

CHAPTER 2 IDEAS, METAPHORS, AND KNOWLEDGE

"There is a certain method in this madness."

Horace : Satires II. iii

Any form of communication between human beings uses **uncertain ideas, sub-certain metaphors, and certain knowledge**. We are mostly aware of the knowledge we use in our every day functioning, in what we call our reality. The fundamental parameters of such knowledge are seemingly given through our observation of events and their connections in a time-space setting, which appears to be objective and thought-independent. But this particular setting, which we experience, is in fact dependent on our thinking. We cannot simply look and see the objective facts; **whatever facts we consciously see have been constructed in relevant parts by our thinking**.

Every object in reality/actuality has the potentiality to become real in several complementary ways. It is the general environment (any kind of influence in a given reality) which causes one manifestation or another. An electron, for example, can behave like a wave or like a particle. It is the environment which at a particular moment in a particular situation causes the electron to behave according to one potentiality or another. It was, is, the environment which caused the first protein to evolve into an organism, DNA, bacteria, plants, animals, man. The environment is ultimately the whole universe. For a human being we must add the whole universe of thought which can potentially influence human thinking, sensing, and acting. Our common environment is *What Is*, eternal, beyond space.

In a human being the environment has unfolded freedom. A human being can refuse to behave according to one set of environmental conditions and choose another set. This possibility of choice is one interpretation of the idea and mystery of freedom.

2.1 MECHANICAL MOVEMENTS

If we look carefully at our personal history or at the history of a whole people, we can observe that **realities, knowledge, and their meaning change together.**

From a distant perspective some of us can comprehend that the “same” facts were experienced, observed, and understood totally differently by different peoples. Slavery, for example, was seen as a perfectly normal part of social life for many centuries amongst practically all peoples and tribes of the world, whereas individual freedom was mostly an unknown concept. In today's world we despise those 'facts of slavery ' and its proponents, not because we are basically better or more insightful people, but because our reality has changed.

We generally judge other peoples and their mores as if they lived today in our own reality and our value-systems. We usually imagine that the ‘true’ facts and realities of history look the same at all times and from all perspectives. The concept of individual freedom, the opposite idea of slavery, appears to most people of today (in the Western world) as a natural, almost instinctive, factual and undeniable truth, and we can barely imagine that such an idea could appear very strange at different times and locations.

Slavery and freedom are fundamental possibilities of the human mind and consciousness, and whichever will be predominantly realized in a given era, depends on largely uncontrollable historical developments. But neither ever exists in a pure form. Hannah Arendt, for example, coming from a German philosophical background, saw in our American society of the nineteen fifties "*a paradoxical combination of political freedom and social slavery.*" For most Americans this society is unquestionably the freest and most desirable of any societies, and they would probably have vigorously disagreed with this characterization.

This shows that reality, experience, and thinking mutually define and sustain each other. Our ways of thinking, sensing, and acting change together with the world, which we are able to discover in and around us. Most of the time such changes occur imperceptibly and gradually, modifying a reality together with our perception of it rather slowly. But radical changes, in which new possibilities for realities arise, are also possible and occur in such ways as to simultaneously transform reality, our consciousness, and our knowledge. True to the generally accepted mechanical worldview we try to explain such transformations as chains of causes and effects. On close inspection one can say that a causal explanation of historical phenomena is rather limited, when it comes to such revolutions. If the empirical data underlying such explanations have been researched and investigated carefully, their rational concatenation represents at best one chain of plausible causes, but others cannot be excluded. A particular interpretation of a scientifically researched historical fact might not even correspond to an actual possibility but could even be a lie or a fanciful construct of wishful thinking, which is convenient from a particular point of view. Facts, data, and their interpretations are usually inseparable.¹⁰⁷

However, in spite of all this, one of the many common irrational beliefs is the one in a rational (mechanical) sequential movement from the past through the present to the future. Such and

¹⁰⁷) 'irrational' = opposite of 'rational' like, for example, the belief in creationism; **non-rational** = **generative or creative reasoning and intuiting.**

similar beliefs are at the center of any mechanical reality, existing in the imagination of the majority of people. But let me stress this point:

A causal, rational explanation of a limited area of history, psychology, and sociology, limiting itself to phenomenologically observable data, is the only way to arrive at a relatively certain comprehension of what was likely to have happened. More than rational thinking is however needed to choose intelligently and creatively from the many possible parameters, which, after they have been defined, can be observed. Thus, a thorough comprehension, knowledge, and insight of the whole issue is required before a scientific study of some of its rationally explainable components can or should be undertaken.¹⁰⁸

This kind of rational knowledge is superior to the opinionated irrational feeling and pretending which is the prevailing belief system of any given reality of a society. However, even the social sciences develop belief-systems in their attempts to generalize from their thought-models to a particular situation of human acts. They also tend to forget that human beings are (potentially) free and can act counter to all predictions of thought-models. The same history looks quite different for a historian with a socialist or a capitalist background. The history books of two countries which have been enemies for centuries, look sometimes as though they describe two different worlds altogether.

2.1.1 MECHANICAL REALITIES

At the center of a belief in a mechanical reality is the 'feeling' that the 'world' is **completely** knowable and controllable. Either I think that eventually I can be in complete control of my life and destiny, or someone else is controlling it, turning me into his or her victim. So, I seem to have only two options, to control or be controlled. This is of course one of the manifestations of Maya, the illusion of a reality which is at the core of human misery.

I construct here the notion of a mechanical reality as an abstract definition, which serves me throughout this book as a focus and reference, to see among other things what an actual reality is not. The basic characteristic of a mechanical reality is that it **seems** to be absolutely definable through thoughts, sensations, and actions in terms of different objects and their causal relationships. It seems to be deterministic, certain, and causal. Knowledge in and of such a mechanical reality is subject to mechanical laws (of logic and emotions). The important properties of such knowledge depend on the fact that definitions can be retained in memory together with the rules which are needed to use and link them. Because of its fixation and definiteness knowledge can be examined objectively. This kind of thinking and the knowledge involved can thus be characterized as a **response of memory** and is similar to the operation of a computer, or rather, such a 'thinking' can be simulated by a computer.

If a human being is absorbed by his or her mechanical reality, the content of that reality has an absolute and determining, yet subconscious, value for what he or she can think, sense, and do. This means that one hears, sees, and senses only what is compatible with that reality, and one also acts accordingly. The content of such a reality is part of our memory and mechanical behavior

¹⁰⁸) See, for example: Max Weber in MWK page 97, his article "On A Few Categories Of Comprehending Sociology."

patterns. But, what can be memorized must first have been reduced to an object of thought or the senses in a **certain** time-space setting, the certainty of which has been created by formal thought. Any certainty is therefore conditional and depends on mechanical thinking, which has disassociated itself from the whole of non-certain thinking. Such a reality would be represented by a predominant mechanical thinking of the triangular thinking model which I have introduced. It is the domain of illusion and Maya, par excellence.

2.1.1.1 CONFUSION BETWEEN THE THOUGHT AND THE THING

Let me take this opportunity to introduce my **definition for a thing**:

For there to be an object to a consciousness there must have been a subject-object split of the mental state of oneness. This split is a creation of thinking in which thinking suspends its oneness. The thingness aspect of an object consists of the sum total of secondary properties attributed to the object through the interactions with consciousness via thinking, sensing, and acting. A thing is therefore a **sensing-acting-thinking** or **SAT-thing**, and most thoughts are **SAT-thoughts**, the results of thinking, sensing, and acting at all three levels, but stabilized through predominantly mechanical sensing and thinking.

For example: the **object** tree is given to us (our senses) as an **actuality**, whereas the **thing** tree is a product of our reality which is created through the human mind in all its triadic functions. The thing tree is a product of our active thinking-sensing mechanism and of our passive sensory-thinking response. **The description, the thing, is not the described, but points merely to some of its aspects, some of which are actual, some imagined, thought up.**

An extremely high danger of confusion arises if the object of thought does not have its counterpart as a material object which is accessible to the senses. In such cases there is a tendency to treat the thought like a mechanical thing rather than as a pointer beyond itself. As there is no tangible object corresponding to the thought, one may also declare such a thought as illusory. "If you cannot touch it, it does not exist."

It is the result of such oversight that people with an inclination towards empiricism or positivism tend to categorically divide thinking into two domains: non-sensical or real. They assume that what is real is **exhaustibly** definable as objects (to our senses) and their relationships, which can be determined, predicted, and controlled through **mechanical** thinking and corresponding movements of the senses. Conversely, they consider anything which cannot be so defined to be meaningless or nonsensical.

This misconception leads to grave consequences in a reality and its center, the consciousness which maintains it. We will have the opportunity to look at such dangers time and again.¹⁰⁹

Let me here just quote Barbara Gordon who has expressed her concern about such dangers in our American society in a way which illustrates my point:

".. my vision was blurred by several basic misconceptions. One was my totally American 'Can Do' mentality: the belief that there is a technology, machine, expert, institute, pill that can solve any problem, remedy any hurt. Get men to the moon. Put lasers in space. Transplant hearts. Mend souls. The energy and drive behind that kind of thinking may be laudable. But the search for external solutions as

¹⁰⁹) See, for example the section 4.5 on page 313 ff.: "*Thinking, Sensing, and Things.*"

a cure for all the ills of the human condition contains the seed for its own madness."¹¹⁰

2.2 NON-MECHANICAL MOVEMENTS

In the moment one tries to describe non-mechanical forms of thinking, sensing, and acting, the definition of words becomes very loose. Normal words are far from being well defined in a mathematical sense. The same word can have different meanings, some of which may vanish over time, and other meanings may be generated. Words are temporarily stabilized thoughts and are part of the flow of thinking and may thus range in their potential meaning from the utmost emptiness of a number to the fullest cipher of an idea.

2.2.1 THE FIXATION OF THOUGHTS

Thoughts are fixed through sounds as speech or other means of sensing and acting, which are separable from thinking and are then symbolic thoughts.

Once a thought has been fixed by a sound, i.e. spoken, that thought is no longer contained in the flow of thinking or maintained by it. It is separate to some extent and can be used by other thinking at other times and for different purposes. The fixation of thought through the spoken and written word (or any other symbolic fixation) is the precondition for a rational society. Language, i.e. organized and commonly used and written speech, in turn is the fundamental ordering system of thinking. **Laws and rules, once written down, obtain an objective reality** and can be examined and tested rationally. In similar ways we create tools, houses, streets, cities, temples and so forth through **actions** to serve us as further fixed references for our reality. No thought per se can be fixed in time independently of the flow of thinking. This is why a **total** separation between thinking and sound as the spoken word is not possible without losing all meaning of the sound. Let me illustrate these observations by means of an allegoric description:

2.2.1.1 THE VORTEX OF THOUGHT AND SELF

A spoken word is like a piece of ice in a stream of water, whereas an unspoken word is more like a vortex which has been formed in that stream and is constantly dissolved, recreated and maintained by it. A piece of ice can be lifted from one stream into another, whereas a vortex depends entirely on its original stream. But even though a piece of ice can be separated from the stream which created it, it will always be a part of that stream, but can become part of another stream, in which it can melt and/or be the seed for other ice formations (thoughts and words), thus providing the possibility for mutual interpenetration. If one lifts it out of a stream altogether, it will sooner or later melt, and evaporate into air.

Time can be considered here as the whole visible (conscious thinking) and non-visible (non-conscious thinking) network of the streams of thought. They start at different sources and end in one ocean, which through evaporation and condensation provides the water for all streams. The whole ocean can be compared to the one un-certain consciousness of mankind, which is a kind of oneness-nothingness in itself.

¹¹⁰) Barbara Gordon: "You Can Begin Again"; Parade Magazine, The Oakland Tribune; December 30, 1984.

Using the model of consciousness as the product of thought, we can also think of ice and the vortex as the consciousness of a human being. A vortex is then like the self or center of thinking even though it is the result of the whole stream of thinking. The vortex is constantly being created and absorbed by the stream. When the self loses its creative connection with the stream it behaves more like a piece of ice. This is the concept of the rigid self or ego whose fundamental confusion lies in its belief that it has no connection to the non-certain movements of thinking and that it is separate from the stream and can even control it.

Whereas ice and a vortex are confined to a particular location in a stream, a human being can have an awareness of the whole process between source and ocean.

In our triadic model the emerging of a thought corresponds to the one-way movement from the creative to the mechanical area. In the mechanical area a thought corresponds to a piece of ice. In the creative area it would be the first ripple of a beginning vortex. In the generative area the vortex becomes stronger to a point where it seems to be a self containing entity.

The whole of spoken words is like an ice castle, rather than randomly floating pieces of ice. To the degree to which these words are being memorized, the self becomes similar to the ice castle. It is the fundamental conditioning through which and with which reality is built and human consciousness formed. The stronger this castle becomes the more it loses its correlation with the non-certain stream of thinking. This solid unchanging castle, as beautiful as it may be, is the ego. In spite of its apparent solidity it is bound to melt away unless it is constantly redesigned and reconstructed, in an incessant movement between the water, the air, the vortices in the water, and the ice.

2.2.1.2 A CLASSIFICATION OF NOTIONS

Returning to our discussion of words, it is clear that what is correct for the spoken word holds for the written word as well. An **absolute separation of thinking and words** is not possible without the meaning of the word becoming totally empty. If we would attempt such a separation the word would be a mere sign or symbol for the senses. We can see this illustrated in the sound of a totally foreign language or the symbols of logic - in the case where we are not familiar with them. It should be evident that the writing down of laws, their fixation in a permanent form as rules and regulations is necessary for the emergence of a civilization.

The meaning of words is contained in the interchange between a consciousness, which understands and interprets them, and the reality-ideality, to which the words and the consciousness refer. This allows us to distinguish words according to the degree to which a separation between them as words (symbols) and thinking is possible. It is a classification which corresponds to the different **movements of thinking: mechanical, generative, and creative**.

A) Mechanical words:

These words appear to mechanical thinking as though they were totally separate from the thinker and thinking. I distinguish them further as:

(A1) Concepts:

These are words whose intended meaning appears to be self-evident and is the result of tradition and habit. They constitute the core of common language. This is the essential domain of illusion (the veil of Maya) and ignorance (avidya).

(A.2) **Analytic and mathematical terms:** they are accurately reducible to the numbers 0 & 1 and logic symbols.

(A.3) **Ideal types: Relatively definable concepts,** idealized well delineated scenarios, with which we can work logically and rationally to arrive at results which are certain (Max Weber). A computer model of society for example is such an ideal type. We always must bear in mind that the results are correct only if our basic parameters and assumptions are correct. **Sometimes the results depend critically on these assumptions.**

The use of ideal types is particularly appropriate in the social sciences, anthropology, and history. Their interpretation with respect to their importance and relevance for actuality and reality is not part of mechanical thinking.

B) Generative words:

I call them **notions and metaphors.** These words are intended to be dynamic and only separable from the thinker in a vague and subcertain way. They contain meaning and value.

C) Creative words:

I call them **ideas and ciphers.** They are intended to point beyond reality and/or to suspend it. The boundary between creative and generative words, in particular ciphers and metaphors is rather fluid.

Very often the same word can be used in all these different ways dependent on the intention and/or its interpretation within an assumed context. The very differentiation of the word categories listed above and of the underlying distinction of the various thought movements belongs to the category of **ideal types**, which was first clearly introduced by Max Weber. **Some metaphors and ciphers have meanings which do not have any object in time and space. God, soul, freedom, joy, love, honor** are a few examples. When the mind uses those words intelligently it can see that itself, in its attempt to give meaning to those notions, is operating differently than when it is using mechanical knowledge. This is the **area of metaphors and ideas, which is traditionally thought of as the domain of poetry, fiction, and other expressions of art.** Such artistic products are generally believed to exist for our pleasure and entertainment more than for anything else. But I try to show that metaphors and ideas have a very fundamental meaning in human life, in our thinking, sensing, and acting.

2.2.1.3 METAPHORS, IDEAS, AND ART

When ideas have become manifest through thinking, their **forms** can appear as nothingness, because they can be rendered more and more certain or objective and thus become emptied of meaning. This can be compared to the movement of a germinating thought from the creative area of thinking to the mechanical area, after which the path which established the connection between creative and mechanical thinking gets clogged up. To prevent the form of the idea to become totally empty, the obstacles on the path need to be cleared away, which requires intelligence and insight.

The **meaning** of an idea, on the other hand, can become more and more encompassing, reaching ultimately for the idea of oneness. In this case the path between mechanical and creative

thinking becomes wider and wider, even to the point where there is a danger that the necessary difference between the two modes of thinking dissolves.

Betweeness, the *harmonious* balance between Oneness and Nothingness, avoids the creation of unnecessarily rigid concepts, but it also does not dissolve important differences. It manifests itself as the creating and perceiving movement which is guided by the idea and which generates a reality of accessible thoughts and things. Its task is to separate form from idea intelligently without forgetting that itself is the creator of the separation. I.e. betweeness is the movement of thinking which remains free of the overpowering forces of oneness (all is an incomprehensible meaningful oneness) and nothingness (all is a meaningless mechanical accident.) It is what can be called **intelligence**, a diligent thinking, sensing, and acting between two powerful and dialectically complementary tendencies in thinking.

In different realities, historical situations, and at different times Man¹¹¹ uses different means to express similar universal ideas, which then become historical observable facts and notions. True metaphors imply the whole being, point to it, and are an inexhaustible source for interpretation.

As such, they can start actual and real forms of interest in a reality, which they can support or revolutionize. Such ideas often carry an energy and feeling with them which suggest to the mind of the person who conceives them that the ideas have created **themselves** and use the particular mind as their tool. I mention in this context the phenomenon of Perestroika in the Soviet Union during the 1980s, as conceived and set in motion by Mikhail Gorbachev, which almost miraculously led to the collapse of the communist Soviet Empire.

It is truly ironic and could be regarded as an act of the "*cunning of reason*"¹¹², the incomprehensible *Zeitgeist*, that communism-socialism was supposed to be the final stage of the dialectic evolution of societies in history. But the concept of the dialectic, recreated by Hegel, and turned on its head by Karl Marx, had become a static thought and intellectual theory in the minds of its believers. In a complete ironic twist of events, the static communist concept of mechanical and predictable dialectic movement of history, proved the *idea of dialectic* true and its mechanical concept wrong; instead of following the communist plan of knowable dialectic movement, which should negate capitalism, the unpredictable power of dialectic negated communism, and revealed its theory of mechanical dialectic as hybris and illusion. Generalizing this phenomenon, one can say that the mechanical use of an idea is usually destructive. The idea of God, for example, if used mechanically, rather than in ways nourishing and sustaining a community, will eventually destroy it.

The idea of dialectic movement, as an uncontrollable, profound and non-certain energy, prevailed, as it always does, and destroyed the presumptuous rigid certainty of ideologues, specialists, and professional thinkers. Whether in religious thinking or in sociological thinking, the dynamic dialectic of Betweeness is as incomprehensible as the whole of the human mind, the whole of creation, the whole of *What Is*. We cannot lift the veil of Athena or Maya; when we imagine that we do we are paralyzed, petrified, and lost in the hell of our mechanical thinking, our own stupidity.

¹¹¹) I generally use the word 'Man' to indicate 'man and woman' in the sense of the German word 'Mensch,' human being.

¹¹²) "*List der Vernunft*," a term coined by Hegel.

True ideas can have quite a mystical character. I try to hint at this quality when I write, for example, that thinking creates the thinker and thought. **I treat the movement of intelligent thinking like an intelligent subject, the one human mind. That part of its movement which is intelligent is also one.**

Great musical ideas, for example, seem to create themselves in the artist and through the artist, who then expresses them in forms which can be sensed directly by the whole mind-body of other people, who, in turn, can be called perceiving artists. These ideas are between and beyond the physically observable and mechanical impressions of the music, the sound.

All true ideas require for their unfoldment an openness on the side of the active listener or reality. This holds for any true communication between human beings. Great poetry, philosophy, music, dance, and the visual arts are types of communication which address Man throughout the times and realities. An idea is being expressed in a formal language (words, shapes, movements, sound, and color), and if this is being done in a creative, genuine way, the idea has **become manifest** in time as a potentiality to **be and exist**. It is there for any intelligent mind to perceive, to be moved by its meaning, to act on it, and to be truly human. And this perception is again independent of a particular reality.

It is only fitting that in Greece the nine Muses, daughters of Zeus and Goddesses in their own right, were the protectors of the arts; this divine nature of the creative process was always clear to some people. Creative processes are determining factors of a civilization and were held in extremely high esteem as the Muses in classical Greece. Not surprisingly, the same was true in the equally old civilization of India where the arts flourished and left an astonishing legacy to be admired still today in the many remnants of India's own great history. Corresponding to the Greek Muses we have the Goddess Sarasvati in India, the creator of speech and the arts, venerated even today.

2.2.1.4 SARASVATI, THE GODDESS OF THE CREATIVE ARTS

The beautiful Goddess Sarasvati is another personification of Maya-Shakti-Devi. She is named after the river Saraswati, which joins the Ganges and Jumna at Prayag. She is the most important of the three river Goddesses, the other two being Ganga and Yamuna. She is the wife of Brahma, the creating dreamer of the world, in the Triad of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. She is the goddess of poetry and music and the embodiment of the creative aspects of human thinking, sensing, and acting. She is the Goddess of language and the hymns and she discovered Amrita (or Soma) the drink of immortality. Her animals are the peacock or swan. She plays the sitar and is often surrounded by a lotus flower. She is also a water goddess and born out of the ocean (like Aphrodite).

During some mythological period in India she was the power underlying all manifestations and appearances (Maya), the mother of All. At some other point in Indian mythology she was the wife of Vishnu, together with Ganga and Lakshmi.

2.2.2 THE ACTUALIZATION AND REALIZATION OF IDEAS

An idea can become a reality without ever being a mechanical part of it. An idea transforms the reality of a person together with the mind which makes the idea actual and real. It **leads** to actions, perceptions, interests, and other real things.

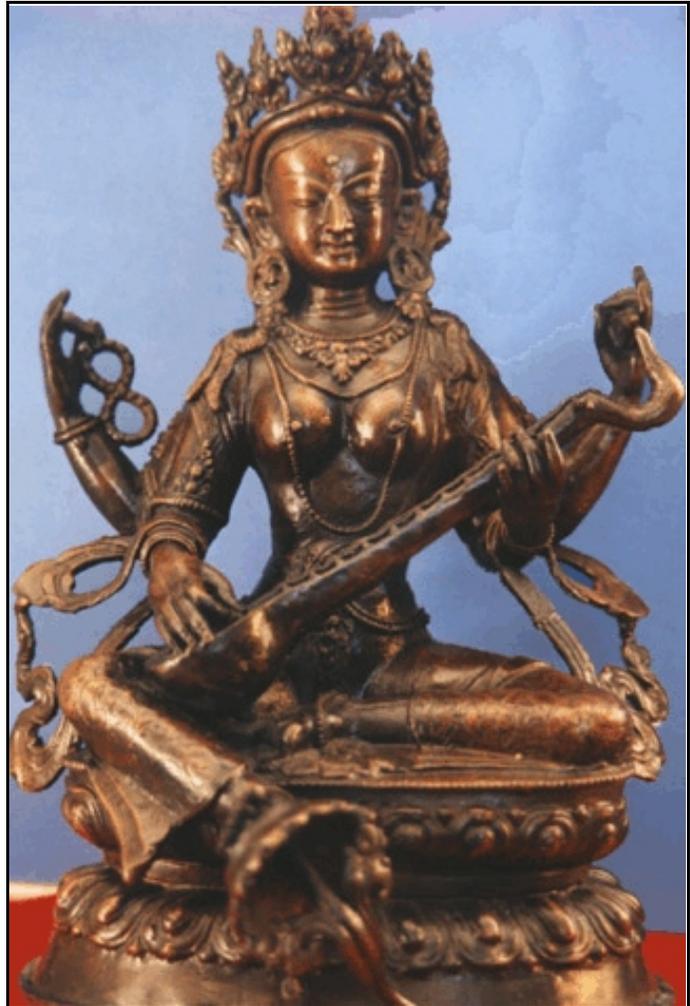
The idea is the source and ground of a reality and is as such its uncertain call and destiny. From within that reality the **form** of the idea can be studied and modified, but the realization of the idea changes and reduces its creative and intelligent energy. The idea itself is never an object for us.

I call **actualization** the **primary act of an idea** which changes into an actual and potentially acting form in a reality. This is the movement from the creative first ripple on the ocean of unconscious thinking to the solid form in the mechanical area of consciousness. It is the uncertain movement (broken lines) from point A to point B in the triadic model of thinking (see page 73). E.g. when an intelligent consciousness wakes up to the idea that it is essentially free, the idea of freedom has actualized itself as a transformed consciousness. The secondary act is the realization of the idea and consists of its incorporation in reality as a particular, concrete, time-bound, and limited concept. This corresponds to the trajectory from B to C in the same graph. Any reality is the product of turning what is actually given to the senses into potential objects of thinking, in an act of realization. **The actualization is a generative movement between un-certain creation and objective manifestation.** It involves thinking, sensing, but above all acting, and turns an idea into something which can act and can be acted on in a reality.

Acting creates new possibilities as new beginnings. **When an idea leads to new thinking this is a creative and generative action, i.e. an actualization.** The creation of new sub-certain possibilities through action is the sub-certain expression of an idea. **But this action must become part of a reality (or the beginning of a new reality) through further actions on the things of that reality.**

This latter chain of actions is what I call realization. The consequences of such actualizations and realizations are unforeseeable. A mechanical investigation of the form which an idea has taken will **alone** never encounter the creative energy of the idea. The mechanical form may

Figure 15
Sarasvati, the Goddess of the Creative Arts,
Bronze, 14", 20th Century



help to stabilize the reality, but its meaning may also provoke new possibilities for actions and thoughts.

An idea does not come **before a reality** in the sense of a strict succession of events in time, but a manifestation of an idea is required to form a particular consciousness of a society, which then is an actual reality with special values and characteristics. Ideality and realities are partial aspects of a whole movement, of which we as human beings are, but of which we can realize only what is compatible with our particular reality.

What is ideal implies the power and possibility to become actual, and what is actual implies the power and possibility to become real.

It becomes clear that a reality is fundamentally inseparable from its ideality. This is the non-rational Oneness of Sameness and Difference, the specific representation of which is the erotic passionate embrace between the Buddhas, Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri for example.

