

# Three Fundamentals of the Introceptive Philosophy

## Part 2 of 16

Franklin Merrell-Wolff  
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In the first part of this discussion we handled, in part, the first fundamental of the philosophy, the one which runs: *Consciousness is self-existent, original, and constitutive of all things*. It was pointed out how the conception arose out of the fifth Realization of September 8 and 9, 1936. This led to a correlation between the three functions or facets of consciousness—namely, the knower and the known, and the relationship between these two that constitutes the form of all our common thinking and perception—and suggested a correlation between this considered as the microcosmic triad with a macrocosmic triad known as *Sangsara*, *Nirvana*, and *Paranirvana* leading to a correlation between the relational factor of our relative consciousness and the *paranirvanic* factor or mode. There is no claim made here that this interpretation of these Buddhistic conceptions is official in traditional Buddhism, but they seem to fit and I am presenting them for what they may be worth. Then we proceeded from the correlation between these aspects to an initial phase of the discussion of *universal illusionism* and *universal realism*.

The step here may not appear to be logically necessary, and therefore I shall elucidate certain of the principles that govern all my production either written or oral since 1936. Two principles are involved, and I've been unable to avoid the action of these two: one is development of logical consequence from fundamental premises and the other is development by the principle of stream of consciousness, which appears as association by psychological connection. There is a certain conflict between these two since they operate by different laws, and there is trouble often in trying to bring about a reconciliation between them; but this is the reconciliation which I have been enabled to develop: from given premises certain conclusions follow logically—in other words, conclusions that are compelled by reason; also, there are certain points of view, or elements, or statements, or formulations which are logically excluded—in other words, something that could not be if the premise is regarded as true. But between these two extremes there is a zone of possibility which does not follow logically from the premise nor is it excluded logically. In other words, this is a zone that is permitted; and in this zone the principle of association or stream of consciousness may function, I believe, quite legitimately. And as a matter of fact, most of the most valuable material emerges out of this zone. Why it emerges at such and such a place, or at such and such a time, is not always clear, nonetheless, valuable material comes forth; therefore I find it necessary to admit this principle. If I were to develop a thesis strictly on the basis of logical implication and no more, it would become purely formal and lose much of its richness. It is in this field of stream of consciousness, or free association, that the function of intuition may enter into the picture. Some of the profoundest material emerges here in the zone which, remember, is not either logically compelled nor logically excluded.

We have identified the movement towards *nirvanic* consciousness as the movement towards the subject to consciousness, in other words, with a profound introversion; and, correspondingly, the movement toward the object of consciousness is identified with extraversion, which can be very extreme, in which case it eventuates as materialism, or sensationalism, or animalism; and, in turn, we have identified the state of consciousness which has been called *paranirvanic* with the position that is intermediate or neutral with respect to these two directednesses in consciousness. In order to avoid a possible error, let us introduce a new terminology, and instead of speaking of a *nirvanic* consciousness in contrast to a *sangsaric* consciousness, we will speak of a consciousness that has a directedness toward the *nirvanic* state or toward the *sangsaric* state; and for this purpose we may introduce a notion that comes from analytic mechanics, namely, the notion of *vector*. In analytic mechanics we find it necessary to deal with the notion of movement, entities moving in directions, and the name for this is a *vector* quantity as contrasted to a *scalar* quantity, which is a representation of entities apart from all directedness. Thus, we may speak of a consciousness which is in the form of a *nirvanic* vector or of a *sangsaric* vector—a consciousness moving toward the *nirvanic* pole or moving toward the *sangsaric* pole without predicating actual arrival at a terminal position in either case. We think, then, of a consciousness that is directed in a certain way rather than in a terminal position. I think this will serve the purposes of clarification.

