

28 October 1968

READING 3

Much time is wasted at meetings and attention and even ideas are lost, in empty verbal debate. Better to find out during the week what is needed to do things well and what is interfering with your attention when they go badly. Choose the best examples and bring them to your meetings; that way you help yourself and the rest of us.

At the end of last week's paper it was said that though one can get through life quite efficiently as an automaton living in the lower storey; for finer work more of the 'Energy of Being' must circulate through the more spacious parts of the house which remain unfurnished. The expression 'finer work' means, first of all, doing what you have to do in a finer, more economical, and more enjoyable way. It means also playing your part in *any* work connected with understanding and handing on the True Knowledge. But if you are a scientist or an artist, it means doing creative instead of stereotyped or imitative work.

So now we can go for the best and let Mozart and Beethoven tell us how they composed music:

1. Quotation from Sitwell's *Mozart*, p.151. (Letter to a certain Baron)

When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer – say, travelling in a carriage, or walking after a good meal, or during the night when I cannot sleep; it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly. Whence and how they come, I know not; nor can I force them. Most ideas that please me I retain in memory, and am accustomed as I have been told, to hum them to myself. If I continue in this way, it soon occurs to me how I may turn this or that morsel to account, so as to make a good dish of it, that is to say, agreeable to the rules of counterpoint, to the peculiarities of the various instruments, etc.

All this fills my soul, and, provided I am not disturbed, my subject enlarges itself, becomes methodised and defined, and the whole, though it be long, stands almost complete and finished in my mind, so that I can survey it, like a fine picture or a beautiful statue – at a glance. Nor do I hear in my imagination the parts successively, but I hear them, as it were, all at once. What a delight this is I cannot tell! All this inventing, this producing, takes place in a lively dream. Still, the actual hearing of the *tout ensemble* is, after all the best. What has been thus produced I do not easily forget, and this is perhaps the best gift I have my Divine Maker to thank for.

When I proceed to write down my ideas, I take out of my bag of memory, if I may use that phrase, what has been previously collected into it in the way I have mentioned. For this reason the committing to paper is done quickly enough, for everything is, as I said before, already finished; and it rarely differs on paper from what it was in my imagination. At this occupation I can, therefore, suffer myself to be disturbed; for whatever may be going on around me, I write, and even talk, but only of fowls and geese, or of Gretel or Barkol [his children], or some such matter. But why my productions take from my hand that particular form and style that makes them Mozartish, and different from the works of other composers, is probably owing to the same cause which renders my nose so large or so aquiline, or in short, makes it Mozart's, and different from those of other people. For I really do not study or aim at any originality.

2. Recorded in Thayer's *Life of Beethoven*

I carry my ideas about me for a long time, often a very long time, before I commit them to writing. My memory is so good that I never forget a theme that has once come to me, even if it is a matter of years. I alter much, reject, try again until I am satisfied. Then, in my head, the thing develops in all directions, and, since I know precisely what I want, the original idea never eludes me. It rises before me, grows, I hear it, see it in all its size and extension, standing before me like a cast, and it only remains for me to write it down, which is soon done when I can find the time, for sometimes I take up other work, though I never confuse that with the other. You will ask where I find my ideas: I hardly know. They come uninvited, directly or indirectly. I can almost grasp them with my hands in the open air, in the woods, while walking, in the stillness of the night, early in the morning, called up by moods which the poet translates into words, I into musical tones. They ring and roar and swirl about me until I write them down in notes.

Careful attention to those accounts, particularly the Mozart, will show the way we are looking at the possibilities of the three storeys, but in these cases the composers have not only innate genius, but perfectly trained machines in the field of musical composition and performance. The same principles underlie not only any of the creative arts, but also the field of Self-creation, which is akin to them in that it requires the same combination of Gunas.

(Pause for *short* discussion)

PART 2. THE SUBTLE WORLD

The above first-hand accounts confirm the enormous difference between the narrow sensory world we know and the unexplained 'subtle' world of creative psychology. The Shankaracharya spoke about it last September:

The coarse world (the domain of body) is the manifest world; the subtle world (the domain of mind) is the cause of the manifest world... The general concept formed by common people when they hear the teaching on the 'four bodies' is that the coarse body is the biggest, inside which is the subtle body, and smaller than the subtle is the causal body, and within that small causal body is the Self hiding in a remote corner.

But the Reality is quite different both on the individual and the Universal scale. The visible and tangible world is the smallest of all, and it is surrounded by an extensive subtle world, which again is merged into an extensive sphere[†] of the causal world. And then everything is covered by the Creator who has no limits and no division.

Similarly the possibilities and potentialities of these worlds and bodies also vary. The possibilities of the coarse physical body are very limited; for example, one knows by experience that this body gets exhausted in six hours, but the subtle body has no such restrictions. Here the concept of space-time changes; one can create huge manifest constructions with the mind: travel far and wide in no time; can experience a whole life in one moment of a dream; or sum up a lifelong activity in a single moment's thought.

[†] An illustration can help to show us the obvious superiority of this picture over others. The visible disc of the Sun is surrounded by the usually invisible corona, but beyond and enormously greater than that is the Sun's gravitational field, which is not only the cause of the effects manifested within the Solar System, but which determines its relation with near neighbours in the Milky Way, and that again is just one unit in a nebular universe, most of which will never be visible to a man on this earth.

This subtle body can reduce the whole Creation into a point, and then one can write volumes and volumes to express that point.

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Q. If the subtle body is so extensive, isn't it more a question of getting to know this subtle body (in oneself) rather than trying to make it grow... ?

S. Information about the subtle world is not alone sufficient for its manifestation... Practice and Knowledge, both are essential. It is the Knowledge which will initiate the activity; the activity is the practice which brings its manifestations and effects into being. If one wants the benefits of the subtle body systematically one must gather full knowledge of the subjects involved, and devote energy over some time to practise and get the best results in the field of one's choice.

(18 September 1968)

In another context he told a story which is applicable here also: Why explore the narrow outside world of the senses or spend enormous time and money in the space-race when there is this relatively unlimited world within?

There was a lord or baron with a private army of retainers. He was very ambitious and always liked to cross his own boundaries and subdue other territory. His people were loyal supporters of his policy, so each time he returned to his castle they honoured him and praised his glorious victories. But after all this flattery he would go to his mother and ask for her blessing. The mother was not amused so she never gave him any blessing. After a few such rebuffs he plucked up courage to ask her why she was displeased.

She said: 'My dear son, you are going on the wrong line. I would be happy if you put your own territory in order and made the best use of your own resources by subduing your real enemies which are within you. In fact, because of these empty victories outside, you are merely making your own enemies even all the stronger, and are losing the battle every day. If you tried to overcome your identification with greed, lust, futile ambition, and your desire to be admired as a great lord, only then would I say you have done a good job and deserve a blessing.'

In all the gambling games that go on in the casino of the sensory world, the losers certainly lose, but those who win are also the losers because, in fact, they are winning nothing that lasts. [The casino is the only one to gain.]

(24 September 1968)

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[NOTE: Don't forget that the picture of the three-storeyed house as we are using it, depicts the unexplored subtle world of our psychology, and that the causal world of the Self is placed in the Fourth Room and must be brought in to light up the other three rooms for exploration.]

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