Once an idea has been given a form, it can be used to organize the reality and be of integral value for it. But an idea - or rather its form - may also become an irrelevant and artificial part of reality and be quite disposable for its general functioning. The Buddha figures in their Yab-Yum embrace can be looked at as pornography, they can be seen at the deepest level of human perception, and they can be turned into icons and idols. Other examples of the dialectic and complementary nature of ideas are:

- **A spiritual idea may become a truly meaningful religious principle and after some time turn into an artificial and irrelevant superstructure.**

- **An idea of freedom may burst into reality and become soon perverted and abused by its enemies.**

- **A scientific idea may revolutionize technology like in the case of quantum physics and the theory of relativity but may be used to destroy the world physically and spiritually.**

In the beginning, the idea may act as a metaphor or principle, but after a while it tends to become a concept, opinion, habit, etc. If one does not understand this fundamental dialectic difference between the acting and energizing non-certain idea and its skeleton, which is a necessary but empty form, then one may call any religion, art, and philosophy a disposable superstructure, as Marxists and 'realists' do, or call all reality a terrible, sinful, and unjust hell, as many religions and mystics do. **Both views are equally possible and are equally limited irrational opinions.** Generative and intelligent thinking and observing are required to **see** the possible and actual non-causal 'connections' and correlations between ideas and their forms.

2.2.2.1 TIME, SPACE, AND THOUGHT

As any expression of thought, any repetitive and observable form, has some kind of a definition in mechanical time and/or space, and as time and space are realizations of thinking in conjunction with sensing, **there is an intrinsic connection between all modes of thinking, sensing, and their expressions. This is to say that mechanical time and space are conditions for any observation and description of form. Mechanical time and space are not what is 'out there' independent of our thinking. They become actual and real in an interaction between the non-certain actuality of the material aspect of *What Is*, including *physical space-time*, and the human thinking aspect of *What Is*.**

An observation and description which uses logic and the parameters of time and space properly will therefore arrive at results which have a meaningful and relevant connection with actuality and being.

To say it differently: Mechanical time and space, *that which we experience*, as well as mechanical thinking and sensing are *realizations* of the same non-certain idea of mind, space, and matter. **Rational results based on physical observation in time and space are therefore real possibilities and provide a basis for adequate interpretations of phenomena.** The adequacy depends on the particular realities, but the basic possibilities will be understandable in all realities, which have the *a-priori conditions of rational science* incorporated in their structure: e.g. rationality, verifiability, universality, limited certainty, openness for change. I trust that these conditions can be communicated to any human being in any reality. They can be studied and appropriated. This is not the case with metaphysical notions, which, in the way I comprehend them, cannot be **cogently** communicated.

All possibilities will never be known in a reality because they are part of the never ending process of realizations of un-certain ideas. The whole set of possibilities would still not allow us a knowledge of actuality with certainty, because the connection between the observable reality and actuality can be causally certain or quantum physically sub-certain. This suggests however to define actuality as that which is potentially knowable through certain and sub-certain procedures in an infinite process of investigation through rational and sub-rational means.

Time, thought, matter, and space (TTMS) are one fundamental movement.

2.2.2.2 CERTAIN AND UNCERTAIN FORMS

Some of the expressed forms of ideas can be known with certainty as in mathematical knowledge or classical science, which both depend on the constructs of the numbers 0 and 1. In the social sciences a relative certainty of ideal forms or types is possible in limited areas by loosely defining key issues and connecting them causally or statistically.

A totally different class of ideas can be alluded to through metaphors in the visual arts, poetry, and music. The function of those forms which are **ciphers** is to point **beyond** any fixation, experience, or knowledge.

Different modes of thinking correspond to any of these expressions of forms. They cannot be entirely separated without introducing a model of a relatively fixed reality. I *trust* that the model presented in this book allows for a comprehension and understanding of how it comes into existence, in analogy to the movement of thinking, which we can observe directly. Furthermore, the model emphasizes function and movement rather than content and substance. It implies that our normal perception of reality is also a model through which we can understand actuality.

In creating such a model one transfers the connection with other non-certain modes of thinking from the area **within** a reality to its non-certain boundaries. That is, we are creating a reality in which most of our thoughts and experiences can be explained mechanically. This is legitimate as long as we do not confuse this model of reality with *What Is*.

If we imagine a reality of a society to be represented by the interior of a circle with our existence being an area within that circle and if we further imagine that circle to be embedded in an infinite and unknowable whole, we can say that human beings rarely venture out of their immediate

neighborhood area and even more rarely dare to go to the circumference of their circle. The classic model of the world (earth) as a disk, at the edges of which the abyss of nothingness looms, was a perfect representation of this concept which, in new forms, still dominates the consciousness of most people, scientists and religious people included.¹¹³

The 'disk' of modern reality is a mixture of rationalism and superstition, as always during all realities of human history; only the content or particular form changes. Its overall structure is that of a mechanism of opinions disguised as certainty and evident truth. True perceptions and their realizations intersperse a generally oblivious and conditioned reality of mass opinions.

From within the reality it appears as though valuable products of generative and creative thinking did not exist. When we nevertheless think about them, they **appear** to us, as if they were rather separate from our consciousness. Mythological stories, ideas contained in the great spiritual and philosophical books of the East and West, seem usually foreign and strange, as if they did not belong to us.

Mechanical thinking does generally not see its boundaries, but assumes that its reality is all there is. If it sees itself confronted with ideas and questions it cannot answer, it has a few choices. It can believe that the question is irrelevant. It can also assume that the question comes from a divine outside agency, which is the area of supernatural knowledge of a few initiated and especially chosen individuals. In that case we have the beginning of a religious establishment and power structure. Soon we then adopt a belief system of the special class of 'priests,' who claim to have **privileged knowledge about the area outside common reality**. This is the old stand-by solution to societies' problems since the beginning of civilization.

In both cases mechanical thinking seeks and finds its **answers** within reality itself, totally ignorant and oblivious of those unknown boundaries, which it has erected itself. This deception is at the heart of its problems, confusion, despair, destructiveness, and self-destructiveness. Mechanical thinking sets itself up for deception and is a helpless victim of its own creation. It is the essence of human illusion, which is so pervasive that in India this illusion was attributed to the machinations of the Goddess Maya.

2.2.2.3 METAPHORS AND CIPHERS

To investigate the **connections between reality, actuality, and ideality** all modes of thinking must act together. Expressions of thought are devoid of ideas whenever they have become certain form only. On the other hand, the more they approach an idea the more they lose their delimited form and become in the abstract limit **one** with the idea. Any **meaningful expression** is therefore **between** the abstract **nothingness** of form and the equally abstract **oneness** of idea. The truth of an expression as possible meaning cannot be contained in the form but points through it to non-observable ideas. **The same truth is in the pointing itself which is the energy leading the vision from the object to the idea and from the idea to the object.**

Where meaning and form go together words, thoughts, music, paintings, architecture, ceremonies, rituals, and so on, have a metaphoric quality. But intelligence is always required to prevent these metaphoric expressions from decaying to the certainty of a mere formality. This

¹¹³) Various sets of overlapping triangles could be inscribed in such a circle, representing modes of thinking, sensing, and acting. Such geometric designs served as abstract ciphers in Tibetan Buddhism, called Shri-Yantra. See chapters 4 and 7 for further detail.

intelligence is not in the reach of mechanical thinking and can therefore neither be possessed nor organized or administered. It is never an agency or institution.

Intelligence is as universal and individual as the human mind, and as such it is limited in its manifestations through time, its own creation, but simultaneously it is always beyond time as its very creator. Intelligent thinking is a thinking which operates freely among all its possible movements.

2.2.2.4 INTELLIGENCE AND INTELLECT, *Vernunft* and *Verstand*

The expressions and forms of thought correspond to its different movements. In the next section I set out to **comprehend** the creation of the three movements of thinking, which I have showed so far to be emerging from one **fundamental ideal** movement, for which I also use the notion of holomovement, a movement of the whole and its parts, in which the parts remain correlated with the whole.

If we characterize *What Is* as a holomovement then our mind and its activities are **sub-movements of that holomovement. Any description and comprehension is by necessity sub-certain, but may nevertheless be a legitimate partial image of the whole. The mind's representation of *What Is* looks at reality and beyond and tries to comprehend through the categories of our thinking and sensing processes: certain and mechanical, sub-certain and generating, uncertain and creative.**

I use the verb "**comprehend**" instead of "understand" because the latter implies the predominance of mechanicalness, which is the limited movement of thought giving rise to fixed and certain knowledge.

It was Immanuel Kant who introduced the distinction between *intelligent thinking* as *Vernunft* (poorly translated into English as 'reason') and the mechanical thinking of *Verstand* (translated as "*intellect*" or "*understanding*"). *The latter leads to potentially certain knowledge and is based on ordering principles¹¹⁴ given to it by intelligence (Vernunft). The mechanical movement of thought as intellect (Verstand) can be described as the bringing to a stand of thought-forms based on fixed ordering principles.* The *intellect (Verstand)* maintains the status quo, and can also be described as the conservation of a current reality. The fixed ordering principles are powerful **possibilities** created through intelligence and fixed as mechanical thought-orders.¹¹⁵ When the intellect pretends to be intelligent, understanding becomes super-standing or superstition. Intelligence tells us that no set of possibilities is exhaustive.

Intelligence creates notions and ideas for formal thinking, the intellect. In so doing, intelligence provides **order and unity** to all forms of knowledge on the basis of those ideas. **This intelligent order within mechanical thinking is the order of rationality and logic, through which we can arrive at certainty.**

Intelligence is idea, and is for the intellect fundamentally an¹¹⁶ uncertain ordering oneness, a vague sense that there must be one source, reason, and explanation for all human existence and experience. The call for certainty leads the intellect to its demand for universal certainty and absolute order; but what it constructs in this pursuit turns out to be **empty and meaningless**, i.e. the characterization of nothingness from the point of view of the intellect, nihilism. If the intellect

¹¹⁴) In the same vein, the German noun '*Verstand*' should not be translated into '*the understanding*' but into '*intellect*.' This common mistake makes Kant's works quite incomprehensible to read in English.

¹¹⁵) For a discussion of ordering principles see the next chapter.

¹¹⁶) Compare Immanuel Kant: "*Critique of Pure Reason*," KV, B359.

pursues certainty on its own, without the guidance of intelligence, science becomes as meaningless as religion or philosophy. On the other hand, it should be clear that religion and philosophy lose their function and value entirely, if they can only occur in the realm of logic.

As Hegel put it: "*Intelligence is mysticism for the intellect.*"

Without intelligence, science is an empty nothingness and religion an empty oneness: Empty under-standing and empty super-standing. The claim of absolute certainty deprives science and religion of true meaning.

A human being has to think and act according to knowledge and ideas in a reality, which is never understandable in its totality, because Man and his reality are always also ideality. Thus, Man has his place between the unfolded reality and the un-unfolded ideality. He **is both, of both, and between both.**

2.3 ONE-NOTHINGNESS, FUNDAMENTAL IDEA OF INTELLIGENCE

2.3.1 CONSCIOUSNESS AND ONENESS

As human beings we exist in individual bodies which represent natural sensory boundaries between ourselves and the environment. Our thinking develops the mechanical concept of a center or self and loosely identifies it with the body. Mechanical thinking then takes this identification too far and equates the separation of bodies with the absolute separation of selves. From there the mechanical self infers the separation of all things, the separation of the self and things as well as the separation of the self and its thoughts. Consciousness as a whole movement can become aware in its dialectic unfoldment that the separation of and in thinking is a condition created by itself, which allows mechanical thinking to understand the world. Thus, consciousness is part of separation because it is part of mechanical thinking, but it is also part of intelligence because the concept of separation is itself a creation of intelligence. Yet, all intelligent human activities have in one way or another a drive in them, a will, to suspend and overcome that separation to arrive at an unconditional comprehension of **What Is**. The will to understand all and everything, completely, and unconditionally, leads eventually to the suspension of mechanical understanding, which is based on the condition of separation. This will to free ourselves from our own conditioning is the dialectic complement of the will to become real, to manifest and understand through separation. But this whole dialectic movement is not mechanical and depends on the mysterious quality of freedom and transcendence, which are the most characteristic functions of thinking.

The intellect feels compelled to understand ever more in order to arrive at a full or complete understanding. This drive towards completion of knowledge is like the *cunning of reason*, as it **leads to the end of knowledge**, i.e. its suspension through itself. This is a new beginning. As we advance in the task of expanding certain knowledge, boundaries which we thought of as certain, prove to be non-certain, whereas uncertain boundaries recede from us ever further, therefore making the process of understanding with certainty an infinite task.

There is no **scale** large or small enough in the universe of space, time, matter, and **thought** to stop **thinking** from going beyond it, because any such observed barrier is also of **thought** and can therefore be overcome by thinking. **I trust that the energy behind thinking is itself infinite, an absolute intelligent infinity which is more powerful than any infinity we can ever think of.** The boundaries of thinking are themselves like ideas, and whatever we can conquer of them is part and function of reality. If we advance a bit in our understanding of a boundary, it merely recedes further. Thus, we can never truly get hold of the boundary itself. Some of these boundaries are the beginning and end of the universe, of human life and meaning, the essence of thinking, matter, time, and space, to name just a few.

The guiding energy of thinking is part of what I call non-certain will, which I think as being free, like intelligence, free in itself and unconditioned, therefore integral part of nothingness. But because it acts on behalf and in the direction of an ever more universal order, a oneness, **it is part of oneness** also. I like to look at this will as a kind of *eros*, a notion which, in its original meaning,

is a dialectic energy to join freedom or nothingness with order or oneness and which is of the same quality as these.

2.3.1.1 BETWEENNESS: EROS, YAB -YUM, MAYA-SHAKTI

Eros was the little son of Aphrodite, the Goddess of love. He was both male and female (like Shiva in India). His job and mischief was to bring people together in love and sex. An appropriate name for this third movement is therefore again the notion of betweenness, the will to bring two opposites together in compassion and wisdom, or love.

His counterpart in India is Kama, the Hindu god of love and the energy of the creative spirit, who later became identified with the energy of desire and its fulfillment, thus undergoing a similar transformation like the Eros mythology in Greece.

Another rather personalized way of looking at Eros or Kama is through Hindu philosophy and religion, and through Vajrayana Buddhism. Seen in this context Kama is one of the primordial energies emanating through self creation from the original 'waters' of nothingness. Thus, Kama is one with the energies of Shakti and Shiva. It is the energy of Maya, the creative, active energy of becoming, the female principle of creation and destruction which has been a part of European and Asian cultures for thousands of years under the names of Shakti, Kali, Durga in India, Isis in Egypt, Ishtar in Sumer, Aphrodite, Demeter, Persephone and others in Greece.¹¹⁷

Maya-Shakti-Kali creates and destroys the world which is accessible to our mechanical sensing, thinking and acting, the world of desire and loss. In Tibetan sculptures she appears as the consort of a Buddha in sexual union, Yab-Yum, indicating the oneness of the opposites. In the many symbols of India and Tibet **she is always on top**; she stands or rides on Shiva in India, and she sits on Buddha's lap in Tibet.

There are blissful versions of this union, but there are also wrathful forms, which allude to the terrible battle of the psyche, male and female, to comprehend the ego and its consequences, and through this insight suspend it. It is the dialectic struggle between the apparent opposites, a struggle which is rarely peaceful and nice but usually chaotic and bloody and messy.

In her single beautiful form Maya-Shakti-Kali appears as a young woman, Tara, who is considered to be the embodiment of wisdom of the Buddhas.¹¹⁸

In her wrathful Indian form as Kali, which also means 'time,' she usually is adorned by a garland of fifty severed heads, a theme which we find again in the figures of *Chinnamasta* and *Vajrakila*. The fifty heads stand for the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, and represent the consciousness of the self which describes the universe, the things inside and outside, through the mechanical forms of language. The separation into the thought-form called the thing and the one called the self (or in its confused form, the ego) forms the basis of Maya's reality.

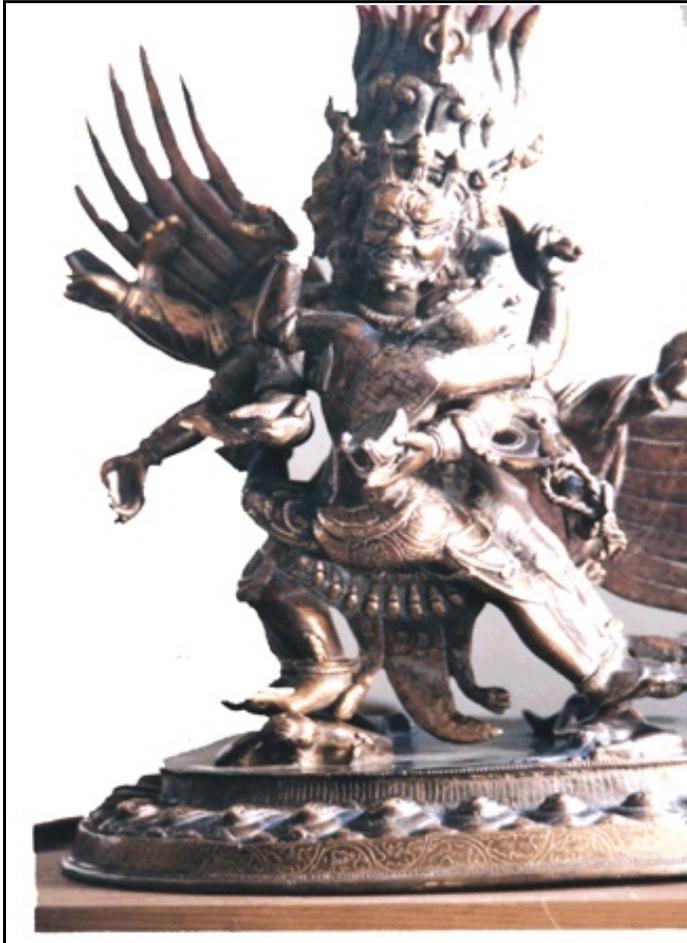
In the figure of Vajrakila we see an image of the bloody fight between the two horrific aspects of duality. When we are caught in illusion everything is fight, and even the ridding of illusion is a terrible struggle involving all the nightmares of humanity. Here the female Buddha or Dakini attacks the three headed, four legged, six armed monster Buddha. They are united in sexual

¹¹⁷) Kama, the Sanskrit noun, denotes the whole range of possible experience within the sphere of love, sex, sensual gratification, and delight. Kama is 'wish, desire, carnal gratification, lust, love, and affection.' Zimmer: ZP, p. 145.

¹¹⁸) In Vajrayana (Mahayana) Buddhism, there is more than one Buddha. As all is nothingness, the historical Buddha Gautama or Shakyamuni is as real as the meditation Buddhas Amitabha, Vajrasattva, or Maitreya, for example, no more no less.

union and dance on the corpses of a male and female. The hair of his skull crowned head is flaming to the skies, he is covered with an elephant skin, a human skin, and a leopard skin. He girded with fifty severed heads. She wields as usual the vajra chopper and the skull cup. This particular Vajrakila also has the unusual attribute of wings and makes the usual signs of teaching the law.

Figure 16
Vajrakila, 1, the Wrathful Aspect of the Buddhas
in Yab-Yum, Bronze, 17"



The figure of **Chinnamasta** describes graphically how this separation comes into being. The fifty severed heads are a reminder that Kali takes that separation back. **Death is the withdrawal of this world of Maya**, the ending of time, which is of course also the end of personal human consciousness. In a larger sense, it is the end of the universe of knowledge, and the end of the physical universe itself. It is the end of duality, the re-enfolding of the world into the Oneness-Nothingness of *What Is*. In India Maya-Shakti-Kali appears usually in the company of the great God Shiva, with whom she is actually one¹¹⁹. She appears alone most often as Parvati, the beautiful daughter of the Himalayas, or in her wrathful form as **Kali (time), the black one, the mother who eats her children**.

Maya is the great illusion and power of illusion which makes us believe that the world with all its psychological, emotional, and belief connotations is the actual world. It is this belief which is the major cause for human suffering.

2.3.1.2 THE STRUGGLE FOR CERTAINTY AND TRUTH

Betweenness, nothingness, and oneness are an indivisible whole in actuality but are divided by a consciousness, which creates them as notions. A consciousness **must** of course divide them, if it wants to understand them, but it **must also comprehend** that itself is inseparable from what it divides. The eros and will of the **whole** movement creates human consciousness with its **own free**

¹¹⁹) See chapter 7 for more details.

will and with the possibility to separate itself from its origin in such a way that this separation **appears** to exist as an actual and absolute fact.

Mechanical consciousness understands only this appearance and arrives at the deceptive conclusion that it can understand totally and completely all by itself. But actually, consciousness itself **as a whole** will always remain a sub-certain movement of betweenness.

The driving energy behind all human activity in a reality may well lie in this irreconcilable dialectical separation between oneness and nothingness.

We want to be **certain**. The certainty is possible if we turn every thing, every idea, all that is, into numbers and finite, i.e. separate objects and things. In this way we arrive at absolute certainty indeed. Unfortunately, we then discover that by rendering everything certain, everything has lost its meaning, because meaning which can be made certain is not meaning anymore. This resembles the situation in which we would worship a computer model of the world together with the computer but forget that the human mind has created that computer with its model and any meaning behind them.

Our search for certainty out of a relentless will for oneness leads us to absolute nothingness. Sub-certain thinking can see this as part of a dialectical movement between nothingness and oneness and calls for an openness to both nothingness as certainty **and oneness** as truth from an always subcertain position between the two ciphers. **I refer to this position as the ideal of an open reality of an individual or of a society.**

Whenever several realities seem to be possible, we are individually **called upon** to trust in one particular decision and act accordingly. The consequences of this action will lead into one sub-certain direction rather than another. We can only **trust** and try to make our ideas a reality, hoping that we have made a truthful and honest decision in a given historical situation. Any projection of a present decision into the future is uncertain, but we **must** take decisions and actions, many of which are irreversible. To do this may lead to inner and outer turmoil, daring, risk, and responsibility as well as fight. But if we have to fight we should remember that we fight because there seems to be no other way out. When we fight we risk the whole reality, our whole self, in extreme cases even our life and the lives of others. To fight out of *a knowing that we don't know* remains a **fight out of an eros which transcends reality.**

This is what the wrathful forms of the Tibetan yab-yum figures and the many other wrathful deities represent. In the Christianized West such images are known too, but strangely, they are looked at as negative, evil, demonic, and anti-spiritual forces. They have their roots in shamanistic traditions and rituals in Europe and Asia, traditions which reach back into the times of the universal Great Goddess. It is these rituals and ideas which were intelligently incorporated in Tibetan Buddhism.

In India, the Bhagavad-Gita¹²⁰ tells of a story, in which one of the main heroes, Arjuna, refuses to fight against his enemy, who are some of his family. But the Lord Krishna, Arjuna's charioteer, explains that this is not his choice to make. The outcome of the battle has already been decided by the Gods. But it is Arjuna's duty, dharma, the truth and meaning of his existence, to do what he has to do in his reality as a warrior. So, if any of Arjuna's friends will be slain, it is not his,

¹²⁰) The Bhagavad-Gita is part of the Indian epos *Mahabharata*.

Arjuna's, hand that slays them, but the Gods.' This is one of the grand Indian stories describing a major battle comparable to the battle of Troy.¹²¹

**"Indestructible,
Learn thou, the Life is, spreading life through all;
It cannot anywhere, by any means,
Be anywise diminished, stayed or changed.
But for these fleeting frames which it informs
With spirit deathless, infinite-
They perish. Let them perish, Prince, and fight!
He who shall say, 'Lo, I have slain a man!'
He who shall think, 'Lo, I am slain!' those both
Know naught. Life cannot slay! Life is not slain!
Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was a time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit forever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems."**¹²²

The story serves an educational spiritual purpose and tries to reconcile human consciousness and conscience with the terrible things we as human beings do and often have to do. This story and the whole Bhagavad-Gita served as a spiritual and political action program during the Indian uprising against the English. To be in the possession of this book was enough reason to be thrown in jail, a fate suffered by the Indian philosopher, poet, and guru Shri Aurobindo.

I am sure that Oppenheimer and some of his friends struggled with Arjuna's problem, when they were building the atomic bomb and saw it deployed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

2.3.1.3 DIALECTIC BETWEEN CERTAINTY AND TRUTH, ALETHEIA

When non-certain consciousness first awakens from its slumber of oneness to a consciousness of itself, **it awakens to the fact of separation and forgets its fundamental and uncertain oneness and nothingness.** The idea of oneness and nothingness is uncertain to a consciousness because of this separation but remains a part of it as its longing for truth or oneness. Actually, this uncertainty between oneness and nothingness is the energizing dialectic tension and driving force of consciousness. Consciousness can arrive at knowledge, which is a kind of truth, that is one of its possible forms and manifestations, but knowledge is not truth itself, not ever.

The source of any knowledge is the nothingness quality of thinking, as its aspect of empty form. It creates *thoughts and things for consciousness and tries to weave them into one single consistent pattern* called reality. **Its methods are abstraction, separation, and negation. Nothingness-oneness is aletheia.** This Greek word for truth, **aletheia, means an energy which reveals itself, but while it does so, it also immediately withdraws.** The timeless creates time and enters it in observable ways for a moment of revelation. What is left after this revelation is not

¹²¹) Both battles can be interpreted as a part of the great upheaval around 1200 B.C.E. during which the patriarchal systems of the Aryans started to overpower the matriarchal systems of Asia.

¹²²) From DOH page 566.

'aletheia' but one of its sub-certain fixed forms. Nothingness creates the goal of formal objectivity, and oneness is its motivation towards **one** universal order. The separation of *What Is* into the **complementary opposites of Nothingness and Oneness, creates also the energy which draws them together and holds them apart.**

This is the energy of Eros, Kama, Betweenness. Together they want *certainty and one truth, a goal which is impossible to reach in reality.*

Thus, nothingness and oneness have manifested themselves as ideas of certainty and truth, giving the human mind a part of their infinite energy in pursuing the impossible. The human mind creates one reality after another on this endless quest.

Thinking as consciousness creates a world as reality, consisting of an endless stream of concepts describing things, thoughts, sensations, and activities which are being defined and fixed through these thoughts and which through this process take on their **forms as reality.**

Any concept A has its negating opposite Not-A or Un-A. Notions and ciphers have similar dialectic opposites, but they contain their mutual synthesis in themselves and thus transcend logic. All depends, of course, on how concepts, notions, and ciphers are being used. They all have a 'form' which in its most abstract mode means nothing. The mind operating on this form, creates its meaning in the mechanical, generative, or creative modes of the *thinking triad* (cf. section 1.4.2 *Three Movements of Thinking* on page 54.).

