

Abstract of the Philosophy

Part 5 of 14

Franklin Merrell-Wolff
December 9, 1974

It is said that the Monad, which is the individual or microcosmic entity, is fated to pass through all kingdoms of nature from the mineral, and perhaps even from below the mineral, on up the scale. These Monads, which now have become what we call human beings, or the sum total of humanity, carries with them traces of its passage through these other kingdoms; thus, the mineral kingdom is represented in the organism of the human being as the bones, and the vegetable kingdom as the hair, and the fleshly organism as the animal. Beyond this lies that which is truly human or man, but all that we can contact through our senses is the mineral, vegetable, and animal entity.¹ To contact the real human entity we must reach the thinker, and he we can reach only by thought. When we look forth among men, we see these animal entities that have a certain shape. We do not contact through that sight the truly human. We contact it, in fact, only through thought and speech.

Of the vast number of entities that are human in their highest stage of development, the center of gravity seems to lie not in their humanness, but in their essential animality, so that man, as we know him in this world, in large degree lingers in the domain of that through which he supposedly has passed and has now transcended. It is said also that mankind has generally lingered too long and that as a result he is behind in what should be his normal evolution, so that there is a pressure brought to bear upon humanity to speed up and to catch up with that status which he should have attained already.

Now, I wish to suggest that the next step which lies before man, and for which a certain portion of humanity is now ready, is the step of the great transformation known as Enlightenment, or Fundamental Realization, or the breakthrough to what has been called Cosmic Consciousness or ultraconsciousness. And what does this breakthrough imply? It implies that man becomes more than man in his highest identity. Just as the Monad, after transcending the animal, became human, so the Monad in its journey, after transcending man, or humanity, becomes an entity of a higher order. We might call him a god, but I prefer to call him a Buddha. In the beginning it may be only the first beginning of Buddhahood, which can evolve to a full Buddhahood; and though this may take considerable time, still it has shifted the whole basis of self-identity to a new ground. Man has become more than man when he takes this step.

Yet, as we go through these various steps we find that something of the earlier kingdoms through which the Monad had passed is retained. In the vegetable kingdom the

¹ In *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia* it is suggested that the word 'man' may be derived from the Sanskrit meaning "the thinker"; it is the root of the word *manas*. See William Dwight Whitney, ed., *The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia*, vol. 5 (New York: Century Company of New York, 1911), 3601.

trace of the mineral is to be found in the dead trunk of the stem of the tree upon which the growing portion may be planted and continue. And as the Monad enters the animal kingdom, the trace of the previous kingdoms still remains in the form of the bones or shell as representing the mineral and of the hair as representing the vegetable. And as the Monad next becomes human, there is retained in addition to the mineral as represented by the bone and the vegetable as represented by the hair, also the fleshly sensuous entity which is the animal. But his center is the thinker. Man is the thinker. We may, then, assume that with the next step there is retained a trace of all this that went before. The being that transcends the human also carries the power of thought, but its center of focus is in a higher nature—in that which I have called “introceptual.” This is the true center of the being. But the focus can be upon that which represents an earlier step in this progress.

And now I submit that the trouble with man, that the real cause of his suffering, lies in the fact that he has not centered himself in large part on the level of the thinker, but on the level of the sensor, upon the level of his essentially animal nature; and that therefore the cure for this suffering lies in his first reaffirming his essential humanness as the thinker, and then proceeding to take the next step of becoming the Buddha, even though it is only the first entering wedge of Buddhahood.

We have now the basis for a reinterpretation of the significance of those who have followed the path of the Great Renunciation as given in *The Voice of the Silence* or of the Kwan-Yin vow. Ordinarily, in the literature, it would seem that these who are called *Bodhisattvas* serve the office of the redemption of mankind from the evolution and a redirecting of their consciousness into the *nirvanic* state. But what I wish to suggest here is that the office of the *Bodhisattva* may not be so viewed exclusively, at any rate, and that it could be this: the removing of man from his attachment to his animality to reestablish himself as the thinker and then take the next step into the beginning of Buddhahood and not destroying or abandoning the evolution. If suffering is to be understood as I here presented it, it is not a metaphysical implication of evolution as such, but simply due to an attachment on the part of man the thinker to his essential animality, a lingering with that which he should have transcended. And this would give us an intelligible interpretation of why suffering is the lot of most human beings. It is not due to a fundamental metaphysical error. It is not due to the fact of evolution *per se*, but rather due to the attachment to his animality or, in other words, his sensuality.

