

General Discourse on the Subject of My Philosophy

Part 12 of 12

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As the final portion of this tape is coming to a close and there is not enough of it left to produce the next hour of discourse, I will here introduce certain casual remarks and perhaps other items.

For one thing, it may be of interest to know the conditions which are favorable for this type of composition. In much that is produced in the sense of ordinary intellectual effort, the force of being under pressure to produce may be an aid—a sense that one has to bring forth his composition, or his labor, or his solving of problems, because a certain date or time limit must be met—however, while some individuals produce well under such compulsion, it is completely destructive with respect to this kind of composition. Actually, the favorable condition is one where there is no feeling that this must be produced, no feeling of a duty to produce, that this is a matter of obligation; on the contrary, the favorable condition is almost like that of an attitude of play, that there is no driving necessity but only an expression out of an exuberant feeling governed mainly by a quality of delight in the producing. It is under such an attitude or state of consciousness that the profoundest and most valuable material will come forth. It is, as it were, a sort of play or *lila* produced without any reason but just because it wishes to come forth.

Now, I can detect in the process the action of more than one level. There is the outer level of mind, that which we commonly call the intellect, which can be directed and made to work as an obligation or as something which should be done, which has its resources, which can set aside hours and say, now I will produce or I will labor in the solving of these problems. That is one part, but it is the subordinate part in this type of production. From time to time, at moments that cannot be predicted, something comes in from a different level that, as it were, acts as an inciting charge which activates the resources of the intellectual mind to produce material that is not in its organization and development governed by intellectual thinking alone; but rather, the intellectual thinking is guided by another principle which may, no doubt, be identified and classified but which transcends the ordinary resources of the individual. The supply of verbal concepts is brought to the joint effort by the accumulations of the intellectual mind through its past activities and acquisitions, but the organizing of those conceptions into a frame or development is governed by something that's much subtler. And this subtle principle operates under a condition of *lila*, or delight, of no pressure whatever, of producing simply for the fun of it; and, yet, from this comes the most valuable production of all.

It may be of interest to note the fact that the most immediate production that resulted from the fifth Realization was the little group of fifty-odd aphorisms that form the little book called *Aphorisms on Consciousness-Without-an-Object*. This affords a prime example of production as sheer delight. One might say that these aphorisms virtually wrote

themselves. They were produced with the greatest of ease. Later I undertook the task of writing commentaries upon them which ultimately became the principle part of the volume *Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object*. The commentaries, in contrast, often called for the severest kind of intellectual effort, whereas the original aphorisms virtually called for no effort at all and were written down in an hour or two. I will present, here, some of them with a limited commentary upon them. They run:

1. Consciousness-without-an-object is.
2. Before objects were, Consciousness-without-an-object is.
3. Though objects seem to exist, Consciousness-without-an-object is.
4. When objects vanish, yet remaining through all unaffected, Consciousness-without-an-object is.
5. Outside of Consciousness-without-an-object nothing is.

This forms the primary principle of the philosophy that here within this tape is being produced. It is the principle of the self-existence, non-produced character of Pure Consciousness. It is conceived as the root principle of the philosophy: *a consciousness which is original, self-existent, and constitutive of all things*. Many years after writing this, I became acquainted with *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, in the edition edited by Evans-Wentz, and there became familiar with a Tibetan term called *rig-pa* which is used to represent a phase or quality of consciousness which is not cognizant of phenomena but which underlies another kind of consciousness known as *shes-rig* which includes the power of being conscious of phenomena. Here I found, then, what seemed to be a parallelism with respect to my own conception. I know that there are difficulties in this conception which Dr. Jung has brought out in his psychological commentary to *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, namely, that we find it impossible to imagine a consciousness which is not centered in a subject which knows, and ordinarily that is true. And I would suggest that this is characteristic of consciousness as *shes-rig*, but not characteristic of consciousness as *rig-pa*. The principle here involved is that consciousness is *original* and not a result of process of evolution or of any other development. It is not simply a function of an organism that has reached beyond a certain point but is *original and self-existent*.

If we cannot imagine this, and I acknowledge the difficulty, we can assume it as a postulate from which one may start his thinking and determine whether it clarifies the problems that are essentially of a metaphysical sort, and therefore of the most profound importance, or not. Because something cannot be imagined is not a reason to conclude that it does not exist, for there are important conceptions in the field of mathematics which are beyond the range of imagination and of intuition where, nonetheless, with great effort progress of thought can be made and conclusions drawn. And in addition such domains of thought have thrown light upon integrating principles that organize certain parts of our experience and bring them into an intelligible, because rational, whole.

Let us now read the next page of the aphorisms:

6. Within the bosom of Consciousness-without-an-object lies the power of awareness which projects objects.
7. When objects are projected the power of awareness as subject is presupposed, yet Consciousness-without-an-object remains unchanged.
8. When consciousness of objects is born then likewise consciousness of absence of objects arises.
9. Consciousness of objects is the Universe.
10. Consciousness of absence of objects is Nirvana.
11. Within Consciousness-without-an-object lie both the Universe and Nirvana, yet to Consciousness-without-an-object these two are the same.

And right here, there is revealed the principle of the equipollency of both *Nirvana* and *Sangsara*, although at that time I had not yet become acquainted with the Buddhist *sutras* that affirm this equipollency, yet here it came forth from a Realization. One must imagine a quality of Consciousness that remains unaffected by either the presence or the absence of *objects* within it and also by the presence or absence of a *subject* to consciousness within it; one must think of these two as potentials within a Root Consciousness. This changes our normal view of thinking of consciousness as an effect. True enough, certain kinds of consciousness may very well be an effect, and consciousness as *shes-rig* may be viewed in that way. But the Root Consciousness is there before all else and is not dependent upon the principle of a center or pole by which it exists but preexists all such centers or poles as potential within it.

We may think of the *subject to consciousness* as the first Logos in the process of producing a universe, and that the *object of consciousness* is the second Logos. Therefore, the principle of subject, while not ultimate, has a relative transcendence with respect to the object, that it has greater importance than the object, that it stands in a position of causal primacy. Whereas, the Pure Consciousness is the Causeless Cause of all, the *subject* is the first cause.

We are in the habit of viewing the environment about us, that which we call the world or the universe, as the domain in which we play a dependent part. To understand this philosophy, one must reverse that point of view and conceive it this way: that I, not as a personal self, but as a transcendental Self, produce this universe and am not ultimately conditioned by it; although, I may, in a subordinate sense, permit myself to be conditioned by it, and therefore induce a condition of suffering.

It thus becomes the second principle in the philosophy. Remember the first is the self-existence, and productive Source or Root of Pure Consciousness itself. The second principle is that of the transcendence of the *subject* with respect to the *object*. And the third prime principle of the philosophy is the emphasis of three sources of cognition instead of two, as is characteristic of the vast bulk of philosophies both Eastern and Western, and these three are sense perception, conceptual cognition, and introceptual

cognition; the latter being founded upon the principle of Realization, of which in this case five Realization have been involved.