

# **The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object**

A Discussion of the Nature of Transcendental Consciousness

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Part 11 of 25

## **PART II**

### **The Aphorisms on Consciousness-Without-an-Object**

#### **CHAPTER 4**

##### **Commentaries on the Aphorisms on Consciousness-Without-an-Object (continued)**

##### **13. When awareness cognizes Time then knowledge of Timelessness is born.**

This aphorism exemplifies another application of the principle which governs the action of consciousness that was discussed in the commentary on aphorism number 8. We are able to recognize time as a distinct form only when we are able to isolate it from what it is not. This is done not only in philosophy, but, as well, in many of the theoretical constructions of science. In these cases, however, we have an isolation for thought. The immensely important philosophical question then arises as to how far, or in what way, a necessity or possibility for thought or for reason is likewise an actuality. This question is so fundamental that it seems advisable to discuss it at some length.

The issue involved here is essentially identical with that present in the ontological argument for the existence of a Supreme Being. This argument is based upon the assumption that the existence of an idea implies the existence of a reality corresponding to it. Hence the idea of a Supreme Being implies that such a Being is. The analysis to which Kant submitted this argument is a classic in philosophical criticism, and it is generally felt that Kant has, once for all, undermined the force of this argument. Yet, despite all this, it continues to have psychological force and has reappeared more than once since Kant's time.

The aphorisms and the philosophy surrounding them do not make use of the notion of a Supreme Being, though they leave open the possibility of evolved Beings that may very well be regarded as God-like when contrasted to man.<sup>4</sup> But this philosophy

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<sup>4</sup> The reality of God as the Supreme Value is not questioned here. The Supreme Value exists in the human soul and may be realized directly. It is the Other which completes the lonely self. The Supreme Value is the Presence in mystic realization. The error of many unphilosophical mystics lies in interpreting the Presence as an existence *in re*, that is, as an objective thing. In the true understanding of the real nature of God, Meister Eckhart reveals himself as one of the clearest seeing of all mystics. For Eckhart, God is the other of the self, and these two stand in a relation of mutual dependence. Hence, God is not a non-relative primal

establishes its base upon the reality of a Transcendental Principle. Hence, the essential problem involved in the analysis of the ontological argument arises here also. So, to bring this question out into clear form the following quotation is taken from Kant:

Our conception of an object may thus contain whatever and how much it will; nevertheless we must ourselves stand away from the conception, in order to bestow existence upon it. This happens with sense-objects through the connection with any one of our perceptions in accordance with empirical laws; but for objects of pure thought there is no sort of means for perceiving their existence because it is wholly *a priori* that they can be known; our consciousness of all existence, however, belongs altogether to a unity of experience, and an existence outside this field cannot absolutely be explained away as impossible. But it is a supposition we have no means of justifying.

Let us, for the present purpose, assume the general validity of this argument. Then, in simple terms, the conclusion reached is that for an object of the reason or thought to have, or correspond to, an existence, in any other sense, that existence must be determined through some other mode of consciousness. In the case of experience, the senses perform this necessary function, in that sense-impression is necessary to determine experiential existence. At the close of the quotation, Kant admits that the possibility of a non-experiential existence cannot be denied, but he goes on to say that we have no means of justifying this supposition. Now, so far as the field of consciousness which is the proper field of physical science is concerned, Kant's conclusion seems to be valid enough. But the domain of consciousness comprehended by science is only a part of the sum-total of all possible consciousness. Once this is granted, then, in principle, it must be admitted that the supposition of a non-experiential or transcendent existence or reality can possibly be justified. Epistemological logic does not rule out this possibility; it simply establishes the point that by means of pure conceptions and logic alone, transcendental existences or realities cannot be proved.