To introduce a new figure, we may say that mankind is in the position of a train that has become largely derailed from the track of his true evolution, and that then the function of the *Bodhisattva* is to facilitate the replacement of those cars upon that track. This does not then mean an abandonment of the evolution and an escape to a *nirvanic* consciousness, but rather a continuation of that evolution. What caused man to suffer, as is the larger part of this life here, is his lingering in his animal nature.

We come now to a consideration of the fifth and final Realization of the series. It is implied that without the turning away from the purely personal enjoyment of the fourth Realization, the fifth Realization would never have been attained. As I have said before, I sought that which was the fourth Realization, but this, the fifth one, which occurred during the night between the 8th and 9th of September 1936, was an imperience that walked into my consciousness wholly unexpected and wholly spontaneously. I called it in *Pathways* the “High Indifference” because of a certain quality in it that involved a

principle of affective silence, a state in which there was equality of regard toward all those affective values which we call positive, and that includes everything that we call delight, and those values which we call negative, or, in other words, painful or depressing. It stood neutral between these, and therefore the attitude was one of indifference. But it must be realized that this is not an indifference with respect to the suffering of creatures or to the well-being of entities, but an indifference in the attitude towards the different qualities or states. I think it is expressed by Aurobindo's conception of equality—equality of attitude towards all states and things. It doesn't mean an absence of awareness of delight on one hand and suffering on the other hand, but of an equal dispassionate attitude towards both and a capacity which with equal ease could enter into a state of delight or a state of suffering if there was a reason for doing so. This is not an attitude that I find a proper part of ordinary human nature. As a normal human being, one prefers the states of delight to the states of suffering quite naturally. We do not in this indifference actually deal with the question of preference. It is a movement of consciousness that transcends the limitations of preference. And while this movement can be realized, or this attitude can be realized, at the same time, there is in the total nature that which has preferences and naturally would choose delight to suffering. But from the level of this higher consciousness there is a Realization of a great dispassion. Another way of designating this state of consciousness is to call it a state of fine and well-nigh universal equilibrium—not a state qualified by *ananda*, nor a state qualified by suffering, but a state qualified by a vast dispassion.

Now, in connection with this I'll direct your attention to something that is said concerning those who have taken the way indicated by the Kwan-Yin vow, namely this, that they take into themselves an experience of the suffering of all creatures; perhaps not in perfect degree as in the case of the Great Buddha, who is said to be aware of the suffering of all creatures in the world, but in such degree as the *Bodhisattva* is able to do this. The reason for becoming aware of this suffering is to effect the office of compassion. By the suffering passing through the consciousness of the *Bodhisattva*, it is possible for him to effect a transformation of it so that it becomes other than that suffering. If one, from the simply or purely human level, looks upon this exercise of power, it would seem appallingly painful, something that could well be beyond the capacity of any human nature, and, in fact, it is beyond the capacity of an only human nature. But, we're dealing here with a mode of consciousness that transcends the merely human, however much it may include within itself the resources of the human nature and of the natures further down the scale in the evolution. We have here a consciousness that is well-nigh unimaginable by the merely human being because preference is so naturally a part of that human nature. Here is another way of consciousness that has mastered suffering by being able to assimilate it without being swamped by it, and is still able to function in the presence of it.

