely proportional to ponderability, or appearance is inversely proportional to reality*. It was only this year, a few months ago, that I got the first verification that this also had been a recognized principle; and this is in *The Voice of the Silence*, where it says, "Study the voidness of the seeming full and the fullness of the seeming void."² I merely added what is essentially a mathematical quality that belongs to modern conception, the notion of a *variable* voidness and a *variable* fullness—that there is not simply an absolute jump from an unconditional emptiness to an unconditional fullness, but that there is a sort of a continuum of gradation—and our modern language, which in this case grows out of calculus, can express that; and I don't think they had that back in those days. So I use that formulation which suggests Sir Isaac Newton, that appearance is inversely proportional to reality. That means the stronger the appearance, the less reality there; the more subtle the appearance, the more reality there, until in the absolute blank to ordinary conscious there is complete reality. Now, what does this lead to immediately? That space is not empty, but is a plenum. Not a fullness to our senses, but a fullness in reality; and that when we are over on the other side, cognize the other way, space is filled. Plenum means fullness. That's one consequence. I got the verification.

Now, you're always happy to get a verification. You know, in the history of mystical experiences, it's often reported that one who has the experience and the great assurance at the time, but when he comes out of the state, he just wonders whether he's quite sane. The story is told of Traubel, who had been a *chela* of Walt Whitman, that he was on the ferry between Camden and Philadelphia, when suddenly things, he Awoke. And in a state of transcendental bliss was just as much up in the stars, as on the ferry, and

¹ Paul Brunton, *A Search in Secret India* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1934), 277-295. This is spelled 'Maharshi' in other books.

² H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence* (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Co., 1928), 61: ". . . study the voidness of the seeming full, the fullness of the seeming void."

on the water, and it was a glorious experience of a new Realization: here is the beauty and here is the truth. At the end of the boat trip he forgot to get off until one of the deckhands reminded him and he got off. And he came out of the state and then he began to wondering whether he had gotten off of the deep end. So he went to see his guru, Walt Whitman. And Walt Whitman instantly saw in his face that something great had happened to him. And Traubel said, I don't know what has happened; I don't know whether I'm right or not. Walt Whitman said, no, at last you are sane.

On August 7, 1936, I was reading in *The System of the Vedanta*, which is a book by a Paul Deussen based upon the philosophic writings of Shankara.³

Oh, incidentally, Guenther has that book. I would like it back.

Participant: There were two or three of mine that I'd also like back that I lent him.

I was reading on that day in the section on Liberation—all of which seemed very clear—it all of a sudden dawned upon me that that which I was seeking—and this is the Realization known as Self-realization, that pattern; there are other patterns—it suddenly dawned upon me that I am already that which I seek and therefore there is nothing to be attained. And at that moment the heavens opened up. The key to attainment is the Realization that there is nothing to be attained, I found.

Now, you've got to get used to paradoxes in this field. In one sense—now let me go into a little elaboration here. In *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, in the footnotes on pages 96 and 97 you come across a discussion of two Tibetan terms: one is *Rig-pa*, defined as the essential Pure Consciousness; another term is *shes-rig*, meaning the cognitive aspect of consciousness.⁴ Now, I had been familiar with this distinction and I use my own terms, but the first time I ever run on to terms meaning the same thing used by someone else and it was a wonderful discovery. The Pure Consciousness involves more than simply cognition. I call it “Substantive Consciousness,” meaning the Substance of all things that are.

Now, when you're dealing with your Buddhist *Sutras* and you run across the words voidness, *shunya*, *shunyata*, and so on, which is the Sanskrit term corresponding to voidness, here is the key to understanding it: that considered as an existence apart from consciousness is entirely void—nothing at all; and that's the thing that's to be impressed upon. It is real as an existent in consciousness. Now, our tendency to give to the object an existence apart from consciousness is the thing that is here driven against in the emphasis of its nature as being void, entirely void. But it's not void in the sense that it is in consciousness. The substance of it, therefore, we call consciousness, but not the consciousness we ordinarily think of as a relationship between a knower and an object.

Now, this is not easy philosophy; and it is something that is very fundamental to understanding what's involved in Buddhism, which I would say now is the most fundamental point of view of all—even more fundamental than the Advaita Vedanta, which I'd say is the next most fundamental.

