

9 December 1963

READING 10

PART 1

How can we sum up the new point of view that has come to many of us in the last three months, and give something firm and clear to hold on to until we meet again? For by the New Year we shall have to set in motion a programme for bringing the point of view of this Society as widely as possible to the notice of the outside world. The long-awaited moment has come and we must not miss it. (*See Addendum*)

The Sciences basic to psychology are in a strange position to-day, standing as they do at the very dawn of human psychology! For one of the earliest writings (the Upanishads) which have come down to us is worth quoting from last Monday's meeting as describing the position reached by those Sciences today:

In this body, in this town of Spirit, there is a little house shaped like a lotus, and in that house there is a little space. One should know what is there.

What is there? Why is it so important?

There is as much in that little space within the heart as there is in the whole world outside. Heaven, earth, fire, wind, sun, moon, lightning, stars; whatever is and whatever is not, everything is there...

What lies in that space does not decay when the body decays, nor does it fall when the body falls. That space is the home of Spirit. Every desire is there. Self is there, beyond decay and death; sin and sorrow; hunger and thirst; His aim Truth, His will Truth. Man can live in the body as long as he obeys the law, as a man may live in a certain farm, in a certain town, in a certain province, or wherever he fancy, if he obey the law.

Earthly pleasures exhaust themselves; heavenly pleasures exhaust themselves. Wherever men go without attaining Self or knowing Truth, they cannot move at their pleasure; but after attaining Self and knowing Truth, wherever they go, they move at their pleasure.

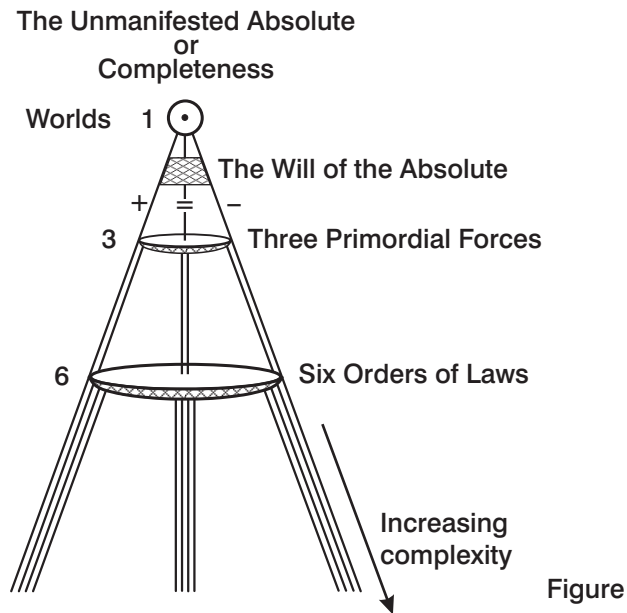
(from the *Chandogya Upanishad*)

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Having discovered in yourSelf the feel of this organisation within the brain, the part of you that can be conscious, it is necessary by special techniques to bring it gradually to its full clarity and power. It is only then that the Three Gunas (the three Primordial Forces motivating man) will become apparent. And consciousness of the fluctuations of the Three Gunas will be your guide in the art of living from day to day.

Think of the Ray of Creation as a Symbol of the possibilities of the human mind (see Figure overleaf):

We have to 'rise', as Lord Shri Krishna said to Arjuna, 'above all the pairs of contending opposites', and if we do this then the 'Threeness in the Oneness' will be realized. Then we know what must be done and the only way by which it can be done. Then all that has been recorded of the sayings of fully Realized Men on the subject of the Three Gunas can be understood by us.



We can already tell when there is excitement and activity dominating the organism; we can tell when it is dominated by torpor, ignorance and inertia and sometimes we can recognise the manifestations of something emotional, something different. Something which is neither activity nor inertia; something harmonious which can set right what has been wrong. That is the basis of 'doing'.

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PART 2

We can perhaps conclude a very successful year by reporting to you the outcome of the visit ten days ago made by two of our people, Mr. and Mrs. B. (Professor of Physics at Delhi University and his wife) with their interpreter, to the Shankaracharya. They travelled 100 miles to Mathura (pronounced Muttra) in time to meditate for half-an-hour and to meet him for a three-hour audience which he had told them would be exclusively devoted to answering their own personal questions. Most of these of course were about the Meditation, but two more general ones can now be quoted as far as I have been able provisionally to reconstruct them from the tape recording:

Prof. B. May I ask a question concerning the Tradition in the outside world? I work in Science and I think most people who work in Science are now aware of the fact that they have a responsibility to raise the standard of living of people throughout the world. I wonder if your Holiness could suggest how we can use the ideas of the Tradition best to achieve this object?

S. Complete success will be in taking hold of the idea of this Tradition and the Meditation; in fact the erudition of Science will depend mainly on the working of this. Success in the Spiritual world will give you success in helping Science – you are particularly in a position to benefit Science. It's not that Science benefits you, but you will benefit Science with the aid of your Tradition and of the Meditation. Scientists are mainly caught up in the limitation of the physical world; but if help is taken from the Spiritual side, Science can make greater strides. He gives an example of Dasharat, an ancient King of India who learnt the true Science from his Guru and he applied that Science in the administration of his own country. That is why people still call his

kingdom 'The Kingdom of God' because it was based both on Science and on Spiritual values. That is why even now Science has to take shelter under Spiritual control, and then the conditions of the individual can rise still higher.

In all branches of knowledge there is full success only when these two are combined – the physical side of Science with the Spiritual Nature of man. Observe the difference between two persons after a single fortnight which one of them has given to the Spiritual discipline while the other has left it alone, and you will find even in that short time what a world of difference lies between the two, though they started the same.

Mrs. B. I'd like to ask is it profitable to give all the time we can spare from following our householder's life to the study of the Tradition and the Meditation, and to devoting our hearts to lofty things. Would this be the best that we could do? Is there no more we could do if we tried?

S. There is no *difference* between the two – the householder duties on the one hand and the Tradition and the Meditation on the other. They are not incompatible. Just as a person walks on the solid ground and the same person swims in water, these are not two distinct qualifications.[†] Similarly we have been learning that side by side with the performance of household duties and living in the world can go the pursuit of this Spiritual method; *a combination, that is, of the art of living with this Spiritual art will give the equilibrium that leads to permanent happiness.*

COMMENT

Now that last sentence leads at once to a question which each of us must ask himself: What third element can resolve *for me* any conflict I may feel between 'the art of living and the Spiritual art' which we study here? For this is a fundamental question in the world today, and was, you remember, the reason given us to account for the sudden appearance among us of the age-old secret of the Meditation.

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ADDENDUM

It is fitting now to remind ourselves of some words of Mr. Ouspensky's at a similar moment of expansion of the Work just thirty years ago:

The question arises: Is it possible to acquire command over these fleeting moments of consciousness, to evoke them more often and to keep them longer, or even make them permanent? In other words, is it not possible to become conscious? This is the most important point, and it must be understood at the very beginning of our study that this point has been entirely missed by all modern psychological schools. For with the right methods and the right efforts man *can* acquire control of consciousness and *can* become fully conscious of himself, with all that it implies; and what it actually implies we, in our present state, do not even imagine.

Only after this point has been understood does a really serious study of psychology become possible.

In those sentences he showed himself to be at least thirty years in advance of his time.

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[†](conflicting activities)

