

Abstract of the Philosophy

Part 8 of 14

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This tape will be a continuation of the series called "The Abstract of the Philosophy."

The philosophy that has grown out of the Realizations which I have elucidated so many times may be and has been reduced to three fundamentals, and these are: first, consciousness is original, self-existent, and constitutive of all that is; second, the subject to consciousness transcends the object of consciousness; and third, there are at least three, and not only two, organs, functions, or faculties of cognition.

I shall deal with these three fundamentals in the order of presentation, but first a word about the last one. The importance of this statement is in part this: that it gives at least the suggestion of an answer to the question, how do you know? The material that comes from the third function gives that which is essentially ontological or metaphysical in nature. But I shall take this question up later in a more elaborate discussion of the third fundamental.

Let us now turn to the first fundamental, namely, consciousness is original, self-existent, and constitutive of all things. I have written and spoken many times concerning this orientation to consciousness, and yet, those who have heard or read so characteristically take it in stride saying nothing that I wonder if the implication of this statement has ever been really understood. It is a radical revolution as contrasted to the presuppositions of our science, of our practical attitude toward the world, and of our popular religions. It is really heretical from the normal point of view. It threatens an overthrow of that normal point of view. And I would feel it was better understood if it aroused at first a certain opposition, but taking it without saying anything suggests to me that it has not been understood. It means this: that the one original fact which is indefinable, although necessary either implicitly or explicitly in the definition of everything else, this one fundamental indefinable is consciousness. It means that the one fact which needs no explanation and cannot be explained is consciousness. It may well be that everything else needs explanation. It may well be that everything else can be defined, but this is the one ultimate indefinable. Yet, nonetheless, we find philosophers and scientists who try to explain consciousness as though it were something derivative. Do they not see that in the very placing of a problem, consciousness is implied? If there were no consciousness, there would be no problem and no resolution of a problem possible. Because this consciousness is the root fact, the subsumption which underlies every specific orientation whatsoever, it is thus the ultimate root from which everything else is derived. That it is the one true and authentic axiom. It is not a mere assumption, for it is implied in the very act of making an assumption. Without consciousness there is nothing whatsoever.

Consciousness underlies all our discourse, all our sensuous perception, and all our various states of feeling. These different qualities may be isolated and identified, but the consciousness is the subsumption which underlies all of them. Without consciousness none of them would be. This primary fact escapes our observation and study because it is not an object before us. It is, therefore, the most obvious thing that is, yet the most difficult to isolate as a subject matter for discourse. What we do is to take the root primary consciousness as it is in itself and represent it by a concept, namely, the word 'consciousness' or the word 'awareness', or any other word that may have the same reference. And it must be borne in mind that the concept 'consciousness' is borne upon the breast of the root essential consciousness and that the concept 'consciousness' exists by a subtle application of the principle of dualistic contrast, whereas the essential consciousness transcends all dualisms since it is the container of all dualisms. Concerning consciousness in its pure essentiality, we could say nothing. We can only be identical with it. But for discourse we can project a concept pointing to it which concept is called consciousness. And the question may arise, how can we isolate this? It is by a second principle, that consciousness in the root sense contains within it the potentiality of many states of consciousness. State of consciousness is to be distinguished from the pure, universal consciousness. And states of consciousness may be elaborated perhaps indefinitely; at least we know that the forms of states of consciousness may be quite extensive. But we're unable to say that they are infinite in number, though we may see that such a potentiality can very well exist.

Now, in all of our conceptuality, and in fact in all of our perceptuality, we cognize by means of the principle of contrast. Something is identified by being other than something else. And it is by the interplay between states of consciousness we eventually awaken to the Realization of the pure, Root Consciousness which lies as the source of all that is. This is a . . . Yet once the discovery is made, it becomes recognized as the simplest, the most obvious of all facts. Consciousness is, in the root sense; everything else becomes.

What I am saying here implies that consciousness in the root sense transcends all deities as well as all lesser entities, animate or inanimate. This point is of supreme importance. It means that in dealing with consciousness in the root sense, we are dealing with that from which all divinities or deities are derived. It thus—it thus is an orientation which transcends all popular religiosity. It transcends the authority of all divinities because all divinities that may exist are them—are themselves derivatives from the Root Consciousness. If this is appreciated, then it should be understood how radical is the revolution implied in this philosophy. It does indeed have much in common with statements found in several of the Buddhistic *sutras* where the term 'mind' is used with the reference that is identical with the term 'consciousness' as employed by me. In fact, the emptiness philosophies of Buddhism could—can be interpreted as meaning that behind all things there is no nonconscious substance whatsoever, but only the stuff of consciousness itself. Orientation to this point of view is the basis of the most ultimate security, for all entities that may be regarded as hostile, all states that may be regarded as objectionable, all transitions which may be regarded as fearful, are only somewhat contained within consciousness; and since I in my essentiality am identical with that Root Consciousness, none of these entities, states, or transitions are capable of injuring me in my essentiality. Consciousness is in no way threatened by its contents, for it transcends

those contents, and this is the supreme security. Birth and death, becoming and becoming not, are but the play or *lila* of consciousness playing with itself. Nothing threatens the ultimate durability of this root principle with which I, along with all creatures whatsoever, are identical. This is the supreme security.

