

23 June 1975

## READING 6

### PART 1

So far we have described the organism in two dimensions – concentric circles on a flat surface. For ‘plane beings’ there is no ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ – only ‘inner’ or ‘outer’. Things become clearer if we can introduce a third dimension by (as it were) pulling the centre of the circles up at right angles to the plane of the paper or screen (see Figure overleaf):

Between ‘Absolute’ (All) and Absolute (Nothing), there must be many attitudes about himself a man could have, many degrees of consciousness more or less subjective, and many ways of calling himself ‘I’. In the figure we depict a solid opaque or ‘physical’ body below; this ‘body of flesh and bones’ has no way of thinking of its whole Self as ‘I’, being divided into myriads of little separate consciousnesses all governed by some ‘life principle’ which disappears when the body dies.

The feeling of ‘I’ we have, appears on the ‘psychological’ level, and we must realise that permeating the opaque body there is a *subtle or transparent body*. This has been envisaged to some extent by physiologists like Sir Charles Sherrington (*Man on his Nature*) who described molecular forms shaping the physical tissues.

But this subtle world (as ordinarily experienced) is a dream world where changes take place at high speed and where there is nothing solid to take hold of. So if we want to progress towards the realization of our full potential, we must begin to recognise the presence of a *luminous or causal body*, the home of the Atman or individual Consciousness which is of the same Nature as the Super-Consciousness of the Universe.

If we interpret this picture (See Figure overleaf) as a spindle set spinning by the Pure Consciousness of the Absolute, we can see why human thought has never quite forsaken the idea of Destiny or Fate. To Homer (9th century BC), Destiny was a single Being presiding over all the warring Gods on Olympus who, in turn, controlled the destinies of men.

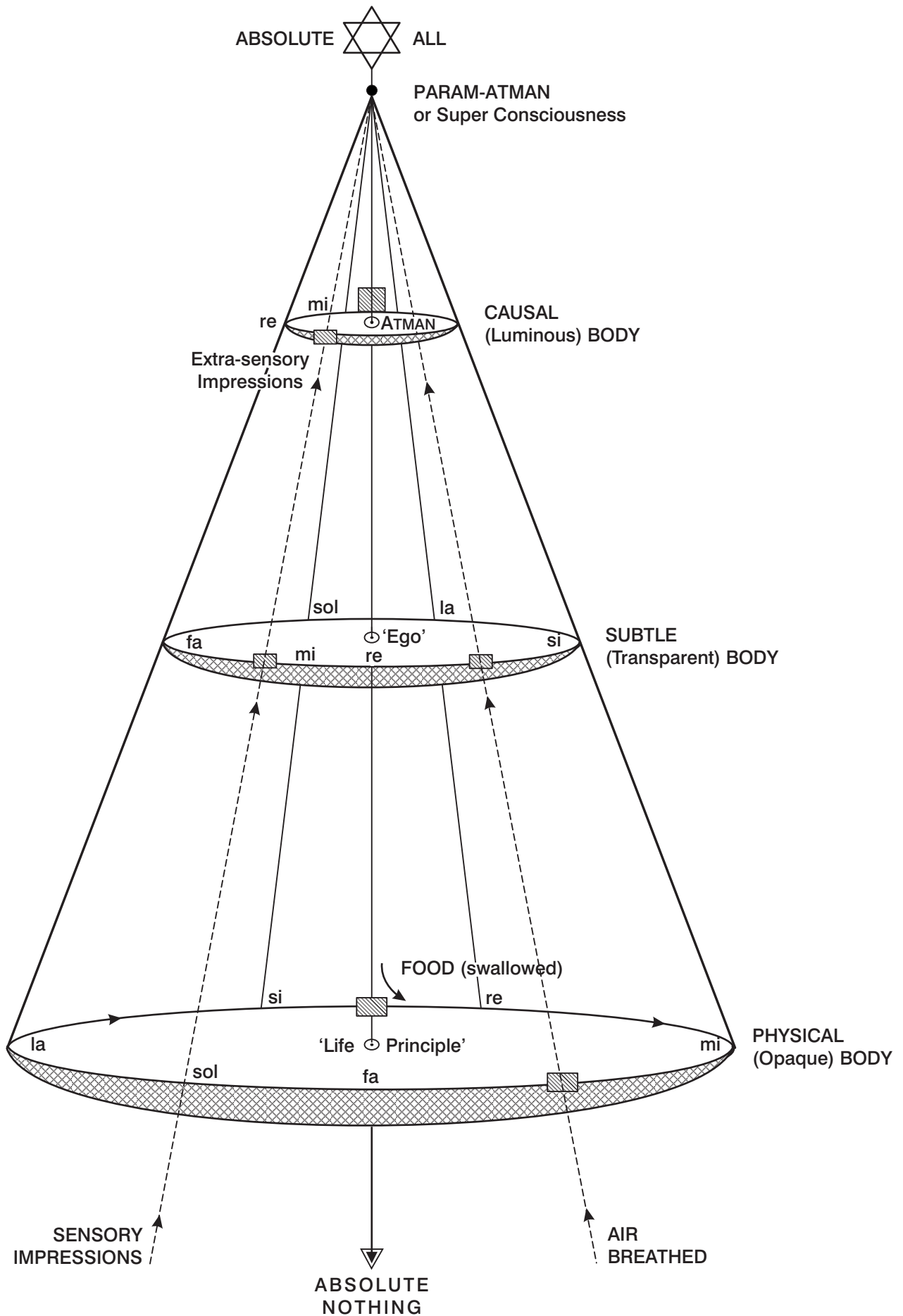
To Hesiod, a little later, there were 3 Fates whom he called the ‘daughters of night’ – Clotho, who winds the yarn on the spindle, Lachesis, who weaves the pattern of individual destiny, and Atropos, who cuts the thread at death.