³ Paul Deussen, *The System of the Vedanta* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1912).

⁴ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed., *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 96.

Now, that consciousness is a self-existence—not made. Another name for it is Buddha nature. And in that sense—since the ultimate substance or essence of which we are composed and all things are composed is that Buddha nature—in that sense, it is said, and I reaffirm it, that we are already Buddha. Every creature is already Buddha, but does not know it. When, however, *shes-rig*, the cognitive aspect of consciousness, coalesces with *rig-pa*, then one attains conscious Buddhahood. This is Buddhist language I'm using right now. Buddhahood is innate in one sense and attained in another sense. Now, there you get the resolution of that statement, the key to attainment was the Realization that there was nothing to be attained. The nothing to be attained was the innate sense in which one is already Buddha or Buddha nature. The attainment consisted in the other part of consciousness achieving a recognition of it. Now, that's the resolution of the paradox that the key to attainment is the Realization that there is nothing to be attained.

When you're dealing in this field you have got to get familiar with paradoxical forms, for you're in a realm where that which here is separated into the pairs of opposites is no longer separated. But to express it in the language that belongs to the field of duality, you have to assert that it is this and, in some sense, that which is even the opposite of this; and they're both true at the same time. And resolution of that paradox is one of the keys to growth to a higher level of cognition—cognizing on a higher level.

Well, now this Realization, which I reported in the opening section of *Pathways* called "The Light Breaks Forth," I described as a rising above space, time, and law into the root from which these forms are projected. It is therefore an experience of Liberation. It follows the pattern of Shankara's yoga. All right. And that you find in the literature is identified with *Moksha*, which is the Hindu term corresponding to the *Nirvana* of the Buddhist. Now, you know *The Voice of the Silence* says this can be attained, and great is he who can, but there's something better. Is it enough that one individual should attain Liberation from all the misery of *sangsaric* existence and let all the multitudes suffer? There already is the sense that in the *Atman* I am not separate from the others. The "I" in me is identical with the "I" in all creatures. The individual *Atman* is only an appearance. It is identical in reality with the universal *Atman*. The individual *Atman* is merely the little sun shining in the dew drop; the universal *Atman* is the sun. And the little sun in the dew drop, the individual *Atman*, is identical to the sun that is the universal *Atman*. That can be so strong that in the higher level of consciousness, when you're up—it even occurred to me, how do I know that I'll return to the same entity below because I am so completely one with every Self whatsoever? It might happen I'll return to someone else and find myself identical there. But somehow I did manage to return to this one. I don't know how that happened either.

Well, this opened a door to an extreme *ananda*. It's absolutely impossible to describe or say anything about the quality of feeling in this consciousness. You can say something about the noetic element. You can't about this feeling. You can give something of the valuation that you feel with respect to it and you would say one moment of this is worth a lifetime of suffering, nay many lifetimes of suffering. It sounds extravagant, it isn't. And if you read the mystical literature you'll find that repeated again and again and it's certainly authentically true. There is nothing in our relative imagination that can suggest the feeling value that comes in that state.

But I discovered very soon that it carried an energetic value, and that quality of consciousness put a load on the physical organism. It would feel wonderful in the state and afterwards it felt exhausted, a strain. And so I learned to tone it down; actually these things can be controlled by the will. The will is very powerful there. You can permit a limited amount of *ananda* till it's tuned down to what the organism can take without feeling strained. There is a temptation to let yourself go into the full force of it and I think if one did, he'd just burn out that organism. Then you get disgusted with the fact of a physical organism. Here this, this darned animal thing is keeping me from going into this wonderful thing. And you, you have a strong feeling as though you'd like to shuck it off and get rid of it.

But I'd been disciplined in the message of *The Voice of the Silence* where at the very end that it is not enough—and I also felt it—to liberate oneself and leave other fractions of consciousness bound. For you've reached a point where you can do something about it. And there it says that those who have reached this point and have renounced the full enjoyment of the *nirvanic* state of consciousness form a guardian wall around humanity that has kept humanity from sinking into conditions far worse than those that now exist; that those who form the guardian wall are not too numerous and it would be far better if there were more in that guardian wall. The lot of this humanity would be better if there were more who strove toward that end. But it is pictured that this calls for a renunciation, the greatest of all, without compensation.

