

# Abstract of the Philosophy

## Part 11 of 14

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When dealing with the field of Realization, Enlightenment, or Mystical Unfoldment, we are faced with very difficult logical problems in connection with formulation. This arises out of the fact that the realized Consciousness, or the mystical state, is a state that usually appears as unitary and contrasts with ordinary consciousness in that the latter is dualistic. The unitary side is more rigorously defined as that which is not one and not many, as formulated by Shankara. It is also viewed as absolute, contrasting to a relative consciousness in which we cognize this world that seems to be around us and all the creatures that seem to exist in it. It is primarily dualistic for the reason that this world rests upon a relationship between the knower and the known, or in other words, a subject to consciousness and an object which lies before consciousness. This is also to be called, and has been called, the relative order contrasting to the absolute or non-relative order. And here we have a problem of how are we to relate the relative to the non-relative.

If there is a relating, then it logically follows that we have only the relative in one form or another, and if it is non-relative, then there is no relation whatsoever. This is the great dilemma of any formulation with respect to that which is the state of Enlightenment. The problem is one of immense difficulty, and one attitude that may be taken, and has been taken, is that nothing can be said in relative terms that is true of that which is the non-relative. Therefore your practical problem is that of how to arouse the awakening to the non-relative, not trying to formulate anything that's true of the non-relative in relative terms, but simply producing a practical means of entering into that state of Consciousness or of realizing that state of Consciousness. This is a well-known procedure of the Buddha, who refused to say anything concerning the nature of the transcendental order. The traditional position with respect to this problem is found both in Buddhism and in the *Mayavada* of Shankara's *Advaita Vedanta*. The old relative order is simply negated in order to awaken consciousness to the non-relative order. Shankara calls it *maya*, which means simply saying that it is not, and the Buddhas call it *shunyata*, which is translated as empty, emptiness, and Voidness. It is that which is essentially of no significance, of no substance; and thus by radical depreciation it is hoped that somehow the miraculous awakening will take place into the transcendental order.

But there is a problem here that I find inadequately resolved. In the very act of negating the non-relative order, the order of the sense impressions and the conceptual cognitions, we are giving it recognition. When, for instance, Nagarjuna says of the Ultimate, it is not reality and—it is not being, and it is not not-being, it is not both being and not-being, and it is not neither being nor not-being, he in effect cuts it off as a total negation. Now, there is no doubt that by the radical depreciation of the relative order it is feasible to facilitate an awakening to the non-relative order, thus this method of radical

depreciation or denial has a practical psychological value; but, there is this logical or philosophical defect in all of this methodology, namely, that in the very act of denying reality to the relative order or asserting that it is only a Void we are giving it a certain recognition in that denial and assertion. This seeming world of the relative domain, of the sense impressions and the conceptual relations, is not made to cease to have its factuality. The very negation, as I said, is itself an implied recognition of that factuality. It is a fact that these impressions that fall upon my consciousness through the senses which have led me to believe in an external world, do exist. They exist as facts. They are events experienced. And I cannot deny their factuality. If there is produced by them a delusion, that delusion rose out of an erroneous interpretation of those facts, but the facts are a part of the history of my total experience. There is, thus, a certain profound logical flaw in asserting their illusory character, in simply asserting, in effect, that they are not, by calling them a Void. In a way, by so doing am I not submitting myself to mere suggestion having a more or less hypnotic effect?

What I suggest therefore is that we face the serious problem of how there can be both a *Sangsara* and a *Nirvana*, both a relative order and a non-relative order. No doubt, by the radical denial of the relative order, we may facilitate the breakthrough to a non-relative order, but we have not explained how a universe could be, and that universe is in its elements an undeniable fact of experience. Somehow or other, that universe, or appearance of a universe, came forth from the non-relative. If we are deluded by it, then somehow the deluding process came forth from the non-relative. Therefore, we must assume the problem of reestablishing in some way in our mental conceptions a relating of the ultimate nondual reality with the relative order that has produced a state of confusion or delusion which needs to be corrected. This problem is a great deal more complex than the essentially psychological problem of arousing, as it were, to wakefulness by sheer denial of the sleeping state. It is the problem of coming to a cross understanding between the eternal and the time bound. No doubt, it involves some refinement or unfoldment of our logical capacities that may not yet have been effected or, at any rate, completed. But, as I see it, this is a problem that must ultimately be faced if we are ever to become free rovers between the *nirvanic* and the manifested order of the worlds. The fact that the problem is difficult is no sufficient reason why it should not be undertaken. To be sure, awakening to the non-relative is the all-important achievement, but there is more than that. There are those Realizations that go beyond this and lead somehow to a vaster integration, therefore we strive with this problem and maintain that while the breakthrough is all-important, still it is not all of the story; and perhaps this is the meaning underlying and hidden in the emphasis of renunciation after Realization on the part of the pilgrim; and that, indeed, that renunciation is not alone for the end of attaining the redemption of all creatures, but of achieving a vaster, more comprehensive Enlightenment.