This is like the picture His Holiness presents to us of Param-Atman and the three Gunas. But whereas in primitive thought destiny was blind Chance; in our Teaching it is Conscious and benevolent. Man can read his own fate through Meditation and Knowledge of the Absolute, turning the laws of Nature to his own advantage – as in the words of Sri Krishna:

He who loves Me and only Me with unfaltering devotion, shall rise above the Gunas to merge with my Being. For I am the refuge of the Spirit, the Eternal and Unchanging, the Source of right action and of infinite Joy.

For the movement of the spindle is the illusion of Maya, and if man’s consciousness can be still, all his possibilities are seen to lie in eternal liberation from the iron law of Destiny.

When we do the spinning or weave the carpet at our Movements to Music or when the Dervishes spin the pattern of the Mukabeleh, we should keep this picture at the back of our minds, and then we will connect what we are doing with the spindle of the universe. In the last Selam of the Mukabeleh the spinning movement round the floor has ceased, as each Dervish has found himself and turns on his own place.



## PART 2

### Some questions from the New Group (Dr. Arthur Connell's):

R.W. I was wondering about the Gunas; whether when trying to get going on something one has first to overcome the inertia of not wanting to do it; and then overcome getting too involved in it – in that order?

Dr. C. As we were taught by Mr. Ouspensky, there are in fact six possible combinations of the three Forces according to their place in a triad.

In your example you begin with Tamas (inertia), and this has to be overcome by active force (Rajas) to take the first step or two towards the desired result. This is of the same nature as those triads in the Food diagram where more powerful matter (enzymes) act on inert or raw material. It is a process by which finer matter is selected and separated from the grosser matter which is got rid of.

It is the same with Air, where the oxygen is selected from the much greater volume of nitrogen, and then conveyed by the haemoglobin to the tissues. It is also what we have to do when selecting and purifying impressions.

But your example gives a different kind of process which has to come later – a process we might call 'transformation'. Just as the products of food are suddenly transformed by a new process – oxidation – so impressions, having been selected, have to be transformed; and this is done by bringing to bear on them some powerful idea.

Find some more first-hand psychological examples like that, and you will be able to classify human actions according to the properties or order of the three Gunas. A man who can Do can pick the appropriate kind of action to achieve a given result, just as a carpenter picks the tool he wants.

P. J. What would be the effect of the Air octave going on?

Dr. C. The most striking physical example of this is to be found in athletics when you get your 'second wind'. Whether in running or in climbing a mountain one experiences at a certain point a sudden easing of the physical strain and a great increase in the efficiency of the body. This, in fact, is due to the Air octave going on.

In athletes, of course, this ability is greatly increased by training. But try to find examples like this in intellectual pursuits and in artistic creativity.

K.S. Should one try to understand it on a personal experience level?

An example was given (with which P. J. also agreed) of putting the Work against negative emotions to clean himself and his mechanical reactions to a situation.

Mrs. A.C. Having heard this example, I would like to hear more about shocks. Are we to understand that the Shocks, when they occur, wake us up?

Dr. C. This is what is meant by a 'Conscious Shock'.

Mrs. E.L. Is there a way of improving breathing to carry on the octave?

After Dr. C. had explained that we could not work directly on breathing, they together

agreed that negative thoughts led to tension which upset the breathing; so if we do what we are advised to do (i.e., psychologically), the physical breathing and circulation will help to carry on the octave.

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After meditation, Dr. C. asked first (in relation to the Conscious Shocks) whether anyone had been using the Easter Programme?

Mrs. E.L. Yes, I have used it. By remembering some part, it can stop thought and imagination, and one can go on to do all the things that have to be done.

After re-reading about the Gunas or aspects of energy...

K.H. Is it the same thing as saying that static is converted into dynamic energy?

Dr. C. I think that is an example of this triad.

K.H. I was also thinking of the Food octave. It enters as gross energy conveyed by inert matter and is converted into dynamic energy.

Dr. C. The enzymes which do this converting are alive...

K.S. A painter sees all this chaos of the world and makes art out of that. Is this the same or something different?

Dr. C. This triad must enter into art, but artistic creation starts with some very strong emotional drive.

(Dr. R. And this drive must persist through all the technical difficulties – even in a painter who has by long discipline acquired the necessary skill. So although that triad enters into art, original Art is greater and rarer.)

K.S. What interests me in painting is seeing suddenly in the chaos an order in the chaos, or what appears to be chaos.

Miss S.T. (a painter): When asked if she, too, sees it like that, replied: 'Yes, absolutely – seeing a formula.'

(Dr. R. Would she include also a pattern or rhythm?)

K.S. Trying to think of it in relation to dynamic energy, you might look at a scene that could be considered vulgar or chaotic, or whatever; but when the underlying order emerges and you express it, isn't that taking something inert and transforming it?

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## NOTE

This conversation seems very well worth recording, since it arrived at a quite magical level with only a very little delicate steering.

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