In the present philosophy, all effort to establish such a proof is abandoned. Logic and analysis of consciousness are employed simply to build a reasonable presumption, without laying any claim to coercive demonstration. It is, however, asserted that direct extra-logical and extra-empirical verification is possible. All of this implies that there is a way of consciousness which is not, on the one hand, to be regarded as presentation through the senses, or in the form of conceptions, on the other. Nor, further, is it to be regarded as no more than affective and conative attitude. It is, rather, a way of consciousness which sleeps in most men, but has become awakened and active in the case of a small minority, which is to be found represented by individuals scattered thinly throughout the whole span of history. This way of consciousness has been known by different designations, but in the West it is most commonly called "mystical insight."

In introducing this notion of another way of consciousness, called "mystical insight", certain obvious difficulties arise, owing to its not being a commonly active

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principle. This primal principle Eckhart called the God-head, a notion which is used by him in a sense analogous to the Buddhist *Shunyata*.

mode of consciousness. The individual in whom this insight is sleeping is necessarily quite incapable of evaluating it directly. To be sure, he may study the phenomena connected with the mystical function, as exemplified in historic personalities, as has been done by some psychologists. But this is a very different matter from the direct epistemological evaluation of the noetic content of the mystical insight.<sup>5</sup> A work like that of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* can be accomplished only by a man who finds in the operation of his own consciousness the very contents that he is analyzing. The study of the forms and processes of consciousness is, of necessity, only in subordinate degree a matter for observation. In the present case it depends preeminently upon the introceptive penetration. As a result, the psychologist, who is not himself also a mystic, is not competent in this field, for he of necessity judges from the base of a consciousness operating through the senses and the forms of the intellectual understanding alone, so far as cognitive content is concerned. Recognizing this difficulty, I have abandoned in the present work the effort to force agreement by means of logic and reference to a widely common ground of experience.

However, the *possibility* of a noetic insight must be indicated. The chapter on "A Mystical Unfoldment" was introduced early in this work to meet that need. Admittedly the reader is in a difficult position when it comes to the question of evaluation of the honesty and competency of the writer in the forming of his interpretations in this chapter. But there simply is no way of presenting the material and processes of mystical insight in terms that are generally objective. The record of historic instances of mystical insight which have led to the formulation of a noetic meaning adds to the presumption of the validity of the insight, but does not help the reader directly unless, he too, has known at least some modicum of the mystical sense. Consequently, all that can be asked of the general reader is that he entertain the idea of the possibility of mystical insight, and then judge the philosophic consequences from that base.

It is predicated here that one important consequence, which does follow, is that an existence or reality outside of the field of experience through the senses can be justified directly without falling into the error of the ontological argument. It would follow that Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is, in principle, valid only with respect to the relationship between the understanding and the material given empirically through the senses. But mystical insight gives another order of material or viewpoint which, also, in combination with the understanding, has noetic value. Undoubtedly there are problems concerning possibly valid and false interpretations here, analogous to those that arise in the relationship between understanding and experience through the senses, that Kant treated so trenchantly. But only the mystic who is also a critical philosopher could possibly be qualified to handle these. In this domain Kant hardly seems to qualify, for his is the scientific, rather than the mystical, mind.

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<sup>5</sup> That mystical insight is a source of knowledge is a primary thesis of the present work. The correctness of this thesis may be, and has been, challenged both on epistemological and psychological grounds. The justification of the thesis thus consists of two parts: a. justification as against philosophic criticism; and b. justification as against psychological criticism. The justification as against philosophical criticism is dealt with in various places throughout the first three parts of this work. The second justification is not needed on the level of Recognition itself, but only for the strictly relative type of consciousness.

Once it is granted that there are two domains from which the material filling of conceptual consciousness may be derived, instead of the one through the senses alone, then the field of cognition has a threefold, instead of a twofold, division. There would then be the domain of pure understanding or conceptual thought in a sort of neutral position, with material through the senses standing on one side, and material or viewpoint from mystical insight on the other. This, in turn, would lead to something like a division in understanding, which may be called the higher and lower phases of intellection. Another consequence is that some men may have the lower phase of intellection, which operates in connection with the material given through the senses, developed in high degree, and yet remain quite blind to the higher phase. More than extensive scholarship or superior scientific ability is required to awaken recognition of the higher phase. On the other hand, there is a considerable dearth of superior intellectual training among those who are, in some measure, awakened to the higher phase of intellection, though history affords us some brilliant exceptions. Thus, there are not many who realize that here, too, is a problem for critical philosophy.