The basis of the formulation consciousness is original, self-existent, and constitutive of all that is was the crowning feature of the fifth Realization. It is formulated in the last paragraph that is more than one sentence, in the section called the “High Indifference,” and I shall read this paragraph into the tape at this time:

I moved about in a kind of Space that was not other than Myself, and found Myself surrounded by pure Divinity, even on the physical level when I moved there. There is a sense in which God is physical Presence as well as metaphysical. But this Presence is everywhere and everything, and, at the same time, the negation of all this. Again, neither I nor God were There; only BEING remained. I vanished, and the object of consciousness vanished, in the highest as well as inferior, senses. I was no more and God was no more, but only the ETERNAL which sustains all Gods and all Selves.¹

This is the most important statement in the book called *Pathways Through to Space*.

Now, the meaning of this may be somewhat more clearly elucidated perhaps. In the ascension which took place in that Realization, there were certain discernable stages starting with our normal condition which may be that of a self surrounded by a secular universe of objects, a state which may very well correspond to what Aurobindo called the undivine. From that there was a first transformation, or overturn, in which the old universe became identical with the Divinity and the self, which in its first state is the pure—the purely discreet ego of an individual, became the *Atman* in the ultimate sense; and remember that the *Atman* is identical with the *Brahman*, the two being but two aspects of one reality. And then in that state, all that surrounded the personal self-identity was pure Divinity itself. The whole secular universe of objects became Divine, was the very Presence of the Divinity—a state of a very vast delight. And then the final transformation was that this divine universe and the relatively eternal subject or *Atman* were absorbed into what I called in *Pathways* the ETERNAL, and that ETERNAL is what I mean by consciousness-without-an-object-and-without-a-subject. It means that the two poles essential to any manifestation, namely, the subject to consciousness and the isolation of an object of consciousness were derived from this ultimate root. The distinction here may very well parallel that of Meister Eckhart when he spoke of the Divinity and then contrasted it with a more ultimate notion which he called the Godhead, the root source, but which I call Consciousness-without-an-object-and-without-a-subject.

Further discussion of the fifth Realization is appropriate in view of the fact that the value of the state was integral and not simply cognitive alone, and it must be borne in mind that in these higher states of consciousness there is a strong tendency to become integral and not simply a development of one particular quality in the whole of

¹ Franklin Merrell-Wolff, *Pathways Through to Space* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1944), 123.

consciousness. I called it the High Indifference because of a characteristic affective *quale* in the consciousness, and this is a quality that many find difficult to understand. The indifference is not in the sense that one has necessarily an aloofness in the practical sense with respect to the suffering of creatures as some have interpreted it. The High Indifference mean—could have been called a High Dispassion, and this may be explained in this way. Man has three primary types or modes in which he functions. One of them is cognitive, which I have discussed most largely; another is affective or the development of the various affections; and the third is conative, which means the activist phase in the consciousness.

Now, the Realization emphasized most forcefully upon my consciousness its quality of affective neutrality, and that may be explained this way. Let us take a group of affections such as love and its opposite pole hate, as peace and its opposite pole of anger. We may think of a zero point between these different poles, that in the positive direction you have the positive qualities such as love and peace, and on the negative side you have the corresponding qualities of hate and anger. Then you have also the different states of delight, on one side, and suffering, on the other, and the neutral point between them—and this neutral point we might call the zero point to take an analogue from our analytic geometry. The state of dispassion or High Indifference would be an orientation or a state of consciousness in which there was no conditioning by either the positive aspect of the affects or the negative aspect of the affects. It's a very difficult state to represent in any way that would be attractive to most human beings; nonetheless, one can appreciate the logic of it when we realize that the all that is includes all that we call negative as well as all that we call positive—hate, anger, and suffering are facts of experience in the empiric world. We cannot simply say they are not and thus have them disappear. They are facts with which we have to deal. On the other side there are the positive qualities which to most of us would make a strong appeal, namely, the qualities of love with all of the meanings conveyed by that word such as vital love, such as the mental affection, and such as the compassion of a highly evolved entity. Then there is the—are the positive aspects which we know as peace, a state which is free from negative feelings of anger and all that goes with that, and then the state of delight which to most of us would be a supremely satisfactory state, one that one would aim at. But the negative aspects in the—on the empiric level are just as real as the positive aspects; and, in fact, in this world as we see it today, they seem to have a predominant power that—and because they have a predominant power the creatures of this world are in need of a redemption from that negative condition. In other words, we're dealing with a pathological condition here and therefore have to emphasize the redemptive factor because it is pathological. Ultimately, we must envisage an order in the total of all that is which is not pathological. Pathology is not normal, it is a state which could be and unfortunately has become a fact with us and has to be dealt with, but the universe and all that is is not essentially pathological.

