

Absolute Abstract Space — Definitional Essay

Absolute Abstract Space is one of the deepest symbolic terms in Theosophy. It does not mean physical space, astronomical emptiness, mathematical dimension, or the empty distance between objects. It is a symbol of the Absolute itself: boundless, non-relational, unconditioned Space, representing what H.P. Blavatsky calls “bare subjectivity,” the one thing no human mind can either exclude from any conception or conceive by itself.

In the First Fundamental of The Secret Doctrine, H.P. Blavatsky presents an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle beyond speculation, thought, and speech. This Be-ness is symbolized under two aspects: absolute abstract Space and absolute Abstract Motion. Duration is inseparable from these. Thus Absolute Abstract Space belongs to the most primary symbolic language by which finite intelligence approaches the One Reality.

Professor R.N. Iyer emphasizes that in Gupta Vidya, Space is one of the foremost means of representing and seeking understanding of the Absolute. This is not relational space. It is Absolute Abstract Space, existing eternally and transcending all distinctions between manifest and unmanifest. Because it is beyond manvantaras and pralayas, it is equivalent to Eternal Duration; and it must also be thought together with Eternal Motion.

This triad — Space, Duration, Motion — is crucial. If Space is separated from Duration, it becomes merely empty extension. If it is separated from Motion, it becomes static abstraction. If Motion is separated from Space and Duration, it becomes mechanical activity. Theosophy holds these together as symbolic aspects of the Absolute, not as separate things.

The Buddhist analogue of Absolute Abstract Space is maha shunyata, the great Voidness. This does not mean nihilistic nothingness. It means no-thingness: the transcendental openness beyond every object, subject, world, and concept. It is the supreme Void, not because Reality is blank, but because no conditioned thing can contain or define it.

Professor Iyer gives this doctrine a direct spiritual application. He says that if one could persist deeply and long enough in meditation on the supreme absolute Void, one could totally transform consciousness. Such meditation means voiding all objects and subjects, all worlds, all periods of time, and all conceptions of possible worlds. It is not fantasy or visualization, but disciplined self-emptying.

This is why Absolute Abstract Space is inseparable from self-study. To ascend into pure noumenal substance and Absolute Abstract Space, one must come to terms with the ego. The ego consolidates, separates, appropriates, and clings. It makes subject and object into possessions of “I.” Absolute Abstract Space reveals the narrowness of that centre and opens consciousness into a wider field.

This is not meant to erase the human being, but to liberate the human being from contraction. The ego fears Space because Space cannot be owned. It cannot be fenced,

named, or made into personal territory. One can only become transparent to it. In that transparency, Manas becomes less possessive and more receptive to Buddhi.

Absolute Abstract Space also has ethical meaning. If all beings arise within one boundless field, no centre is metaphysically privileged over another. Each being appears at a point, through karma and limitation, yet every point is held within the same immeasurable Space. This recognition deepens Human Solidarity and Universal Brotherhood. Difference remains, but difference is no longer separative.

The doctrine also teaches reverent stewardship. The field of life is not raw material for private use. It is a sacred emergence within the unconditioned. To meditate on Space should make one less possessive, less reactive, less enclosing of others in labels and projections. True spaciousness makes room for beings to be seen under a wider law.

Absolute Abstract Space is therefore not cold emptiness. It is the supreme openness in which worlds, beings, sorrows, hopes, and awakenings are held. It does not flatter the ego, but it excludes nothing. It is impartial, boundless, silent, and inexhaustible.

To live with this term is to make inner space before speaking, before judging, before desiring, before reacting. Such space is not passivity; it is the condition for wiser action. It allows motive to be seen, thought to be purified, and compassion to enter before the will becomes fixed. In this way, metaphysics becomes ethics, and ethics becomes meditation.

Absolute Abstract Space stands as a master-symbol of the Real beyond all grasping. It asks the mind to release its cramped centre and enter the vastness in which every being is silently held. In that vastness, knowledge becomes humility, detachment becomes compassion, and the soul learns to serve the world without forgetting the boundless Space from which all worlds arise.



Short Glossary for the 2.5 Page Version

Abstract Motion — A symbolic aspect of the Absolute representing Unconditioned Consciousness; linked with the Great Breath.

Absolute Abstract Space — Boundless, non-relational Space as a symbol of the Absolute; not physical space or emptiness between objects.

Be-ness — H.P. Blavatsky's term for Absolute Reality beyond conditioned being.

Buddhi — Spiritual intuition and wisdom; the principle through which mind becomes illumined.

Duration — Eternal Duration, beyond time; inseparable from Absolute Abstract Space and Abstract Motion.

