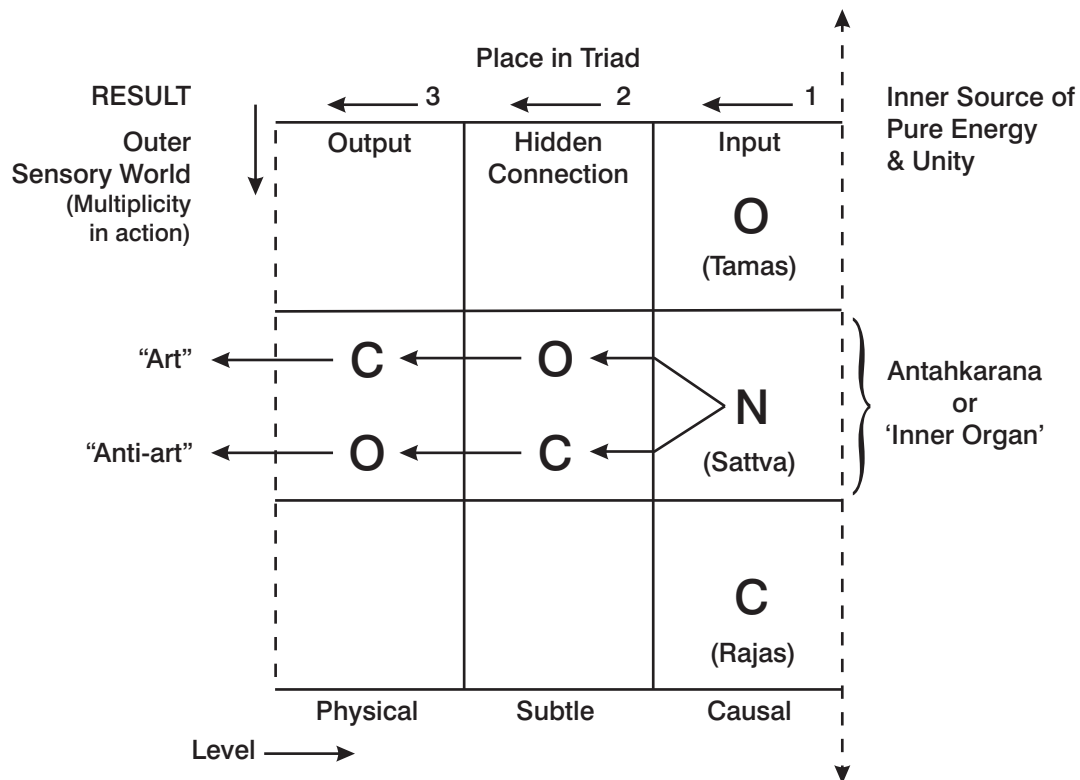


1 March 1976

READING 5

PART 1

Here is a simple basic picture of the 'Diagram of the Three Forces or Gunas' shown on the screen last Monday.



a) The three storeys (*from above downwards*) represent the anatomical situation of the organs of reason ('Head'), of emotion ('Heart') and of action ('Hand'). The Shankaracharya calls 'Antahkarana' (literally 'Inner Organ') that part of the Causal level where unity with the pure energy is first felt, and recently said once more that it is *felt* 'between the heart and the throat' – that is between the emotional feeling and its expression by the voice (larynx). Man's machinery is similar to our projector, the screen, the light and the power; and these are the media through which the white light is broken up as by a prism into the three elements (Oxygen or Tamas, Nitrogen or Sattva, and Carbon or Rajas).

b) *From right to left* are the three places in any given phenomenon: Input (1) on the Causal Level, Hidden Connection (2) on the Subtle Level and Output (3) on the Physical Level, resulting in one or other of the six possible combinations which give rise to the multifarious activities of man in his external environment (left).

We show the two possibilities here only in relation to the emotional function, governed by Nitrogen or Sattva, to illustrate the following description just received.

Mr. Howitt's first question (First audience Sunday 18th Jan 1976):

N.G.H. How can we know for sure which actions lead to purification of the heart, so that liberation may be obtained through Self-realization?