In the discussion of universal illusionism versus universal realism as presented in the last tape, we introduced the idea of a different approach to this problem as contrasting to the apparent approach which is to be found in Oriental philosophy. This was suggested by a statement of Immanuel Kant and resulted in the view that instead of viewing *maya* or illusion as contrasting to reality, we would instead think of appearance as contrasting to reality while illusion or *maya* or error contrasted with truth; and we made the point that there is no question of truth or illusion involved in a consciousness which produces no judgments, that only when a judgment is made can we have the condition in which there is either illusion or error on one hand, or of truth on the other. This introduces the idea that judgment is a function of the very highest importance; indeed, it may be the very primary feature that differentiates a man from an animal. And it is my thesis that the attainment of that which lies beyond man is through the powers peculiar to man rather than through the capacities that man shares in common with the animal—that means through the sensuous nature. I do not envisage the goal as a becoming a sort of super-animal, but rather as a becoming a super-man; in other words, as a reaching into a zone that may be called “transhuman,” or “Transhumanism.”

This consideration leads to a thought which may be introduced here as a sort of extended footnote. When Buddhism was introduced into China, it underwent a certain transformation which causes it to appear as something quite different from what it was in the hands of the Indian metaphysicians. It is true that Buddha avoided metaphysical statements, but this, I submit, is not equivalent to his denying the existence of a metaphysical reality, for if it was a denial, that would have been a very simple statement to make. But rather, he remained silent on metaphysical subject matter for the simple reason that this subject matter is ineffable, in other words not communicable in its own nature as it is; and this point is one that is reconfirmed in the mystical unfoldment.

I know perfectly well that there is an ineffable element in the very heart of these Realizations, but there is a possible principle of communication that I believe has grown

since the days of Buddha, and this is connected with the mathematical way of thinking. We do have entities in the field of mathematics, specifically in the fields of number, which cannot be transformed precisely from one form of number into the terms of other forms of number. We do not have simply rational numbers, or rational integers, although those are the numbers with which we begin—the ordinary 1, 2, 3, 4. We have added to them fractions, which are also rational. We have added the conception of negative numbers, which are also rational. But there have been added many other numbers, one of which was originally discovered by Pythagoras; and here is something I have not so far found in the ancient thinking of the Orient. This was the conception of the square root of 2 which developed in the mind of Pythagoras in a way that was outlined in other tapes.<sup>1</sup> Here we have introduced a number which stands essentially in the relationship of ineffability to all rational numbers. We do have a means of conveying approximations in rational terms of these irrational numbers which can be carried to a high level of approximation of value, but can never be formulated completely. This, then, suggests that the ineffability of the transcendent consciousness is not an absolute with which we are unable to produce any expression whatsoever, but rather that we can approach with greater and greater degree of approximation a formulation of that which in its completeness cannot be formulated. Ineffability cannot be excluded entirely, but we can approach it in our formulation indefinitely. We've introduced in the development of this science other numbers beside the ordinary irrationals such as the square root of 2. We have introduced numbers like the transcendental numbers, the hypernumber such as the square root of 1, and transfinite numbers. Also, there is the possibility, which is even now being explored, of introducing other hypernumbers which have a definite bearing upon states of consciousness. This leads, then, to a possibility of formulation which did not exist in the earlier days so far as we have been able to find.

Now, as Buddhism went up to the north and entered into the world of the Mongolian races, the Chinese and the Japanese, there was a tendency to give it a well-nigh exclusive aesthetic interpretation; in other words, a movement away from the conceptual zone into the sensational zone. This would imply an exclusion of metaphysical interpretation, perhaps somewhat indicated by the silence of the Buddha in this field; but I would suggest this very emphatically, that his silence did not imply a denial of a metaphysical value. At any rate, the Buddhism became sensationalistic, and that sensationalism is evident in the statement of the logical Buddhists Dignaga and Dharmakirti, particularly the former. The former asserted as a fundamental aphorism, said to have been placed on the outside of his book, that there were two and only two organs, faculties, or functions of cognition and these were sense impressions and conceptual cognition. If, then, the conceptual representation is viewed as not giving the truth but simply at best pointing to it, then the only other zone was the sensational zone; and this gives a turn to the Buddhistic formulation with which I cannot agree. On the contrary, I have introduced the notion of a third organ of cognition which I have called "introception," which is the zone of true metaphysical knowledge, and in relationship to this zone the conceptual function can serve as an instrument or pointer, as well as being an instrument of pointing with respect to the sensational zone when we move in the mundane world. In other words, from the base of conception there are two possible