In any case, the aphorisms must be taken as material derived from mystical insight. As a consequence, their verification in the full sense is possible only from the perspective of a similar insight. Logic and experience can provide only a partial presumption for them, at best, and that is all that is attempted in these commentaries.

**14. To be aware of Time is to be aware of the Universe, and to be aware of the Universe is to be aware of Time.**

This aphorism emphasizes the interdependence of consciousness under the form of time and of consciousness of objects. Formerly, in the days when our scientific thought was governed by the Newtonian mechanics, we were in the habit of regarding time, space, and matter as three independent existences. Explicitly, Newton held the view that these three were not interdependent. However, as knowledge of the subtler phases of physical nature has grown, it has become evident that this view is no longer tenable. The new relativity, which has been largely developed through the insight and coordinating thought of Albert Einstein, definitely asserts the interdependence of these three notions of time, space, and matter. Now, while this integrating conception was developed to unify actually existent knowledge of physical fact, it is, at the same time, the formulation of a profound metaphysical principle. The notion of time is meaningless apart from the notion of change. Further, there is no change save in connection with objects. Thus, at once, it should become clear that the awareness of objects implies change, and consequently, time, while on the other hand time becomes existent only in connection with objects.

It should be clearly understood that the ground on which this aphorism is based is not the above theory of mathematical physics, but is genuinely transcendental. However, the physical theory is a beautiful illustration of the essential idea.

**15. To realize Timelessness is to attain *Nirvana*.**

In this work the terms 'realize' and 'realization' are used in a special sense, which is to be clearly distinguished from 'perception' and 'conception'. Whereas the latter two terms refer to a relationship between a self and objects, whether in the form of sense

objects or ideas, the terms ‘realize’ and ‘realization’ are employed to designate a mode of consciousness wherein there is an identity between the self and content, in other words, a state of consciousness not concerned with objects in objective relation. Thus “realization” means a mystical state. The *Nirvanic* State is not something conceived or perceived, though it is possible to conceive or perceive a symbol which means the *Nirvanic* State. If the latter possibility did not exist, it would be impossible to say anything at all in reference to *Nirvana*.

The realization of Timelessness should not be confused with the concept of timelessness which frequently occurs in philosophy, nor with the notion of simultaneity which is employed in classical theoretical mechanics. In the case of the mere concept of timelessness, the thinking and experiencing self is actually, in terms of awareness, moving within the time-world of objects. Thus his creating of the concept is a time-process. In this case, the self is not fused into identity with that which it has conceived. But when genuine realization has been attained, the self is found identical with Timelessness. The difference here is of crucial importance, though one that is difficult to convey adequately with ideas. Not only is it not merely “knowledge about”, but it is an even more intimate state than “knowledge through acquaintance”, such as that which comes through immediate experience. It is, rather, a state of “Knowledge through Identity.” This consciousness has a peculiar quality which is quite ineffable, but it may be suggested in the following way: If we may regard all concepts and percepts as being a sort of “thin” consciousness of surfaces only, then the state of realization would be like a “thick”—substantial—consciousness extending into the “depth” dimension. All presentation and representation deals with surfaces only, and all expression in its direct meaning is solely of this nature, whatever its symbolic reference may be. But the realization gives “depth-value” immediately. It may, therefore, be called substantial in a sense that may never be predicated of mere presentations or representations. This “depth-value” actually feeds that which some modern psychologists have called the “psyche.” On the other hand, mere experience and intellection do not supply this nutritive value. They may arouse self-consciousness and afford something which has the value of control, but they do not themselves give sustenance.