S. That action which gives us joy in the beginning in the middle and at the end, that action is Sattvic. This kind of action would be such that we would not need to hide it from anyone, and we should never repent of it.

Such an action is good in the worldly as well as the spiritual field. We don't approve of the attitude of devoting ourselves to meditation only, and thereby adopting an escapist attitude from worldly activities. That can create the misunderstanding that meditation makes a man lazy, so it should not be our attitude.

Meditation gives us energy; it makes us able to do our worldly duties more efficiently. What an ordinary person accomplishes in ten hours, through meditation we can do in half the time. So we must express this attitude to anyone who thinks that meditation is for lazy people and is not meant for the active.

N.G.H. Is meditation one of the main methods for the purification of the heart? Does meditation in itself purify the heart or does one have to do physical actions as well?

S. Actions also; those actions which we need not hide from anybody, those are necessary. Actions relating to your family or country; those actions which are devoid of narrowness or pretence. Actions related to those who are very special to us, who are near to us, and connected to us.

(Note. One needs gradually to get accustomed to this picture of man's 'house of three storeys', and get into the way of 'putting questions to it'. Then many unconnected fragments of truth will become connected.

For example: in the context of this paper it can be seen that the combination $N \rightarrow C$ is explosive as in chemistry. Impulses arising in the heart need to be 'tempered' with reason (O), or disaster may follow.

In meditation we reverse these processes and turn inwards to produce or release more Sattva.)

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PART 2. (Mainly for the New Groups)

The Question of Terminology

What symbols suit us best for a description of the interaction of matter and energy today? Why do we choose to revive those used by Mr. Ouspensky so long ago? What is the significance of the words Carbon (C), Oxygen (O), Nitrogen (N) and Hydrogen (H) which were borrowed by our Western System at the beginning of the nineteenth century just after the discoveries of Lavoisier, Priestley and Cavendish? Those, you may remember, replaced the old Alchemical terms 'Fire, Water, Air and Earth' which stemmed from Plato's *Timaeus*, and the Sanskrit equivalents which are used by the Shankaracharya in his cosmological teaching.

Carbon ('fire') describes matter as the positive medium of action; Oxygen ('water') as the negative medium of counter-action which brings activity to an end; Nitrogen ('air') as the invisible medium of equilibrium or harmony between the two opposites; and Hydrogen ('earth') as the primordial stuff of which the universe is made. Both systems use these symbols taken from

physical chemistry for the subtle and causal levels as well. It seems that in the physical world these four names have come into their own again, and have a special significance today.

For some of the reasons for this present point of view, I am indebted to Mr. Colin Lucas who writes (February 23rd, 1976):

The following introduction to an essay by George Wald in the *Penguin Science Survey 1968 (Biology)* entitled 'Stars and Living Organisms' gives a new and immediate interest to the meaning of these four words:

About 99% of the living parts of living organisms are made of four elements – hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon. Most of this is water; but even with that removed, 95% of what remains is made of these four elements... these alone offer the constellation of properties upon which life depends. For this reason I think they are irreplaceable...

George Wald goes on to point out an even more surprising fact about these four elements. Not only do they form the substance of life on earth, but these same elements play an equally important part in our sun itself, by enabling hydrogen (the basic material of the universe) to be condensed to the 'inert gas' helium, and so to provide the radiation upon which life on this earth depends:

All life on earth depends ultimately on sunlight, that is on photosynthesis performed by plants. If one enquires into the source of radiation in such a main-sequence star as the sun... a remarkable correspondence emerges. Sunlight arises from the condensation of hydrogen to helium... The elements that accomplish this transformation in the stars are the same four that principally constitute living organisms... In these later generation stars such as our sun... a way of 'burning' hydrogen to helium occurs, catalysed by carbon and oxygen, in which nitrogen is an intermediate. This is the CNO (Carbon) cycle... a single turn of this cycle under such conditions as obtain towards the centre of the sun takes on an order of one hundred million years.

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