Now, if one gets to the threshold of *Nirvana* and has these experiences of which I have spoken and along with that a kind of knowledge—it's truly called the noetic kind of knowledge—you may have to look that word up in your dictionary, it comes from the word *nous*—the prospect of turning your back on that looks pretty grim. I can testify to that. Not for a lifetime, say a million years to make it concrete. That looks appalling. However, I thought that's the only thing to do, and we had contact at that time with one of the Brothers; he wasn't on this plane. He said watch for a cycle involving thirty-three. He didn't say thirty-three what—thirty-three days, weeks, months, years. I thought it wouldn't be thirty-three days. I had no idea. Oh, I was having a very happy time for thirty-three days. After a while he suggested I start to write it up. That's how *Pathways* got started. I had no inclination to write. He said it would be a good idea. After I got started, well it began to write itself. One day I had been very busy writing, my mind had been very active, and my mind was very active that night when I went to bed. And then after going to bed something opened up I didn't have the faintest idea was impending. I wasn't seeking anything whatsoever. I thought I had hit the top. And here was something so much vaster. I never heard of it, and it just walked in on me. That's what I called the High Indifference. It was an awfully difficult thing to try to formulate. There was a visitation thirty-three days later that made it possible for me to formulate what is now in *Pathways*, but my first effort was not very good.

Now, there was an inversion here. It was not a movement towards outstanding bliss. It seemed to be more a movement that was in a line of a relative extraversion from a deep introverted position, and it occupied a position intermediate between bliss and suffering, and involved an attitude of equality or indifference to whether one entered into a zone of suffering or a zone of bliss. Now, that's an incredible thing. But in that state of consciousness, one could move towards torture or bliss equally indifferently. I'm merely

reporting what I know about the state. I'm not saying this personal organism feels that way, but that's the state. What I called "indifference" really is equivalent to what Aurobindo means by "equality"—equality of attitude. The key note for this state of consciousness was equilibrium—not ecstatic bliss, but equilibrium—a uniting of all pairs of opposites whatsoever including the pair of opposites known as *Sangsara* and *Nirvana*—a great, steady equilibrium, absolute equilibrium, no possibility of any distortion without its immediate correction.

I had one experience in which I was trying to formulate a state of consciousness where that which corresponds to our thought seemed to be an indeterminate flowage in consciousness—a flowage that seemed to involve the infinite. And I tried to get a verbal concept that would suggest it. I thought of one, and immediately I saw that it was equally the opposite of that concept. And then an autonomous process brought about a synthesis between this assertion and that opposite so they were integrated. But that was a kind of particularization, so the process was repeated and there was a negation of that particular integration and a further integration of that thesis and negation. It was the Hegelian dialectic working autonomously there. So I knew where Hegel had been. You can't capture it in verbal form. Nonetheless, here was a thought indeterminate so far as conceptual consciousness is concerned, but completely satisfactory. The value in your own Realization was complete satisfaction, but you could not tell anybody what in the world it was. That's the reason why these things can't be expressed; the reason why Buddha didn't attempt to formulate them, because any attempt at formulation is a misformulation. Even if you suggest something, you falsify. Nonetheless, he repeatedly said it is not this and not anything else you can think about whatsoever. It is not *a*, and it's not *not-a*, and all that, a great many people thought he was talking about absolute annihilation, and that wasn't what he had in mind. And so it was necessary to take the risk of formulation, warning at the same time that the formulation is a distortion; and this is true of every *Shashtra* whatsoever. No *shastric* material, and that means no *Sutras*, no *Shastras*, no Scriptures, can possibly be correct. They can only point. They cannot anymore be correct than you can express an irrational number in rational terms completely. I know that definitely. So anybody who takes any *Shashtra* in the dead letter sense is off the track. That's aimed at our fundamentalist brothers and sisters. You've got to learn how to use them. They are pointers all right, but don't hang on them, don't take them in the dead letter sense, because no matter how skillful you are, you cannot formulate in conceptual terms correctly. You can only give pointers and indicators. It's not a matter of skill. A skillful person can do a better job than one who's not, but, nonetheless, there's falsification goes along. And that applies to *Pathways*. It applies to the *Bible*. It applies to the *Bhagavad Gita*, and *The Voice of the Silence*, and the whole works. Nonetheless, I certainly make use of those *Sutras*. This is a shocking thing to many people, but you cannot hang your security on the dead letter sense of any *Shashtra* or Scripture whatsoever. In other words, you've got to have the courage to dare, make the gamble, and find it for yourself. The guru may take your hand for awhile, but ultimately you'll have to take that gamble; and you don't know beforehand whether you will succeed or whether you'll get into a cul-de-sac. But you've got to have the faith and confidence to dare. This is a heroic path. Of course you're not asked to do it before you're ready, and the guru helps you as far as he can. But ultimately you've got to make that step yourself.