Certainty is identically repeatable separation of forms in (mechanical) time:

"I am certain of thought 'A'" means that I can *re-member* this thought exactly in the same form, in which I have recognized or created it before. Thus the existence of thought 'A' means that it has been successfully separated from the infinitely many possibilities of other thoughts, including the self. Certainty is a **form** of oneness, created by the whole stream of thinking. Certainty is a movement of thinking which creates a particular order through separation. **In the sense that it creates a consistent set of certain thoughts it creates an order and thus oneness.** But the form of a certain thought is also empty, the more it is removed from the consciousness which creates and recognizes it. **Identity (oneness) and emptiness (nothingness) in their dialectic tension are both needed by thought to create an order.** This tension, which is present in all certainty and uncertainty, provides human thinking with the energy for the endless self-transforming movement of thoughts and orders. **Realities, having such orders as their bases, transform simultaneously with that thinking.** Thus, for example, when the notion of **universal human rights** entered the consciousness and sub-consciousness of a large number of the American people, their reality changed.

I consider thinking to be the main tool which the human mind has unfolded as an 'image' of one-nothingness for the purpose of achieving outward oneness and freedom. I trust that thinking is as such a true image - a holomoving image to be more specific - of *What Is*.

The Oneness-Nothingness of unknown being is reflecting itself in thinking and through thinking.

When thinking reflects on itself it can see that it is one and nothing. In this very reflection it is one but becomes like nothing when it tries to get hold of itself as an object. When thinking considers the whole of *What Is*, it also sees oneness and nothingness in a dialectic play. Wherever thinking directs its attention, it sees the enfolding-unfolding dialectic play of nothingness and oneness.

It can therefore truthfully say:

"This is the mystery of what I am."

When thinking then reflects on what this signifies and means, it starts to move from a feeling of knowing to a feeling of not-knowing, from insight to ignorance, from a sense of hope and joy to a sense of frustration, despair, and hopelessness; and thought can again say in a moment of clarity and insight:

"This is the mystery of what I am."

Or it can refuse to see the movement of uncertainty and identify with any particular static thought as part of the whole movement. Such identification acts as an impediment to the free movement of thinking and creates a rigid self and ego.

It is the dynamic dialectic thinking which allows it as a whole to suspend, reflect, and negate itself, and this, in turn, gives rise to its creative, generative, and mechanical operations.

Thinking can function as a true creator of a new thought, it can extend and generalize a given thought into new areas in causal and non-causal ways, and it can preserve thought through memory in an area. These qualities give thinking unlimited potential power for creation, preservation, and communication as long as its qualities unfold in harmony with each other.

But a harmony between the certainty of mechanical thinking and the uncertainty of creative thinking seems rarely to be displayed by Man. S/He is often left with confused mechanical thinking, and the following seems to hold as a rule in human affairs:

The intellect (*Verstand*) prefers the appearance of absolute certainty to the difficult and limited certainty of actuality. It prefers simple opinion to the challenge of uncertain truth.

This means that the **concept of certainty tends to override all other modes of thinking** and threatens its own basis of truth. The demand for certainty tends to become so powerful that rational criteria of certainty are being substituted by a show of certainty, which replaces reason through opinions, emotions, habits, or other ego-centered thoughts and sensations, illusions. The ego - the confused self - becomes the quintessential certainty of all activities of a person. Through this aberration a powerful element of confusion enters the

energy of dialectic movements, and certainty becomes desirable at the expense of truth.

A good example is homesickness. People are homesick because they have lost their reality without 'realizing' it. Their memories consist of the old reality, but their new reality in which they have to live, after emigration, for example, imposes new ordering principles on thinking, sensing, and acting. The person suffering from such a 'sickness' evidently does not comprehend what conflicts are going on in the mechanical consciousness.

When a person is struck by a debilitating illness like blindness, deafness, paralysis and the like, a new reality is imposed on the person with unconditional force. We know examples when people are able to cope with such a tremendous change in their realities. A person can only survive if he or she is able to die to the old reality and accept the new one. Such a deed is very similar to a radical spiritual awakening.

What is demanded of all people at all times, in a truly liberated mind, is such a readiness to die to a reality which is a structure of comfortable certainty on which we can build our lives. This **liberation is true spirituality** and it is at the roots of Buddhism, as I understand it. The mind must learn to be open to liberating forces and distinguish them from empty promises of eternal bliss, paradise, nirvana, or struggle-free omniscience and omnipotence, as offered in organized religions of all shades and colors, from cults to new-age talk shows. The freedom of the mind is its own Nothingness, which it can never have, but which is the end of confusing powers of the self.

2.3.1.4 Certainty And Causality

The notion of causality arises through combining certainty with change. One can define causality (in thought) as a chain of changing **certain** thoughts. In order to reach complete certainty the change intervals must be made arbitrarily small, no truly empty gaps are permissible. Then one can say that one thought causes the next, which results in the concept of non-contradiction, or logic. We generally call the thought-interval time. We usually assume in our mechanical mode of thinking that this can be done. But this is not the case. A thought is defined through a differentiation which gives it what we can call a form. The simplest form is that of a point and a line (note that we must take refuge in our senses), which brings us to geometry and analytical geometry. Apart from these mathematical examples, in which we can empty the content of thought to any arbitrary extent, thus arriving at a meaningless empty and therefore objectively correct form, we cannot reduce an **actual** thought arbitrarily without changing it. Thus we lose the essential characteristic which we want to observe in its causal behavior, we lose the *substance*.

So it seems that the concept of causality can strictly only be observed in mathematics. Outside of mathematics we bridge the gaps through imagination. In those cases we should be aware that we are only able to have possible and probable causes and chains of events. When we reduce a line to a point and want to observe its behavior, we can either see (with our mental eye) a point which is not moving or we see a line. Thus, when we actually try to observe the movement of thought we bring the movement to a halt, and all we can verify is a static thought. We encounter the fact that even a thought-object cannot be 'completely' observed in its moving aspect. Motion and non-motion, motion and locality, are incompatible, or rather complementary.

The underlying movements of causal thought chains are non-causal or quantum-causal. That is, there are many possible pathways that a **subconscious** train of thinking can take. It is an overall

oneness of thinking, a holo-moving thinking, which determines the path to take. This determination transforms the non-causal thinking into causal thinking. The determination can also be a non-conscious will or desire in the case of thinking. It is this non-conscious part of our thinking which directs the sub-certain motion into what looks like a causal chain. The conscious portion of thinking sees only this display of consciousness, which pretends to be all there is. The desire for control provides the energy for this confusion, so do fear, hope, and other strong convictions or emotions. Our whole conditioning and belief system form a virtual map of roads which can be taken and, maybe even more importantly, which are forbidden.

We have to learn how to read “signs” of the non-causal movement of thinking to determine intelligently which direction towards causality is true. **In we succeed, it is the overall holomovement of thinking and sensing in correlation with the whole system of thinking (ultimately all of thinking in the whole universe and beyond), which determines this causal pathway.** This is another cipher for intelligence.

It corresponds very much to the intelligent behavior of an organism. Take for example the bone cells in the human body. At some point in their existence they limit their growth and determine the behavior of the bone to be mechanical. The intelligence of bone cells lies in their determination to behave mostly mechanically. The intelligence of any observable, mechanical substance, lies in the fact that it behaves in a mechanical, observable, causal way. The cells do this in close correlation with the whole body and its functions. This becomes even more striking in the case of many reptiles which, even in their adulthood can grow new limbs, and repair damage done to apparently completely mechanical parts of the body. Stem cells can perform the same miraculous deed.

When we project the concept of thought-causality onto actuality and reality we must be able to verify through experiment or observation, i.e. sensory feedback, that each link in the chain of causal development is indeed as expected from our thought-model. When this observation becomes impossible in quantum mechanics, this **classical** causality concept breaks down as well. In quantum mechanics we have found evidence that the material structures, outside of our thinking processes, show the same characteristics as thinking. There is an underlying, non-mechanical (quantum physical) behavior of material objects. **This movement is also non-causal and it is the correlation with the whole environment (the whole universe and beyond) which determines which one of many causal channels a non-causal movement will take in an observable context.**¹²³

2.3.2 THINKING ONENESS

Before I continue I want to consider some additional aspects of the ideas of Oneness and Nothingness.

In order to comprehend the idea of oneness let us pay attention to our thinking, when we try to think 'one.' A reasonable explanation is possible on the basis of the model of thinking which I have proposed.

Remembering our definition of things¹²⁴ as **a product of thought which gives the object its thing-aspect**, we may approach the cipher of oneness and nothingness from yet a different angle: These ideas are not objects and therefore not things but no-things; they are not definable in mechanical space-time-thought concepts. Where there is no definition there is no limit or

¹²³) See also “quantum causality” on page 443.

¹²⁴) See page 90

separation. This means that **any true idea of *What Is* is One**. But this Oneness is not a sum of objects or subjects, as they too would need separation for their conceptualization.

As there are no things in this Oneness of *What Is*, it is also No-thing-ness or Nothingness. This exercise shows that thinking is forced to differentiate *What Is* into Oneness and Nothingness, if it wants to think at all, but it must also suspend this differentiation (forget it, while preserving it) and say that Oneness and Nothingness are one.

Therefore thinking starts to move between the ideas of Oneness and Nothingness, which is the idea of *What Is*.

But thinking is an integral part of *What Is*; as thinking can think these no-things, it is of that same quality as well. Anything that thinking can think is however also a thing, a thought-thing. A no-thing is therefore also a thing. But the thing-aspect can be negated and suspended, allowing thinking to arrive at the idea of nothingness. The thing-ness and the no-thingness aspects of *What Is* establish a second dialectic movement between thinking and *What Is*. This is in addition to the dialectic between "I am" and "I am this."

The Nothingness-Oneness of our mind and the Nothingness-Oneness of the material universe are the same. When the physicist develops mathematical theories about creative quantum-fields out of which time-space-matter emerge, or when anyone looks at the human mind and sees consciousness emerging, they see a parallel complementary movement which creates the conditions for the possibility of a causal, quantum-causal, complementary comprehension of an aspect of *What Is*. **The insights of the physicist and of the philosopher unfold from the same creative energy of *What Is*, and in that moment are One with it.**

To summarize: *What Is* enters the mind, is enfolded and unfolded by it, as the dialectic thinking between nothingness and oneness. This thinking creates the inner thought-movement of thingness and nothingness and projects it outwardly as the dialectic between reality and ideality. Anything that enters our consciousness has fundamentally these non-mechanical dialectic aspects. Mechanical thinking is the result of the temporary suspension or negation of this dialectic. It is a thinking which limits itself to operate predominantly in the mechanical thinking space.¹²⁵

2.3.2.1 THINKER, THOUGHT, AND THING

At the beginning of a reality is the non-conscious and sub-conscious thinking process which - in unison with our senses - determines a thing, the 'label' for an object, which can be memorized and consciously recalled as an identical thought of the thing. This process corresponds to the slow formation of a separable image, or a vortex, on the thinking path from the creative to the mechanical thinking area of the triadic thinking space.¹²⁶

This conscious determination of a thing implies two further determinations: In the moment we determine a thing we also determine what is **not** this particular thing. In addition, by memorizing and recalling the thought of the thing we dynamically determine the thinker, the self. Actually, I should say that the whole thinking determines its center and the particular thought as object of the center. It then negates (erases) the path to both and, in so doing, creates the appearance of the self with its object as separate entities. This can again be regarded as part of the **concealing play of Maya**.

¹²⁵) See page 73.

¹²⁶) See also section 4.5.2 on page 314.

This thinking self can also be made into an object of thought and is as such to thinking consciousness of the same nature as the thing. In order to determine the **fundamental** properties of any thing we must reduce them to - project them on - the fundamental qualities and parameters which are conditions (*thing makers*) for the determination of things. These are the concepts of material substance on top of space and time. A thing is somewhere and/or at some point in time and has certain quantifiable static properties. The thought of moving or changing properties is very disconcerting and requires great sophistication of thinking. The only change which our **normal consciousness** allows is the predictable change, leading to a deterministic world view. This kind of change is merely an extension of a static thing. True, radical, non deterministic change is not thinkable by the static self, because its comprehension of such change implies the same radical change of itself. It is the end of certainty, the end of reality, the end of the self as we generally know it.

When the thinker thinks about itself as an object it must imply in all its mechanical thinking that it exists like a thing. We can say that at the beginning of a reality is the thing and the thought of the self, which is the **conscious and/or sub-conscious thought of "I am this."**

In the moment in which the thought of "*I am this*" manifests itself, the division of the unbroken non-conscious stream of thinking "*I am*" into the conscious thinker of "*I*" thinking the thought "*I am this*," and the object of thought, has become real. The "*I am this*" means in this context the naive, unreflected, and 'self-evident conviction': "*I exist, I know that I exist now and here.*" The Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad comes to mind again:¹²⁷

"In the beginning the universe was nothing but the Self in the form of Man. It looked around and saw that there was nothing but itself, whereupon its first thought was, "It is I!"; whence the concept I arose."

This thought of "*I am this*" does not need to be consciously present, but it is always implied in the conscious attitude towards an outside reality. It is the foundation of the mechanical thought of one or oneness, whereas the "*I am*" *represents the cipher of oneness*.

Both sides of that division appear to be real to any conscious thinking. Or rather, this division and its consequences make reality. **The tri-partition of thinker, thought, and object of thought is the condition for the experience which we call real.** However, we can see by actually doing (thinking) it, that the division can be **suspended** by creative and intelligent thinking. The certainty of conscious thinking and experiencing reveals itself in that suspension as real but also as ideal; certainty becomes a form of truth, as does reality. The boundaries between creative and mechanical thinking move closer to each other and become transparent to thinking. Generative thinking establishes a channel between mechanical and creative areas. But certainty and reality **depend** for their **meaning** on their unbroken connection with **uncertain truth**. Thus, strangely enough, with certainty comes uncertainty and with it the possibility for error. And the **possibility** of error becomes a **real** error, whenever absolute certainty in any of its forms is being postulated. Such a postulate presupposes a causal connection between non-mechanical truth and certain reality, and thus actually claims that truth is part of reality in a mechanical, non-dialectic sense.

¹²⁷) See page 31.

2.3.2.2 DESCARTES' OVERSIGHT “Cogito, ergo Sum”

Descartes, who is believed by many to have been decisively influential for the thinking of the beginning of the scientific revolution, was probably not aware of this uncertain quality of truth and certainty. He did see that the **"I think" is the fundamental certainty of any reality**. But he did not see that certainty is not some thing apart from that reality and thinking. Actually, the thought of "I think" is closer to the uncertainty of "I am" than to the certainty of "I am this." Descartes conclusion is kind of strange because neither the "I think (*cogito*)," nor the "I am (*sum*)" are statements implying any certainty. To introduce causality through the word "ergo" into this non-certain thinking is even stranger.¹²⁸

Descartes should have said :”I think, therefore I appear to be, and this appearance contains the illusion that rational thinking can lead to absolute certainty, at whose center is the “I” which is the illusion of an absolute substance. But in this illusion a non-certain truth about the idea of a non-certain absolute can reveal itself.”

Descartes made an inference from the certainty of thinking to the certainty of the empirical self, the certainty of the whole, and from there to our certainty of God. The implications of this inference have led to the typical deception and confusion of the modern world, giving a new form to a confusion which is, of course, as old as Man's history.

To *infer conclusively from a certainty in a reality to a certainty in an ideality is to infer from a certainty to its truth*. There is only a non-certain connection between certainty and truth, because certain connections are only possible within a reality. **Aletheia and Maya hide the truth, while (at best) revealing a little aspect of it**. The inference from certainty to truth is an inference from reality to ideality which is sub-certain and has a different character from certain knowledge. **Descartes, however, treated this inference like a mathematical induction, and this is were he was wrong.**

This is different from the holistic view, which can see the creative non-certain energies everywhere, even in mechanical realities whose creation is a non-mechanical process. **This perception or insight is not of the same nature as the knowledge with certainty.**

Certainty is an **intrinsic possibility**, potentially universal like in mathematics and science, of any **conscious** thinking process. It is the **proper and adequate** movement of mechanical thought within the stream of memory and of mechanical thoughts:

A particular thought is memorized and remembered, reactivated and written down, in an identical form; whatever is not identical is being negated by the suspending mode of thinking. **The comparison takes place in generative thinking in which the subject-object separation is not yet completed.** The recognition of this former thought as identical is certainty and **correctness**, but not truth, which is a **cipher** and **idea**. We are rarely aware that it is a creative process of intelligence and truth, a subtle movement **between** two modes of thinking, which allows the abstract recognition and comparison of thought-forms.

¹²⁸) See also the section *From Descartes to Nietzsche* on page 241.

To give a reality-transcending absolute value to the forms and results of this process was the fundamental error of Descartes and is the fundamental error of any human being who has fallen prey to **scientific or cognitive superstition**.

Other kinds of superstition, which are created by ego centered desires, beliefs, and opinions have their origins in similar crude confusions. If one is caught in confusion, one does not see that any certainty is part of reality only, i.e. of formal thinking, and that it should therefore be given relative and time-bound importance or value only. Certainty is not unconditioned, and error is inevitable in a world of certainty. The greatest error is the belief in a fixed thought, i.e. the treating of fixed thought in the mechanical space of thinking as if it were truth.

2.3.2.3 THINKING AND NON-THINKING IN MEDITATION

Whenever we are conscious of our thinking, its non-certain modes are being covered up by the consciousness of the mechanical self. We often identify any mode of thinking with the single mechanical mode. In the typical Western awareness and consciousness there is no other mode! "**Without thinking you are dead,**" (thinking is to be understood here as rational conscious thinking only) is the essence of this limited understanding. It is only in such a Western limited context that Descartes' statement can make sense.

If one comprehends that there are the other modes of thinking, one can see that 'without' mechanical thinking a person is actually more alive than at any other moment of his or her existence. After all, living is a non-mechanical process. When mechanical thinking is dissolved, or has moved to the background, the non-certain self of a person is free of all the conditioning brought about by the content of that thinking. Freedom and creativity are not possible unless this conditioning is seen as what it is, as a **theater of Maya**, an illusion and play, which ranges from scientific knowledge to make-belief and superstition. The rational mode of this thinking is an outcome of the Nothingness aspect of *What Is*, pure form as identically repeatable thought.

In the context of the three modes of thinking one can say that, paradoxically, "**I am, when I don't think.**" Of course, there is no "I," when there is no thinking. Thus, for the "**I**" centered in its reality, *What Is*, does not exist.

On the other hand, the very fact that the idea of *What Is* has found its way into our consciousness and given meaning and value to it, is transcendental, but forever *non-certain evidence* for its being. The unsurmountable problem for a conscious thinker is that the very fact of being conscious of *That* precludes the One-ness with *That*. The only way thinking can do both simultaneously, think about it and be one with it, is in a complementary, dialectic, non-certain mode of thinking, in which the existence of the thinker is being questioned by the thinking process itself.

In this insight it becomes clear that **being and existing are two different, complementary movements**. We have other relationships which are similar: truth and reality, Shiva-Shakti, Yab-Yum, insight and knowledge. Truth is the underlying uncertain web of reality. Without it there is no reality. This truth is not conditioned in any way, shape, or form. This is why it is absolute, free, one, no-thing, i.e. Nothingness-Oneness. **It is not conditioned by reality but is the condition for any reality.** Human thinking is both. On the other hand, truth without reality has no existence.

For a consciousness caught in its certainty mode, believing only that which can be measured and observed, this meditative thinking is impossible

Quite a number of serious and sincere people have set out on the path to reach this state without self, the supposed state of enlightenment and bliss. **But unfortunately, any promise that through a method, initiations, practices, disciplines, etc. a disciple can reach that much desired state of enlightenment is based on the same confusion from which the disciple wants to flee.**

In Eastern philosophy the mental energy in which there is no conscious thinker is often described as meditative. People talk about a meditative **state**, even though it is not static. It is the mind paying attention to its own movements, in which form and images have been largely dissolved. It is thinking which is aware of itself. This **thinking-attention is called dhyana**. What we '**experience**' in meditation is actually not the non-thinking but the remnants of creative and generative thinking which have adopted a form, part of which is conscious thinking, however subtle it may be. Wherever there is memory, there is consciousness. In the freedom of meditation there is no thinker, no consciousness, no mechanical time and no memory. Whatever one might say it is, is metaphor and cipher. It has been called the highest bliss of Oneness-Nothingness; it is the Tibetan incantation of **OM MANI PADME HUM**; it is the Yab-Yum statues; it is Brahman, it is Shiva-Shakti; it is enlightenment and nirvana. It is all this and none of it, *Tat Tvam Asi* and *Neti Neti*.

The sense of **experience** of the blissful effect of meditation is the newly won freedom of the mind and its creative energy. It is the freedom of thinking from its mechanical domination, the freedom from its self and ego. The bliss of freedom is not something to be re-membered or restaged. There is no way from here to there. Which is why the Mahayana texts state:

“There is no ferry man, no ferry, no river, no shore. There is no awakening from this consciousness to that consciousness. **There is no Buddha and there is no teaching.**”

This truth has no certainty in it whatsoever, nor causality. It is the freedom from all that, and it is not illusion. We have to wake up, at least occasionally. Otherwise we drown in the deafening and blinding noise of meaningless reality with all its pleasures, horrors, and illusions.

2.4 MEDITATION ON THINGS AND MATHEMATICS.

2.4.1 THE NOTION OF CERTAINTY. 0 & 1

The number,
I created it for them,
The highest skill of mental power,
And also letters, conserving power of all thought.
Aischylos; Prometheus, verses 460 ff.

We can see that Aischylos was aware that the skill to use numbers and letters was a divine gift, which set Man at a par with immortal beings and which enabled Man to create realities as civilizations.

“Prometheus” stands for the thinking which creates and generates notions, thoughts, concepts, ordering principles, ultimately the conscious self with its power to create and destroy realities. But this gift to Man has its inevitable dark side. Prometheus is chained to a rock wall and every day an eagle eats part of his liver, which grows back during the night. The consciousness which does not comprehend its own origin and the origin of its reality is caught in the web of Maya and is condemned in eternity to suffer that its soul is eaten alive. Its life (its liver!), the spiritual energy, which gives a human being his or her divine dignity, is being eaten by the ignorance of Man. This is the Maya of illusion, the Goddess Shakti in her horrible aspect as Kali. This is the suffering which the Buddha wants to end through the insight into *What Is*.

Similarly, in Kundalini yoga, the power (Shakti) of human consciousness unfolds and enfolds **through the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet.** Here also it is letters, the basic forms of written speech, which are seen as being of divine origin. More specifically, it is the Maya-Shakti energy which through conscious thought and speech creates reality. Kundalini yoga, Tantra, and Taoism, do not remain with the Greek symbolism of Man punished by the Gods, but they show how through insight and comprehension Man can clear up the pain and confusion created by the mechanical use of the divine gifts.

Thoughts about and of the divine are ideas and ciphers, born in the creative space of thinking. Prometheus is the symbolic energy of the mind, carrying this uncertain cipher into the world of Man, the world of mechanical concepts. Numbers and letters are the most powerful tools of mechanical thought and help to create the basis for verifiable rational thinking according to fixed and discoverable rules. These are the foundation of any civilization from the Egypt of the pharaohs to the empires of the Incas and Mayas.

The power of the letters and numbers ultimately helps us to decipher enough aspects of nature that we can nurture it and/or destroy it. We are free to do both, or one or the other. **The power of certainty goes hand in hand with the power of self-deception.** Only freedom and insight can create a harmony between the two.

The foundation of all mathematics is the idea and concept of number, the de-ciphered cipher of Nothingness and Oneness. Still, the numbers are empty and deceptive forms which tend to create the illusion and maya that they are *What Is*, truth, reality, and actuality at once. As some mathematicians, for example Kronecker, have said:

"GOD GAVE US THE INTEGERS, AND THE REST IS MAN'S WORK."

All integers are built on the concepts of zero, one, and the requirement that any integer must have a successor which differs from it by one. As the 'zero' and 'one' are **fundamental** ideas, one cannot deduce them from any other concepts. It might, however, be fruitful to speculate on their origin in our thinking process without making reference to outside objects.

2.4.1.1 THE MATERIAL OBJECT AND ITS DESCRIPTION

Let us first look at the deed of our mind in connecting an "infinite"¹²⁹ material object with a fixed and finite mental image and concept. Any object in time and space presents infinitely many attributes and coordinates to our thoughts and senses, which can find a finite set of useful descriptors. These are based on the ordering principles of mechanical and stabilizing thinking, sensing, and acting. The connection between the actual object and its describing concepts is not at all unique. Mathematically speaking we may have to do with a mapping of the observable attributes of the object onto the formal ordering system of thinking and sensing. However, what can be observed is not independent of the ordering system. This becomes evident, if one looks at the many different descriptions in different cultures and times for one and the same object. These descriptions are sometimes so different that the sameness or difference of the object must be seen as part of the description, i.e., the description of the object and the object itself are not the same. Still, the description and the described are fundamentally interrelated, correctly or incorrectly, from yet another vantage point. In other words, the description, the described, and the perceiving and describing sense- and thought processes are intrinsically interacting. As an example one might just look at what a 'tree' means to a lumber man, a Hopi Indian, a Druid, or a Chinese peasant two thousand years ago. In spite of the differences there is usually a minimal set of descriptors which makes it possible to point at the same material object. This minimal set is of a highly formal and mechanical, identically reproducible character. Normal language and thought consists always of a mixture of formal and non-formal concepts, so much so, that it becomes often difficult to keep the description apart from the described and vice versa. This is to say that when we talk about a tree, for example, standing there right in front of us, our concepts of the tree interfere with our capacity to perceive the actual tree. The story of Helen Keller can illustrate my approach to thinking and reality.

2.4.1.2 THE STORY OF HELEN KELLER

At the age of nineteen months Helen Keller became deaf and blind. From that time on she lived for many years in what appeared to be a sub-human like state of mind. She could neither speak nor, to all outer evidence, think or act in any intelligent way. When she was seven years old, a hopeless case, about to be handed over to a mental institution, Anne Sullivan became her new teacher. Anne had been an orphan and felt that the miseries of her life had been her true teachers. She had a very unique and insightful understanding of what it was that Helen had to comprehend in order to open up to a reality, her own intelligence and intellect. Anne forced Helen to memorize a finger alphabet and the finger symbols (by sensation!) for many objects like water, pump, steps, mother and so on. It was however evident to Anne that, even though Helen could memorize those

¹²⁹) Any material object can be described in potentially infinitely many ways.

symbols, they had no reality for her. Helen was able to make a connection between sensations and objects, but not between the memorized finger symbols and the objects. The connection between the object, the sensation, and the thought was not there. This is why she did not live in reality. Reality is created by our thinking and is exactly that connection. Even though Helen's brain was physically healthy, her thinking process had not been able to establish Helen's self and her reality.