To attain the *Nirvanic* State is to reach the source of sustenance for the psyche. This is the genuine goal of the religious effort, however inadequately that goal may be envisaged in the majority of religious conceptions and programs. Religion is concerned with the sustenance of the psyche; it is a search for the durable “Manna.”

To realize Timelessness is to transcend the tragic drama of Time. Time is tragic because it destroys the beloved object, and because it is constantly annulling the unused possibilities. In the Timeless State there is none of this tragedy; hence it is a State of Bliss without alloy. But Bliss without alloy is simply another name for *Nirvana*.

#### **16. But for Consciousness-without-an-object there is no difference between Time and Timelessness.**

This is another instance wherein the meaning is more easily seen by consideration of the fact that Consciousness as a principle is unaffected by the nature of content or state. But this is not the whole meaning of the aphorism, for Consciousness-without-an-

object is not merely an analytic abstraction from the totality of common consciousness. It is also a symbol of That which may be directly realized. On the level of That, there is no differentiation or significance. In other words, it is neutral with respect to Meaning as well as to affective value. It is a level above all relative valuation, both in the affective and noetic senses. Stated in another way, all differentiation has the same significance, and this significance is simply irrelevancy.

Consciousness-without-an-object represents all possibilities, but is specifically identified with no particular possibility. If IT were especially close to any one tendency, then IT would cease to be perfectly neutral. Thus all judgment or valuation lies on some lesser level, wherein the principle of relativity operates. But this lesser level depends upon the superior for its possibility and existence.

### **17. Within Consciousness-without-an-object lies the seed of the world-containing Space.**

‘Space’ is a generic concept, as there are many kinds of space. Thus the perspective-space of the eye has characteristics quite different from those of the space with which the engineer works. The latter is generally the familiar Euclidian space. But, whereas we formerly thought that the Euclidian space was the sole real space, today we know there are many kinds of space. Most of these exist only for mathematics, but within our own day we have seen one of these purely mathematical spaces become adapted to the uses of mathematical physics. So, now the notion of a multiplicity of types of spaces is definitely extended beyond the domain of pure mathematics.

In the present aphorism, the reference is to the space in which all objects seem to exist. In the broadest sense, this is not a single space, but several sorts of spaces, all having in common the property of containing objects. Two of these spaces which are generally familiar are: a. the ordinary space of waking consciousness, in which all physical bodies from the stars to the electrons rest; and b. the spaces of the dream-world, wherein distance takes on quite a different meaning. It is characteristic of these spaces, at least as far as we are commonly familiar with them, that distance and quantity are significant notions. Such notions, however, are not essential to space as such, as is revealed in the mathematical interpretation of space as “degrees of freedom.”<sup>6</sup>

Space is to be regarded as the framework or field of each particular level of differentiated consciousness. The world-containing space is that framework in which objects appear. The normal framework of the space of waking consciousness vanishes for the dream-state, and a space having discernibly different properties replaces it. The latter is a space filled with objects quite distinguishable from the objects filling the space of waking consciousness, even though they may be related. Different laws of relationship and operation apply. The superiority of consciousness to a specific space is revealed in the fact that the external space of waking consciousness can be annulled by the simple act of going to sleep. The dream space is annulled by the reverse process of waking to the external space. This fact, which is part of the common experience of all men, is of profound significance, for it reveals the overlordship of the principle of consciousness

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<sup>6</sup> See Section LX, “The Symbol of the Fourth Dimension,” in *Pathways Through to Space*.

with respect to these two kinds of space. It is a constant reminder that, in reality, man as a conscious being is not bound to the space which defines the form of his experiencing or thinking while in a particular state. The delusion of bondage is truly a sort of autohypnosis, produced through man's predicating of himself as a subjective consciousness-principle those spatial dependencies which apply only to objects, including his own body. In reality, the consciousness-principle supports and contains the universe, instead of the reverse being true, as commonly supposed.

The world-containing space is derived from, and is dependent upon, Consciousness-without-an-object. The latter comprehends the former, both as potentiality and as actuality.