Now, if the hearer can imagine a zero state with respect to all affections, neutral between them, not colored by *ananda* nor colored by suffering, not colored by peace nor by anger, but neutral with respect to these, and the same with all other affections; one stands in that state in a condition of a great dispassion. He looks alike upon the negative and the positive. Now, in looking alike upon the two a distinction must be made. It doesn't mean that the same judgment of value is attributed both ways; it means that the judgment is made dispassionately. That is the important distinction. One feels, of course,

the more desirable value of the positive aspect of these affections, but in the zero state he is capable of looking upon all things, be they good or bad, beautiful or ugly, immoral or moral, with an equal eye and values dispassionately. The judgment in such cases in such a state is uncolored and clear.

Now, for a consciousness so conditioned, it is possible to enter into the dark side with the same ease as it is possible to enter into the luminous side, if it becomes necessary to do so. It doesn't mean that in the individual there is an absence of preference, but it does mean that the individual can rise superior to preference in his functioning; and if it became necessary for some reason that he should participate in the experience of the dark side or the negative side, he could do so with equal facility as compared to participating in the positive side. And to become the ultimate knower of all and to function with wisdom with respect to all possibilities, it is necessary that an individual should have this qualification. This would seem to be what is required of those that are called the *bodhisattvas*, those who have followed the *Kwan-Yin* vow and undertaken to effect the redemption of all creatures within this world.

Now, part of the equipment required for the dealing with the suffering of creatures is the understanding of that suffering, and there is only one way that it can be understood and that is by participation in it. Now, what is implied is, that at some time he who becomes a *bodhisattva* must be prepared to experience in himself all states experienced by all other creatures—even including the states of the most extreme suffering as of the individual on the torture rack, or dying upon the cross, or entering into the last stages of a death from extremely painful disease—to pass through all of these not as something which is his own individual *karma*, but as something experienced vicariously. It is said that the Buddha thus experiences or has experienced the suffering of all creatures and that those who follow in his way undertake to do likewise. This is a very difficult stage—achievement. It's a very difficult type of experience to know all possibility of suffering as well as all the possibilities of delight and to remain unmoved and in balance at all times. This is part of the meaning of the High Indifference.

However, though it may well be necessary to come to an understanding of all possible suffering at some time, it does not mean that the office of being the transformer who redeems necessarily has to at all times experience the suffering for which he brings redemption, for when the Current from the transcendent plays in the individual consciousness, it can transform that suffering without it being experienced as suffering by the transformer. But no doubt, at some time one must experience all to be able to master all. Remember we are not here dealing with *karmic* obligations; we are dealing with that state where there is a voluntary acceptance of the experience of these things by one who has transcended the limitations of *karma*.

There are three modes in which consciousness manifests in the incarnate entity. In popular terms these modes are thinking, feeling, and doing. But in more technical language we would call them cognition, affection, and conation. Cognition means knowing in any form whatsoever. In my philosophy it exists in three primary forms: sensation, conceptual cognition, and introception, which is primarily knowledge through identity, or as I have defined it elsewhere, the power whereby the light of consciousness turns upon itself towards its source. Affection includes all possible feeling qualities, such as the love-hate compound, the peace-anger complex, and the states of enjoyment such as

joy and its counterpart suffering. These constitute a very important part of the total life as is obvious to anyone who has thought upon these things. The third mode is that of conation or the activistic element in consciousness. This has a weak and a strong aspect. The weak aspect is just simple desire; the strong aspect is volition or willing. When one has transcended the lower realms of consciousness, he comes to a place where there is no more desire, but there is still the possibility of willing. The realized man no longer desires, but he does will.

Now, in the case of the fifth Realization, it was the first occasion among all five Realizations when the element of conation became evident. The first four Realizations had great value for knowledge and great value for feeling, but nothing seemed to be implied concerning the conative aspect of consciousness. In the case of the fifth Realization, however, the conative aspect was very strongly evident. There was a sense of will that had the potentiality of cosmic effect. It was very evident that on this level, one should not exercise the will except by—it was guided by wisdom. Now, the exercising of the will does not mean that an effect will be evident at once. It does mean that the effect will ultimately manifest, but there may be a considerable delay in time before its effect is manifest objectively. The sense of will force was so stupendous that it transcended all the ordinary powers in the world. It was greater than the powers of all the Caesars, for it acted at the very roots whereby the very powers of the Caesars were supported. A point may be made here that for one who has attained this state of consciousness, there is no place for prayer in the sense of supplication. True prayer is willing, not supplicating. Supplicating implies weakness. It implies that one is still in thralldom to desire. But if there is strength, there is no desire, for that which should be can be willed and it will eventuate, perhaps after a long time, perhaps immediately, but in the end it will eventuate, and when such is the case there is no place for mere desire. This is an important part of the total picture. One that has not been dwelt upon heretofore, but it should be remembered. The complete entity, fully Awakened, is a coworker with nature and with supernature, and may exert will to mold future development affecting at least something of cosmic action.