Well, then I had a heck of a time trying to find any literature whatsoever that referred to a state of consciousness that had this quality. There were three or four steps in it. One that opened up was a great satisfaction—not a satisfaction of things; it was just a quality of satisfaction, almost as though the satisfaction, the abstract quality, was a substance, something that you could even bestow as a blessing. And after that it turned into this “indifference.”

Now, that’s something I’ve never been able to communicate to people so that they like it. I remember when—J. William Lloyd was the first man who read the manuscript. J. William Lloyd was one of those that appears in Maurice Bucke’s *Cosmic Consciousness*. He was something of a mystic in his own right: a very delightful man; he was warm, mystic, with a very large human heart. He read it. He couldn’t take that in there. He says I don’t see how you can be indifferent. He took it in the sense of indifference to the suffering in the world. No, it’s indifference in the sense of Aurobindo’s use of the word ‘equality’—equality of attitude towards all things. I can’t communicate somehow it. It’s a state that’s very weird in that sense that you’d feel the same towards anything whatsoever. Well, so I’ve had a good many who have wondered about that particular experience.

At the same time Sherifa was in that room. Sherifa participated in it. She said the whole room was filled with golden light. I don’t have that particular sensorium, or capacity to see. It was filled with golden light. She knew something was going on. But she didn’t like my formulation at all. She didn’t like indifference.

Participant: You just answered a question.

Wolff: Hmm?

Participant: You just answered a question, but we’ll go on to that another time.

Wolff: Oh.

Well, then, beyond that there was a stage where “I” disappeared—that’s the sense of ‘I’ in the sense of *Atman*, not in the sense of ego; it was a higher level—and the sense of Divinity disappeared—entity, divine entity. It had persisted up to this point, both—the sense of Self-realization is really, parallels, anyway identical, with God-realization. These two dropped off and only Consciousness remained.

Now, at this point my language became for the first time identical with Buddhistic formulation. In almost all religions and in much of Hinduism, the orientation is to an entity, an ultimate entity, and that entity is usually called by one of the names of God. It all springs from an entity. Now, in Buddhism you have what is known as the doctrine of *Anatman* and the doctrine of *Nastikata*; in other words, no Self, no God. In the place of it is Buddha—not a man, not now an entity, but Enlightenment. That’s the real meaning of the word. It’s merely attached to one Great Buddha in most of our consciousness, but the real meaning is the abstract one of Enlightenment, and that’s identical with a self-existent Consciousness which is not the consciousness of a Being. Entityhood and selfhood, then, becomes a function of Consciousness instead of consciousness being a function of an entity.

Now, that shifts your whole perspective. I don’t believe you can imagine it. Jung, in writing about this in his “Commentary” in *The Tibetan Book of the Great*

Liberation, says he cannot imagine a self-existent consciousness like that, but he says it's found in the Oriental literature. They assert it and so forth, but he says I cannot imagine it. I cannot imagine a consciousness without a subject.⁵ All right, and that may be your fix in the last analysis. I couldn't imagine it. In the ordinary sense I can't imagine it now, but I know it is. I can talk about it. I can conceive of it. I can draw the conclusions from it and all of that; but in the ordinary state of consciousness it seems proper that a consciousness is something that a self produces. But actually on that level you find that selfhood, the subject, and along with it all possible objects of consciousness, are derivative from this pure, self-existent Consciousness. Now, Jung says it appears to be true that the unconscious has no center. He says there's a good reason why it shouldn't have, that we do not find anything corresponding to its center. If, then, one were to dip into the unconscious and find it as consciousness, it would be a consciousness without a center. So he there has a conception of its possibility; but, nonetheless he says he can't imagine it. Now, there's a difference between imagining power and conceiving power. We conceive things—and we do in mathematics right along, in the higher mathematics—conceive things that you can't possibly imagine. If you don't believe it, take up the theory of groups.