**18. When awareness cognizes the world-containing Space then knowledge of the Spatial Void is born.**

As the underlying principle of the complementary or inverse awareness has already been discussed in the commentaries on aphorisms 8 and 13, it will not be further considered here. Our attention will be devoted to the meaning of the Spatial Void.

The Spatial Void stands in polar relationship to the world-containing Space. The latter is preeminently a space with content involving the notions of quantity and distance. The Spatial Void is without content and involves no notion of quantity and distance. The more qualitative spaces of mathematics suggest the idea. It is predominantly Space as Freedom, and not space as restraining and constricting form. Any differentiation which would apply here would be analogous to that which attaches to the notion of transfinite numbers, and not like the sharply bound differentia of finite manifolds.

The direct realization of Consciousness as the Spatial Void has an inconceivably lofty value. It is a state in which the lonely self has found its own other in the fullest possible sense. Symbolically expressed, it is as though the lonely self, regarded as a bare point, had suddenly been metamorphosed into an unlimited space, wherein content-value and the subject—the "I"—were completely fused and coextensive. More commonly, this is expressed as union with Cod. The latter statement is sound enough so long as it is understood as a symbol and does not assume an arbitrary pre-interpretation. The Reality realized is Presence, in the sense of envelopment in the Eternal Other. This is the final resolution of all the problems of the tragic life in the world. It is the Terminal Value, with respect to which all consciousness concerned with objects is of instrumental significance only.

**19. To be aware of the world-containing Space is to be aware of the Universe of Objects.**

This aphorism asserts the interdependence of our ordinary space and the objects contained within it. This involves a departure from the older Newtonian view wherein space was regarded as independent of the presence or absence of objects. While it is possible to conceive such a space, it would be a space taken in a different sense from that of the world-containing Space. The view developed in the new relativity is consonant with the present aphorism, for in this latter theory matter and space are viewed as interdependent. This space is not simply an empty abstraction, but actually has what

might be called a substantial quality. Thus, the very form or “properties” of the space is affected by the degree in which matter is concentrated in different portions of it. It becomes warped in the vicinity of large stellar bodies, so that the shortest distance between two points is no longer a straight line, in the old sense, but a curved line, analogous to an arc of a great circle on the surface of a sphere. Modern astrophysics has even developed the idea of an expanding space, implying therewith the possibility of a contracting space. This notion, at the very least, renders intelligible and plausible in physical terms the ancient notion of a pulsating universe on the analogy of a great breath.

Once we have the notion of a space expanding with the matter, which is coextensive with it, and the consequent possibility of its contraction in another phase of the life-history of matter, then there at once emerges the further implication of the dependence of matter-space upon a somewhat still more ultimate. For pulsation implies a matrix in which it inheres. In these aphorisms, that matrix is symbolized by Consciousness-without-an-object. The objective phase of the pulsation, that which is marked especially by the expanding of the universe, is the state of consciousness polarized toward objects. The contracting phase develops while consciousness is being progressively withdrawn from objects. This may be viewed first as the macrocosmic picture—a process in the grand cosmos. The same principle applies to the microcosmic or individual consciousness.

These two senses are not generally distinguished in these commentaries, as the latter are concerned with general principles that may be applied in either sense. Thus, what is said may be interpreted either in reference to an individualized human consciousness, or to consciousness in the more comprehensive sense.

## **20. To realize the Spatial Void is to awaken to *Nirvanic* Consciousness.**

This aphorism effects a further expansion of the meaning of *Nirvana*. The latter may be viewed as a spatial consciousness, but not in the sense of a world-containing Space. *Nirvanic* Consciousness is not to be regarded as simply the total consciousness of the manifested universe. If such a total consciousness could be envisaged, it would be very appropriate to call it Cosmic Consciousness, and it would stand as a whole, in contradistinction to *Nirvanic* Consciousness. These two, *Nirvanic* Consciousness and Cosmic Consciousness, would contrast in the relation of polarization, analogous to the familiar polarity of subject and object. In spatial symbols, the polarity is between the world-containing Space and the Spatial Void.

