

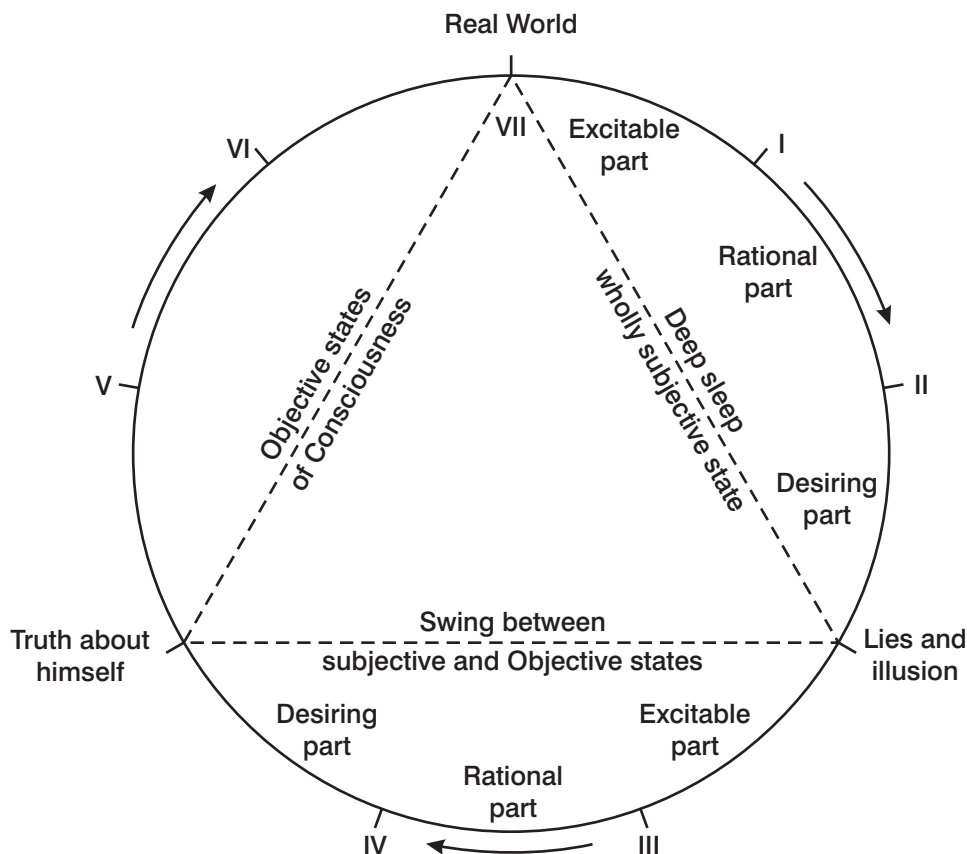
22 March 1965

READING 9

I would like to go on considering the difference between subjective and Objective states of Consciousness, and would ask you to look at last week's diagram (Part 2) again. Have you been able to bring any observations with you?

(Pause to collect observations)

As a practical scheme of observation of one's mind, one can consider the threefold nature of the psyche in relation to the Ladder of Self-realization. Looking at the Symbol from this point of view – the whole circle being regarded as our mind with all its aspects and possibilities – we see that the circumference is divided into three parts, and that each of these is again divided into three. We can regard this smaller threefold division as representing the three-fold nature of the psyche (or seat of our psychology) – instinctive, rational and emotional.



From earliest times this threefold nature has been recognised by people practising Self-realization. Thus, in the *Philokalia*, it is called the 'tripartite nature of the Soul', and the three components are given as 'the excitable part, the thinking part and the desiring part'. With a little care we can easily recognise these in ourselves.

Next, how do we feel these in different states of consciousness? In deep sleep the rational part is reduced to long-established attitudes and 'establishment slogans' which form part of our

dreams; rational thinking has disappeared and the instinctive part is in command; the desiring part (if roused at all) being greatly under its influence. If we have had some success in Self-realization during the day before, the emotional part can suddenly come to life and wake us up with a sudden feeling of Conscience or a glimpse of the Truth. In the next second, of course, the rational part begins to race under the influence of excitement and complicates or obliterates that spark of Truth. For this the remedy often is not to *think*, but to *move* with physical attention; since it cannot be too strongly emphasised that such 'thinking' is useless and only increases the lies and illusion.

Though we may be comparative strangers to the instinctive and emotional parts of the psyche, we can at least define the characteristic activities of the 'rational' mind (the 'Manas') in these subjective states. It seems to swing between *inertia* whereby it damps everything down, and *excitement* when it races along a single track, or jumps from one association to another confusing every issue. One can scarcely exaggerate the number of contortions of this subjective rational mind which have bedevilled the human race, often in the name of Logic! We can safely say that most of those activities of the human mind which are hostile to, or not useful to, the Atman come from this 'Manas' acting on its own in subjective states. All the 'isms' – materialism, Marxism, logical positivism, or what-not. We call it 'formatory thinking' when it usurps the function of finer elements of Mind.

What then, we ask, would be the right function and the right relation between these three parts that we might expect would accompany more Objective states of Consciousness? Can you recall what they feel like, and what they are capable of doing in better states?

(Pause for discussion)

The 'Manas' is really a wonderful instrument of almost infinite potential when performing its own constructive work in better states of consciousness. What is its right work as the efficient and highly-trained servant of the Higher parts of Mind? *First* of all to attend and to observe; *secondly*, to collect and pigeon-hole impressions, and in that way both to acquire Knowledge and have it ready to hand; *thirdly*, to furnish on demand the facts and information required by the creative parts of the Mind; *fourthly*, to check, confirm and shape the ideas with which these creative parts come up. If the 'Buddhi' is to get the time and energy needed to create and enjoy Objective states of Consciousness, it needs a really well-trained servant, who will keep appointments, earn our living, fill in forms, cook the dinner, buy the tickets, and get us easily and quickly from place to place!

What the rational part should *not* do is to form opinions of its own, decide our policies, or in general usurp any of the functions of the more creative and dependable parts. So on that second part of the Ladder (which represents the swing between subjective and objective states), we *do* have some principles and some experiences to guide us; and we need to be remembering these principles, particularly in relation to the present subject of discussion, because all the current definitions of what is Objective and what is subjective (defined as they are by this very formatory centre) need a complete re-look.

(Further discussion)

SUMMARY

Perhaps by the end of the evening you will begin to realise that we have been approaching the System description of Centres and parts of Centres in a slightly different way, and that the key to them lies in the practice of Attention. The rational mind must first be trained to attend quite passively and in cold blood, so that when the emotion is aroused more and more strongly during the creative process, the Attention will only be strengthened thereby and not disrupted as it tends to be in everyday life.

Finally, looking at the three parts of the diagram as a whole, we can once more recall the old Zen saying:

To a man who knows nothing, mountains are mountains, waters are waters, and trees are trees. But when he has studied, and knows a little, mountains are no longer mountains, waters are no longer waters, and trees no longer trees. But when he has thoroughly understood, mountains are once again mountains, waters are waters, and trees are trees.

And then the mountains, waters and trees will find their place in one single, harmonious whole not separate from oneSelf. That would mean Objective Consciousness.

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