Beyond that, I plunged into “darkness.” Now, one might be scared of doing that. You don't know for sure you'll ever get out of it. Nonetheless, you do have a faith and a confidence, and you have the feeling that the heart of all is a friend. And in a way you don't care if you never come out anyhow. You go into the depths of that friend. It doesn't matter. And all I could distinguish in that was darkness getting deeper and deeper. I don't know how far I went—maybe a million miles. I don't know. Only there are no miles. And up again I popped. Now, I'd say there was this, that at that stage of penetration the consciousness that is represented by *shes-rig*, which is a developing consciousness, had reached the limit of its capacity and could not make the correlation so one was in a field of total unconsciousness, which is symbolized by darkness.

Another time I was talking to Senior and he spoke of this unconsciousness, and he says that the Brothers have often had discussions about it. He says you would enjoy their conceptions of what is their nature—the level that is unconscious to them. I would think that no matter how far we go up the scale of evolution, there will always be that which is not yet illumined by the two types of consciousness coming together, and so there can always be the experience of this darkness. It's not a hostile darkness at all. It was a very friendly, warm darkness. I wasn't the least bit unhappy in it. But nonetheless, I could not bring anything out of it except the sense of a vaster Beyond. So that I know the final word of the High Indifference is by no means the final word. How vast that Beyond is, I do not know. It may be that this is only a little beginning that I have experienced in a way that is illimitable, that is infinite in its progression, and that literally the Beyond is for all entities, no matter how exalted in development, is inexhaustible. And that is attractive. There's always a chance for further research. There's always an unknown to be discovered. It isn't a matter of always trailing over trails that have been well marked. In the yogic way there are well marked portions of trails. Aurobindo speaks of them. They

⁵ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed., *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), xxxix.

have sign posts. They're in the *Sutras*. He said he could gallop over them at full speed; but it's the inexhaustible wilderness of the unknown Beyond that is the fascinating part—even more fascinating because there are dangers in it. The very fact you don't know whether there'd be a dissolution of all possibility of organized consciousness. I had evidence that that sort of thing could happen.

I remember once when I was writing this up in *The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object*, that I got into it without realizing how deeply I was in it in the very effort to formulate a very difficult material to formulate. And I was in it all of a sudden, and I began seeing concepts dissolved like pieces of metal you might drop into a chemical menstruum. They just dissolved, disappeared. I had to stop the process because if you're going to manifest a thing you've got to have these organs. But I had no objection to it. I really would have welcomed the dissolving and getting rid of all conceptual process and just go into that Elysian Field of the formless. Very attractive. But there seemed to be a duty to retain the conceptual organ. So you had to stop the process. The will does it. I found the will very effective.

I also had at another time the experience that this same force could dissolve memory. I found myself forgetting the past. I stopped that. Because if you forgot the past far enough how could you possibly return to *Sangsara*? You might have the will to do it. You might have decided it was the thing you should do, a moral judgment. But how could you return if you had forgotten it entirely? It would cease in your memory. But you can stop that too. Just will to retain the memory. Not because you want to, because you're perfectly willing to let the memory of this sordid realm of *Sangsara* as it is now to disappear. So you're stopping processes that you even welcome in here. You welcome their happening, but you know you're a traitor to your job if you let them continue.

Now, here is the base. I've outlined the base for that which I have to say. What I say that is based upon these Realizations is not, "Thus I have heard." It is, "Thus I have *imperienced*," to use your term, which I think is very good.⁶ It has for me authority. I do not assert that it has authority for anyone who hears me speak or reads what I write. That's a very different matter. But it has authority for me. What you'll hear me say, and have heard me say, is only, "Thus I have heard," for you. Use it if it appeals to you. But your way may be another way. Your *guru-parampara* line may be another line. And that's perfectly all right with me. I belong to the *guru-parampara* line that descends from Buddha through Shankara and Christ. I do not belong to the *guru-parampara* line that descends through Krishna to Aurobindo, for instance, and yet I honor it and respect it, but it's another line, not my line. I accept it perfectly well in that sense and I want to know all I can about it, but we are each of us under the obligation to go the line which is our own proper one. What I have to offer is yours, if you have use of it. So there's no obligation to use it, and there's no offence to me if you don't. Get that point clearly established. Now, I'm speaking out of the authority that comes from the Realizations,