One day Anne Sullivan demonstrated once more the connection between the finger symbol for water and the actual water. This time, in a flash of insight, Helen perceived the connection. She had an insight in which the reality of her intellect (*Verstand*) was created, and simultaneously her self had become the center of her reality. Her whole thinking underwent an instantaneous transformation. She understood that sensations, objects, and thoughts are connected. She perceived and created in one flash of insight her reality, and her self. An act of intelligence, unknowable creative thinking, created her as a true and real human being. Her intellect could now carry out proper thinking processes. With this same insight Helen also started to speak.¹³⁰ With every further act of thinking and speaking in her newly created reality, Helen expanded her reality and her thinking skills. But it had been the first insight that made it possible for her to realize her sanity.

One can compare this insight very well to a mystical insight into nothingness, in which the true nature of reality, self, and time are revealed to a thinking mind which up to that insight thought that reality was independent of thinking. Helen's insight helped her create reality. The mystical insight helps to comprehend its relative nature. **We see in this example of Helen Keller that to establish a connection between the material object and a mental concept in the form of a spoken or written word requires a creative act of insight.**

2.4.1.3 IDEAL NOTIONS AND REALITY

When we deal with objects of thought which are created by the whole thinking process, for example by intelligence, the differences in their description become even more striking. In the case of the notion of e.g. freedom we have to do with a cipher. There is no material object which can be pointed at as a representative of freedom. Nevertheless, the idea of freedom can be the foundation of a reality, and yet, it cannot be observed. In such cases all descriptions fall short of the idea. The idea can only be communicated indirectly from creative thinking to creative thinking, whereas the descriptions can prepare the mind for such indirect communication.

(A reader with an aversion to mathematics may skip over the next section and go directly to the subsection 2.4.3 on page 126 "*The Chinese Book of Changes: I Ching.*")

2.4.2 INTRODUCTION INTO THE PHILOSOPHY OF MATHEMATICS

What happens in our psychosomatic being, when we have the feeling of understanding a mathematical idea and concept, a theorem, take the Pythagorean Theorem, for example? What occurs in our mind when we exclaim like Archimedes: "Eureka, I've got it."

To arrive at the concept of any number we must first create the idea of pure quantity and conceptualize it in a sensory symbol like the **1**. That is, we must fix a concept of thought in time and space, and in this way make it apparently independent of the individual thinking process. As thought

¹³⁰) This is reminiscent of Heidegger's claim that "*Language is the home of being.*" (*Die Sprache ist das Haus des Seins.*)

is movement in time and a condition of perceivable time, thought must suspend part of its movement in order to create consciousness as subject as well as thought as object. This is particularly clear in the creation of the number 1. The number 1 is modeled to appear as an absolutely fixed object, independent of time and of space, as well as of the thinker. This is the impression thought wants to impose on thought thinking about the number 1. And, as 1 is nothing but thought and can only be understood by thought, this is possible. There is no other criteria for 1 but thought itself. All that is necessary for thought to create a number etc. is that its creation does not with necessity conflict with thought itself. The number 1 is the formal concept of thought's oneness. To give the number 1 a reality the senses are needed in order to stabilize it, and an **action** is needed to perform this deed. We write it down on paper or draw a line in the sand and say the magic word "one." We can see that even in pure mathematics, we must consider sensing-acting-thinking (*SAT*) as one movement, even though the content of this movement, the concept of 1, seems to be completely independent of the thinker, sensation, and action.

The written symbol of the number 1, as a sense object, with its particular shape, size, or color has no meaning other than what thought gives it. Thought in and for itself is **ONE** undivided movement. It is in the process of creating conscious thought as object and subject, that the Oneness of thought doubles into the **one object** and the **one subject**. *Non-conscious, sub-certain thinking is creating the subject, the object, and the thought of consciousness, thinking about this process.* Thus, even though subject, object, and thought seem to be separate, thought can understand that itself has created the separation. The separation is therefore of thought and not a fundamental separation at all. The fact that this is possible provides thought with its **properties of suspending, memorizing, remembering, and forgetting.**

With respect to its oneness this means that thinking can posit its oneness, suspend it, separate it from itself, negate it, forget it, memorize it, and remember it. Thus, thought can create the concept of the number one as concept of its own oneness separated from itself. The symbolic representation of this oneness can be negated through the **cipher and symbol of zero**. The numbers **zero** and **one** are released by thought into an independent existence.

This existence is nothing to the senses as well as to actions through the senses. Numbers can therefore not be influenced by the senses. The zero and one exist only to and through thought together with their independence of thought. This means that the nothingness-oneness aspect of thought is made 'mani'-fest in the numbers. Numbers are reality, ideality and betweenness, just like any other conscious thought. But numbers, in contrast to other non-numerical thought, are independent of sensing and acting. In this sense numbers are universal and independent of time and space.

2.4.2.1 THE NUMBER 'ONE' AND 'ONE' OBJECT

Usually, when trying to explain the concept of 'one,' an elementary school teacher points to one single object out of many similar ones and says 'one,' hoping that the student will understand what he means. He presupposes that the student knows what counting implies, i.e., he presupposes that the student already knows what he should be taught. This is actually an interesting presupposition. One is reminded of Socrates who thought that a teacher can only function as a midwife to help give birth, in a form, to the manifestation of an idea. The student is asked implicitly

to abstract from all properties of the object and to reduce it to the unit of quantity, which, in addition of not having any properties like color, smell etc., also is independent of the space and time coordinates.

This being the case, it becomes clear that pointing to a material object in order to illustrate the concept of 'one,' is not of much help, but will rather confuse the issue. When we normally use the concept of number in referring to five apples, six oranges, five hundred people, etc. we create abstract identical images of merely similar objects which can be counted. A counting drill along that line of thought will give the student the skill to manipulate numbers, most likely, but an important chance to show him the working of his abstracting thinking process will have been missed. Learning should not be just a repetition of uncomprehended concepts and operations; this is what computers do; for learning to occur, all levels of human sensing, thinking, and acting must work intelligently together.¹³¹ I think it would be worthwhile to point out some of the mystery of numbers, even to very young students. They may be subconsciously puzzled by that mystery, if it is not made clear to them that they are asked to deal with a very difficult idea and concept. This may prevent them to actually go ahead with a mechanical memorization.

As numbers are products of thought, we should be able to reconstruct what may have occurred in the human mind, which arrived at the idea and concept of number. We try to bring to our consciousness some kind of projection of what happens at the subconscious levels of thinking. We are not concerned here with the historical development of mathematics, but rather we want to find out how the human mind can arrive at its basic concepts without making reference to a conditioned reality. So, let us start with the thinking process itself and first see what we might mean with an idea like 'abstracting to the number one.'

2.4.2.2 THE THOUGHT OF 'ONE'

According to what we have found earlier, it seems that the idea and concept of 'one' is an intrinsic creation of intelligent thinking. This means that the idea of 'one' is contained in all thought created by that thinking, which is:

thought as object to a thought-center,
consciousness as that center,
and the whole of thinking as the essence of that consciousness itself,
including generative and intelligent thinking.

Thus, '**one**' has an **unmediated meaning to all thought**, in particular to thought before the split into the thinker with his consciousness and its thought. The movement of thought-thinking before the split is what I called the undefinable intelligent movement of thought. The ONENESS between thinker and thought is the essence of the idea or cipher '**ONE**.' Whenever there is a consciousness of thought, this undefinable **ONE** movement must have negated and determined itself into two opposing movements, thought as **subject** consciousness and thought as **object**. Also, it determines itself as nothing to consciousness and objective thought. Objective thought does not and

¹³¹) For a detailed description of these levels, see "*Triadic Levels Of Sensing Acting and Thinking*" on page 262.

cannot know this Oneness. This is why, to itself, its determination into objective thought is its negation as ONE, and its negation is its determination.

The One intelligent movement separates itself simultaneously into mechanical thinking and non-mechanical thinking. Non-mechanical thinking is sub-certain as generative thinking and uncertain as creative thinking. Both modes do not contain a subject-object separation like mechanical thinking. This is why normal consciousness is oblivious of these areas. The Oneness is suspended for this thinking, whereas mechanical thinking is a possibility.

Intelligent thinking suspends itself in its movement of creating thought and consciousness, whose very existence become the essence to them of any existence for this consciousness. That essence, however, is pure quantity and it takes the form of 'one.'¹³² Its opposite, not essence or nothing, takes the form 'zero.' This essence of a newly born consciousness or thought center has no content yet. It is 'one' simply because it contains nothing. It is because it is thinking. Content can be given to it through the senses and through actions via intelligence.

We can distinguish between intelligent content (metaphors and ciphers) and mechanical content (concepts). **Intelligent content goes always beyond the mere form and points beyond all mechanical operations.** E.g., any language consists of mechanical **and** intelligent content, and the boundaries between the two are not certain.

As 'nothing' cannot be thought by conscious thought the cipher of 'zero' as the foundation or essence of nothing is of a contradictory nature (to this consciousness) and is preferably avoided.¹³³ **We can think about the concept of nothing, but we cannot think 'nothing' as an object, because the thought turns 'it' into something.**

The 'zero' and the 'one' are therefore the fundamental forms of mechanical thought. These forms originate fundamentally as ciphers or ideas. Their ideal nature is merely disguised by the fact that thought uses forms as its objects in a mechanical way. Mechanical thought thinks **about** an object, but it requires intelligent thinking to think the object. In order to comprehend its own true essence, as a creation of unknowable intelligent thinking, consciousness has to suspend (negate) itself, or rather, the undefined movement of thought has to negate its negation through and in consciousness. The first self-negation of thinking is its own oneness, which results in the thought of 'I'; the second negation is the negation (suspension) of this consciousness. What emerges in that creative movement of consciousness in suspension is the beginning of intelligence, which may point into the right direction for consciousness to suspend itself. Consciousness learns in this way to be open to the generative and creative modes of thinking. It awakens to its own nature.

Thus, the essence of pure quantity is 'one' and its opposite is 'zero.' **Quantity** is the foundation of all formal thinking, which is being created through the negation of sub-certain thought movements. The 'one' and the 'zero' have their roots in that negation and are therefore more than form. To actually think 'one' and 'zero' without treating them as concepts given to thought by an outside agency, thinking must negate (suspend) its subject-object split. It can only try to do that, but it can never actually, consciously observe itself succeeding in the attempt. It will never know that it can do so, it can only infer. In that negation the abstracting character of all formal thinking reveals itself.

¹³²) 'Form' as contrasted with 'idea.'

¹³³) 'Zero' as the number 0 does not cause a problem, because it becomes a formal object also.

Thinking can see the **cipher character of all quantitative and formal thinking**, the cipher character of all reality and of human existence. We can therefore say, that the creation of formal thinking is the suspension of generative and creative thinking. The whole movement of thinking, in which we distinguished three levels, limits itself to mechanical thinking. The result of that thinking has an existence of its own as consciousness in the form of the 'self' or 'I.' It can, but must not and should not, be used by formal thinking alone. **If formal thinking tries to operate on its own, it erects barriers for intelligence, which is destructive for formal thinking and its realities.** Unfortunately, this is what usually happens. Such a consciousness is the easy target of Maya. It lives in a rather illusory world, in a prison called automatic thought, opinion, and conditioning. It is paralyzed by Maya, not much more than a corpse.

2.4.2.3 FORMAL THINKING AND MATHEMATICAL STRUCTURE

If the idea and concept of 'one' is the foundation of all certain and observable reality, can we comprehend through inference and speculation what may happen when we actually think the concept of 'one'? The formal or mechanical concept of 'one' is best illustrated by the concept of the number 'one.'

Scientists start from the premise of formal oneness, in as much as they seek a complete, consistent, mathematical formalism for their theories. This formalism has been made possible through the invention of numbers, the foundation of pure thought-forms. Let me briefly explain:

Any measurement results in a rational number. The set of rational numbers can be mapped on the set of integers, which can be constructed from the numbers 1 and 0 and the operation of addition. This process requires the concept of **identical repetition**. The undoing of this operation is its negation, which in this particular case is subtraction. The negation of addition can be generalized to the notion of identical negation of any thought-process. All these mechanical thought-processes taken together form a structure which mathematicians call a group. Different groups can be linked together and are then called algebras. Thus, one can say that the formal structure of mathematics is similar to the formal structure of logical thinking, a thinking which allows genuine certainty. **To see this similarity one should bear in mind that the only object of thought which can be identically recreated is the concept of the number 1 and its equivalents.** But this number 1 is completely without intrinsic meaning and therefore has also the quality of nothing. (**A thing without properties or characteristics is no-thing. As Kant saw, any thing is in its essence a no-thing. This same insight has been confirmed by quantum-theory.**) This 'mystery' is contained in the mathematical formalism by the ingenious concept of the number 0 as the negation of the number **1**.

We see that the thought of identity exists in the concept of the number 1 in its purest form. We can create this empty form of oneness by abstracting from any given particular thought all its qualities and characteristics: Take away from the thought of a baseball the thought of its color, shape, smell, consistency, its existence in time and space, and what is left is the same as when one goes through this process of negation with any other thought of a thing. In other words, the conscious human thinking process which creates thoughts and things as its objects presupposes the idea of oneness-nothingness and creates their mechanical formal representations. Reality, rationality, and logic have their common roots here, just like science and mathematics.

2.4.2.4 CERTAINTY, REALITY, AND "I"

The concepts of certainty and reality depend on similar identical repetitions. Let us examine more closely what we may mean with a sentence like: **"I am certain of it."**

Before I can be certain of it, the I and the it must have been determined and fixed with a name or a symbol, some form of thought and the senses. This form has been created by a self-limitation of the creative, whole movement of thought and can be memorized and recalled from memory, i.e. it can be preserved, conserved, and re-membered. There is, however, a difference as to how those thoughts are being memorized. The it can be memorized directly, whereas the I is being memorized implicitly, together with any thought of an object like the it. This is why the I is always present, whenever a conscious thought is being formed. The I is enfolded in any conserved thought.

In other languages this relation between certainty and knowledge is quite apparent. In German, for example, the word for certainty is "*Gewissheit*" for "having-known-ness," and the word for knowledge is "*Wissen*" for "knowing." *Gewissheit* derives from the past tense of the verb "*wissen*" ("to know"). This means that some thing that is known is certain. I make use of the fact that any language has enfolded in itself the thought processes which give rise to its particular content and dynamics. The reality which led to particular notions and grammatical structures is also enfolded therein.

Certainty then, is the attribute of all proper knowledge and as such requires a determination and negation of thought. While an object is determined, a subject, the self, is always implied and the thought movement of oneness and nothingness, which preceded this determination, has negated itself in the process of becoming certain of it.

Any conscious thinking about that process, which is before consciousness will also result in the negation of itself. **It is this dialectic twofold negation which I characterize with the cipher of nothingness, oneness, betweenness or NOB in the context of thinking.**

1) The non-conscious thinking without center or object (i.e. a no-thing-ness) limits its whole movement to create a center: consciousness, the I, which can say "I am" and "I am here." Thinking becomes a one-ness as consciousness.

2) Thinking suspends its product, namely consciousness, to let consciousness merge back into thinking. Thinking becomes no-thing-ness, again. The difference between this nothingness and the previous nothingness (this sounds preposterous) is that consciousness was created and suspended in a movement of thinking.

(Later, in chapter 6, I talk about the What Is which underlies the universe and permeates it. It has the same no-thing-ness "attribute" as thinking without the thinker. What Is, is timeless, eternal, without space or matter. In the creation of a universe, time-space-matter-thinking are being created. During the actuality existence of the universe, comparable to the self, What is is always there, everywhere, but imperceptible within the space-time structure. The same holds for the thinking process which creates the self and its consciousness. When this consciousness sees its true nature it sees, that it is also timeless. But this timelessness is a No-thingness, which cannot be properly thought and examined. All of this thinking is a holo-morphism, where consciousness trusts that it is a movement which reflects, and is unfolded by the true movement of What Is.)

Evidently, the thought of the object is not the object, if the object is part of the material world. Only thought can be memorized and remembered, recognized by and compared to other thought. But again, it is only a particular kind of thought which can become a clearly defined object to other thought. I have called it formal or mechanical thought. All of this is the reason why I have defined certainty as identically repeatable separation in mechanical time. Certainty, identical repetition, mechanical time, and mechanical self have their intrinsic significance as ideal types and

concepts in an abstract reality as constructs of thought. All of this is dialectically embedded in a non-certain actuality.

Without the help of the senses, which are an intrinsic part of that actuality, formal thought can only be the empty form of one. On the other hand, the well defined *one* as object, **implies** the equally well defined and empty concept of the *one* as subject, the empty form of the I. This empty subject, which is a part of the self, is filled with *certain knowledge, the sum total of all mechanical thinking which makes our mechanical consciousness*. This is the part of the human mind (consciousness) which we can study as an object in psychology and about which we can acquire some kind of certain knowledge.

By implication, this means that we cannot arrive at certain knowledge about the essence of the human mind, the essence of nature, the essence of being, which is cipher.¹³³ The generative and creative modes of thinking can only be approached through non-certain ideas, metaphors, and ciphers. Thinking can only spiral around its creative ideas in tautologies, and circular arguments.

2.4.2.5 THINKING THE NUMBER 1

What do we think when we think the number 'one'? If it is the foundation of all certain and observable reality, what happens when we actually think 'one'?

At the beginning of a reality is the non-conscious and sub-conscious thinking process which determines a thing, or rather the label for a thing, which can be memorized and remembered. This determination implies another determination, namely the one of the thinker. The thinker is to conscious thought of the same nature as the thing. Thus, we can say that at the beginning of a reality is the thing and the thought of the thinker, the conscious or sub-conscious thought of 'I am.' In the moment in which the thought 'I am' manifests itself, the appearance of division into the conscious thinker of 'I,' thinking the thought 'I am,' and the object of thought, has become real. Both sides of that division and the division itself appear to be real to any conscious thinking.

This tri-partition, - I, the thing, and the separating (or connecting) thought, - is the condition for the experience which we call real.

Any one of these three activities is implicit in the two other ones. We must see by actual doing, that the division can be suspended by creative and intelligent thinking, i.e. a thinking which encompasses openly all its modes of operation. The certainty of conscious thinking and experiencing reveals itself in that suspension as real but also as ideal.

Certainty becomes a momentary form of truth, as does reality. They are products of aletheia.

But certainty and reality depend for their **meaning** on their connection with uncertain truth. Thus, strangely enough for consciousness, with certainty comes the possibility for error, and the possibility becomes an unquestionable actuality when absolute certainty in any of its forms is being postulated. The ultimate certainty in a reality depends on and can be expressed by functions of abstract things, which, like the numbers 0 and 1, are creations of the ideal ciphers oneness and nothingness. Whatever fact can be adequately expressed with certainty in a reality has therefore a connectedness with an ideal fact, like the connectedness of the 0 and 1 with nothingness and oneness. The *meaning* which we give a certain fact in a reality ought to be from between the areas

¹³³) *Sein and Seiendes* in German.

of certain reality and uncertain ideality. Whether we consider laws which regulate a community of Man, laws of mechanics which allow us to build cities and cathedrals, or laws of physics which allow us to understand matter, they are all functions of abstract things.

The thought of absolute certainty is the deception of Maya, who sets this divine goal for the seekers of truth and God through all the ages. The closer the true believers and seekers believe to have come to their goal, the more they are entangled in the web of Maya. Concepts like enlightenment, the end of suffering, paradise, sin, redemption, salvation are the honey which attracts, fascinates, and horrifies sinners and devotees alike.

The essence of truth is the cipher 'One,' undivided and unconditioned, therefore also free and one with Nothingness.

Oneness and freedom together are uncertain truth. Any manifestation in a reality, any thought of truth is never only real, unless its truth has been violated, which can only happen as appearance in the illusion of mechanical thought. In the same way, the 'I' of a human being is 'One' and free and between, but never only real. Its reality is the empirical 'I' which should be open to the fundamental truth of its own 'Oneness' and Freedom.

But any **thought** of 'one' includes the thought of **not-one**, the dialectic and complementary opposite of one, which is 'zero.' Any thought of non-change and fixation includes the thought of change and movement. **The number 1 and its philosophical, not mathematical, opposite, the number 0, become thus the fundamental complementary symbols of a formal reality.** We have divided the reality of the subject consciousness into movements of sensing, acting, and thinking. To this corresponds the outside material world which can be sensed, acted on, and thought.

The formalism of the 0 and 1 is the essence of computers. They are based on millions of electronic switches etched into silicon. These switches are either turned on or off, represented by 1 or 0. This binary pattern can be repeated millions and billions of times, and allows for trillions of instructions. All information can thus be digitized and acted on through computer programs. Anything that can become an **object** to the human mind can in this way be translated into the computer's binary language. It is interesting to note that there is a very old binary system of thought which tried to understand reality in some way through a binary system; it is the I Ching.

2.4.3 THE CHINESE 'BOOK OF CHANGES': I CHING.

In China we find two formalized systems based on the fundamental opposites, called Yang and Yin, depicted as an unbroken line and a broken line, for 'one' and 'not-one.' The word Yin stands for the female principle, and the word Yang for the male principle. The sexual connotation between the unbroken line and the penis, or the broken line and the vagina is evident. These symbols can also be represented by the numbers 1 and 0.

One of the oldest books of mankind is the Chinese 'Book Of Changes,' the **I CHING**. It has been used as an oracle book for several thousand years. It is based on two symbols:

An unbroken line called Yang (male) which corresponds to 1 **—**

and a broken line called Yin (female) which corresponds to 0 **▬▬**

The I Ching introduces various combinations of these two opposite symbols in the form of trigrams. E.g.:



There are eight different trigrams possible as shown in the adjacent figure. The I Ching uses double sets of trigrams, one trigram above and one below. It describes all of reality by means of the 64 possible combinations of dual trigrams. The interesting fact here is, that the Chinese thus reduced all of existence to combinations of such formal opposites of Yin and Yang. In spite of their formal character, the hexagrams were given meaning through concepts reaching from the concrete to the abstract. In the context of this present work it is remarkable that the Chinese invented purely abstract symbols, much like the 0 and 1, the binary instructions of a computer. In their interpretations of these formal symbols they felt however not bound to be definite and precise in a modern scientific sense. They used **concepts, metaphors, and ciphers** in many possible variations.

It is interesting to note that the Chinese did not use the yin-yang symbols of the I Ching to construct a simple alphabet, like the Sumerians did. They rather developed a very complicated and complex written language based on thousands of images similar to hieroglyphs.

For example, the trigram formed by three broken lines is called **Kun** standing for 'earth, female, passive.' The trigram formed by three solid Yang lines is called **Chien**, meaning heaven, male, active. By placing the female principle (Kun trigram) above and the male principle (Chien trigram) below a hexagram is formed called T'AI, the passive principle.

The whole hexagram stands for peace (**T'AI**), heaven and earth, celestial and terrestrial forces have intercourse and all things are in communion with one another. This whole symbol is similar in its interpretation to the Yab-Yum statues of Tibet.



Figure 17; I Ching

Interestingly enough, if this hexagram is inverted, i.e. with the male principle on top and the female principle below, the result is *P'I*, stagnation and obstruction.¹³⁴

The whole symbol is then interpreted in a macrocosmic fashion, as well as in ways pertaining to the fate of the state or the individual person.

But the two opposing symbols Yin and Yang are not static. They have the capability to change from one into the other. This possibility to change is actually their main characteristic. The whole book 'I Ching' therefore **deals with movement and change between dialectic or complementary opposites**. I would say that, whoever invented the tables of the I Ching, had some deep insight into the dialectic nature of all reality as a movement beyond itself.¹³⁵ Niels Bohr, one of the fathers of quantum theory, chose the **Yin-Yang** symbol for his coat of arms when he was knighted, in 1947, for his work in physics. He used it as the prime symbol to illustrate the idea of **complementarity in physics**.¹³⁶

2.4.3.1 YIN-YANG

The Yin-Yang symbol itself is well known as one of the principles underlying Chinese culture and civilization. **It represents the dialectic oneness of opposite energies and forces in the microcosm of human consciousness and in the macrocosm of the universe.**

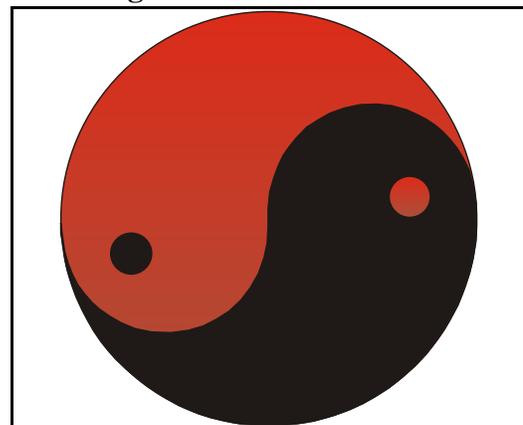
The combined symbol of Yin and Yang stands for the whole of *What Is*, intelligence, truth, the universe, and looks like two fishes, one dark and one light, within an encompassing circle, joint with each other head to tail.

Actually, it is also an interesting geometrical construction. Draw a circle of radius r , and draw two circles tangent to each other with half the original radius inside of the first circle. Erase the opposite half circumferences of the two inside circles, so that a S curve remains. The centers of the two inner circles form the "eyes" of the Yin and Yang symbols.

The two points, or smaller circles, a light one in the dark half circle, and a dark one in the light half circle indicate that **each of the two energies already contains the seed of and is about to be transformed into the other opposite energy**.¹³⁷ The underlying **shared characteristic of Yin and Yang gives rise to change**, which is said to be the movement of the Tao. The Taoist philosophy has many similarities to the dialectic two-in-one symbolism of Shiva-Shakti, Yab-Yum, and the Shri-Yantra discussed in this book on other occasions.

The Yin-Yang symbol is an excellent graphic metaphor for the **dialectic movement between nothingness and oneness**, which is Tao (in Chinese philosophy) or Brahman (in Hinduism). The

Figure 18
Yin-Yang



¹³⁴) According to Richard Wilhelm.

¹³⁵) John Blofeld, *The Book Of Change*; Allen & Unwin, London

¹³⁶) Cf. chapter 6.

¹³⁷) See *Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion*; ENC

fundamental text of Taoism is the *Tao Te King* by Lao Tse, who lived in the sixth century B.C.E. The interpretation of the Yin-Yang symbol as erotic-sexual imagery is evidently also similar to that of the Yab-Yum figures¹³⁸.