Now, a more complete interpretation of the pulsation noted in the last commentary becomes possible. The expansion of the world-containing Space corresponds to contraction of consciousness in the sense of the Spatial Void, or a reduction of consciousness concerned with the Self, while there is an expansion of consciousness in the field of objects. In psychological terms, it is the predominantly extraverted phase. While in such a cosmically expansive phase, the balance of human consciousness, as well as of all other consciousness, is bound to be predominantly extraverted, yet particular individuals may be relatively only more or less extraverted. In this setting, the so-called introverted individuals are only relatively introverted, and



cannot be predominantly introverted so long as they possess physical bodies. To become predominantly introverted is to cease to exist objectively, and thus, to have a consciousness centered in the Spatial Void or *Nirvana*.

For most individuals the centering of consciousness in the Spatial Void is a state like dreamless sleep, in other words, a psychical state which analytic psychology has called the “unconscious.” In this philosophy this state is not viewed as unconscious in the unconditional sense, but is conceived as a state of consciousness which is not conscious of itself, and therefore, indistinguishable from unconsciousness from the subject-object standpoint. It is possible, however, to transfer the principle of self-consciousness into the Spatial Void, in which case it is no longer a state like dreamless sleep. But this is not an easy step to effect, as it requires a high development of the principle of self-consciousness, combined with its isolation from the object. If, in the case of a given individual, this power is sufficiently developed, beyond the average of the race, it is possible for such a one to become focused in the Spatial Void, in advance of the race as a whole. When this is actually accomplished, the individual is faced with two possibilities. Either he may then become locked in the Spatial Void, in a sense analogous to that of the binding of most men to the universe of objects, or he may acquire the power to move his consciousness freely between the world-containing Space and the Spatial Void. In the latter case, the individual’s base is neither the universe of objects nor *Nirvana*, but lies in THAT which comprehends both these. The latter is here symbolized by Consciousness-without-an-object, which is neither introverted nor extraverted, but occupies a neutral position between these two accentuations.

### **21. But for Consciousness-without-an-object there is no difference between the world-containing Space and the Spatial Void.**

In one sense there is no difference because Space or Consciousness, in either sense, is irrelevant. From the standpoint of a profound metaphysical perspective, both are irrelevant, as the just forgotten dream is irrelevant to the consciousness of the man who has awakened from sleep. Yet, while dreaming, the dream was real enough to the dreamer. We can thus distinguish a sense in which we would say the dream is not, namely, from the perspective of the awakened consciousness for which it has been forgotten, yet, at the same time, in another sense, for the dreamer while dreaming, the dream is a real existence. Shifting now to the highest transcendental sense, we can say that both the world-containing Space and the Spatial Void both are and are not. In the sense that from the level of Consciousness-without-an-object both the universe of objects and *Nirvana* are not, there is no difference between them.

It is possible for an individual to achieve a state wherein consciousness is so divided that in one aspect of that divided consciousness he realizes the irrelevance or essential nonexistence of both *Nirvana* and the universe of objects, while at the same time in another aspect of that consciousness he is aware of the relative and interdependent reality of these two grand phases of consciousness. The synthetic judgment from this level of dual consciousness would be: The universe of objects and *Nirvana* both are and are not. There is something here that can be realized immediately, but which defeats every effort of the intellectual consciousness to capture and represent in really intelligible forms, but there can be no doubt of the superior authority of the State of Realization

itself, for the individual who has acquaintance with it. To be sure, intellectual dialectic may confuse and veil the memory of the immense authority of the Realization, but this veiling process has no more significance than the power of the ordinary dream to veil the judgment of the waking state. Whereas the dream is generally something inferior to the waking intellectual judgment, the Realization has a transcendent superiority with respect to the latter. But can the intellectual consciousness of the man who has had no glimpse of the Realization be convinced of this? It is certainly quite difficult for the dreamer, while dreaming, to realize the purely relative existence of his dream. Has the waking intellectual judgment a superior capacity with respect to the acknowledgment of its own Transcendental Roots?

