

2 March 1970

READING 4

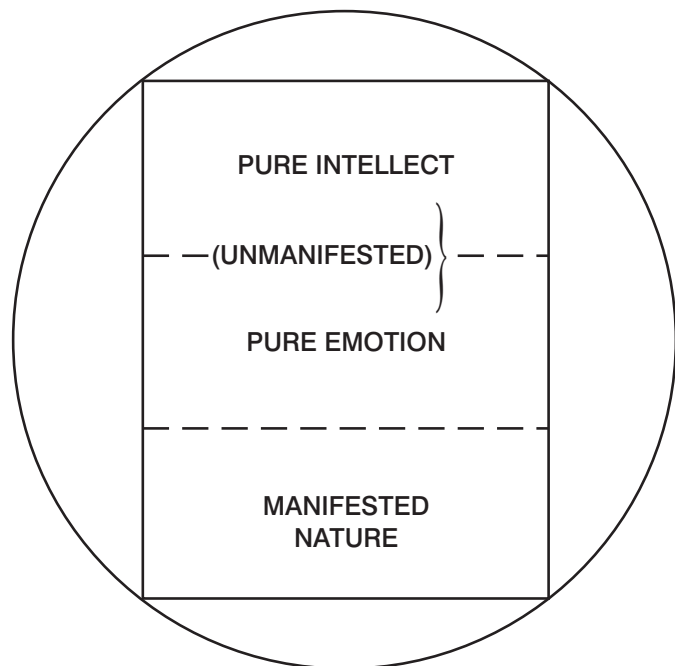
In order to understand the more practical picture of what Man needs for the realization of his possibilities, we should be prepared to see in it a rediscovery of something already dimly known. We go back to the time of the Battle of Britain just before Mr. Ouspensky left to make sure of the safety of this Work by starting a branch of it in the United States. At that time he was speaking in this kind of way:

In order to come to ourSelves we have to travel light and leave all our heavy luggage behind. We have to retreat from complexity to simplicity, to see things from above, not from below.

After all there are only three rooms in the house man lives in – Intellect, Emotion and Physical Activity. In order to build a house you need constant *physical effort*. No brick will arrange itself on the others – you have to put it there. But no amount of physical effort by itself will enable you to *invent*, for instance an electric bell or a telephone – this requires energy and know-how of a different kind. Furthermore, no amount of physical strength or of inventiveness will enable an artist to paint a fine and original picture – though plenty of pictures spring merely from physical work or inventiveness. *Creative Art* then, again requires a new kind of energy as well as the other two. Finally, neither physical nor intellectual nor emotional effort will enable a man to discover and remember himSelf – that requires energy quite different again – the energy of Consciousness.

Since that time the whole trend of physiology has been to regard the central nervous system as one whole, presided over by its most newly evolved part, the ‘forebrain’. All the big discoveries in neurology of the last three decades have tended to reveal the infinite complexity of this part which lies deep to, and above, the level of the eyes. Similarly in psychology the tendency has been to regard man as the possessor of *one mind* with many levels of control, though here the term ‘mind’ is still being used in far too narrow a sense.

Also the sciences today still continue to take the human mind as a finished article (slightly different, it’s true, from his cousin the ape’s), static and fixed, ‘for better for worse, for richer for poorer’. It seldom seems to occur to the academic scientist that his own and other human minds are able to work only in a very limited way because human consciousness at its present level is embryonic; and that there are well-authenticated ways of bringing into actuality man’s potential as a self-conscious being.



The circle represents Divine Consciousness and Will
ANTAHKARANA – CAUSAL LEVEL

For us, however, it would be of great benefit to have some model or picture of the mind *as one thing* (whose potential could be raised almost indefinitely by changes of energy and consciousness), but without analysing it into its different parts – a process which has a disintegrating instead of an integrating or unifying effect. That was the trouble about our fragmentary western System with its seven centres and all the other complexities we had to learn.

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Our own search for such a model during the last decade has been a bit like a detective story! The Shankaracharya's answers always depend entirely on the questions asked him; and it has been only recently that we have been able to ask the right questions.

On a visit to him in 1965 I put a question about 'Conscience'. Our interpreter looked the word up in a dictionary which gave the Sanskrit equivalent as 'ANTAH-KARANA'. So while I was putting questions about 'Conscience', His Holiness was replying about 'Antah-karana' which seemed to be very different; and so the subject was dropped.