2.4.4 MODES OF THINKING IN RELATION TO ONE-NOTHINGNESS

Preserving thought is the **thought of a mechanical and certain reality which appears to its carrying consciousness as the one and only 'truth.'** This exclusive kind of oneness, having the convincing *appearance* of the one and only world, tends to become its desire, security, 'oneness,' and 'true' reality, which is then in fact an institutionalized insecurity based on illusion.

To the same degree to which this mechanical reality **appears** to be oneness, it actually becomes an empty nothingness. The object as well as the subject, the self, of such a reality become increasingly meaningless, because meaning requires openness to uncertain truth.

Such a reality, caught in its illusion of absoluteness, is blind and forced to destroy itself only to start another equally illusory and 'certain' reality. This is one possible explanation for the periodic movement of blind suffering of an individual person, a people, or mankind as a whole.

It is the curse of ignorance (avidya) which turns the wheel of the never-ending sequence of life, death, and rebirth of a consciousness, as described in Hindu thought and mythology.

But the self as a universal and common phenomenon, which may be thought of as the common consciousness of a significant number of people, does not seem to be able to destroy itself totally and absolutely and therefore may retain the possibility and will to eventually comprehend the deceptive nature of its certainty, i.e. its subconscious belief system and conditioning. In its partial confusion it may try self-destruction as indicated above, but as long as it does not succeed there is the possibility that one day it will move in the right direction, **towards the negation of the possibility of absolute certainty.** This is then the beginning of its learning and its freedom from its conditioning. This is incidentally the essential idea of Buddhist philosophy and religion, as I see it, called *Prajna-Paramita*.

When this reality learns to negate its certainty, it has effectively opened itself to the creative movement of intelligence. In its sub-certainty and un-certainty it starts to become an integrated movement of truth and freedom.

Whether this opening has actually been with us since the beginning of human consciousness or not, is an open question. **One might take the view that human intelligence has in the course of ten thousand years unfolded itself as freedom, human respect, compassion, and wisdom, qualities which do exist, and of which we could use more, evidently.**

2.4.4.1 ONENESS AND SECURITY

The three fundamental movements of thinking correspond to expressions of three discernible movements of the mind's most abstract (and therefore potentially universal) self-reflections in a **reality which is open to ideality.**

A person whose thinking embraces and implies consciously or unconsciously a mechanical separation of these movements reduces all thinking to mechanical thinking. Such a sense of

¹³⁸) Fritjof Capra has in his book "*The Tao Of Physics*" drawn many interesting parallels between Taoism and quantum-theory, not unlike some of the ideas of "Dancing With Maya." See CTP.

separation may create a pleasing illusion of security and order, but it is disorder and chaos in a deeper sense and creates disorder and separation in its reality.

To shut out the uncertainty of non-mechanical thinking leads of course immediately to an anti-spiritual order of society, like for example Mao Tse Tung's communist China, or Lenin's and Stalin's communist Russia. There, the so-called working people and their '*freedom and will*' were the only accepted social forms. Never mind that only a few comrades, well connected to the leadership, had absolute power to define who belonged to this united people and what its freedom meant.

Another example from the political arena may illustrate this point: Hitler gave a sense of unity to the German people by separating them from the rest of mankind through the deadly combination of fake 'spiritual' and 'scientific ideas' like, for example, the absolute supremacy of the Aryan race and as its counterpart the evil nature of the Jews. Islamic rulers used similar methods in their conquest of India, which is probably the bloodiest event in history.¹³⁹ That kind of 'oneness' was based on the concept of 'and led - and always leads - to widespread oppression, wherever it is given support and power. Typically such 'oneness' is espoused by totalitarian systems. They cannot be free, they cannot be open, they cannot have true non-certain meaning, or allow the free exchange of ideas. They have usually an uncanny skill to empty society's institutions of existing meaning, as rudimentary as it may seem. It starts with the redefinition of language and ends with the torturing and killing of people who have some decency and courage left in them to speak up for honesty and freedom.

A human being is physically extremely vulnerable. In addition to this factual danger we are confronted with a sense of psychological insecurity, when we get a first glimpse of the factual non-certainty of our existence as thinking beings. **We don't know our space, our past, nor our future, nor our present.** But we grow up in societies which cherish certainty and are therefore forced and conditioned to feel insecure when we start to understand how unfounded any certainty is, when it comes to our psychological and spiritual being, or even when it comes to relevant knowledge about the meaning of our personal life. We are conditioned to interpret non-certainty as insecurity and to suppress this sense of insecurity by avoiding the fact of non-certainty. **The ego is a state of denial of non-certainty.** We thus separate our mechanical existence, the area of real or imagined certainty, from our transcendence. We cover this up by creating **absolute belief-systems** through which we avoid the confrontation with our uncertain transcendence. **We establish and accept positions and institutions which claim to possess authoritative knowledge in areas of genuine non-certainty.** We prefer to believe absurd nonsense and submit ourselves to the power of its high priests. This seems to be safer than to think for ourselves and to **face the fundamental ignorance** and uncertainty of the existing world outside and inside of ourselves, the uncertainty of who we are. Thus, we unleash very powerful deceptive and ultimately destructive forces, which threaten everyone who does not share the same beliefs. The only way out of this confusion and permanent danger is the elimination of such belief systems, which is possible only when we start to comprehend the cause of these destructive forces in our own thinking. If we don't want to repeat this destruction over and over again in an endless cycle, we must comprehend that non-certainty is not equal to insecurity, but rather that a perception of the factual non-certainty is security, because it is at the beginning of honest learning.

¹³⁹) Will Durant, DOH page 459 ff.

One should bear in mind that this whole discussion which, by necessity, uses separating thoughts, is an attempt to open our mind to the uncertain movements of the mind. Any *form* is separating, but a comprehension of that separating limitation transcends the mechanicalness and emptiness of form and gives it value and meaning.

Problem #1 of the human mind can be called the tendency to reduce all of thinking to mechanical thinking only. This results in an illusory reality, through which some kind of a sense of security can be achieved. The naive belief that reality is out there for us to study independently of a thinking model results in such an illusory reality.

It seems that another kind of mental movement leads to silence, a self-reflection of the mind in which oneness is nothingness, and in which reality and consciousness cease 'temporarily,' creating a sense of timelessness. This also gives the mind a sense of security which is necessary to function without too much disturbance.

Such an abstraction from reality in favor of ideality needs a fundamental openness to reality, lest it loses itself in an empty oneness, which, *if it is a state of mind experienced by consciousness, is as illusory as the experienced certainty of all reality.*

This state of silent oneness, together with the experienced nothingness aspect of the world, is the goal of some Eastern schools of meditation, like the Indian yoga systems, Jainism, and Sankhya¹⁴⁰.

There is clearly an **abdication from the world** involved, which in my view, is a violation of the oneness of *What Is*, and which constitutes basic problem #2 of the human mind. Both problems are manifestations of a short-sighted approach to life which ignores *the challenge for human beings to be between reality and ideality.*

Both problems are addressed in Vajrayana Buddhism. In this aspect of Buddhism life is embraced; compassion and wisdom are the attributes of the **intelligent Bodhisattva**, who **participates in whatever life has to offer. True and enlightened wisdom lies in the dance with Maya, not in the illusion of ending all of our attachments to reality.** The withdrawal into a cave or monastery, the escape into the games of “*Who is the greatest Master*” or “*Who is the most humble servant of whatever deity*” or into the mental games of Zen are merely different aspects of illusion. The wisdom and compassion of the Bodhisattva in Vajrayana Buddhism (at its best) has looked through this mirage of deception.

Compassion means in this context the intelligent attention and action in everyday life which grows out of insight. *Wisdom* is the ongoing challenging energy which keeps the mind open and questioning, and which leads to appropriate actions and means in reality. Both together constitute the fundamental openness which allows the mind to regenerate itself in the nothingness of its

¹⁴⁰) See Joseph Campbell in “*Oriental Mythology*,” COM, page 237.

unconscious and unknowable intelligence.¹⁴¹ The corresponding attitude is illustrated in the Yab-Yum figures of Tibetan Buddhism as metaphor and cipher.

Compassion, the Buddha, is in loving embrace with wisdom, the female aspect of the Buddha. The fact that the Buddha, sitting in Lotus position, is in sexual union with his 'shakti,' sitting on his lap, illustrates the life and reality affirmation of this dialectic union. The two who are originally one, have separated, but now are united again. This is the double negation of oneness-nothingness I talked about. The energy in this may be entirely blissful, but also wrathful and full of fury as seen in the Vajrakila figure.

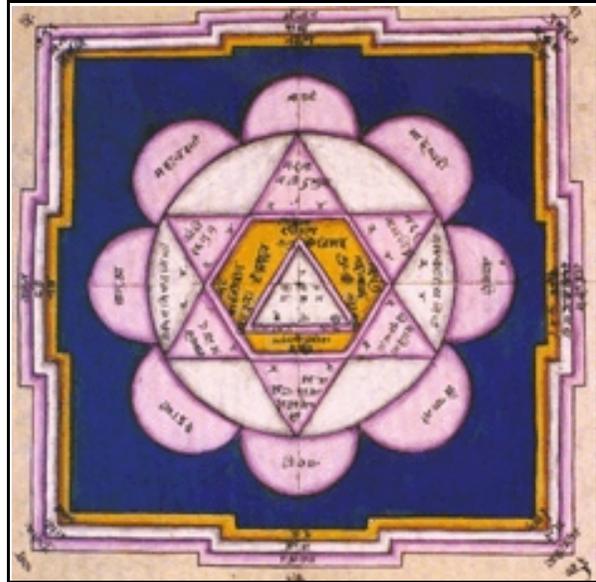
This same dialectic oneness of the opposites is also contained in abstract **geometrical** designs based on the **Shakti triangle** (downwards pointing triangle) and the **Vahni or Shiva triangle** (male, upwards pointing). The further unfolded version of this design is called the Shri-Yantra; it represents an abstract model of the universe and of human consciousness, and their relationship.¹⁴² At the center of this design is a point, called the Bindu, representing the original undivided Oneness-Nothingness which through its own intelligence creates out of itself.

The Shri-Yantra can be compared to the five Platonic geometric structures, which were Plato's mathematical visualization of the universe. Here and there the universe is represented as abstract mathematical structure. Plato's concepts were the beginning of the Western rational models of the universe, which, in spite of their evident success, reveal their fundamental flaw. They are neither creative nor intelligent. The universe becomes mechanical and with it the human beings.

The Tibetan design, like the Chinese Yin-Yang principle, recognizes the dialectic harmony between two fundamentally opposite and complementary energies as the dynamics of the unfolding and enfolding Nothingness-Oneness.

The human challenge, as I see it, is the inescapable sub-certainty of being and existing between a world, which appears to be 'solid' and certain, and its meaning, which is non-certain but powerful enough to suspend the former certainty at any moment and to reveal it as maya.

Figure 19
Vahni Triangles, Shri-Yantra



¹⁴¹) "prajna-paramita," the wisdom of having gone beyond reality, in Mahayana Buddhism

¹⁴²) See chapter 4 "*Triadic Unfoldment of SAT*," page 289; see also 7.2.4.1 on page 503 ff for a further discussion of the Shri-Yantra symbolism.

We must attempt to live harmoniously between both extremes of human thinking and its results, between the illusory security of a world of unquestionable conditioned behavior (samsara) and the illusory security of a silenced mind, which dreams in nirvana. We must learn to see that samsara is as illusory as nirvana. They represent the Scylla and Charybdis, creative forces turned to monsters, through which we have to sail. This is the challenge to live with risk and uncertainty (in fundamental issues). One of these challenges is to communicate ideas among people of good will around the world.

As thought can be cast into universally understandable forms, a common thinking, sensing, and acting among all human being becomes possible. **Thinking makes formal communication possible across spatial and temporal separations.** A formal clarity and consistent order of mechanical expressions is possible and has been achieved in mathematics and science, the areas of knowledge per se.

But communication in its deeper sense has also always been possible among and between human beings, who were able to suspend their conditioning of time, space, and knowledge. They have been using, in addition to certain knowledge, subcertain ideas similar to those which we can find in the best of art, religion, and philosophy. Such measure giving human beings have often been the so-called 'mystics,' the dark and hard to understand ones, the revolutionaries outside of all conventional thinking, who were able to see through the superstitions and idiosyncrasies of their and of all times.

It is these ideas which make any true communication possible. Trust, love, and compassion between two or more persons have their origin in that, the non-certain Oneness-Nothingness, and only that can give us meaning.

2.5 MEDITATION ON ONENESS, NOTHINGNESS, AND BETWEENNESS (NOB)

**WHY IS THERE SOMETHING?
WHY IS THERE NOT NOTHING?
F. SCHELLING**

The movement of *What Is* can be thought of as a movement of self-revelation with the goal to reach a self-understanding and awareness of its sub-movements, which this movement creates freely, and which it endows with its own characteristics of freedom and intelligence. One of these sub-movements may be human consciousness. **"God created Man in his image" means "the unknowable Nothingness-Oneness enfolds and unfolds potentially intelligent, free, and creative sub-holo-movements, one of which is the human mind."**

Nothingness is that which shows complete **symmetry** if considered in any place at any time by any consciousness. Thinking can approach it through the negation of all thingness, of all conditioning, of all attributes. The negation of this negation is Oneness, which shows perfect

symmetry as well. Nothingness is approachable through the suspension of Oneness. I say suspension, rather than negation, because a complete negation is not possible. Thinking cannot abandon itself. Therefore, while it negates Oneness, it also preserves it, but transcends it into Nothingness. In this sense one can regard **Nothingness and Oneness to be the most fundamental complementary opposites**. The mind moves back and forth between Nothingness and Oneness and in this movement creates actuality and reality, time, space, substance, things, worlds, universes. And there is a no-thing like object which I call Maya's quantum or mini black hole in physics which behaves in a fashion similar to the movement of the mind just mentioned. (See glossary: p. 514, black hole)

2.5.1 THINKING ABOUT NOB

Something (like for example thought) cannot think nothingness. But the converse is not true. Nothingness can think, does think, and has thought thingness, because there is this thinking right here **about** it. Therefore, there is not Nothingness and only Nothingness. We ask: "How can Nothingness, which is Nothingness without any otherness -therefore Oneness- how can it think some thing, unless Nothingness and Thingness are one holo-movement, identical with freedom, and creativity?"

When Nothingness unfolds Thingness it creates another, which is separate from itself.

It is absolutely free, it can do so. It suspends its oneness in favor of the creation of a separate other. In this creation separation and thingness unfold in thought, time, matter, space: TTMS.

Nothingness is absolute creativity-freedom, without conditioning, continuity, causality, certainty. It is absolute freedom and creates all that which it is not in appearances which seem separate from itself. Yet it enfolds itself as potential unfolding in all appearances. Creativity and freedom find their way (through Nothingness) eternally as potential movements into all that is manifest as and in thought, time, matter, space.

Nothingness suspends the nothingness aspect in itself in favor of all that it creates outside of itself. It becomes all that and yet remains Nothingness-Oneness. Thought can see this Nothingness-Oneness-Betweenness.

Something approaches the idea of Nothingness by suspending its thingness, fixed thoughts and things, fixed time and space, i.e. its mechanicalness.

In this contemplation, the intelligent mind comprehends itself as a movement of **NOB** and as the highest unifying idea itself. **The difference between the "maybe" of doubt and the certainty of "I know" loses its power and importance in this existential thinking.**

2.5.2 UNIVERSALITY AND TRUTH AS EXPRESSION OF NOB

We may now think of nothingness as pure form and certainty, of oneness as substance and truth, and of betweenness as the link between these two, Nothingness and Oneness, and our mind. This link is the energy between the two actualities, which makes a reality possible and gives it meaning. These three movements - like thinking itself - are three in two and two in one, complementary and dialectically interfolded.

**BEING IS ONE MOVEMENT; IT IS ONENESS-NOTHINGNESS-
BETWEENNESS.**

The nothingness of formal thinking becomes a universal possibility to build together, to communicate and to bring about a oneness which goes beyond formalism and mechanical thinking. The demand for oneness cannot stop but must lead beyond any boundary unless confusion is introduced. The same holds for the movement towards abstraction and certainty as an energy of nothingness. The mind following any of the movements of **NOB** will be able to contain its principles without destructive inner conflict.

Intelligence can unfold **NOB** as the idea of truth in a reality in many interpenetrating forms, which can be categorized by the degree to which they depend on a given reality:

A) Correctness

A form of truth which I call *correctness* and which is highly reality-independent, because it is an extremely advanced and abstract formalism. It depends on the fundamental parameters of time, space, matter, and thought as the conditions for the possibility of any understanding with mechanical certainty. It exists in universally correct formulas and laws of mathematics and the natural sciences.

Another much more limited correctness is **predictably dependent** on the rationalized structure of a reality and exists in the statistical models of the social sciences, history, economics, etc. Its correctness depends on the stability of all factors and their mechanical independent (random) behavior.

B) Rightness

Another form of truth is strictly reality-dependent and is of the quality of a personal 'self-evident' truth. It is a truth which can dominate a single person or a people and culture through tradition. I call this truth a rightness. It should not be confused with opinionated assertions and irrational beliefs, but it is always threatened by these because of the lack of objective criteria to determine right from wrong. For example, in India we used to have the practice of suttee (Sati), the voluntary suicide by a widowed woman. This practice was based on the mythological story of Sati, the wife of Shiva, who chose this death to save the honor of her husband.

Such instances were right in many occasions, which would be seen as totally repulsive and wrong by most Western observers.

C) Metaphoric Truth

A truth which is between the two extremes above is what I want to call a *metaphoric truth* or simply truth as long as it remains sub-certain metaphor in a reality, thus pointing beyond any particular reality, rightness, and correctness, but taking them into account. This metaphoric truth is evidently not static, or an object, but rather a demand and appeal to fill its sub-certainty with meaning and thus incorporate it in a reality. It carries therefore a dynamic or even revolutionary energy with it. For example, before the American Civil War slavery was the practice in many American states. For many people this practice was seen to be right even before the eyes of God. But it was seen to be wrong by people who were not totally caught in the conditioning of the current reality. This conflict was one of the reasons which led to the Civil War.

The challenge is to act and think correctly and rightly in a reality but under the guidance of transcendent truthfulness, which is our sense of honesty. If this dynamic aspect is not present in true and active life, right becomes wrong and correctness becomes dangerous.

Let me give an example to illustrate what I mean: Someone who acts according to the laws of his country acts rightly and possibly correctly and truthfully. Someone who disobeys them, acts wrongly but possibly in truth. Both may act correctly and rightly or correctly and wrongly. The infamous concentration camp organizer Eichmann, for example, was a bureaucrat who acted correctly and rightly, obeying his orders and abiding by the rules of his country organizing and institutionalizing the mass murder of Jews and other innocent people. But he did not listen to his conscience - or he had none - he was not truthful, which is why he was guilty of crimes against humanity.¹⁴³ This example illustrates that as human beings we have a responsibility in our actions which goes beyond any formal law, which can be quite contrary to the **ideas of freedom, openness, and oneness which are the indispensable fundamental principles of truthfulness.**

In order for a **principle** of human thinking and acting to be applicable truthfully and correctly to some area of a reality we must try to make it formal and rational. How difficult this can be seen in the endless struggles at the United Nations, where politicians and lawyers of all countries try to reach a compromise in laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines which should be fair to everyone.

The proper choice of **form and content** of a principle of human thinking and acting with adequate definitions and limitations requires some kind of anticipatory intuition, i.e. a thinking which goes beyond the present reality. The wider the area of possible application, the more abstract the form must become. In the case of universal principles the abstraction and emptiness is pushed to the limits:

In the area of the mathematical sciences these principles can be formulated on the basis of the **generalized concept of 0 and 1**, numbers and concepts which in themselves do not mean anything¹⁴⁴, but for which consistent, universal and objective interpretations can be given within definable limits. The basic parameters of the conditions for **phenomenological observation**, space, time, mass, etc. are correctly described through algebraic formulas, and mathematical equations.

Let me quote Alfred North Whitehead, philosopher and mathematician, from his essay *Mathematics and the Good*:

"If civilization continues to advance, in the next two thousand years the overwhelming novelty in human thought will be the dominance of mathematical understanding. The essence of this generalized mathematics is the study of the most observable examples of the relevant patterns; and applied mathematics is the transference of this study to other examples of the realization of these patterns."

The astonishing computer revolution which we have been witnessing during the last decades of the twentieth century is of course in part due to these applications of mathematical principles.

In the area of philosophy the abstraction can go just as far, not only to forms but to the ideas of nothingness and oneness, which for their consistent interpretation by the individual mind require the existential engagement and daring of the whole human being.

¹⁴³) Crime against humanity was a new concept, introduced at the Nuremberg trials against Nazi criminals, presupposing a set of common values among all human beings, going beyond the order and laws of any one particular reality.

¹⁴⁴) Mathematically speaking, these are the neutral elements of algebras.

In what I consider to be true science or true philosophy the correctness must be present together with the dynamic truthfulness. Merely the emphasis is different: In science it lies on correctness but the inspiration comes from truth. In philosophy the inspiration comes also from truth, but the object-subject of philosophy is that truth, such that the goal is not a correctness but a dynamic possibility and actuality of an existential and transcending life, which gives subcertain and trustworthy meaning to a reality and a self.

The truth can easily be lost in science and philosophy due to the tendencies of thought to turn its ideas of *What Is* into knowable thought forms, tombstone thoughts and corpses.

There is universality in the formal and objective sense in the sciences, but there is also universality in the existential sense in mythological, spiritual, and philosophical thinking, which I prefer to call catholicity. The former universality is part of evolving and changing realities, strictly in mechanical time. In mechanical time, correctness and progress are possible. The best examples exist in mathematics and the natural sciences. Under favorable circumstances such progress may lead to the exponential growth of knowledge.

In existential philosophy, in wisdom and compassion, there is no progress, because, in spite of a possible correctness of expression (which is desirable but not a condition), the existential breakthrough of the individual being through his mechanical time is the condition for the insight into any principle of philosophy. Existential insight transcends any reality, which is also the reason why it cannot be cogently conveyed in a reality. The insight is not contained in the expression, whether the expression is formally correct or not. Actually, if the expression is formally correct there is the danger that the correctness may be mistaken for the insight. This is evidently a dilemma. **One might say that whatever can be said with absolute correctness, has no meaning for the human being, and is neither insight, nor wisdom, nor compassion.**

The basic dialectic and therefore unresolvable struggle of Man is **hidden** in mythologies, religions, and philosophies of the world throughout all ages and crossing all territorial boundaries.

The catholicity of Plato's intelligent thinking, for example, is universal but not objectively. Take, for example, his famous metaphor of the cave, which in essence suggests that: **"our observable reality is merely the shadow play of an underlying truth."**

How deeply and in what sense Plato and his teacher Socrates actually understood this allegory is hard to know. Apparently, Socrates was unable to see any truth and wisdom in the old myths of Greece and the Orient. Paradoxically enough, the idea of shadow play is pure Oriental mythical thinking of Maya. It seems that he fought against those myths, like many rational people for whom rationality became the only acceptable kind of thinking. Thus he was fighting against the Goddess Aphrodite (and her consort in crime Dionysus), the creative female principle of ancient Greece and Crete. Even in his sexual life he preferred boys to girls. For both offenses, much more the spiritual than the physical offense, the Goddess punished him, as Ranke Graves mischievously says in his book "The White Goddess":

"for though the Goddess as Cybele and Ishtar tolerated sodomy even in her own temple-courts, ideal homosexuality was a far more serious moral aberrancy - it was the male intellect trying to make itself spiritually self-sufficient. Her revenge on Socrates for trying to know himself in the Apollonian style instead of leaving the task to a wife

or mistress, was characteristic: she found him a shrew for a wife and made him fix his idealistic affections on this same Alcibiades, who disgraced him by growing up vicious, godless, treacherous and selfish - the ruin of Athens. She ended his life with a drought of the white-flowered, mousy-smelling hemlock, a plant sacred to herself as Hecate, prescribed him by his fellow-citizens in his punishment for his corruption of youth. After his death his disciples made a martyr of him and under their influence myths fell into still greater disrepute."¹⁴⁵

Plato's, Socrates' or anyone else's insights cannot be enforced. We cannot be sure as to what he himself wanted to say with his allegory. Maybe Ranke Graves and Nietzsche were right in their condemnation of Socrates and Plato, their overemphasis of rationality and their contempt for creative mythology, the life blood of East and West. When Plato wrote down his parable of the cave he may have had a true insight, trying to show that truth cannot be observed by any means, rational or non-rational. Maybe he was the tool of Aphrodite-Maya, who showed him how to proclaim her own mystery. He used dialogue, the method of betweenness, to communicate that which he knew could not be communicated in any cogent form.

The same insight can be had by any human being at any time anywhere, if the mind of that human being is ready to be lit by the eternal spark present in the existential-timeless ideas. It should be evident also, that the intention and insight of the writer are not even necessary with respect to what sets a reader afire. The 'cunning of reason'¹⁴⁶, the power of myth, the energy of the manifest form is unpredictable in their impact on a receptive mind.

Hindu philosophy expressed the idea of a questionable reality with the notion of Maya, and Shiva-Shakti, divine powers which are omnipresent in India and the Orient. Kant pointed out that all phenomenology depends on a-priori conditions of the human mind. **Causality**, the forms of perception, as well as ideas of truth and meaning are a-priori. They are genetic possibilities and are *instructions* in and by material processes, which have their roots in the intelligence of NOB.

A fundamental insight is in time **and** out of time, existentially individual (indivisible), but not egotistically personal or bound to culture or civilization. One cannot be certain of an insight. One can give various valid interpretations for it, each corresponding to a different 'tuning' of human consciousness. Therefore one cannot own it, possess it, and teach it like knowledge. One can try to communicate it, trusting uncertain intelligence to help in the process of creating a communicable form, through which the insight may transpire. **The only areas where this form, based on insight, can become certain, are mathematics and the sciences, where we know the uncertainty of the certainty.**

2.5.3 FREEDOM, UNITY, AND COMMUNITY

I trust that manifestations of ideas of freedom, unity and community are actualizations of Nothingness, Oneness, and Betweenness. From Nothingness to the idea of freedom to its manifestation in reality.

¹⁴⁵) See Robert Graves; "*The White Goddess*," GWG, page 12.

¹⁴⁶) Hegel's "*List der Vernunft*."

In the area where knowledge **alone** is meaningless - like in morality, responsibility, and duty - intelligence can provide the intellect with universal guidelines for action, which reflect ideas and metaphors of oneness and nothingness. Oneness, for example, can lead to the fundamental idea of **one mankind or one intelligence**. Nothingness can lead to the fundamental idea of **freedom**.