## **22. Within Consciousness-without-an-object lies the Seed of Law.**

Consciousness-without-an-object is not Itself law-bound or law-determined. It is rather the Root-source of all law, as of all else. Thus, when by means of Recognition an individual self is brought into direct realization of Consciousness-without-an-object, it is found that that most fundamental of all laws, the law of contradiction, no longer applies. Here no affirmation is a denial of the possibility of its contradictory. Also, Consciousness-without-an-object is that excluded middle which is neither *A* nor not-*A*. Hence, the actuality which Consciousness-without-an-object symbolizes is unthinkable, and so in order to think toward IT, a thinkable symbol must be employed.

All law, conceived as law of nature, or of consciousness in its various forms and states, or of relationships, is dependent upon law of thought. For such states of consciousness as there may be in which there is no thought, in any sense, there is no awareness of law, and, hence, no existence of law within the content of such states. But for a thinking consciousness which contains or is associated with those states, the operation of law is realized. Thus we may regard a law-bound domain as a thought-bound domain, though such thought is not necessarily restricted to the familiar form commonly known to man. This implies, among other consequences, that there is no *universe*, save for a thinker.

## **23. When consciousness of objects is born the Law is invoked as a Force tending ever toward Equilibrium.**

The school of English Empiricism performed a fundamental service for philosophy, in a negative way, by trying to interpret the mind as an empty tablet on which uncolored impressions from objects were imprinted. The culmination of this line of thought was finally achieved by Kant when he demonstrated that the only way to avoid absolute agnosticism was through the recognition of a positive contribution by the mind itself, that is, a contribution not derived from experience, however much experience might be necessary for arousing this factor into action. Kant showed that, *pari passu* with the development of awareness of objects through the senses, there was aroused knowledge of a form within which the objects were organized as a whole of experience. This “organization as a whole of experience” is simply the principle of Law in the general sense.

The most fundamental meaning of Law is Equilibrium. For equilibrium is that which distinguishes a cosmos from a chaos. The very essence of the notions of “law” and “equilibrium” is contained in the notion of “invariant.” The counter notion is that of an “absolutely formless flux.” If we abstract from experience all the notion of law, then all that is left is such a formless flux, devoid of all meaning. This would be a state of absolute nescience. Therefore, the existence of any knowledge, or of any dependability in consciousness, implies the presence of law. But the moment that we apprehend an object as object, we have invoked both knowledge and dependability. This is shown in the fact that the apprehension of an object implies the subject, which stands in relation to the object. Thus, Law appears as a subject-object relationship. Now, at once, the factor of Equilibrium is apparent, for opposed to the object stands the complementary principle of the subject.

Laws are not discovered in nature, considered as something apart from all consciousness. Rather it is the truth that organized nature is a product of thinking consciousness. In a profound sense, the Law is known before it is empirically discovered. This is revealed in the fact, noted by psychology, that law-formations are developed out of “phantasy” processes. In notable instances, as in the case of Riemann, a form principle was evolved as a purely phantastic geometrical construction, which several decades later supplied the form for Einstein’s general theory of relativity, to which current physical experience conforms better than it does to any preceding theory. The form which a given law takes when constructed in relation to a certain segment of empiric determination may be, and generally seems to be, inadequate. However, this should not be understood as implying the merely approximate or pragmatic character of Law *per se*. It should rather be understood as an imperfect objective apprehension of the Law, “known” prior to experience. The real Knowledge of Law lies somewhere in what the analytic psychologist calls the “Unconscious.” Man is born with this hidden knowledge, which rises more or less imperfectly to the surface as an intuition. Even when scientific laws are interpreted as the product of a relative purpose, the notion of Law in the deeper sense is presupposed. For the affirmation of a productive relationship between purpose and the scientific law implies a deeper Law, whereon faith in that productive relationship rests. Even the Pragmatist rests upon a base of a non-pragmatic Assurance, however little the latter may be in the foreground of consciousness.