Ego — The sense of “I” that consolidates, separates, appropriates, and clings to subject-object identity.

Great Breath — Symbol of eternal Motion, rhythmic manifestation, and the outbreathing and inbreathing of universes.

Maha Shunyata — Great Voidness; Buddhist analogue for Absolute Abstract Space.

Manas — Mind, self-consciousness, the thinking principle in the human being.

Manvantara — Period of cosmic manifestation or activity.

Maya — The field of conditioned appearance when mistaken for final Reality.

Mulaprakriti — Root-substance, the veil of the Absolute and noumenal origin of differentiated matter.

Parabrahman — The Absolute, the One Reality beyond all attributes and relations.

Pralaya — Period of dissolution, rest, or non-manifestation.

Sat — Be-ness, absolute Reality beyond conditioned being.

Shunyata — Voidness; emptiness of separative self-existence and objectified reality.



Twelve Verified Quotes from the Full Written Definitional Essay

Quote 1 — H.P. Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine, Volume I / “The Three Fundamentals”

“An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought – in the words of Mandukya, ‘unthinkable and unspeakable.’”

Quote 2 — H.P. Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine, Volume I / “The Three Fundamentals”

“To render these ideas clearer to the general reader, let him set out with the postulate that there is one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being. This Infinite and Eternal Cause—dimly formulated in the ‘Unconscious’ and ‘Unknowable’ of current European philosophy – is the rootless root of ‘all that was, is, or ever shall be.’ It is of course devoid of all attributes and is essentially without any relation to manifested, finite Being. It is ‘Be-ness’ rather than Being (in Sanskrit, Sat), and is beyond all thought or speculation.”

Quote 3 — H.P. Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine, Volume I / “The Three Fundamentals”

“This ‘Be-ness’ is symbolised in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute Abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness. Even our Western thinkers have shown that Consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, and motion best symbolises change, its essential characteristic.”

Quote 4 — H.P. Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine, Volume I

“The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as an outbreathing and inbreathing of ‘the Great Breath,’ which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute — Abstract Space and Duration being the other two. When the ‘Great Breath’ is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is regarded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity — the One Existence — which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos.”

Quote 5 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “The Seventh Principle” Essay

“In Gupta Vidya Space is one of the foremost means of representing and seeking understanding of the Absolute. This is not space in any relational sense, but Absolute Abstract Space, which exists eternally and transcends all distinctions between the manifest and the unmanifest. Because it is beyond manvantaras and pralayas, it is equivalent to Eternal Duration.”

Quote 6 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “The Seventh Principle” Essay

“One cannot even begin to think upon this one Absolute Abstract Space, boundless and universal, without also thinking about Eternal Duration. In turn, both of these are related to Eternal Motion.”

Quote 7 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “The Seventh Principle” Essay

“Eternal Motion linked to Absolute Abstract Space and Duration generates the possibility of conceiving a consciousness which is indistinguishable from unconsciousness, but which is characterizable as Absolute Consciousness. From this originates the entire realm of differentiated and individuated consciousness, the world of subjects and objects on seven different planes.”

Quote 8 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “The Seventh Principle” Essay

“The conception of Absolute Abstract Space is represented in Buddhist language by maha shunyata. This teaching may be found, for example, in the Mantra of Voidness, one of the

great short sutras of Mahayana Buddhist literature and the basis of a remarkable commentary by the Tibetan Lama Geshe Rabten.”

Quote 9 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “The Seventh Principle” Essay

“This purifying property of space is a recurrent theme throughout the literature of Gupta Vidya. It suggests that if one really knew how to persist and to progress far enough and long enough through deep meditation in understanding the supreme absolute Void, one could totally transform one’s consciousness.”

Quote 10 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “Consciousness and Existence” Essay

“To ascend in consciousness into the realm of pure noumenal substance and Absolute Abstract Space, one must come to terms with the problem of the ego. The ego, or the sense of ‘I’, is that which consolidates, separates and appropriates both subject and object, nurturing a sense of possession and self-protectiveness.”

Quote 11 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume I, “Consciousness and Existence” Essay

“Given the postulate of Absolute Abstract Space, however, no set of instruments could exhaust the possibilities of growth or of absorption and annihilation.”

Quote 12 — The Gupta Vidya, Volume III, “Enlightenment” Essay

“If absolute abstract Space, unconditioned Consciousness and boundless Duration are the fundamental terms in the equation of manifestation, then they must also be the ultimate factors in any adequate conception of self-reference, self-regeneration and self-realization.”