Last year I discovered in a book on Indian philosophy that the Sankhya and Yoga Systems agreed on the following description:

Pure Consciousness (the Master or Supervisor) is unconditioned and does not command or control. The conditioning functions tend to work of themselves, automatically and blindly; the real centre and governor of the life-process being the so-called 'Inner organ' (Antah-karana). But Consciousness like light, illuminates and seems to be reflected in the process to a lesser or greater extent... The relation has been compared with that in the Hindu game of chess between the King and his omnipresent general (Senapati) – the equivalent of the Queen in our western game – who is in the powerful, serving, yet commanding position of the 'Inner organ'.

The game is played for and around the King, who has himself not to become involved, while the Queen and the other pieces are, in a sense, his servants.

At the time of this discovery (the only reference to the 'Inner organ' that I have been able to find in the literature), I was keeping up our correspondence through a new and rather uncertain interpreter who was sending translations of my letters up to His Holiness at Badrinath in the Himalayas and relaying translated answers to me after much delay. In one of these (13th August 1969) he was quoted as saying:

The Antahkarana is the 'inner organ' as you say, but out of it arise all such things as you call 'the mind', the fluctuating 'consciousness', the 'conscience', the 'head', the 'heart', which command the organs of sensation and action. According to the Vedanta, it is that 'place' or call it the 'medium' within us through which mind, emotion, senses all receive their respective powers to function; and these different functions are like the separate mechanisms or 'elements' of a motor-car, and they all should function together as parts of one engine. As such, the Antahkarana is present in all of us as the 'Causal body'. However, its functioning differs greatly from man to man and from time to time, being dependent on the relative concentration of the three Gunas.

Pause for discussion.

That was as much as I knew until this last visit, during which the idea of the 'Inner Organ' ran like a unifying thread through all our twelve talks, because we kept asking about it. Before going, I *did* find some clues as a result of searching through the records of previous conversations.

1. Just as you have been often told that there is a kingdom of the Intellect, so there is a kingdom of Emotion. In this domain of emotion what you call 'conscience' arises. It is one of those things which exist in seed form and this happens in the Antahkarana which, though composed of many elements on the subtle level, on the Causal level is all one thing...

Again, the Causal body is not subject to space and time. The physical body can never have communion with the deity; it is only through the Antahkarana that a man will have experience of such communion. In another simile, one person can listen to a piece of music and immediately get into the stream created by the music and so enjoy happiness, peace and unity; whereas another person might go by the way of Yoga and have to undergo rigorous discipline for months and months. Even then he would meet with numerous obstacles (which might prove insurmountable) before he reaches his goal. In the domain of the Antahkarana things can be done more quickly and easily.

This had reminded me of the following passage in a book by the Russian Symbolist poet, Alexander Blok:

There are, as it were, two spaces; one is historical and exists in the calendar, the other is musical and cannot be reckoned. It is only time and space of the first order that are invariably present in the civilised consciousness. We live in the second only in those moments in which we feel that we are close to Nature, when we surrender ourselves to the musical wave which rises out of the Universal Orchestra.

The Collapse of Humanism (trans. Isaiah Berlin)

2. At one talk on a related subject, again in 1965, I quoted to the Shankaracharya Christ's saying in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven where neither moth nor rust corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal'; and asked, 'How do we do that?'

S. The 'treasure' in question is the treasure of the Atman. The material treasures for which everyone strives will all be left behind at death, because they are all perishable. You may collect stores of food, money or other possessions, but as it is quoted in Christ's saying, either it will be broken into and stolen or eaten by moth. One can see glimpses in one's own life of the fact that there are two kinds of treasure – the treasures of gold, etc. and the treasures of knowledge and creativity in the arts. If you have acquired knowledge or art, it is not subject to anybody's permission for use; no one can steal it and moths can't devour it. You can use it anywhere, any time, whenever you feel like using it. This type of knowledge, moreover, can transcend the barriers of land, nations, races and duration of lifetimes. By analogy one can get a glimpse of the treasure in heaven.

The bad influences in the world are like moth, rust and thieves. Once you are surrounded by them you are being eaten up. Through discipline one becomes immune to all those influences. It is possible that one under discipline may fall into the hands of these thieves, and for some time forget the real treasure; but when the time comes in his life when he gets a shock, then, again reminded of the permanent treasure, he would proceed towards the right path.

I have since learnt that the process of 'laying up treasure in heaven', whether of knowledge or art or understanding of the Divine Self must take place in the Inner Organ, the Antahkarana.

3. He told us also in 1965 that:

In each individual and within each Antahkarana the knowledge of all 'names and forms', with their possibilities, is present in seed form. The individual doesn't know that he knows.

If we all patiently try for short periods each day to come to a 'state' or 'place' where there is no division into separate parts, nor any movement of different elements of the mind; we shall be gradually able to understand all this material we've just been given, our days will be different, and happiness and unity less elusive.

Better not ask too many questions yet because none of us can answer them; but go on a search into yourSelf!

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