⁶ For the definition of 'imperience', see the audio recordings "General Discourse on the Subject of My Philosophy," part 10, and "On My Philosophy: Extemporaneous Statement," where in speaking of introceptual knowledge, Wolff says, "The third function therefore gives you imperience, not experience. It is akin to sense perception in the sense of being immediate, but is not sensuous."

not from the Scriptures that others have left; although I respect and honor them and learn from them all that I can.

Now, in the last year, it suddenly dawned upon me that this is the thirty-third year since 1936. That year was culminated in August 7th or September 9th. I don't know which is the more important date, for the High Indifference came during the night between September 8th and 9th. There are certain reasons why thirty-three happens to be important with me—also, in this case, 3—and there are certain importance that it could have implied that this was a cycle to draw in. There's some evidence that that possibility has existed and maybe still exists—a year hence it may not if I would live on till then. And it occurred to me very recently, the thing that I'm dealing with right now calls for a subtle state of being very close to the brink in order to carry out a certain line of cognition in the borderline between life and death itself, as we understand it. There's nothing unpleasant about it from my experience, but there is a sense of being tricky—that one could fail to keep his balance in there. And yet these cognitions that have come out of it I feel are so important that I'm perfectly willing to take the chances involved in it. And there's nothing unpleasant about it at all, only it's subtle.

I come to the problem of trying to make a correlation between these states that I know and others that are known and named in the literature. Now, they don't come with tags. There isn't a tag attached to, say, the High Indifference, say, this corresponds to what in literature is called so and so. All that you have to go by is what others have said about those states and see how they correlate with what you have experienced in your own state, or see how it fits in the schema that exists. Now, the state itself said of the High Indifference this transcends not only *Sangsara* but *Nirvana* in the ordinary sense—now that was out of the state itself—and that the first Realization was at the threshold of *Nirvana*, not a full entering in. It said also—this comes into the consciousness—it makes it possible to enter the *nirvanic* state or the *sangsaric* state. What is there in the literature that corresponds to such a state? You find it in the conception of *Paranirvana*.

Now, that means I have to change my whole original conception of the relationship of a *Paranirvana* to *Nirvana*. I had the conception: here was *Sangsara*; here's *Nirvana*; here's a deeper state in the same direction. It doesn't go that way. It changes to this form: *Sangsara* on this side; *Nirvana* on this side—complementary opposites.

Sangsara means the whole cosmos. The last figures I've seen—they keep changing—is that it has a radius of 10 billion light years. All the galaxies in it; all the matter and all the space in it; and all that goes down into subatomic physics is in it; all that science studies is in it; all that most religion is concerned with is in it and doesn't get out of it; all of the *lokas* that we speak of are in it—heaven worlds and hells; saints without yogic knowledge are as much bound in it as the sinners. The only difference is that whereas the sinner circles between hell and life here, the saint circles between a heaven world of some sort—what we usually call *Devachan*—and life here. A pretty good saint might get a million years up there, but he gets back. He's not out of *Sangsara*. And the hellees go through their process. They burn with their desires and clash and so on down in their hells—and according to Swedenborg they like it—and then they come back here and circle again. They're all locked in.