But is the life of these who in the deepest and most profound sense serve humanity one conditioned by an overwhelming consciousness of suffering? My answer is "no," that is only part of the story. We must not forget that there is the other side, that there is the state of delight, a positive quality, and the entity which really abides in the center of equilibrium participates just as truly in the delight; that therefore the total awareness in this affective sense is suffering on one side and delight on the other; and the two, thus, lead to a blend or complex of another way of consciousness altogether that is

more than a human-like kind of consciousness. Here I shall recall for you a statement in the *Bhagavad Gita*—not the *Bhagavad Gita, The Voice of the Silence* where it speaks of those who have made of themselves a channel for that current which flows from *Sumeru* down through themselves to humanity, namely, those who do not make of this stream a private pond, but make of themselves a streambed whereby it can flow to the human whole.² Now, what I will suggest further is that these also have made of themselves a second streambed through which flows the suffering of all creatures, and these two streams blend, and when they blend, suffering is not realized as suffering, but becomes something which is purified and transformed. If, now, the *Bodhisattva* were in certain moments not functioning as the bearer of the stream which flows from *Sumeru*, and yet the stream of world suffering continued to flow through him, then indeed he would know this almost, if not completely, unbearable pain. But when the two streams continue to flow through him, the suffering becomes transformed, becomes purified, and becomes a rain, a blessing upon mankind.

Now, we can understand the meaning and the office of the Christ, who was first known as Jesus, but not of him alone, for he is not the only Bodhisattva or Christ, there are others—and this is the office which they perform to the extent of their capacity for mankind.

A commentary upon that which has been said in the preceding tape may help to render its meaning and significance clearer. I spoke there of the stream which flows from *Sumeru*, an expression which comes from *The Voice of the Silence*. Now, it should be borne in mind just what the significance of *Meru* is. *Meru* is said to be a mountain which stands at the North Pole. There is literature that states concerning the two geographic poles of the earth that one is a mountain and the other a pit. Now, if we consider the geographic earth, as we know it, the North Pole is located in a sea and the land is deep below it so that it would seem to be like a pit; whereas the South Pole is located on high ground which is now covered with ice. This seems like a contradiction, but there are statements which hint that that which we call the North Pole is not that which is meant in the mystic literature, but rather that which we call the South Pole. In other words, there is a veiling here, and the implication is that our orientation to what we call the North Pole is due to an error. In other words, that there should be a 180 degree reversal. This point, however, is not of prime importance. We may think of the earth and the relationships in connection with it as a relative macrocosm with respect to which the human being is a

² H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence* (Chicago: The Theosophy Company, 1928), 70-79:

Would'st thou thus dam the waters born on Sumeru? Shalt thou divert the stream for thine own sake, or send it back to its prime source along the crests of cycles?

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

Know, if of Amitabha, the "Boundless Age", thou would'st become co-worker, then must thou shed the light acquired, like to the Bodhisattvas twain, upon the span of all three worlds.

Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of Alaya be poured forth into another bed.

Know, O Narjol, thou of the Secret Path, its pure fresh waters must be used to sweeter make the Ocean's bitter waves—that mighty sea of sorrow formed of the tears of men.

microcosm, and the North Pole in the human being is the pericarp at the top of the head. In many of the representations of the Great Buddha, there is a raised portion on the top of the head which quite clearly seems to mean a reference to this pericarp, and the stream which flows from *Sumeru* in the individual consciousness would be a streaming downward from this pericarp. This gives to us a more intelligible interpretation, I believe.

Now, there is in the literature a reference to a sense of flow which is connected with the *Muladhara* and the flow up the spine when *Kundalini* is raised. The experience of this, it is said, is a flowage from below upward. It is also said that it can be experienced as a flowage both upward and downward at the same time. Sri Aurobindo has said this. I have had the experience of a sense of flowage that was upward and downward at the same time and that tends to confirm the statement made by Sri Aurobindo. But in general, as I know a current in consciousness it seems to flow downward, and, thus, not as a flow upward in the spine. It seems to come from above. This is something which came into my experience on the occasion of the event of August 7, 1936, and was referred to in *Pathways Through to Space* as the “Current which is Joy”; but, however, this is only part of its total meaning. There was the sense of flowage, but not a sense of flow from the past to the future and not a sense of flow from one point in space to another. The symbol of the circulating light would seem to fit the experience rather well.³ There is flowage, a sense of dynamism, but also a sense of stability; and the figure of a rapidly revolving object of light which produces the effect of an apparent static circle but which at the same time is a rapid movement suggests the idea of a combination of dynamism and stability, and this would be a figure true to the direct impingence of the flowage. There is also connected with this stream a sense of something like fire; and often individuals who have experienced an effect of this flowage have reported the feeling of heat, but it need not produce a feeling of heat. Nonetheless, we have here something that suggests the quality of fluidity, either gaseous or liquid, and the quality of fire. I have not found a quality corresponding to that which is symbolized by earth. But the sense of flowage is very real and the sense of a fieriness is also very real, though not necessarily of a fire that produces heat. By reason of the qualities of this Current, it is possible for one who is qualified to accept the feelings of guilt that may be in the consciousness of the *sadhaka* and transform them so that they no longer are a cause of suffering. This power exists and I know it.

