

Three Fundamentals of the Introceptive Philosophy

Part 7 of 16

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This is an impromptu extemporaneous statement presenting one of the most fundamental problems that is dealt with by mankind, and I might state the problem this way: how do you communicate the truth, or at least indicate the truth, when the only tools you have to work with are all of them lies? This problem has been wrestled with in past religious philosophy, and the approach of the Buddhists has generally been in the form of a purely negative use of language. It is the problem of trying to communicate the consciousness of a non-dualistic reality in terms that are essentially dualistic. All conceptions exist by contrast with their contradictories or opposites, and even all perceptions exist by such a principle of contrast. But what we are doing is in terms of concepts and, while pointing towards a non-dualistic reality, they are inevitably defined in terms that involve dualism. There is concerning every concept that which it is not, and yet in a non-dualistic reality, there is necessarily a fusion, as it were, of the concept *a* and the concept *not-a*.

The method that was used by Nagarjuna was to employ a radical system of *negation*. The formula comes down to us in this form: you ask the question what is Ultimate Reality, and the answer which Nagarjuna gives us is that it is not *being*, and also not *not-being*; it is not both *being* and *not-being*; and, it is not neither *being* or *not-being*. While this, on strict analysis, does not imply an absolute nihilism, yet on the other hand, psychologically it has the effect of suggesting an absolute nihilism, and has been historically so interpreted. The problem that we tackle is the more difficult problem of trying to approach this question in terms of a *positive* statement. It's probably the most difficult task that the human intellect has ever had to face.

Now, the problem arises in connection with certain communications that came after the publishing of *The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object*. One of the correspondents, who is especially qualified for an understanding of what is written in the philosophy, has evidently misunderstood my use there of the conception of the unconscious, taken from von Hartmann and Dr. Carl G Jung. He has interpreted it as being used by me in an *ontological* sense, when, in point of fact, I was merely adapting an already existent usage in an *empiric* sense. Now, maybe you have some difficulty in distinction between those two terms, and to understand them you would have to have some years of philosophy tucked away in your mind, and I won't attempt to do that this morning. Now, this illustrates a point that has bearing upon my willingness to accept a postponement of the return home in order to guard what has been formulated from a misinterpretation or misapplication, and this is a critical point. I found in reflecting upon it, I came upon this very difficulty of trying to use the intellect to communicate a meaning that in the last analysis is non-dualistic.

Perhaps a bit of a review of what is involved in the development of the philosophy known as *Introceptualism* would be of help to us at this time. The ordinary naive view of man surrounded by a world of objects is to view those objects as real, and as being essentially self-existent—that means the whole cosmos, as well as the more immediate world surrounding us, and ultimately it means all those more subtle objects which we call concepts. The naive view is that we're dealing with something *real*. Careful analysis shows, however, that this view has to be modified. We found over the period of centuries of thought that we do not deal with an external world as it is in itself, but rather with the world as it *appears* through certain forms of our cognition. The full statement of this shift of point of view was given by Immanuel Kant primarily in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but his thought was the result of centuries of thought preceding him. The point he made was that we carry with us forms that determine the nature of our experience and of our conceptual cognitions. He suggested certain forms, such as space and time, which he called the transcendental aesthetic, and the forms of the understanding. It's a rather difficult subject, but I may suggest what is involved here by using a figure, which I have used before on other tapes, to the effect that man here is in a capsule—Dr. Jung used the figure of a box hung up by a thread in his last work—and in that capsule there are certain windows, and our cognition of the world about is only through those windows. The forms of the windows, as it were, determine the forms of our experience. He had a borderline conception which he called the *ding an sich*, or the thing-in-itself, as an existence beyond the windows, and that we did not know. We only knew the effect of the thing-in-itself, as it appeared through the windows, and we carried with ourselves those forms which decided our cognition.

Now, we may interpret *yoga* as the colossal achievement of building a *door* in the capsule whereby the seeking self may leave the capsule and come into reality as it really is, and also the power to return. In the case of genius, we may say that something of this exists, but more in the sense of a rent in the capsule whereby the reality as it is in itself, in some measure, is cognized by genius; but they are not Masters, because it is rent and not a door that can be opened and closed. I'd like to suggest here that the true thing-in-itself is the Clear Light referred to repeatedly in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. To realize the Clear Light is to realize Reality. But that Reality does not consist of the forms which we experience and think here. It does not consist of a cosmos of worlds and suns, and of galaxies perhaps without number, but of the pure Clear Light. I would like to suggest further that though we have the naive tendency to think of ourselves as being surrounded by things of all sorts—mountains, rivers, cities, dwellings, and so on—that while we naively think of these as existences apart from consciousness, yet we have no knowledge of any existence whatsoever that is totally apart from consciousness. The only valid affirmation of existence is an affirmation of an existence in consciousness. Speculation concerning that which is totally outside consciousness is meaningless; we are not capable to predicate of it either existence or non-existence if we are responsible in our judgments. It is essentially meaningless. Only that which in some sense exists in and for consciousness has any meaning to us; we can make predications validly of only that.