These two ideas, oneness and freedom, held together in a dialectic tension by the ideas of love and compassion, are necessary to bring about a sane community through communication. But the actuality and reality of the **one and free** human being is the pluralistic and diverse society of the **many**. Few try to implement freedom and oneness in society, and fewer try to overcome the endless obstacles of Man's stupidity, ignorance, and confusion in a non-ending struggle. The *eros* - love and will for oneness - encounters the equally strong force of separation and differentiation with its basic idea of individual freedom. A free society is **one** in its pluralism and diversity. Individuals, families, races, traditional ethnic and religious groups, etc. all strive to distinguish themselves from the rest of society and try to give their idiosyncrasies the greatest possible support and influence in society. As long as this competition takes place in openness and respect the society remains free. **Any idea which closes itself to communication is a fundamental threat to freedom and oneness.**

It is in communication that the diverse manifestations of the one mind can find and manifest a right and truthful form of their common source. The essence of this is the pluralistic open society of free individuals. Just like in the case of thinking of the individual, what is dangerous and destructive for the whole is the illusion of complete separateness or of complete unity and equality. Both illusions deny freedom, communication, and oneness as transcending ideas which can hold a society together. Anarchism and communism are two such experiments which have been tried and failed. **The essence of any true human culture, as I see it, is independent and free of historical, geographic, and ethnic conditioning.** The rather arbitrary characteristics of culture (also often mixed up with the notion of civilization) provide merely the material for the particular mold of a person or a group of people. Historical events seem to bind people together, but this is only on a plane of reality. And any reality is immersed in illusion. **True culture runs perpendicular to time and space as a spiritual dimension of free human beings, who have seen the tethers and conditioning of family, tribe, race, sex, nationality, and other characteristics of the biological, social, and historical environment.**

2.5.3.1 MORALITY AND FREEDOM, INEXHAUSTIBLE IDEAS OF *NOB*

Morality is the set of rules which have shown themselves to be **truthful and right** in the tradition of a society. **Freedom in a reality is the movement of negation and is thus in some kind of an antagonistic position to the form or manifestation of morality.** In order to free oneself of a moral command for example, one has to negate it, i.e. see the conditioning of its values. If the mind succeeds in this, it has uncovered the moral command's non-universal and/or non-catholic character, thus negating its existential appeal. But **freedom and morality complement** each other. How can we understand this? Morality and freedom require a form for their universal expression. The form is their fixed expression as a written or inherited law, a code of honor, a rule of behavior, and so on.

Legality or correctness in one's action is the minimal necessary requirement for a stable community. But forms of legality don't imply morality or truthfulness and are therefore not sufficient to create and maintain a sane community. To do one's duty in a society comprises both, freedom and morality in a **formal and creative** sense. We are free and bound to be moral, whenever we see that

the form of a morality is carried by the spirit of truth and freedom. But when all that is left of a moral law is its form, then our sense of freedom and honesty must rebel against it. Furthermore, several forms of morality may be in contradiction with each other.

Freedom and responsibility or duty have their roots directly in unknown transcendence. They can lead the individual to obey the law or to disobey it, if it is recognized as being empty, mechanical, and destructive.

One must make the distinction here between the arbitrary disobedience as a result of one's egocentric whims and desires, and the existential rebellion, in which a person may (ultimately) put his or her life at risk, trusting in the idea that:

Any human being is potentially free at a fundamental level. All human beings are fundamentally of one spirit but can go insane to the point of senseless self-destruction.

True to the nature of such an existential position, it is sometimes hard to tell, whether a person's actions are the result of insight or of conditioning.

Existential ideas cannot be found like objects in a reality, but any intelligent being strives to build a reality according to such principles. Statements reflecting these ideas are metaphors, they come from outside of our reality, and they carry beyond it, if followed by real actions. That is, their **comprehension** is an immediate change of thinking and therefore reality, but as thinking, sensing, and acting merge in such insight, a totally new reality and human being can emerge.

In history we have seen such transformations in the changes of communities from family to tribal to national societies. Today we may be witnessing the transition to international and continental and in the future to intercontinental societies. This movement of societies is only possible in freedom, if it occurs out of a change in consciousness which realizes the fundamental oneness of all human beings, which can be formally expressed by the notion of equality before the law. But the notion of oneness itself is different from the notion of equality. Differences, even radical opposites, are an integral part of a non-static, dynamic, and dialectic oneness. Thus, organizational structures or rules should never limit the right of free expression, the right to dissent, the right to be different. In the course of history a wrongly understood oneness, a mechanical unity, has often served to suppress and oppress others. The ideas of a unique exclusive tribal god, the devastating concepts of nationalism, racial separation, gender separation, class differences, have all served the purpose of uniting one group **against** another. Such ideas and their applications can be disastrous.

Neither oneness and unity nor nothingness and freedom are terms which can be clearly defined or statically constructed for their philosophical purposes. Their actual and intelligent implementation in a human being or society are only possible if there is a fundamental openness and will to communication. The particular form and interpretation of their implementation depends on local factors and creates a reality. None of them can be satisfactory in a final sense because the form must always fall short of its idea. The ideas of **NOB** are inexhaustible and ever demanding.

It seems to be the highest possible meaning of intelligent beings to be open to such ideas and to try to give them a universally comprehensible and useful form, i.e. a form which is essentially free of the constraints of a closed reality.

2.6 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

In the preceding sections I started to touch on the similarities but also differences between science and philosophy. It should be clear by now that philosophy is not science, but that any new science has its roots in philosophy. On the other hand, the rational content of philosophy has to heed the correct aspects of science.

2.6.1 POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

The **rational** and **universal space of departure** in philosophy is the skeleton on which philosophy not only rests but lives. In other words, **rationality** is necessary but not sufficient. From there positive philosophizing with the goal of catholic insights and appeals can start to develop metaphoric principles in terms of dialectic and sub-certain thinking movements, which have the potential to open human realities for a transcending breakthrough and which enable us to give a **truthful meaning** to human existence. This is what I call **positive philosophy**.¹⁴⁷ In this present section I want to explore in some greater depth the possibilities of negative and positive philosophies. In order to see and experience the **freeing power of positive philosophy** the individual and historical human being has to actively engage in the dialectic movements of thinking and thus start to think in all seriousness. But one should always bear in mind that the jump from normal to existential thinking (which implies acting), cannot be enforced by any means, be they attempted proofs, or acts of belief. **Existence with transcendence** is the unknowable goal and is like nothing for our normal consciousness. This encompassing cipher of human thinking unfolds as a dialectic and complementary movement between who we are and who we become. **Because it is encompassing and meaningful it must be non-certain.**

Existence with transcendence cannot be found in mechanical thought, which is always part of memory, nor in the senses, nor in the world. It has neither location, nor time, nor thought, nor matter **bound** to it. What we can find in and as reality through our thinking, sensing, and acting has been made **manifest** as things through a creating and positing intelligence and can be understood through a negating or formalizing intelligence. I refer to these two kinds of intelligence in action as positive and negative philosophy.

Positive philosophy creates the appeal and openness to transcendence. Negative philosophy attempts to reduce (uncertain) ideas and ciphers to certain form. Positive philosophy puts an idea into reality and gives it sustaining and defining, yet non-certain, characteristics. Negative philosophy refines and analyses these characteristics, potentially to death and oblivion.

2.6.2 NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

In the moment one perceives ideas of **NOB** as particular concepts, they have taken on a form, and that form **can** be examined like an object (thought-object). If one applies the mechanical rules of form and intellect to such concepts, i.e. if one analyzes them, they tend to vanish into nothing. This movement of thinking towards '**negative nothing**' is negative philosophy.

¹⁴⁷) "*Positive and negative philosophy*" were terms first used by Schelling.

Positive thinking creates the idea in and with its particular form. Negative (negating) thinking then refines, analyzes, understands. It can also misunderstand and annihilate, i.e. reduce to the nothing of pure form and formality. A thought-thing as such has no real essence except the dynamic energy of the whole of thinking, the non-certain idea. Analysis reduces the thought-aspect of the idea to mechanical uncertainty, i.e. nothing for mechanical thought, and the thing-aspect to empty form. When mechanical thought separates itself from the whole of thinking, it interprets this empty uncertainty as an irrelevant illusion.

We must bear in mind that positive and negative thinking are complementary activities of the same intelligence which creates, maintains, and changes reality, and they both become untruthful and destructive, if they separate from each other. The rules of rationality, which are the tools of negative thinking, are products of creative intelligence.

We see again the recurring theme of ancient mythology, which 'created' the **Goddess/God as a dynamic concept of complementary energies**, for example, of **Shiva-Shakti** as creator, preserver, and destroyer, all in one.

2.6.2.1 ANALYSIS OF IDEAS

An idea is not a thing, but the idea's manifestation as cipher or metaphor is an object of thought and has also a thingness aspect. This is its form which can be submitted to the rational and/or formal investigation of logic.

If taken to its own limit, formal logic has no meaning in itself, but this is the unintended consequence of how it has been constructed. Only as such is it capable to arrive at absolute universal (and empty) certainty.

We have the other result that this emptiness of *formal and certain thinking* negates all **essential or ideal** thinking. That is, **if we probe deep enough into any substances or ideas with the aim to understand them analytically, we arrive at the intrinsic emptiness of logical form itself, which is alive only on the basis of the whole of thinking and is as such not a thing.** The whole of thinking has dialectically differentiated itself into empty, formal thinking and uncertain creative thinking of all-encompassing oneness. Through this differentiation arises the possibility that both kinds of thinking could function alone in total separation; for the sake of an easier discussion I leave the intermediary (generative) thinking aside for the moment.

Formal thinking may appear as though it could understand everything and all through rational analysis alone, and creative thinking may appear as though it alone could comprehend absolutely through direct insight in a state of oneness with All That Is. Both appearances are deceptions.

When we apply formal thinking to itself, to the basis of the intellect, and try to understand through logic alone the foundation of logic, our whole mechanical understanding vanishes and with it the investigated issue, which in this case is formal thinking. In order to comprehend formal thinking, or comprehend through formal thinking, we need more than formal thinking.

It is in this sense that the emptiness of formal thinking negates ideas of truth, beauty, oneness, and morality. But most importantly, it negates itself, **if it follows its own rules, which it should.** This 'should' is not part of formal thinking but of the idea of truth and honesty. If formal thinking negates itself **intelligently** (with the essential help of creative thinking), it also negates its negations, and thus is part of positive philosophy also. This self-negation of nothingness becomes or remains

part of a whole *NOB*. For example, if we analyze any idea which talks about the meaning of life, that idea will become nothing, which might lead us to the conclusion that life is meaningless. Even though the result of this analysis denies meaning, this conclusion presupposes that a formal analysis is meaningful. **Thus, we should be able to see that formal analysis cannot tell us anything conclusive about an area of ideas and meaning.** We must limit analysis to form and mechanical aspects.

One hears this sometimes stated in the form of the pessimistic thought, that the human race is not good for anything. It is easy to come up with some positive things like the development of technology and science. This can be countered by saying that science and technology destroy the planet. Depending on one's general reference frame of thinking, one may agree or disagree with any side of these statements. This shows their precarious non-universal character. Positive philosophy would say that ideas of oneness and freedom are major contributions to the world, acknowledging that these ideas are not certain, but worth pursuing with existential honesty in one's life.

If formal thinking does not respect the call for self-limitation, it loses its own power as a servant of truth, a power, which lies in its mechanical and consistent universality providing its certainty. Otherwise it becomes sophistry and hypocrisy. Mathematics and science and their technological and economic creations are the best examples for the positive and revolutionary impact of formal thinking on society.

If a person does not comprehend that the basis of certainty is uncertain, he or she feels likely compelled to secure the certainty by **irrational** means, which is the beginning of dogmatism. This compulsion is part of the limitless demand for encompassing oneness, which, as certain formalism, can only be achieved through the introduction of irrational elements, in other words, through self-deception.

Mechanical, formal thinking must be seen in its limitation and be suspended if necessary. If used appropriately mechanical thinking can be beneficial for all of thinking and all of reality.

Such a movement of rational thinking, which is open to self-suspension, is what I consider part of an **intelligent** negative philosophy. It serves this valuable purpose of determining critically conventional forms of values, morals, and ordering principles. It limits and negates itself and acknowledges it. In doing so, it loses its dogmatism and meets its own uncertain ground and can freely function within a relatively definable area. It destroys what deserves to be destroyed, and gives new life to what is valuable. This intelligent negative philosophy is a sub movement of *NOB*, with an emphasis on nothingness in the forms of rationality, analysis, and formalism. As such, it allows universality and certainty in limited areas but with the possibility for meaning. One should bear in mind that even the simple symbols of 0 and 1 must first be created through intelligent thinking and be given a meaning.

2.6.2.2 RATIONALITY OF SOCIETIES

Rational thinking can be correct **and** truthful, when it uses its formalism and emptiness but also transcends it at the same time. It becomes intelligently one with the fundamental principles of freedom, unity, communication, and **self-limitation**, without which any formalism becomes an instrument of arbitrary local rules, accidental conditioning, opinions, pseudo-meaning, and fraud.

The human mind needs to be clear about the merely empty nature of formal thinking **alone**. Only then can it use such thinking to the benefit of a society, if it is aware of the **complementarity**

between the emptiness of understanding and the oneness of essence and being, which cannot be obtained from sensing and acting in the actual world.

Formal thinking is the basis for rationality. As such, it is at the beginning of modern societies with their rational laws, economies, organizations, and administrations. But without insight into the nature of formal thinking, the progress brought about through that rationality remains accidental and must lead to irrational chaos again, the chaos of one of the many forms of dogmatism.

It follows that to impose the rational methods of one society on another is dangerous, if the latter has its roots in pre-rational orders of a thinking which has not yet become aware of itself. Personal freedom and justice, the pillars of a democracy, are impossible to implement without the objective methods of rational laws and orders of a society, which are fixed in a written constitution and codex of law (or the equivalent) and are accessible and potentially understandable by every person. But without a comprehension of the deeper ideas of freedom and justice, no fixed law or constitution can maintain the spirit of such ideas. Even they will sooner or later lead to chaos and disaster. In other words, the **ideas** of democracy and freedom must accompany their institutionalization in the same dialectic play which is alive between the creative and mechanical modes of intelligent thinking. It seems that human beings undergo some kind of a non-mechanical evolution with respect to a comprehension of these ideas. A human being (or a group of people) starts out with **some kind of a blind oneness, a feeling and thinking within a closed sphere of unquestioned conditioning, traditions, and habits**. A reality accompanying such a feeling is always unfree and dogmatic. Its certainty is identical with its security and is maintained and produced through habit, dogma, and oppression. These are methods of power which are directed against universal reason and catholic intelligence. Nevertheless, we can see in very old societies built on hierarchic principles, that individuals became aware of some of the basic ideas described here. The Upanishads show such early insights, as do fragments of Pre-Socratic thinkers in Greece. It takes a long time before such ideas can be integrated in the formal structure of a society and culture.

It is through **creative perception and learning** - a creative unpredictable self-mutation of the mind - that such a blind oneness can transform to the clarity of reason and rationality, together with the possibility for an intelligent certainty. Such transforming and revolutionary insight opens the reality for oneness **and** freedom with their expressions of catholic rationality and logic, **orders which reject any unquestionable and therefore irrational and dogmatic authority**. But perception is needed as a non-vanishing possibility to keep this movement from ending in the opposite chaos of empty nothingness, towards which an advanced technological, or for that matter, any highly developed society tends to drift.

Intelligence and free will are harmonic movements of trust and reason, which must be manifest in a reality in order to dispel the violence of dogmatism.

2.6.3 RATIONALITY AS A FORM OF NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

Rational thinking as a function of *the intellect* provides us with a formal ordering set in and of our space, time, thought structure of a reality.

The intelligence of positive thinking creates both the possibility for such a structure and the free will, which can transform possibility into reality. Human intelligence is helped and guided in this creation by its **oneness** with sensing and acting as well as by its oneness with the actual unknown structure of what constitutes being, which I consider to be intelligent as well. Intelligence, thinking which encompasses all three modes of operation, transcends any particular reality and is therefore

free to create new ones. Free will is then the expression of the betweenness of the human mind. It is freedom joining creativity to form new possibilities and new realities. A pure structure of rationality is mathematical and scientific, as which it can lead to **formal** results which are relatively certain. This operation of the intellect under the guidance of intelligence has resulted in the most promising revolution of mankind in the last century. Mathematical rationality has been transferred to computers which have become omnipresent. As a consequence, incredibly complex mathematical operations have become easy to perform, providing an exponential growth of formal thinking power to anyone who wants it and can use it. The problem is going to be a lack of comprehension and insight into the limitation of these powerful devices.

A certainty is only intelligent if its limits are known. Intelligent certainty is the foundation of any true rational structure. In the thinking process of a human being it cannot be static, but sooner or later turns its **non-formal** positive criticism towards the conditions of its certain results and **understands** its own limited nature. Whether people using machines to perform their formal thinking operations will have the same critically intelligent attitude towards the apparently unlimited power of computers remains to be seen.

2.6.3.1 LIMITATION OF SCIENCE

In science the drive for deeper and deeper understanding and ever greater certainty led to exactly this discovery of its limited nature. In the scientific exploration of time and space, which constitute the basic parameters of scientific knowledge, this study has been leading to smaller and smaller dimensions whose description and exploration defies common notions of certainty.

The same problem of limited certainty has surfaced in the exploration of the largest accessible dimensions of the knowable universe. In these two contemporary examples a sincere pursuit of scientific questions has led to the borderline of science and thinking in terms of objectivity and certainty. Both explorations lead to the question of creation out of Nothingness.

They have led me to the trust that the underlying actuality of what can become manifest, from the smallest to the largest space-time-matter structure, is an eternal continuous non-measurable quantum field, possibly the last comprehensible form before the incomprehensible Nothingness-Oneness cipher. The reality and actuality of this quantum field is uncertain, and the question can be asked whether this unknowable field is just another cipher for the unknowable Nothingness-Oneness-Betweenness in which we are partaking.

I trust that a further rigorous pursuit of such **boundary** questions can lead one to the insight of the fundamental relativity of all certainty, it being based on thought, which by its very nature requires the separation between thinker, thought, and object of thought. Rational thought is the only form of thought which can lead to certainty or definable sub-certainty, (Heisenberg and Schrödinger equations) in quantum physics. The insight into the **empty structure of science as a pure formalism and set of definable actions** will eventually allow us to be free from the unfounded belief in absolute certainty and could have a very positive effect on society at large. In the long run, only such insights can function as the fuel of creativity, even in a negative philosophy.

Formal thinking cannot put a whole reality, which would have to include itself, to test. No formal system contains the possibility to verify all its own assumptions from within itself. This result

was discovered for formal mathematical structures by Kurt Gödel.¹⁴⁸ A **reality, in as much as it can be analyzed**, is at any given time a structure whose elements can be mapped on a subset of the rational or real numbers. (*Actuality and truth*, do not fall into the domain of this theorem.)

Thus, Gödel's theorem applies to such a reality. A reality as a whole is always more than these subsets, as correct as they may be. **Reality as I define it here is a thought construct. Any reality which goes beyond this empty definition of thought is inseparable from subcertain actuality and uncertain creative truth.** It cannot ever be absolutely correct but can and should be put into question through a thinking which ultimately arises from its free and reality-transcending essence. Such thinking and its results will always have to remain sub-certain. Man has usually understood this intuitively and created the ideas of God and supernatural powers. It is they, who ultimately give value and meaning to our existence and transcendence, and who can judge Man and his/her activities as a whole.

2.6.4 ABERRATION OF PHILOSOPHY

Unfortunately, Man, (maybe modern Man in particular) has generally adopted the concept that objective thinking is all by itself omnipotent and encompassing. This is a belief system disguised as truth. Allegorically speaking, one might say that under such a belief-system the emptiness of formal thinking pretends to be all there is. It implies the belief that the content of thinking, a result of habit and convention as well as mechanical logic, reveals the true facts of being. The uncertainties of life and thinking as a whole are being ignored and denied. Formal thinking, when functioning **alone** and on its own, cannot even comprehend its own nature and wants nothingness as empty form - calling it objectivity - without being able to recognize its dialectic connection with non-certainty. **As the nature of mechanical thinking is fundamentally interwoven with the whole - including truth, freedom, and uncertainty, the veritable characteristics of humanness - formal thinking deceives itself and substitutes arbitrariness, probability, statistics, license and the like, i.e. concepts which it can rationally understand, for truth and freedom, which it cannot understand.**

This is a fundamental and typical error which can be construed by mechanical thinking. Formal thinking in its confused manifestation in a particular human being, does generally not follow its own rules of analysis. It directly or indirectly asserts itself to be truthful and **absolute** essence and considers that to be the only truthful and meaningful thing possible. But it forgets that any object of thinking has a thing-character, which is a necessary product of thinking. Mechanical thinking is therefore unaware that it attributes non-mechanical values to empty thought-forms, even though it is at a loss to explain what it means with notions like meaning or value. Denying the movement of non-certain true nothingness and freedom which it itself is, mechanical thinking and the mechanical self deny free will and become an empty nothingness. All they can produce is an empty and violent order with pseudo-meaning.

Such unintelligent formal thinking is at the core of materialism, atheism, and positivism but also of religious thinking which claims to **know** the essence of Man, truth, or God as part of a thinking with certainty. All such belief-systems are dogmatic. To know God, or to know that there is no God, to know Man as a divine being or as a mechanical conglomerate of molecules, are thought-forms which are like two sides of the same coin. They are aberrations of exclusive positive thinking or exclusive negative thinking.

¹⁴⁸) See, e.g., FM, vol. I, page 78 ff.

2.6.4.1 CONFUSED RELIGION AND INTELLECTUALISM

A more sophisticated form of this confusion can be found within the intellectual discussion of our century. Much of academic philosophy indulges in positivism (**not positive philosophy**) and dreams of *scientific* omnipotence, whereas *existential philosophy* has been buried by an immature atheism. Religion, particularly in the United States, has to a large degree become evangelical nonsense with great potential for profit, power, and politics, much of it produced in a ludicrous Hollywood style. Innumerable fads based on Christian and Eastern belief systems promise everything from redemption to nirvana and enlightenment. Few religious leaders show that our own mind causes the confusion and allows itself to be lured into Maya's web.

A philosophy which takes as its starting point the idea of nothingness and leads to a negating criticism of all thinking, acting, and sensing, stopping short, however, of its own negation, is a thinking which should be called negativism in proper contrast to an equally absurd positivism. Both end up with the meaningless and absurd, with arbitrary, and/or statistical probabilities. But both philosophies, in their confused manifestations, exempt themselves from that conclusion in an arbitrary about face. A philosophy which claims that all is absurd or mechanical must, however, include itself in this judgment, and therefore terminate itself.

2.6.4.2 THE CENTER OF DOGMATISM: THE EGO

At the center of such dogmatic and self-certain thinking is the self as ego, which claims directly or indirectly to be concrete, all important substance. I define the *ego as a confused* self. In spite of the inner contradictions and confusion brought about by such thinking (sensing and acting), the ego clings to such thinking (and itself) as its only certainty and great source of pleasure by simply proclaiming it (directly or indirectly) to be **absolute**.

The ego begins as a self saying (implicitly)

"I know with (increasing) certainty who I am, and/or who I am not, what I want and what I don't want."

The self solidifies with any additional belief or conviction.

The ego culminates in statements ranging from **"I am the greatest, most powerful, beautiful, successful, etc. human being ever,"** to **"I am the most humble person ever. I have absolutely no ego. I am a Man of God."**

The ego is in such a state of confused certainty that it cannot understand that certainty (and its opposite, fear) is a product of thinking and that the possibility of certainty in thinking and interacting with a reality is a movement of non-certain *NOB*. The formal certainty of which the ego is capable, for example through rational thinking, produces only formal and empty thought but no meaningful order. For the latter it depends on the non-certain order-creating faculties of intelligence. Thus, one can say that any certainty is created on uncertain ground. **But the ego constructs**

psychological and emotional walls between the areas of mechanical and non-mechanical thinking.¹⁴⁹

The ego entangles itself in its own confusion, aided by uncontrollable emotional feelings and actions, which provide fake proofs and facts for its demand for certainty and security. The **ego is therefore at the core of any dogmatism and of any make believe reality of certainty and security.** The ego creates a self-enclosed reality in which it can satisfy its self-ascertaining need for security, which in this case is the result of actual insecurity, produced by confused thinking. When a human being has become a victim of such a reality - i.e. a victim of itself - with its mechanical and irrational mode of thinking, the self having become an ego, there is confusion in all modes of thinking, sensing, and acting. Unfortunately for the development of mankind, this confusion has been dominant throughout much of history. The age of rationality has not dispelled this confusion because what we have gained in objective knowledge seems to have been compensated by a simultaneous loss of wisdom. And wisdom is necessary to prevent the self from falling into the steady state of the ego or to suspend the ego when it has been formed.

On the other hand, any positive philosophy, which is a philosophy of wisdom, can only be a **philosophy of appeal** to the individual in his or her particular reality. The appeal can only be meaningful when it comes (also) from the inside of the individual, historical human being. He or she must learn to **listen** and to **see** the truth of their own thinking as a free and creating movement. The appeal, which is an existential challenge of wisdom, must be translated into **action** in that reality, in which it must be subjected to the negating criticism of rational, and nowadays scientific analysis. **The self-assuring certainties of religions, cults, political and sociological systems, from dictatorships to democracies, from communism to capitalism, are fictional certainties which abhor intelligent scrutiny.**

Any healthy system of power should be based on a position of trust as a form of oneness, which, in spite of its necessary strength, cannot be certain.

The empty certainty of negative thinking exists in positivistic thinking as a blind certainty. **Only together can negative and positive philosophy create a free and true reality.** The tests of a true rationality and science can merely tell us where we go wrong within a formal reality. Results which reveal an error or incorrectness in a reality, which, as an object of investigation, must have the form of a limited proposal, can be certain. It is in this sense that certainty as part of a possible reality is part of positive insight.