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<sup>1</sup> See the audio recordings "General Discourse on the Subject of My Philosophy," part 2 and "Various Philosophical Considerations," part 1.

movements: one into the mundane, the other into the supermundane. And, again, we have a formulation involving the principle of threeness or the trinity. And I submit that this is more in harmony with the hidden significance of the Blessed One's emphasis of threeness than the view that there are only two functions of cognition and that the meaning of the *dharma* is really sensationalistic.

Returning from the footnote to the main text, we shall now proceed to a further consideration of the conflict between universal realism and universal illusionism. One factor which has become very evident, again as the result of our mathematical development, is this, that when we make any formulations whatsoever we do so from some base of reference which may or may not be conscious; and therefore the truth of the formulation has to be judged relative to the base, and failure to do this often leads to considerable confusion. What is meant by the base of reference may be very well illustrated in the shift from the Ptolemaic view of the planetary universe to the Copernican view. In effect, Ptolemy assumed a system of coordinates—a mathematical term—fixed with respect to the earth. We assume that these coordinates are stationary, then view all things from that perspective. From that perspective it is true that the sun goes around the earth—the ordinary popular view which we are in effect reaffirming every time when we say the sun rises and the sun sets. There are problems that arise in connection with this point of view involving dynamics that render it difficult, for not only would the sun go around the earth, but the whole stellar universe goes around the earth making a complete circuit in twenty-four hours. Considering the distance to the more remote stellar entities this would involve impossible velocities particularly if we are to view the speed of light as the highest velocity possible; but let us disregard that dynamic difficulty and view this simply as a geometric relationship. Now, when we shift from the Ptolemaic system of coordinates to the Copernican system of coordinates, which are now fixed with respect to the ecliptic, or the path of the earth around the sun, and the sun, then it is not true with respect to those coordinates to say that the sun goes around the earth, but on the contrary, it would be true to say that the earth goes around the sun, and it would be definitely false to say that the sun goes around the earth. What we have introduced here is this point, that the truth or falsity of a judgment is relative to a base of reference.

Now, here we have a certain clarification that may be applied to the twofold sense of unreality that I experienced in connection with the Realization of August 7. From the perspective of the higher or transcendent Consciousness, the mundane order seemed unreal. It was false. Then, again, returning to objective or relative consciousness, that transcendent state, in turn, seemed unreal. This, then, is to be reconciled by introducing this conception of base of reference. From the transcendent base of reference, indeed, the mundane seems unreal; but, from the mundane base, the transcendent seems unreal. This is simply a principle of relativity here. To find a position with respect to which both the mundane and the transcendent may be viewed as real will require the shifting to some further base of reference. Again, to return to our figure of the cosmic relationships or astronomic relationships, in addition to taking the earth as a base of reference or the sun and the ecliptic as a base of reference, we may take something in a more distant portion of the heavens, such as the Milky Way, as our base of reference. From that base, it appears that the sun also moves around a center in the galaxy, and that the real movement of the earth is not simply an ellipse, to a first approximation, around the sun, but is a

complex movement, perhaps an epicycloid-like movement. Now, which is the real view? Taken apart from the conception of base of reference, all three views, namely, the sun going around the earth, the earth going around a fixed sun, the sun itself going around a center elsewhere and the earth going through a complex curve, all three views are meaningless. Not so much false, as meaningless. The base of reference must be present to give them meaningfulness, to judge them as true or false, or, again, as truth or illusion. This is an introduction, in a sense, to the principle of relativity which was so emphasized in the work of Einstein, and what I'm suggesting is that we must apply this principle to the interpretation of what is real and what is unreal. A simple statement without reference to base of reference to the effect that all is unreal in the mundane order or all is real in the mundane order is meaningless unless it is made with respect to some base of reference. This, I think, will tend to clarify the difference between illusionism and universal realism.