Now, the whole development of the thought in *The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object* starts with this recognition. In our analysis of consciousness as we find it in our ordinary waking state, consists of these three elements: that there is an object

before us which we cognize, and that's everything whatsoever; everything seen or otherwise sensed and everything that is thought is an object before consciousness. But we have the dim sense, to begin with, that there is a somewhat which we habitually call "I" which cognizes those things. And, in fact, one of the fundamental *yogas* is the search for the actual Realization of that I. As we ordinarily deal with it, it is an assumption and a conception only. We assume it. But in our ordinary searching we cannot find it, for if we think we have found it when we have evolved the concept of self; careful analysis will reveal that the true self lies behind and is cognizing that conception which we have projected. The time may well come when one realizes that that which he now is seeking can never be an object before consciousness; he cannot cognize it in the usual way. Ceasing the effort to discover it as an object, and sinking back into it, may be the key to the opening of the door that leads out of the capsule. It is known by another means of cognition, which I have called *knowledge through identity*. It is known not by sensation, not by a conceptual cognition, but by *knowledge through identity*. Thus we have determined that our doors to knowledge are more than two, but are three. And most of our thought in philosophical and other forms has down through the ages implied that there are only two doors of cognition: sense perception and conceptual cognition. And even this is reaffirmed by the Buddhist logicians Dignaga, and not so much, by Dharmakirti. Therefore the revolutionary contribution in this philosophy is the assertion that there is a third door of cognition; and with this, Aurobindo does agree. That changes the picture.

But beyond the Realization of the Self, there is a still more profound Realization wherein one ascends to a position such that the whole secular universe disappears as secular and exists only as Divinity. And on the other hand, that the subject to consciousness—which appears to be in the beginning unique, separating one self from other selves—becomes a transcendental Self, or *Paramatman*, which carries within it the Selfhood of all creatures. And thus standing in a divinized middle world, as it later proved to be, where all is sacred, then the Divinity, which is now all that is objective, and the pure subject, the *Paramatman*, both vanish into a more ultimate Reality. And that more ultimate Reality is what I have called Consciousness-without-an-object-and-without-a-subject, yet containing within it the potentiality of all objects and of all selves.

This leads us away from the two positions known as Realism, which is the identification of reality with the object in some sense, whether gross or subtle, over the whole range from coarse Materialism up to the subtler ranges of the New Realism, on one side, and of Idealism, on the other; for those philosophies that are called Idealism or Spiritualism in the philosophic sense of the word are not an orientation to consciousness, but an orientation to that which is conscious; it's so defined in the dictionary. Therefore this philosophy that is presented here is neither Realism nor Idealism since it is oriented to the Consciousness itself; and it made it necessary to invent a term to represent it, and that term is 'Introceptualism'.

The distinction here may seem subtle, but it is very important. Ultimately it leads to the view that the comprehensive Realization of Reality is a state of consciousness without content where everything is the Pure Light of Consciousness, and that the experience of a universe—and I mean a cosmos; I mean everything that is objective whatsoever—is produced by a process of *obscuration*. We see things because our

consciousness, to that extent, is obscured or blanked out—not necessarily a complete blanking out, but a partial blanking out. It can be variable. And that is the meaning of *Substantiality is inversely proportional to ponderability*, or *Reality is inversely proportional to appearance*. Now here we do have involved a notion of, at least, relative unconsciousness. It is through relative unconsciousness, and only through this, that we are aware of a world. If we were fully conscious, we would know no world, nor would there be any Self.