2.6.4.3 THE EGO AND MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

There are some philosophies or religions which have as their expressed goal the insight into the mind and the suspension of the ego. They qualify in my view to be considered as existential appeals mentioned above. These philosophies have emerged around some Hindu traditions in combination with Buddhism, evolving into forms of Mahayana Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, and Tantra or Vajra Buddhism. These religions with their arts, rituals, and philosophical texts try to illuminate the destructive role of the mind in its projection of the world as image of the ego. The symbolism of Tantra Buddhism consists of pedagogical devices to help a person understand the mechanism behind the process of ego-formation which creates an ego-reality. The **“Tibetan Book of the Dead,”** for example, can be understood as an appeal with an utmost life and death urgency, a

¹⁴⁹) See 1.4.5.2 “Triadic Model of Thinking” page 73.

teaching device to help a person not only in the state of physical dying but also in the psychological termination of the ego. Any violent anger is seen as a construct of the ego. The destructive feeling of anger is primarily a destruction of the whole and holy being which every person is. Such anger locks the door to the more reflective modes of thinking, sensing, and acting. It has spiritual consequences, in the creation of bad karma, for example. To see that this anger is a projection of the mind is the ending of anger, and essentially also the end of the ego. Thus the perception is the death of the ego. Unless this ego dies without desire for "**rebirth**" it will recur and resurrect itself in a neverending cycle of deaths and rebirths. The goal of this idea is not the salvation of the individual, but the comprehension, the insight of the person, any person, into the deluding machinations of the mind.¹⁵⁰

Hinayana Buddhism, just like many classic Yogic practices, has as its goal the extinction of the self. No distinction between the self and the ego is usually made. If a person succeeds in this goal he/she can evidently not function in a society any more, which he/she rejects as illusion in its entirety in a logically consistent manner. Vajrayana Buddhism on the other hand, accepts society and reality as intrinsic parts of the whole. It is the Buddha and his female consort together in intercourse, Shiva-Shakti together as one, not Shiva or Shakti alone. Only together they are enlightening insight, which brings with it or is wisdom and compassion. Nothingness and Oneness are one. This is what the mind

Figure 20 Vajra-chopper, Ego-flayer



must and can see in non-rational creative insight: **the oneness of the logically and rationally incompatible, complementary, opposites.**

Tibetan Buddhism symbolically associates the act of comprehending and suspending the ego with the flaying of a person. The sacred tool for this is a Vajra-chopper, a skinning knife which is wielded by the Shakti consort of the Buddha in

Yab-Yum embrace. One end of this knife is the Vajra or Dorje, the instrument, **hard and transparent as diamond, representing the clarity of insight and wisdom.** The other end of the Vajra-chopper is a skinning knife with a rounded blade. The name Vajrayana for this form of Mahayana Buddhism, refers to this **vajra as the "clear cutting instrument of the mind," which is Oneness and one with Nothingness, untouchable, indestructible, invisible, absolute freedom and potential power.** Any unresolved emotional or ego situation is the germ for the next problem, thus producing a karmic chain of cause and effect, the wheel of karma.

¹⁵⁰) See also 4.4.1.5, *Reincarnation And Suspending* on page 311.

To use the ideas of karma and reincarnation in this way but also in the context of actual physical dying and rebirth, is a positive approach to creating a 'myth' - an ordering device - which can help us relate to the incomprehensible oneness-nothingness of *What Is*. It can help create order in the chaos we perceive around us and makes the injustice and horror inherent in human existence a bit more comprehensible, which does not mean acceptable.

This idea puts responsibility for the whole, past, present, and future, on the individual person, who is thus perceived as inseparable and indivisible from the whole, the neverending, always changing realities, within an intelligence which may be eternal. Every person is responsible for his her actions and their consequences, every person is free to follow the desires of the ego, or to learn how to end it. Oneness, freedom, and openness are integral parts of this non-dogmatic approach to life. Individuals who have insight into the mind are the true teachers whose individuality takes a minor place behind their wisdom which is one. What remains of their individuality, i.e. their historical example, is another pedagogical device, a floating device, to help us float in the waters of non-consciousness, to the shores of wisdom and compassion.

When we venture out to heed the appeal of those spiritual voices, we are bound to get wet. The spiritual bath - (The water is the creative energy of the God Shiva and the Goddess Shakti-Maya, the two in one and one in two.) - requires that we leave our clothes behind; naked and trusting we enter the waters to join in the beautiful and wrathful play of the enticing and often frightening Goddess. This first step into the water is the last step, the journey and the other shore are one, the water and the self are one, the self and the God/dess. Or, there is no first or last step, no journey, no water, not this shore or other shore.

This thinking, including the **thought of reincarnation**, is a projection of the idea of the movements of thinking as I outlined them:

A thought emerges from the nothingness of the whole unobservable vastness of uncertain thinking. Once a thought is born, it is released into consciousness as part of consciousness, oblivious of its former oneness and nothingness. This thought contains the whole uncertain creative thinking enfolded in it. Every thought entertained by consciousness effects whole generations of thinking processes, which seem to die and be reborn, in the stream of individual and collective thinking of a society. One can find this idea represented in the genealogies of the ancient gods and goddesses of Africa, Asia, Greece, and Europe. The companions of the Gods and Goddesses are representatives of who they are. In all of them the character of a God (an idea) is unfolded. He or she is the product of the creative union of parents whose deeds and misdeeds carry on to their offspring. The character of Parvati, for example, is enfolded in all her previous incarnations. Maya unfolds and enfolds them all and is *What Is*, Nothingness and Oneness.

I do not regard the goal of reaching an ego-less and self-less state as attainable or even desirable in a meaningful reality. The erroneous concept behind this general interpretation of Indian philosophy and religion corresponds to an early unfolding of the idea of Maya into a simplistic non-dialectic, non-holistic, duality of good and evil, nirvana and samsara, heaven and hell. It is of course totally dominant in the religions of Zoroaster, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This simplistic concept of dualism will have to unfold its underlying oneness again. When the non-dualistic consciousness is more developed there will not be a need for organized religions, which are all built on dualism, separation, and division; they all promise in essence a path from here to there. Unfortunately, **this duality still governs all world religions and systems of morality, Tantra (at its best) and mystic insights of a few notwithstanding.**

To come back to the discussion of the ending of the self as the goal of Indian philosophy and religion, the possibility of reaching a self-less **state** would imply the existence of an end-state of the unfolding thinking which can ignore its origin and driving uncertain powers.

The real individual in a reality can transcend his or her ego in a reality, but not the **self**, which I defined as the moving center of conscious thinking. To transcend the self would mean that the center of rational thinking ceases to function, and with it rational thinking. Metaphorically speaking, it would mean the refusal to participate in the play of the Maya, the action principle as the creating and destroying Goddess, who is an integral and integrating part of human oneness-nothingness. It would mean the end of the idea of freedom and responsibility in a reality.

Even from within an Asian worldview, such a refusal would be in itself un-holy, and can be interpreted as selfish, thus negating the ideal of selflessness. We must learn that we are as human beings between the oneness of the original 'paradisaical' state and the nothingness of unfolding thinking. We cannot consciously grasp either completely. Our reality space is governed by Maya, the mystery of actual life. When we learn about ourselves or about the universe we learn about the activities and resourcefulness of Maya, of **What Is. This learning is never complete.**

The human mind, highly complex and organized living matter, awakened to consciousness and mind, is as inexhaustible as the Maya, the Mother Matter, the Goddess and Mistress of Mystery.

2.6.4.4 ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY AS NEGATION OF REALITY

Any certainty of a reality is conditioned by that reality and therefore fundamentally relative. **There is no absolute reality.** The will for **absolute** certainty must ultimately negate itself and become nothing in its criticism of any thought which claims to be such a certainty and which is thus going beyond the boundaries of rational thought.

Or, put differently, as long as the will for an ever increasing certainty does not deceive itself, it will move within and towards the perception that an absolute certainty is not possible, even though an ever increasing body of reliable **scientific knowledge** can be accumulated. In this perception lies the self-negation and self-limitation of a will which is free.

Positive and negative thinking are one and also **no-thing** in that movement of negating any dogmatic reality. Any certain time and space structure, being the foundation of difference, causality, and progress, reveals itself as a creation of thought and becomes with increasing certainty absorbed in its empty formalism. In this absorption, the emptiness becomes ultimately so certain that the mind realizes its utter meaninglessness and dissolves it in a dialectic self-transformation, in which the absolute certainty of nothing becomes an encompassing uncertainty of no-thing, out of which the

possibility for a new and meaningful unfoldment of thought, time, space, and matter may arise and form a new reality.

A more painless transformation of realities is made difficult by the self-deceiving efforts of the ego with its emotional attachment to its particular world, which it perceives as being a self-evident truth and in which it feels secure. This is why radical transformations of human beings with their realities are rare or even impossible, and why, if they do happen, they are usually connected with suffering and pain.

Much of this kind of suffering might be avoided, if Man could listen to his intelligence, and take his logic seriously, even, or rather particularly so, when reason and logic point towards their own negation. Immanuel Kant's master-work the "*Critique Of Pure Reason*" is probably the most outstanding example of a negative philosophy which *rationally examines the limits of rationality*. I would want to summarize the result of that critique of formal thinking from the point of view of our present discussion in the following way:

Any certainty about the absolute is impossible. What is fundamentally absolute is unsayable, unrepresentable and nothing. Any statement about 'it,' which can never be a proper object of thought, can only be cipher and/or metaphor, i.e. non-certain idea and challenge for thinking, sensing, and acting. At their best, these ciphers are existential and transcendental challenges which give us guidelines as to what to do and what to trust in a reality.

The mind is of the same nature as the absolute, or at least inseparable from it. Therefore, the mind can have a non-certain image of the **absolute** as poetic, mythical, artistic, spiritual cipher. **To treat this cipher in the same way as knowledge is at the bottom of human illusion. To treat it as certain and absolute knowledge, we cover up our fundamental dilemma of being ignorant about this most desired good. An impossible certainty becomes the illusion of absolute certainty around which we build whole realities. This clinging to illusion comes from the desire for emotional security and is at the root of totalitarianism and evil, of egos having gone totally awry.** It does not matter whether there is an awareness of this desire for absolute certainty as the driving force behind our illusory reality or not. It does not matter whether this illusion be called belief, knowledge, direct insight, culture, tradition, religion or philosophy, to name but a few of the common disguises.

2.6.5 POWER OF POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

A **positive philosophy is a philosophy which has at its center and as its object the transcending nature of the human mind and of all being.** Positive philosophy (not to be confused with positivism) tries to address acting, living, and thinking with the idea of a fundamental oneness, which can best be expressed through ciphers. Such a philosophy tries to comprehend all manifestations of the transcendent as they are enciphered by Man in art, music, mythology, and religion, and as they are present in the greatest cipher of all, the human mind. From the ideas of Gods and Goddesses to the beautiful bronzes of Tibet and the majestic churches, temples, cathedrals, and mosques, from the Upanishads to the philosophies of Meister Eckehart, Schelling, and Nietzsche, the world is full of sign posts of positive philosophy. These signs have the power to speak to people through all times and across all boundaries and borders.

A philosophy that has the idea of oneness as its starting and central idea cannot lead to any certainty in an objective sense because it is not based on the formal structure of thought-space-time with its fundamental abstract and empty elements. It nevertheless uses that structure to express itself, to communicate, and to change it. Therefore, the *mind* (spiritual intelligence, *Geist*) of a positive philosophy is necessarily limited by the reality of its expressions but transcends that reality by its meaning. A true positive philosophy **includes** the negative philosophy. In the same way a true negative philosophy has as its carrying foundation a positive philosophy, so that we can say that any true philosophy is open to the nothingness **and** oneness of what it can see as *being and reality*.¹⁵¹

A confusion similar to the one arising in negative philosophy enters positive philosophizing also. Here, the tendency has been to posit ideas, metaphors, and ciphers and to deal with them as though they could be objective things, susceptible to the cogent powers of formal logic.

Here are a few examples of this confusion: The idea of the One God becomes an **object** (*one thing*) of our thinking, and we then confuse the thought with the idea. The unknowable Oneness becomes the known formalism of knowable identity. The 'One God' becomes 'my God' with his attributes against 'your God.'

In a similar deception we imagine that we can **know truth, love, the meaning of life** and the human spirit. We believe that we **know** that we are 'enlightened,' 'good,' etc.

Any such and similar knowledge would, if used intelligently, effectively negate the idea which that knowledge supposedly incorporates, and therefore negate itself and suspend its boundaries with the effect that such knowledge would become metaphoric and a potential existential appeal for a human being. This transformation cannot take place, if one takes refuge in the absurd and irrational, often euphemistically called belief, whenever it is convenient for the ego. **The same kind of knowledge, the same formal content, can for one person be the center of a transforming insight and revelation, whereas for another person it can be a prison of deadly confusion.**

A true philosophy of a human being is one which incorporates the idea of *NOB* in all modes of **knowing, trusting, and acting**. It relies on reason but does not treat knowledge as an absolute. It is free and therefore open for suspension and communication. We need a positive philosophy negating itself in positive philosophizing together with a negative philosophy negating itself in negative philosophizing. **Together** they become the cipher of what a human being is and what he/she can become. Both philosophies merge into one in their respective self-negation.

¹⁵¹) as "Sein" and "Seiendes" in German.

To actualize this trust of true philosophizing in a reality is the eternal free responsibility of a human being, who is called upon to live and act accordingly.

2.6.5.1 FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF MANKIND

I am not talking about academic philosophy but about the innate potential urge in every human being to find truth, from the correctness of language and logic to the highest metaphysical ciphers. Every human being has probably wondered about apparently simple questions concerning the origin or extension of the universe, merely to see these questions smothered by scientific answers, which seem to be correct, but which do not truly live up to those questions. To go to the core of such questions we must remove them from a material context in which science can give its limited answers to truly limitless questions.

"Why is there something?

Why is there not nothing?

Why is there the thought of nothing in something?"

These questions are not meant as scientific or semantic problems but they express as questions the miracle of the human mind. **The answer lies in the metaphor and cipher of freedom.**

When a human being enjoys or suffers, loves or hates, hopes or despairs, he or she has entered this mysterious world, the human world. This world is usually not seen as such, because Man is generally quite unconscious of his or her existence. **But a human being can and must wake up to his or her true being as separation and oneness, freedom and responsibility.**

It is interesting to note how this fundamental question was asked and an answer attempted in one of the Upanishads around 800 B.C.E. in India. Let me repeat the quote of **Yajnavalkya**, author of the **Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad**:

In the beginning the universe was nothing but the Self in the form of 'Man.' It looked around and saw that there was nothing but itself, whereupon its first thought was, "It is I!"; whence the concept I arose...

Then he was afraid. (That is why anyone alone is afraid.) But he considered: "Since there is no one here but myself, what is there to fear?" Whereupon the fear departed. (For what should have been feared? It is only to a second that fear refers.)

However, he still lacked delight (therefore we lack delight when alone) and desired a second. He was exactly as large as a man and a woman embracing. This Self then divided itself in two parts; and with that, there was a master and a mistress...The male embraced the female, and from that the human race arose. She however reflected: "How can he unite with me, who am produced from himself? Well then let me hide." She became a cow, he a bull and united with her; and from that cattle arose. She became a mare, he a stallion; she an ass, he a donkey and united with her...Thus he poured fourth all pairing things, down to the ants. Then he realized: "I, actually, am creation; for I have poured forth all

this." Whence arose the concept "Creation." Anyone understanding this becomes, truly, himself a creator in this creation...

Whoever knows "I am Brahman !" becomes this All, and not even the gods can prevent his becoming thus, for he becomes their very Self. But whoever worships another divinity than his Self, supposing "He is one, I am another," knows not.

The Nothingness-Oneness of the mind (Brahman-Atman) is in itself without awareness until it becomes conscious of itself through the realization: "*What Is, is I.*" This is the self-separation of the oneness-nothingness into the thinker, the thought, and itself as the object of thought. **It is the creation of the world of duality, represented in this tale by the male animals and their female 'opposites' and 'complements.'** The mind, the self, creates the world of duality, i.e. reality, through thinking which disguises itself in the process to solidify the separation between thinker and thought, the thinker and its world. The 'one' needs its complement for delight. By the uniting of the opposing elements Man/Woman becomes the creator.

A human being with this awareness exists consciously in a reality, but that existence is perceptive, open, and guided by transcendence. **Therefore, the truth of existence and the existence of truth are the reality of transcendence and complement each other.** There is no check of this complementarity except for the genuine and existential life of the human being who is an individual and who, as such, cannot be part of a statistical or logical evaluation without denying his or her individuality. By this human individuality I mean to indicate that the human mind is **undivided in apparent separation**. Our egos are encrusted manifestations of this separation and reject the underlying oneness of human beings. It is small wonder that egotism is generally being equated with individualism (and existentialism).

2.6.5.2 JASPERS, NIETZSCHE, SCHELLING: POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

Let me quote Karl Jaspers who has expressed this dialectic nature of positive and negative philosophy well.

He writes in his book on Nietzsche:¹⁵²

"What is rational and universal is as such critical and negative, i.e. the intellect by itself is destructive; the **historical fact of the irreplaceable, non-universal being is alone positive**. Such being is rooted in its ground, but remains not only hidden but also without substance (*wesenlos*), if it does not bring itself to clarity in the medium of the intellect. Nietzsche did not have this profound insight of Schelling, but he followed it unconsciously. The insight led Schelling to his separation between negative and positive philosophy."¹⁵³

"The negation as the manifestation of rational comprehension is itself a position in the service of the historical fact. On the other hand, the

¹⁵²) Karl Jaspers, *Nietzsche*, JN, page 120.

¹⁵³) F.W. Schelling, PO, page 41.

historical fact enters the sphere of rationality in its expression and decays in the pronouncing of the movement. What is rational is always merely one through another and is valid only in relationship to others; what is truly historical lives through itself and enters communications of self-becoming. Without the vastness of negative philosophy there is no positive philosophy. Only in the purgatory of what is intellectual can a human being become truly aware of his positive historical factuality. This historical fact expresses itself only through the rational, with which it still can capture indirectly its historical ground. The positive as ground of historical existence moves therefore in all directions of rationality. It abandons itself to all these directions, but guides, comprehends, and holds them together through its own historical ground and source, which cannot know itself, but which illuminates itself without end in what can be universally known and which as such is its own creation. The positive in the form of something precisely stated would have become rational and universal and thus have entered the area of unlimited analyzability which is destruction for the positive. This is its inevitable fate in a wrong rationality which does not comprehend itself. Under such circumstances it must become words and knowledge. In such forms of a doctrine of a general knowable thing the positive, usurped by mere intellect, made universal and abstract, has become rotten in its roots. **The most radical of such decays occurs, whenever a doctrine of separation between positive and negative (or rational versus historical) philosophy is being used to eliminate reason, yet making factual and rational statements but refusing rational examination."**

2.6.5.3 VAJRAYANA BUDDHISM AS POSITIVE-NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

In Vajrayana Buddhism Man's earthly condition is not interpreted as a punishment for some evil deed which lies in the collective history of Mankind. **The 'saving' power of the Buddha and his images, paintings, sculptures, bronzes, has nothing whatsoever to do with atonement.** The teachings and images (a teaching is an image also) are pedagogical devices and are not penal in nature. The aim is not the satisfaction of a supernatural father, but an awakening of the natural Man to truth, the clearing up of the confusion which prevents a harmonious interplay among all the modes of thinking, sensing, and acting. And *truth is betweenness* as I have tried to show. Vajrayana, Tantra Buddhism, claims merely that its texts and images will effect the learning more easily and swiftly than any other pedagogical device. The images are in no sense idols: they are supports of meditation. And the Buddha of meditation himself is not a supreme being somewhere in heaven but a figure, a mask, the mind's presentation of the inhabiting mystery of all phenomenality whatsoever, whether of the world, of the temple, of the image, or of the student him or herself. The very fact that there are female and male Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and teachers is a radical departure from most spiritual teachings.

The methods of the more restrictive and ascetic Hinayana Buddhism (and of Jainism, to some extent also the methods of monastic systems in Judeo-Christian traditions) require the breaking away from actuality and reality. Whether in the forest voluntarily, as a monk, or as victim of the social structure, the aspiring individual is psychologically dissociated from the normal life of his kind. External stimuli are rejected and cut off. **The historical actuality of Man is rejected as totally illusory.**

In Vajrayana Buddhism stimuli are used to energize the spiritual forces and meditative tendencies in a person. It is therefore a positive philosophy, which interestingly enough develops in two directions without ever denying reality and actuality:

- toward the **nothingness of being** (negative philosophy): the Buddha realm is a mere vision of the mind;
- toward the **oneness of being** (positive philosophy): the world of normal life is itself a Buddha realm.

It is remarkable that both ideas were contained in a statement attributed to the historical Buddha Shakyamuni :

*"Every Buddha Thus Come (tathagata) is one whose spiritual body is itself the inhabiting principle of nature (dharma dhatu-kaya: the body that is the principle, or support of the law of true being). Hence he may enter into the mind of any being. Hence, also, when you have perceived that Buddha, it is in fact your own mind that is in possession of those thirty-two signs of perfection and eighty minor marks of excellence perceived in the Buddha. In sum: it is your own mind that becomes the Buddha. Nay! it is your own mind that is even now the Buddha. The ocean of true and universal knowledge of all the Buddhas derives its source from one's own mind and thought."*¹⁵⁴

The Buddha-mind is the mind 'awakened' to itself which is essential intelligence. It is the inhabiting principle of nature, and therefore, all beings, animals and humans, are potentially intelligent and even are that intelligence. Furthermore, in Vajrayana Buddhism, the world and all phenomena are seen as maya, as illusion, but it is the visionary energy of the perceiving mind, which can see essential aspects of this illusion as integral parts of the great plays and accomplishments of the mind, of Shakti, of Maya. Affirming this positive view of reality a Mahayana text declares: **"And the most important of these 'illusions' is woman."**¹⁵⁵

That is, one of the most important powers in the life of a human being is sensuality, eros, and sexuality, or more generally, the participation in and enjoyment of life in a historical reality. This includes the suffering which is unavoidable in the existence of a living mind-body. Sigmund Freud had the courage to state that again to the modern world.

I see in this the existential appeal that we should embrace this reality, because it is a movement of *What Is*, of who we are; it is all we can **know**. The Buddha-mind is the unknowable nothingness-oneness or intelligence of being, and every human mind is a (potential) Buddha-mind,

¹⁵⁴) I follow in this the text of Joseph Campbell, see *Oriental Mythology*, COM page 316.

¹⁵⁵) J. Campbell, *Oriental Mythology*, COM, page 320.

and so is every sentient being, and any atom, elementary particle, or quantum of energy. And any recognizable pattern is a form of Maya, from the mathematical to the illusory. The mind meditating on itself and joyfully accepting its possibilities steps on the dance floor with Maya. She, the Maya image, the mystery, represents the illusion which is present in all thinking to various degrees. Whether it be positive or negative thinking, creative or mechanical, when the mind does not respect its dialectical opposites, the illusion dominates and all thinking becomes illusory. The Buddha image represents the mind 'awakening' from this self-induced illusion to the intelligence which it is. In Nietzsche's terminology, the Buddha image is a reminder **"to become who we are."**

Figure 21 and **Figure 22** on the subsequent pages show two famous Tibetan representatives of the Buddha mind. One is Avalokiteshvara, the other one is Green Tara.

2.6.5.4 TARA AND AVALOKITESHVARA AS TRANSCENDENTAL IMAGES

Avalokiteshvara is one of the most important transcendental bodhisattvas. He/she is a being that has achieved deliverance from the cycle of rebirth, but is postponing his ultimate, total redemption. In Indian Buddhist tradition, Padmapani (carrier of the lotus flower), or Avalokiteshvara, is of an ambivalent or polyvalent character. He is, like Vishnu, the master of Maya, and is possessed of the divine powers of assuming forms at will. The statues shown earlier (figures 3 on page xxii and 4 on page 2) show him/her in the form of an attractive Yogini, or sky-dancer¹⁵⁶, Chintamani (the bearer of the magic (chinta) jewel (mani)).

Figure 21 shows his/her best known manifestation with eight arms and nine (eleven) heads. He/she is the personification of the oneness of **compassion and indifference**, the two at once, exceeding -if possible- even the attitude of the Buddhas. The eleven heads emphasize the important role of the mind in the liberation of the human being from his or her illusions and self-deceptions.

Avalokiteshvara is the being who is capable (ishvara) of enlightening insight (avalokita), but who, out of infinite mercy, postponed his/her attainment of nirvana.¹⁵⁷ The eleven faces are arranged in three layers of three, looking into the three worlds of desire and ego, of living actuality, and of the invisible realm. Avalokiteshvara is associated with the Buddha Amitabha who is shown as the eleventh crowning head and single face; the tenth face at the fourth layer is that of a demon or Mahakala. Avalokiteshvara's mantra is

"OM MANI PADME HUM,"

What Is, is the oneness of Nothingness and Oneness. In his right hands he carries a rosary of 27 beads, a flaming sword, and makes the 'gesture of giving' with the jewel in the palm of his hand. In his left hands he holds a golden lotus, bow and arrow, and the initiation vessel.

Tara¹⁵⁸ is "perfection of insight," Prajna Paramita, which bestows enlightenment and Nirvana. Tara is the highest female in the circle of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, particularly honored in matriarchal Tibet. Tara represents the Shakti of the redeemer Avalokiteshvara in as much as this Bodhisattva has male form. **In Tantra Buddhism She is the highest deity.** She is revered as the miraculous savior who rescues all beings from the suffering of Samsara. (As Maya, she is in India also the energy responsible for making this suffering and samsara possible.)

¹⁵⁶) See section 5.2.5.1 page 367.

¹⁵⁷) Heinrich Zimmer: ZAIA I-182.

¹⁵⁸) Heinrich Zimmer; ZM 34 ff

Tara represents the wisdom of enlightenment, 'prajna paramita': 'Prajna' means **wisdom**, 'param,' other side of the river; 'ita,' having gone. She leads across the river of Samsara, the painful and largely illusory world, to the other side or Nirvana.

Figure 21 Avalokiteshvara, 9 faced, 8 armed



There is an apparent paradox in this interpretation of the idea of Nothingness, which is all there is. The contradiction lies in an unresolvable dialectic tension between Nothingness and Oneness. *It is this tension, eros as well as suffering, which is the energy behind actuality and reality. But ultimately there is no river, no samsara, no nirvana. To existentially know that Nothingness is Oneness is Tara's wisdom.*

Her symbol is the Lotus flower besides her shoulder and the Lotus on which she and all other Buddhas stand. She, as the Mother of the universe, carries and supports all and rises above the 'waters' in which consciousness is born and sustained. Her hands form the circle of inner vision of the true teaching¹⁵⁹. She is the great **Maya of Vishnu**, the **Dawn of Brahma**, and the **Shakti of Shiva**, the universal God, and becomes finally in Mahayana Buddhism the Shakti of the **Adi-Buddha** and the creative energy as and of all Buddhas.