There is also another approach to the problem related to the mandala which grew out of the third Realization. This mandala is in the form of two conjugate equilateral hyperbolas growing out of the sense or Realization that *substantiality is inversely proportional to ponderability*, or *reality is inversely proportional to appearance*. Now, if we take the appearance of things here in the sense of being true proportionately to their apparent impact, it would lead to a state of illusion, assuming the basis given by the mandala; but if we gave the principle of inversion, or inverse principle, the fundamental premise, then from the appearance we can derive the real and, therefore, we could justify a universal realism. Through all of this discussion we are emphasizing the point that without judgment the problem does not arise, but with judgment we can have error or illusion on one side or truth on the other. Without judgment, there is no illusion, but also there is no truth.

Let us proceed now to a consideration of what consequence follows if we view the state of Consciousness called the High Indifference as our base of reference. Reviewing the background of this Realization, I wish to remind you that this was a Realization that came wholly spontaneously. I was not in any sense seeking it, for I did not at that time know that there was any state of Consciousness of this sort and therefore could not seek it. It walked into my consciousness of itself and was very welcome indeed; in fact, it was the most valuable of all the Realizations. Now, I called it the High Indifference because a certain affective quality in it was very evident to me and rather startling. This was the fact that from the level of this state of Consciousness one had an equal attitude toward either delight, on one side, or pain, on the other, and that the Consciousness at this level could with equal facility move either way. It was above the conditioning that is involved in our ordinary attitudes with respect to both felicity and pain. It occupied, in fact, a neutral position with respect to these two. However, while this is a naming of the state from the affective quality of it, it also had a noetic value, and that value was expressed in this respect, namely, that it was the state of equilibrium, of perfect balance; and this emerged in Consciousness as the ultimate principle underlying all law—that equilibrium, not height nor depth, was the supreme principle.

Now, with respect to both the *sangsaric* and the *nirvanic*, it may be pointed out that while in a sense the movement towards the *nirvanic* is a movement away from the principle of multiplicity, including dualism, it introduces a new dualism. The *sangsaric* taken by itself implies manyness, multiplicity, and the *nirvanic*, unity; but here we have introduced to us a new dualism, the dualism between the many, on one side, and the one, on the other. For the High Indifference we could say that it is not one and not many. You could not

symbolize it by any specific number other than zero itself. In this discussion I've had occasion to refer to the Oriental terms *Sangsara*, *Nirvana*, and *Paranirvana*. I have used them in the sense of regarding the *Sangsara* as the universe of objects or the evolution, or from the psychological angle as the movement towards the object in consciousness or extraversion; and *Nirvana* as corresponding to and perhaps identical with the movement towards the subjective pole of consciousness, towards the ultimate Self, or subject to consciousness; and that the High Indifference was viewed as corresponding to the Oriental's conception of *Paranirvana*. Now, there's very little that I've been able to find in the literature concerning the latter conception. In *The Mahatma Letters* there is one reference which says it is totally unlike *Nirvana*.<sup>2</sup> The usage I am suggesting here is quite in conformity with that statement, but that is only a negative statement and gives us no idea as to how *Paranirvana* enters into the total philosophic picture. I'm assuming it is identical with the meaning of the High Indifference. I do not know whether Brahmanical or Buddhist philosophers would regard this as a valid use of the term in their understanding of it. Therefore, I arbitrarily assume these terms for my present usage and do not claim that the present usage conforms with either Brahmanical or Buddhist usage. The question of whether this usage does so conform or not is left for future determination.