Now we come to the use of the unconscious as it was employed by von Hartmann and by Dr. Jung. These are *empiric* concepts essentially. We know from our experience that contents do arise in our ordinary consciousness, namely, the consciousness which we call relative consciousness, subject-object consciousness, or waking consciousness. We know that contents arise in this zone, the source of which we cannot trace. The outstanding examples of this are the dream images and the phantasy processes of the waking state. And let me make a little footnote remark here concerning the phantasy process, lest you view it as trivial. Actually, Dr. Jung speaks of conscious phantasy as one of the highest functions of all. No doubt it's involved in producing an Alice Adventures in Wonderland, but it's also involved in the Newtonian integrations, and that is one of the most important developments of all. It's involved in the integrations of an Einstein. Yet how do we get these precipitations in our relative consciousness? From whence do they come? There is a blank. This was noted by von Hartmann, and by a physician contemporary with him, and was later employed by Freud, and especially Dr. Jung.¹ It became very important in the psychology of Dr. Jung.

We are speaking here of something which we may call a psychical continuum, which is akin to our relative conscious processes of the waking state but are not traceable by the consciousness of the waking state, and, therefore, they were called *unconscious*. This section of the psychical continuum was called by von Hartmann and Jung unconscious—the *unconscious*, more particularly. But while that appears to be a predication concerning that part of the psychical continuum, are we capable of making that predication? Do we know that it, from its own point of view, is unconscious? The answer is, unless one has broken out the capacity that is aroused with Enlightenment, he cannot answer this question. Aurobindo says the unconscious is simply another way of consciousness; a statement with which I agree.² No, in

¹ Jung, C.G., *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, vol. 9, part 1 of *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), 152:

Although various philosophers, among them Leibniz, Kant, and Schelling, had already pointed very clearly to the problem of the dark side of the psyche, it was a physician who felt impelled, from his scientific and medical experience, to point to the *unconscious* as the essential basis of the psyche. This was C. G. Carus, the authority whom Eduard von Hartmann followed.

² Aurobindo Ghose, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, vol. 20 of the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centennial Library* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, 1971), 370:

What we call unconsciousness is simply other-consciousness; it is the going in of this surface wave of our mental awareness of outer objects into our subliminal self-awareness and into our awareness too of other planes of existence. We are really no more unconscious

thinking about this what von Hartmann and Jung and Freud have done is to project upon a portion of the psychical continuum an unconsciousness that really exists in our relative, subject-object, everyday consciousness. The unconsciousness is really there. This everyday consciousness cannot trace these processes; therefore, it's unconscious with respect to them. It only knows the products that emerge in the relative consciousness. Get the argument. That's all we know about them. So when we speak of the unconscious as an entity in the psychical continuum which we think of as being itself unconscious, we're on ground where we don't know. We can't predicate that way. What we have actually done is projected a zone of unconsciousness in our ordinary consciousness upon that. And that's all there is to it.

It is not to say that this zone, which in the last analysis includes everything other than our waking, relative consciousness, that zone may indeed be all-consciousness. And I so affirm. It is the thesis implied in the very title of the book, *Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object and Without a Subject*, that all is Consciousness, but not necessarily of this type that is our ordinary waking consciousness, which is subject-object consciousness. This other Consciousness can be *consciousness by identity*—or *through* identity, to use my preposition—and even something beyond that, for consciousness through identity implies the fusion of the cognizer and the cognized, and beyond is the Consciousness where both the cognizer and the cognized vanish in a still vaster Ultimate. That is implied, but I haven't developed that in the volume. Therefore, in referring to the terms that have been employed by von Hartmann and Dr. Jung, I'm merely using empiric conceptions and reinterpreted them, as you've heard me reinterpret them this morning, as being essentially a projection of a limitation in our ordinary relative consciousness, but not a true predication of the state of this other portion of the psychical continuum.

Now here's where we come into some difficulties. We use the psychical continuum as a conception that helps us to reach to a certain point, but it is a conception that stands in contrast with all that which we call physical, for instance. That's our ordinary implication. In other words, it is the *other* of the supposed physical existence. There we are still in a dualistic position, and so we have to say that everything I have said this morning is a lie, as we ascend into that unity where the contrast of physical and psychical no longer exists. But maybe I have succeeded in using lies to suggest some adumbration of the truth in a positive sense that may not suggest simply complete annihilation, but rather the completeness of an all-enveloping Consciousness which is no longer merely a relationship between a knower and a known, but the container of the potential knower and the potential known. This Sea, transcending sensation as well as conception, is the Ultimate Reality, and it is all-conscious; but from it a universe, a cosmos may be projected. And this process of projection is by a deliberate partial obscuration of consciousness, and that gives us objects. We know all, when we cognize nothing.

when we are asleep or stunned or drugged or “dead” or in any other state, than when we are plunged in inner thought oblivious of our physical selves and our surroundings.