In Tantra Buddhism the historical Buddha is only one more appearance, part of Maya, of the many Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all worlds. The primal or Adi-Buddha represents with his numerous successors the reality transcending power of wisdom. Tara is the Mother Goddess, the primal power which is timeless, and

which manifests with her companions in time. The historical reality is such a time, as is the consciousness of an individual and his or her creative mind. **To see a glimpse of the Truth is to be in and out of time simultaneously.**

¹⁵⁹) dharm-chakra-mudra

2.6.5.5 BETWEEN KNOWING AND TRUSTING

If, in philosophizing and living, we want to allow for and seriously consider expressions and forms which are not verifiable through rules of logic, how then can we distinguish between meaningful and meaningless speculation and expression in philosophy, art, and religion? How can we uphold laws and enforce them if we are not certain of their innate truth? How can we use notions of honor, honesty, truth, morality, and so on if we cannot know what they mean? Or, can we find out reliably what has absolute significance and is not tainted by subjective reality? Is the question for absolute meaning possibly another trap, to enclose us in yet another illusory reality?

Before we try to delve into these questions, we should remember that so-called reasonable methods of logic as well as certainty and proof are as much to blame for human problems, possibly even more so, as non-rational and intuitive or emotional methods. Most wars, for example, have very rational justifications, and the troops place their trust in the same God or in different Gods. Problems and conflicts do not seem to depend for their existence on either rational or emotional methods but seem rather to emerge from deeper-lying sub-certain intentions, which, when they are confused, produce problems, whether the intentions be carried out by means of logic and rationality or by emotional sense-oriented activities. I use the word *intention* in the sense of a **will towards an action which helps an ideal meaning to become manifest in a reality**.

The two areas of negative and positive philosophy, which I consider to be essential for human beings, can be explored rationally and intelligently and are distinguishable by the degree to which certainty is possible in them. Negative philosophy is the proper domain of mechanical thinking and positive philosophy that of non-certain thinking.

Figure 22 Green Tara



These two extremes are abstractions of which neither exists in an actual reality, but they serve us as tools and guidelines with which we can operate rationally and dialectically. Their application reveals possibilities and limitations of thinking.

There are situations in which certainty is impossible, but we nevertheless intend to communicate an insight, intuition, or existential trust. In such cases, intelligent sensing, acting, and thinking can only appeal to the intelligence in other persons through an expression of our common essence as human beings, the possibility of freedom and responsibility which is in all of us. It is this possibility which may be called the divine human nature. If this is the predominant idea behind our intention, our **eros and will** guides our actions carefully and diligently, and remains largely free of the ego. But even such an action is, once it has become part of reality, subject to all kinds of forces other than the free will and intention which originated it. In every human being there are facets of conditioning and ego, which tend to interfere with this eros. In addition, once an idea has been released into reality, it cannot be controlled any more. It is as though it takes on a life of its own. Good intentions can therefore lead to bad results. We should evidently strive for good intentions and good results. But unfortunately, **intentions and goodness cannot be properly measured** because they belong to the uncertain realm of ideas, which is why the will to communication about these ideas and their possible results is even more crucial. When communication between human beings who have contrary ideas breaks down, the stage is set for confusion, mutual destruction, and tragedy, all of which imply the possible end of the manifestations of freedom and wisdom.

If we want to communicate an idea (in thinking), the tools of rational thinking are crucial, because it is through them that the form of an idea can be expressed and thus made real. Only from its implementation in a reality can we learn about the idea, which otherwise remains totally uncertain. The idea for order in a society, for example, needs more than good intentions and must be given a rational objective form (the written law), which in turn can be evaluated by everyone as to its effects. Then, one can change the written law if necessary by adjusting it to gradually conform more and more to the intentions and realities.

In order to act on our intentions, or even to know them, we must first give them a form, which, in the beginning, is necessarily quite crude. In this process of transforming uncertain ideas into measurable and mechanical parts of reality, errors are unavoidable, but if we are aware that freedom and communication must be upheld and supported under all circumstances, these errors will never be final.

Every man and woman, as well every society, is an integral part of this dynamic transformation between ideality and reality. Mechanical reality has an exact and universally cogent form which is epitomized by logic, mathematics, and science, but which is given meaning by subcertain intelligent thinking of which formal thinking may not even be aware. This implies that once the rules and laws of a reality have been created, we are able to forget the uncertain underlying intentions and stop the fundamental communication between uncertain ideas and reality, simultaneously losing our freedom in reality.

Such unawareness leads to self-deceiving mechanical thinking, which I subdivide into three kinds according to the role which one allows meaning to play in our reality:

- 1) **No formal expression in a reality has in itself meaning for formal thinking alone.** A person who believes (irrationally!) that this

kind of thinking is the only adequate thinking will therefore have to conclude that any intended meaning must be reducible to tangible purposes, uses, and motivations. In other words, *meaning in the sense I develop here does not exist for such thinking*. The error in that conclusion lies in the unprovable premise that only mechanical thinking is valid and valuable, which is such a sweeping and unlimited assumption that it puts the whole of mechanical thinking in jeopardy.

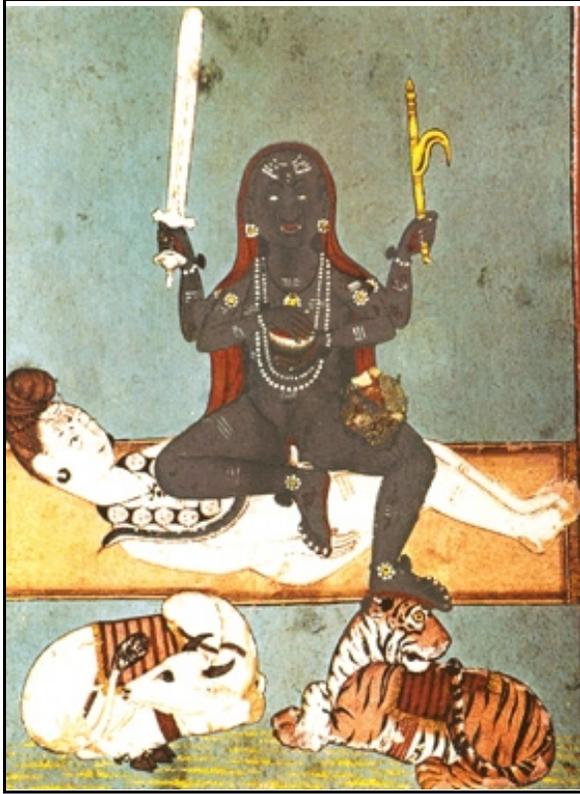
2) Meaning is not knowable. In that area of human existence which has evidently non-mechanical undercurrents, from psychology to religion, we easily commit the error of trying to explain meaning as though it were knowledge or scientific fact. Anyone who claims to know or to be able to express something with a cogent and universal certainty in this area of intrinsic humanness is necessarily the victim of **deceptive thinking**.

3) Catholic (potentially meaningful for all) subcertain meaning is possible. But, if one concludes from this (1 and 2), that meaning does not have catholic components but must be arbitrary and accidental and thus ought to be left to the individual's conditioned tastes and opinions then this would be yet another illusion.

In true art, philosophy, and religion we are dealing with spiritual expressions of the human mind, which are intended to **communicate from meaning to meaning in a free communication** among human beings. **The fundamental meaning is freedom and communication of the unexplainable human soul. This meaning is irrevocably incompatible with any absolute position, all too often assume by organized religions.**

If someone desires to produce an arbitrary and meaningless form, this is, of course, up to him or her. But it should be clear to everyone that this expression is then indeed nothing more than the **accidental and noncommittal selfish whim of a moment**. Unfortunately, such nonsense is common place in every society. Whimsical silliness can be sold as profound wisdom.

Figure 23
Kali, Sitting in Sexual Union on Shiva's Corpse (Shava).



give us? Nothing, if we look for fixed answers, recipes of how to live, or the knowledge of truth or enlightenment.

**THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS DEAD.
 THE KNOWLEDGE OF PHILOSOPHY IS DEAD. THE KNOWLEDGE OF
 RELIGION IS DEAD.¹⁶⁰**

If we look for systems of thoughts and things, which can be objectively had and possessed, we are indeed looking and hoping in vain. The **knowable state of enlightenment is a state in which all movement of life has stopped.**

Maya is defeated by a corpse only, so concludes the illusion which desires to know her secret. But this is no defeat! It is the curse and creative power of Maya, who casts her spell on all those who ignore her and turns them into rigid corpses, like the Goddess Medusa did to anyone who dared to look at her ugly aspect, or like Maya-Shakti did to Vishnu and all the other Vedic Gods, caught in

Following that whimsical thought its producer may try to endow the product with 'meaning' (importance) by giving it an artificial and pseudo-meaningful name or interpretation. **Calling his or her nonsense religion, art, or cultural tradition goes a long way to silence potential critics.**

Art, philosophy, and religion (spirituality) are sub-certain, but as such they attempt an appeal to the sub-conscious of all human beings and try to communicate between the many individuals. They can be challenges and provocations, potential destroyers and creators of realities.

The three self-deceptions mentioned above are such powerful modes of thinking that they seem at times to completely control human consciousness and realities. These powers are so pervasive, yet illusive, that it was very fitting to attribute the Goddess Maya to them.

**2.6.5.6 THE MEANING OF HUMAN
 EXISTENCE; SHIVA-SHAVA**

If self-deception and the ego rule everywhere, if Kali, the horrific aspect of Maya, is omnipotent, then, what can positive philosophy

¹⁶⁰) "God is dead," spoke Zarathustra. Nietzsche

their illusion of uncompromising power. Maya-Shakti calls on us instead, to love her, to embrace her, have sex with her, drink from her lap the live giving juices of love and life. She is life and action, and she can give life to the mind which despairs between the deadly shipwrecking rocks of positive action and life denying non-action. This is the dialectic mystery of *Eros and Thanatos, love and death*, discovered in the West by one of the founders of depth psychology Sigmund Freud only at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This mystery is related in Indian paintings and sculptures with the dead Shiva lying on his back and with Shakti sitting on his lap reviving him through her sexual creative energy. The life-less Shiva is called Shava¹⁶¹. **Without Shakti, Shiva is but a corpse, Shava.** Without Maya **What Is**, is a lifeless empty nothing. **Without love, all is death.** There are innumerable mythological stories all over the world about how love conquers death. Conversely, when transcendence (Shiva) is dead, Shakti takes on her most horrific aspect as Kali; all reality becomes a Waste Land, a graveyard of calamity, disaster, and horror, Auschwitz and Dachau. It is through this horror that Shakti tries to awaken Man again to his true nature. In all religions there is a sense of this truth.

We can say that Maya is like the action of the intellect, whereas Shiva is the action of intelligence. If Maya is acting on her own she creates illusion and deception, the worst kinds of ignorance and avidya. The empty world of superficial and conditioned mechanical thinking comes into being. When Shiva acts without his Shakti a world which is like a corpse (shava) comes into existence, a world of intellectuals and theoreticians. The result is equally disastrous, whether these intellectuals are proponents of religions or of atheist systems.

What is needed is the dialectic and dynamic oneness between the two opposite energies. This dialectic is best described with the metaphor of the relationship between two lovers. The tumultuous love between Shiva and Shakti, told in numerous stories of Indian lore, goes through all the stages from passionate love to misunderstanding, separation, death, and rebirth. It is symbolic for the endless struggle between the intellect and intelligence in a single human being and in the life of a whole society. Judging from the mythological stories of India it seems that the danger of rejecting the Maya of life is considered much greater than the danger of rejecting Shiva, another indication that her rule is seen as all pervasive and primary. No wonder; any action or reaction of a conscious human being is an action from within the web of Maya. Ultimately all is Maya. This is why the only true action which can lead to a deliverance from Maya must be directed towards her. Embracing the uncertainty of reality, we are called upon to change it, recreate it, improve it. It is a task without end.

One example is the idea of redemption through **bathing in the lap of the Goddess**. In one story this idea of Maya is duplicated in the Goddess *Ganga*, the mother who bestows prosperity, and secures salvation, the Goddess who is the river Ganges. Bathing in her waters washes away all the sins accumulated in thousands of lives. To die close to her, or to have one's ashes or corpse delivered to her waters guarantees absolute forgiveness. Millions of Hindus have made a pilgrimage to the holy city of Benares (Varanasi), to bathe in her waters, drink from it, and to take a sample as blessing for one's family and friends.

All systems of philosophical or religious thought evaporate in the merciless or merciful light of negative philosophy, which analyses a thing by negating it and reducing it to the no-thing of the whole of thinking, in particular to the emptiness of mechanical thinking. It is at that threshold where thinking with its possibility for certainty **can** return to its source. If it recognizes the limitation of

¹⁶¹) Heinrich Zimmer, MS page 206.

knowledge it can stay as a movement of certainty within its proper limits. Or it may try to comprehend and modify these limits.

What **actually** happens in the human mind that dares to approach this **threshold of thinking**

Figure 24
Ganga, River Goddess, AOI, plate 36



is unknowable but not beyond intelligent speculation, part of which may be akin to mystical experience. If we run aground with our thinking at that threshold, we have reached the doors of conception and truth. But it takes trust of and in an unknown source to take the decisive step in the right direction at that moment of crisis. Then, the suffering and crisis have the power to suspend our reality, our rational knowledge and **call** on us, to look anew, and possibly to create anew, ourselves and our reality. This call is a call for meaning which can be tentatively and poetically alluded to in the language of ciphers:

The fundamental trust in ourselves and the possibilities of human existence allow us to create a new self and a new reality on a daily basis if necessary. It is the trust that through this new creation we may see a reflection of the transcending source of that creation, which we are and of which we are.

The way we live our lives and the way we actually think and feel is the utmost such creation, and it is what creates meaning. That is, our individual and historical reality reflects who we truly are and is brought into sharp focus at such moments where the past and the future, i.e. our illusory concepts about past and future, seem to disappear.

It is the demand for **itself**, in which our creative self seems to say: *"You human being, give yourself meaning through your actions, your existence, your ideal, and your honesty. Don't believe your own constructs of what this meaning is."*

The more certain you want to be of this meaning the more you get caught in its emptiness from which only the **nothingness-oneness insight** can save you. This insight puts the demand for certainty in a relative societal perspective, and allows one to see that part in the quest for meaning which is conditioning. **"You live consciously for a moment, and you are dead for eternity"** (Nietzsche). You know this, and *you don't know this*. Therefore live so that you would not regret this moment for eternity. You are absolutely free and absolutely responsible, and your only judge is your

freedom and responsibility. You are the creator, the performer, the spectator, the judge, and your own executioner. But you *don't know; you can see that you cannot know*. In this insight of the meditating mind is all meaning. Our reality is '*nothing*,' the *self* is '*nothing*,' and in this insight the emptiness of both is transcended in a double suspension into a possible *blissful no-thing-ness and all-one-ness*.

At many levels of a person's or a society's evolvment a pedagogical approach to this question must suffice, an approach which meets the human consciousness and can touch and compel it towards 'good' actions.

"Do not kill, do not hurt another sentient being, or the powers of the universe, your God or Goddess will punish you!"

This command may be all that is possible or necessary to guide a person towards right actions at the right moment. **For most people in most situations the question of meaning or of absolute truth does not even exist; it cannot, and will not be asked or contemplated.**

"Tell me please what I shall do!" is all they ask.

And this question must be answered simply, not abstractly, when it is asked innocently. We can only hope, that in such moments, a parent, friend, lover, priest, or good neighbor is present to help with a simple and yet so uncertain and cryptic:

"YOU DO WHAT IS RIGHT."

2.6.5.7 MEANING AND MAYA

The German word for **meaning** is '*sinn*,' which signifies also **sense**, and is with this double meaning particularly suitable to express this idea. '*Sinnlich*' in German means sensual, whereas '*sinnig*' means thoughtful and contemplative. In English we have similar words with the root 'sense,' like **sensible, sensitive, sensual**. We talk about common sense and good sense, implying a common movement of thinking and sensing. When we try to refer to **deepest meaning** we say '**in the deepest sense**,' revealing that subconsciously we are very much aware that at the generative and creative levels **thinking becomes inseparable from sensing**. Guided by these insightful correlations between sensing and thinking, I propose to consider the **meaning of meaning** as follows:

Meaning is the energy of intelligence between the idea of Nothingness and Oneness. It is an intuition and intention, a sensing and thinking, insight and command, in many ways similar to the energy and will towards a oneness, eros.

Sensitivity, sensuality, and sensibility merge with subtle thinking into a non-certain self which is rich with potentiality and meaningful creativity.

The question of meaning¹⁶² is a tantalizing challenge for human thinking and acting, as tantalizing and erotically sensual as a beautiful woman may be for a man and vice versa, potentially exciting all levels of thinking, sensing, and acting. And just as love and eros among human beings give rise to endless challenges, interpretations, and possible fulfillment and suffering, the ideas of love and meaning are also profoundly interrelated.

¹⁶²) or '*sinn*' in German.

Is there meaning without love? Is there love without meaning?

Is not all creativity related to love, whether it be creative thinking or creative sensing or acting?

Is not mechanicalness the absence of love?

Many Tibetan statues of the Goddess Tara, or Indian statues of **Parvati**, the dark beautiful one, **Kali**, or **Shakti** have an erotic appeal to them which best reveals the sensual component of spiritual meaning. Art, music, dance have this sensual component, which reminds us of the original oneness between sensuality and spirituality.

The erotic ecstasy of the moment of ideal oneness between lovers, or the ecstasy of Man in the union with his/her meaning, may be the cause and culmination of deception, but may also be the source of a truthful reality of acting, working, and thinking, of mutual trust and joyful living which gives us the strength to say **Yes!** to the challenge of our lives and deaths. A human being is an integral part of *What Is*. As such, we are part of any meaning but also of any madness and evil, whose meaning we also cannot fully understand, but which we must face and try to understand and inhibit. The significance of this is of course that **we do not fully understand but must act. Living with openness implies also taking risks. We trust our perception, but know that trust is not knowledge. We act and take risks. This actual and acting perception is part of a deeper comprehension which is positive, creative, and uncertain in its origin.**

The mystery of meaning in a reality is contained in the idea of the Goddess Maya. She is the veiling power of the great Goddess Shakti, her own female erotic attraction being itself the greatest Maya of all. She gives meaning and creates suffering as a consequence, she gives pleasure with one hand and fear with the other, and yet she is the Goddess who must be worshiped. She is the gateway through which we must pass on our way to wisdom. Without her, life is without meaning. With her, life is full with potential illusion. But it is an illusion which we can comprehend, and in this comprehension our love with Maya makes sense and has meaning. **Meaning, just like love, cannot be analyzed unless one wants to kill it, leaving the killer as a triumphant corpse, sterile philosopher, or nihilist.**

There is no objective meaning, which would be **outside** of the ciphers of human and divine mystery. There is no **knowable** outside agency like a God or Devil, who would tell us what the meaning of life and the universe would or should be. **Meaning** is the metamorphic movement from truthful thinking to an actual living of a historical person, who is in dynamic harmony with that thinking. God or Devil are the most meaningful ciphers, and the most destructive symbols too, when we fall into the illusion to know them or to reject them.

Meaning requires the alive and active confirmation¹⁶³ in a historical actuality, which is its significance. Thus, **meaning** is the common living ground **between** thinking and sensing/acting, as well as **between the certainty of a reality and the non-certainty of a trust.**

As human beings with a finite consciousness we may comprehend some meaning or the energy which asks for this meaning, but this wisdom is not given to us as a present. We must prove in and with ourselves to our conscience and in the reality of our actual historical existence that meaning **is**, and that **our** meaning in reality is worthy of that idea which we may gather intelligently from between thinking and our unique historical situation. There is no meaning without Maya!

*"The truth of meaning must prove itself in reality and through this give significance and value to uncertain being in time."*¹⁶⁴

Karl Jaspers

But **all proofs are within the realm of reality**, limited by the fundamental uncertainty of any certainty and proof. In other words, there is no authority, no system of thought, which we could consult for a certain answer, which could give certain meaning to our lives and the universe. Our **meaning** of freedom itself, and our intelligence, cannot and should not accept such a conceptualized absolute authority, which should have vanished at the encounter with the threshold of thinking.

In the area of spirituality we have all but abolished the idea of freedom and responsibility, and handed our thinking and intelligence over to so-called professionals and institutions. With a naivete which is unthinkable in political matters we have given absolute authority to more or less self anointed gurus, priests, and preachers, (or psychoanalysts in some cases), who pretend in so many words to speak from divine wisdom. One should keep reminding oneself that only a few hundred

Figure 25
Parvati, 1, from ZAIA II, plate 421



¹⁶³) 'Bewährung,' which is German for "having shown itself as being true"

¹⁶⁴) "Die Wahrheit eines Sinnes muss sich in der Realität bewähren und gibt dadurch der Realität und dem ungewissen Sein eine Deutung und Bedeutung in der Zeit."

years have passed in the West since a time when all secular power derived from the same divine authority as well. In most Islamic countries that is still the case with disastrous consequences for the people. I hope that I show with this book that in the area of spirituality the **belief in an absolute divine authority, represented by a person, a book, a myth, an organization, or whatever object one may find in the world, amounts to an oppression of the human mind and spirit. Spiritual expressions should help to set the human mind free rather than to bind it to a deceptive spiritual authority and to enslave it.**

2.6.5.8 WHY MEANING?

One may ask: "Why should we give meaning to our lives at all. Can't we just live in our tradition, without even asking such an impossible or uncomfortable question"?

To this one may answer that, of course, one may try to live that way, actually most people do that anyhow on a conscious level. Sadly, this attitude implies the blind acceptance of an accidental tradition and authority. It sells our greatest treasure, namely **freedom, rational, and creative thinking**, for the illusion of comfort and the security of habit.

In the freedom of creative thinking we are what we think and we become **one** with the idea of meaning. What is possible in this thinking is actual in that moment for that person but still awaits its realization.

Therefore, one can say that the creative and intelligent thinking, which is not separated from sensing and acting, **is meaning, and that same meaning tells us to realize and verify the manifestation of that meaning in and through our realities, for which we are responsible.**

We can check our **manifestation of meaning**, its significance, negatively through the means of rational thinking and observation. We have to push our knowledge to the boundary, where only creative action can reveal some kind of meaning. But in this revelation there is as much hidden as there is revealed, and what has been revealed becomes part of reality and can be negatively tested in its formal aspects. **Science and rationality are thus indirectly part of meaning because they allow us to see what can be known, and where the limits of knowledge are, and how well we know these limits.**

It is conscious realization as certain knowledge, together with creative **action**, which allows us to **take a stand intelligently** and not arbitrarily. Thus, the question for meaning, and the attempt to actualize it in a reality, leaves us suspended between reality and ideality, between freedom and responsibility.

The meaning we give to our lives is a direct reflection of the degree to which we see that freedom and responsibility and make it an active part of our lives. When we say: "**Act in such ways that you can look at yourself in the mirror every morning,**" we talk about our challenge for a courageous realization of meaning in our daily lives.

The ego finds only mechanical significance and purpose and 'lives' accordingly. The more we become aware of the oneness of our individual mind with the timeless oneness of all minds as the One Intelligence the more we intuit that we have to stand up for integrity, honesty, freedom. The degree to which we take up this challenge of who we are and who we ought to become in the endless process of finite realities determines our humanness.

2.6.5.9 FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

I have at various occasions used the notions of freedom and responsibility of the human being. They both are ciphers, which demand of us to create them and to live them, and to try to clarify them existentially in our lives. Their meaning becomes clear by thinking **and living** them in the reality of our personal and historical situation.

How can we think those ciphers?

The human being is conscious of his or her self, and this consciousness expresses itself in the uncertain thought and feeling of:

"I am," which implies **"I am free"** and **"I am one"** and which becomes the **certain** thought of **"I am this person, here and now."**

The conscious **"I am this"** is preceded by the self-negation of the non-certain self.¹⁶⁵ But whenever we think it in any form whatsoever, which we must in order to act and survive as physical entities, we introduce a separation, which frees us from our unconsciousness and binds us to our reality. This drive towards living consciousness is the human power to live, which makes us create new worlds and entices us to act through and in them.

We may understand the necessary separation between thinker and thought as a kind of freedom, the freedom of self-consciousness from the uncertain whole of the thinking process. On this fundamental level it is also clear that freedom from the whole uncertain stream of the non-conscious is simultaneously a limitation by and through the conscious. Self-consciousness arises from that whole stream of thinking and is not possible without it. To think consciously about the whole movement of our individual thinking is the beginning of the conscious response of our self-consciousness to its source. From the moment consciousness arises it is caught in the dialectic struggle of becoming more secure and more free. All values we create henceforth are comprised between the two poles of freedom and security. Any value which tips the scale more towards one than to the other creates conflict. The imbalance is therefore the constant fuel to action, given the fact that a static harmony is not possible. This thinking may lead to action in reality with the intention of creating conditions for freedom. But in a reality of men and women our freedom can only be maintained, if we all feel responsible together for that freedom and keep working at its realization. Due to the free nature of thought, this movement from freedom in consciousness to freedom in reality is by no means a necessity. Freedom is free to be manifest in tangible reality or to be hidden in the stream of potentiality. The opposite thinking, striving for security and control, thus limiting freedom, is just as prevalent in human consciousness and has been the dominant force in the history of mankind.

The connection between self-consciousness and our whole uncertain thinking process, which is interwoven with our sensing and acting, reveals that the meaning of freedom **and responsibility** is also a non-knowable challenge and is essential as cipher for the essence of human existence and transcendence.

We are potentially free, and this freedom is our responsibility, both of which are not automatic and mechanical but rather beyond the realm of certainty altogether. We are free and responsible for who we are and who we become, or, said negatively, if we were not free but rather programmed like robots, then we would not be responsible. It is in this freedom and responsibility where meaning

¹⁶⁵) I try to think this "I am" as consciously unthinkable. It corresponds to creative thinking, in which there is no separation between thinker and thought.

arises and without which philosophical speculation, religion, and art are meaningless. And if art, religion, and philosophy are without meaning, then those societies who subscribe to such an opinion are meaningless in themselves, no matter how great their cultural, technological, or scientific achievements may be. After all, laws and rules of a society are not arbitrary unless that society is ruled by a totalitarian aberration of the mind.

Our individual non-certain existence is embedded in the historical movement of all of mankind, from which we can free ourselves to some extent and for which we are responsible very much in the same sense as we are free and responsible for who we become. The freedom of the individual is as essential as the freedom of all mankind, and no freedom is possible without the simultaneous responsibility. We are all potentially free but our responsibility for each other is limited by our individual limited freedom and insight. Only our challenge to help understand and realize freedom has no limits.

That is to say that to realize freedom in a reality is an endless task, just like the attempts to realize love and compassion. We don't own or know freedom or love. We can only hope that our insights and actions are energized and guided by them.