Now, continuing with the picture. Let us now assume we take the High Indifference, or *Paranirvana*, as our base of reference, then in conformity with the imperience of the High Indifference, it involved the idea that the *sangsaric* and the *nirvanic* were complementary and that each with respect to the other was equally real or unreal. Viewing it positively as real, then this leads us to the conception of the equipollency of *Nirvana* and *Sangsara*. And here we arrive at a conception that is to be found in certain Buddhist *sutras*, but now with a greater clarity of understanding. It would not be true to say that the *sangsaric* state is the same as the *nirvanic* state, but it would be true to say that they have equipollency. And this may be explained by certain usages of terms in mathematics again. In algebra we have the conception of the modulus of a number, which is simply the measure of a number as to its size or quantity without considering its directedness; in other words, we do not consider it in its aspect as positive or negative, but only in its quantitative aspect so that the modulus of +5 is 5 and the modulus of -5 is also 5. This, then, would seem to be the parallel of the Buddhist statement that the two states have equipollency. And if we were to step over into the algebraic use of the conceptions, we would say that the sum of *Sangsara* and *Nirvana* always equals zero, just as the sum of +5 and -5 always equals exactly zero. Zero, then, is the symbol of the position attained in the High Indifference, or *Paranirvana*, and perhaps this is the reason why the Buddhist speaks of it as Voidness. But we must avoid the common thought that we are dealing with zero simply as quantity. Zero does not always mean nothing at all. It can mean, and does mean, in our systems of coordinates the base or starting point from which we consider various directednesses such as the positive direction and the negative direction represented by the plus and minus. It also is the point of balance on certain types of weighing scales. It does not there mean that there is nothing at all on the scales, but if the pointer points at zero it means that the weight on each side of the pair of balances is equal. So, the conception of zero here is to be

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<sup>2</sup> A. T. Barker, ed., *The Mahatma Letters* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1923), 197: "Nor is Nirvana itself comparable to Para-Nirvana."

identified with the principle of equilibrium or balance, not with the conception of nothingness. Zero has other usages, this, however, is the one that is important here.

Now, in the state of balance, potency in both directions appears to be equal. There can be, as the Realization itself indicated, no distortion of balance for one moment of time. Movement in any direction implies a counter-movement, but in our relative consciousness there may not be awareness of the counter-movement, so that it may seem to that consciousness that there is development in a specific direction. If we could apprehend the whole of the picture, we would see counter-development in the complementary opposite direction, so that at all times the balance in all that is, not only objective but subjective as well, is never broken. It would be then suggested that the law of *karma* is simply the principle of equilibrium in action in the field of movement. Any movement whatsoever carries the implication of counter-movement so that balance is never broken. This, then, seems to complete the picture whereby the subjective and the objective, or the *nirvanic* and the *sangsaric*, stand in a sense of essential equality, having equal reality or equal unreality, having value in one sense balanced by value in a complementary sense, so that now a question arises, if we were to lay out a straight line as our system of reference and establish an arbitrary point on that line which we would call zero and then arrange numbers on each side at a fixed distance between each number so that we have positive numbers on one side—which in conformity with our convention would be the right side—a unit distance would lead to 1, the same distance added to that would be 2, and so on through all positive numbers; and in the opposite direction from zero we would have the negative numbers in perfect balance.

Now, which is positive and which negative, *Sangsara* or *Nirvana*? Here we have a relativity that may very well be different with different individuals. I would rate the direction towards the subject or towards *Nirvana* as positive because the values realized in that state so far transcended the values of the *sangsaric* state that the latter seemed negation of the beauty, and the delight, and the benevolence of the *nirvanic* direction. But another individual might approach the subject in the reverse point of view and view the *sangsaric* as positive and the *nirvanic* as negative, and there is a certain portion of *Savitri* in which it would appear that Aurobindo takes this point of view. Certainly one who is orientated towards the evolution most strongly, or towards the object most strongly, would view that as positive, and the other direction as negative; but in my system, it would be the *nirvanic* that would have the positive value and the *sangsaric* the negative value. And this would fit the conception which grows out of the third Realization, the one that was formulated in the form of the mandala to the effect that all manifestation is by means of subtracting from the fullness of Consciousness by a partial blanking out of it. We have a universe by means of the principle of privation, not by the principle of addition. The fullness belongs to the indrawn state, the state of Pure Consciousness. Objects arise by relative negation of fullness. This brings to us a mathematical-like statement of the relationship.

This I think is enough for today, so it is the end of Part 2.