Now, *Nirvana* stands opposite to that. I'm putting it not above, but over to the left or to the right, whichever way you want to put it; that these are polar opposites; that they are dynamically equivalent, but opposite in sense. But in our present stage, creatures get locked into one or the other; hence, in the literature it'll be said that he who takes *Nirvana* is locked away from the rest of humanity. They are called the *Pratyeka* Buddhas, those that do that. They're called spiritually selfish Buddhas. It's the Buddhas of compassion, therefore, are those who renounce this inconceivable bliss—and I believe you can't imagine how wonderful it is—who renounce it in order to help overcome the bad *karma* that this humanity has developed. Your field of action is limited by *karma*. There really isn't too much you can do. You can't pick a person up by the scruff of the neck and shove him into *Nirvana* against his will, anything of that sort. You have to work along with his *karma*. You have to arouse an interest in him, a willingness, and all of that, because you've got to respect the autonomy of the enemy, of the entity. There's no violating that permitted, and it limits your action. You can influence; you cannot compel. Everyone has to make his own decisions. That's the right of every human entity. Now, I'm avoiding the word 'soul' because the Buddhists have no use for it, but there are times when I'd like to use it. The Buddhists get around it by saying "principle of consciousness," which is merely a difference of term. Something, however, persists, whether you call it soul or if you call it a principle of consciousness, that entity has an autonomy of its own, and even the greatest, the Great Buddha himself, cannot trespass upon that autonomy; but he can influence. He can give discourses. He can bring inductions and glimpses into the Beyond, but each individual must choose for himself.

Well, now *Nirvana*, a locked-in state; and *Sangsara*, a locked-in state. *Nirvana* a wonderful state to be in, but if you're locked in, you're not fully liberated. Now, an earlier conception of Liberation, the conception I got out of *The System of the Vedanta*, was if you got into *Moksha*, there's nothing more to it. You've got everything then. You've got full Liberation. Now I have to say it isn't so. You certainly haven't got Liberation if you're merely in heaven. The saints are in trouble; they have to be redeemed as well as the sinners. Your key to a *nirvanic* state is not simply goodness, it's equilibrium—equilibrium between the pairs of opposites including that pair of opposites which is good and evil. Now, there's the shocking thing that's very hard for people to take. Well, now, one may be tempted to say, "Do I mix evil deliberately with my goodness?" No, no, that won't get you anywhere. But, here, you can recognize the fact that you are not separate from the sins of humanity. They are your sins too, even though you personally do not indulge in them. By that recognition you can reach that equilibrium between the good and evil. The equilibrium was verified.

Now, everything here, every cognition or possibility of cognition here, is based upon the principle of contrast of opposites. We do not know up except in contrast to down. We do not know good except in contrast to evil. And so on through our whole field of cognition. It's fundamental here. You've got to bring together these opposites, these things that are separate, essentially are separate in the structure of *Sangsara*, into a state of equilibrium, a poise, before those gates of *Nirvana* will open; except, that if your virtue and merit brings you to the attention of a qualified guru who can initiate into the *nirvanic* state, then through his initiatory power, you may be introduced into it. The *Pratyeka* Buddhas, I presume, do not earn the service of such gurus, and therefore must do it on their own; and therefore I have a lot of respect for their ability. But, they're—

been spiritual selfish; they are locked in. They are therefore not fully liberated. You're not fully liberated till you can freely move between the *sangsaric* and *nirvanic* state. The *Pratyeka* Buddha, then, is an object for redemption as truly as the people in *Sangsara*. Now, you see, we've gone beyond not only the sinners, but also the saints need redemption and the *Pratyeka* Buddhas need redemption. They're fully redeemed when they're free to freely move through all these states without attachment that holds them one way or the other.

Now, instead of the picture of a *Nirmanakaya* who has renounced *Nirvana*—the Great Renunciation for a well-nigh eternity of time, where he weds woe as put in the words of *The Voice of the Silence*—he has renounced the *Dharmakaya*. In place of that, I envisage a *tri-kaya*—one who is *Nirmanakaya*, *Sambhogakaya*, and *Dharmakaya* all at once and free to rove through all these three realms. One who can bring the refreshment of *Nirvana* to the parched lips of the dwellers in *Sangsara*, and he himself knows naught of suffering, but this is a service of delight where there is no renunciation, but a movement in the delight of a full existence in which there is the joy of bringing to those who are suffering in the ignorance the refreshment of a full life—something that is not a sad task, but a delight to perform—freed himself, bringing that freedom to others. And in the end, not destroying *Sangsara*, but redeeming *Sangsara* as well as the creatures within it, not junking it as some of the exoteric literature suggests, but retaining it as a valuable training ground, not a mere voidness as the exoteric Buddhism says, not a mere *maya* as Shankara says, but a training ground in which consciousness grows to the point where at last it can be conscious of itself—and that is Buddhahood.

And that will be enough for tonight.