This is a statement of it as it manifests in the human microcosm. The language of *The Voice of the Silence* suggests a relative macrocosmic correspondence. I say relative because the true macrocosm, in the final analysis, is transcendent even above the entire cosmos. But as manifested in a planetary entity, we have a relatively macrocosmic aspect. We’re dealing here with factors that are real mysteries, but they are knowable and one can confirm their reality.

Now, my own experience has been that the Current which broke into my consciousness on August 7, 1936, has been with me, off and on, not continuously present, but readily present, for the past 38 years. It is like a companion. It may break into the relative consciousness spontaneously or it will respond by my orienting my personal consciousness to it. But the evidence is that it does not seem to flow at all

³ See *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, trans. Richard Wilhelm (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1931).

times. It is available, usually, at all times, though there are conditions that can cut off its flow for a protracted interval, and I have known such a condition, after which it reestablished itself. When it flows into the consciousness it acts as a force that produces a quality in the mind like that of inspiration. It can give to the concepts that may be employed in a formulation a certain filling that makes them potent. The same concepts produced as ideas without the flow of the Current would not have that filling. They would be empty. And most of the concepts in the literature of mankind, the overwhelming mass of them in fact, are thus empty. But when filled with the Current, the concepts have a power which is over and above the dictionary meaning of those concepts. The verbalization is an instrument of communication, but the Current can direct the capacity of verbalization, though it is restricted by the resources of the individual accumulation of relative knowledge. It employs this accumulation for its formulation. And it does produce something that is a bit embarrassing, in that an outward plan of organization may be abandoned in an effort at formulation so that one develops a thesis in a direction and of a material that he had not originally intended to do. But, it gives value which the formal organization by itself would lack.

Now, in my experience with this Current—which I now call the “transcendental function”—down the years is that it is not active at all times, and there’s a reason why it should not be. There is an energetic demand upon the individual bearer of the Current; not that the bearer generates the Current, but he produces a certain portion of the condition that renders the play of the Current possible and that does make an energetic demand. I can illustrate this by a figure drawn from mechanics. There is that which is employed in the combination of mechanism with electricity which is called a solenoid switch. It is used in connection with the starters with which we start the motors in automobiles and in other engines. The principle is this: a light current activates a magnet which draws a second switch into play through which flows a heavy current. The heavy current is that which turns the starter in an automobile, the light current activated the switch. It, by itself, did not start the automobile. Now, applying the figure in connection with this transcendental function, the individual himself when inducing the Current supplies the energy that energizes the magnetic switch, and then the other Current plays. This means that effort in the personal or mundane sense is involved, and is a good reason why the Current does not flow at all times. It flows when there is a reason for it to flow, and, while it may flow by reason of spontaneous action on its part, it can also be invoked by the personal will activating the magnet in the switch. One does not activate this magnet when he ties his shoelaces, a figure with which I assume you are now familiar. One does not invoke the high Current when dealing with problems of ordinary relationship, but only when it is important to do so.

Now, there is another point to be borne in mind. If one becomes a channel through which the stream which flows from *Sumeru* may run, he does not experience the values carried by the Current in the same way that he does when he was an object upon which that Current played at the moment of the initial breakthrough. That gives the experience of the value so transcendent that one would say without any exaggeration that if the cost for this experience were a thousand lives of suffering, the price would be small. But as it has been pointed out in *The Voice of the Silence*, one who carries the Current does not do so for himself, but for all others. Nonetheless, there is a gentle delight realized in connection with its flowage. One feels a gentle happiness. One feels a

great peace and a penetration into knowledge which he did not have before. One needs no entertainment, no vacation from the action of the Current. It is a gentle delight even though it flows through one rather than to one, but on to other need in this world. It is an unmitigated blessing.