

14 March 1977

READING 5

PART 1. A WESTERN TERMINOLOGY

We must get ahead with our systematic study. Looking at the diagram in Reading 4, we see a column of figures on the right hand side, which is called the 'Table of Hydrogens'. At the beginning of the 19th century following on the new chemistry created by Lavoisier, Priestley and Cavendish (the basis of today's Periodic Table of Elements) a new terminology was introduced in Europe (it is believed, by the Freemasons) which was designed to replace the medieval 'Elements' – earth, water, fire, air and ether. The various kinds of matter were seen not only as differing in respect of measurable physical characteristics, like mass, volume, density, duration etc., but also in respect of the kind of energy it was conducting in any given reaction. Matter when not conducting – matter with only potential energy was called Hydrogen and was regarded as the raw material of the big world. Today we know that the 'dust' in outer space consists of frozen Hydrogen atoms, and that the stars are great furnaces for transforming Hydrogen into Helium and a few other elements.

A given matter when conducting 'Positive Force' was called 'Carbon'; when conducting 'Negative Force' the same matter was called 'Oxygen'; and when conducting 'Neutralizing' or 'combining' force was called 'Nitrogen'. This idea came originally from the Indian three Gunas – Carbon for Rajas, Oxygen for Tamas and Nitrogen for Sattva. But you will see from a few examples that the Gunas are a special application relating to Self-realization; and the Western 'Elements' are much more universal as well as more flexible. Now, after a whole century's advances in organic chemistry, these four elements are regarded as the basic constituents of life. Whatever other elements may be present (as iron in haemoglobin or magnesium in chlorophyll), those four must be there to prove the existence of 'life' – it's essentially what the Viking programme is searching for in the samples from Mars!

Triads of three elements combined at every hydrogen level (as shown by the brackets in the diagram) differ both in respect of the *order of action* of the forces (Ouspensky's system) or in respect of their relative concentration (Shankaracharya). In this particular diagram, two of the possible six combinations are shown. *Creation* (reading the three octaves downwards) starts with Carbon combining with raw material (Oxygen) to give birth to a new level of matter Nitrogen: C–O–N. This is the triad of 'Evolution' – as when from the prototype 'dog' appear all the varieties of dogs derived from interbreeding. It is the same triad that man uses in the gradual improvement of cars on the production line from one blueprint or building houses from an architect's plan. Carbon, active effort, must initiate every step – bricks do not assemble themselves into houses on their own!

On the other hand when we read the three octaves from the bottom *upwards* we are studying a 'return to the source', a *transformation of dense and heavy matter into finer*, as expressed in alchemy: 'Learn to separate the fine from the coarse'. To start with an example from a low level (Hydrogen 768), the solid matter part of which can be used as food for man (sometimes assisted by cooking). Having got your meat and two veg. on the plate in front of you, you take a

mouthful. But, long before that, the delicious aroma wafting from the kitchen has made your mouth water and has also caused a flow of the powerful enzymes of the saliva, gastric, pancreatic and intestinal juices, so that these are now ready to complete Stage 1 (384) which is the separation of the soluble building stones (salts, amino-acids, fats, sugars and vitamins) from all the unwanted residue which is then prepared for elimination (1536). One more step of further digestion is performed in the 'cauldron of the liver' (to supply energy for immediate use or storage) which will take the venous blood to the right side of the heart (192) and the mi-fa interval – the 'shock' for which is given by the entry of air into the lungs and the formation of arterial blood with its full complement of hormones and chemical messengers (96).

Here again natural evolution has supplied the necessary Carbon in the form of haemoglobin (and the tissue pigments) to take the 'digestion of air' to its own mi-fa interval at level 48. So from birth to death the digestion of food and air continue in sufficient degree to keep the physical organs in mechanical operation. But in respect of *sensory impressions evolution has not provided an adequate amount of Carbon*; so we really make very little energy out of those myriads of sensations which are the raw material of our consciousness: 'I never saw a sunset like *that*, Mr. Turner!' said the lady visitor to his studio. 'Don't you wish you *could*, Ma'am?' he replied. Therefore in the development of consciousness man has to proceed further by his own efforts; just as the creative artist, the tea-taster or the wine-taster has to be trained for his job.

Turning thoughts, dispersion of the mind and selfish identification have to be overcome by living in the present moment and attending to its needs and opportunities.

(Pause: Please arrange to bring some more examples to illustrate Mr. Ouspensky's statement: 'In the state of identification which occupies all our waking hours, a person does not see and does not hear.')

PART 2. AN EASTERN TERMINOLOGY

We have, till lately, considered it impossible to relate that Western terminology to the Shankaracharya's Eastern one which preceded it by many centuries; but this diagram based on the Enneagram has now enabled us to do this. But don't rush it, take a few weeks; after all, it has taken some of us forty years!

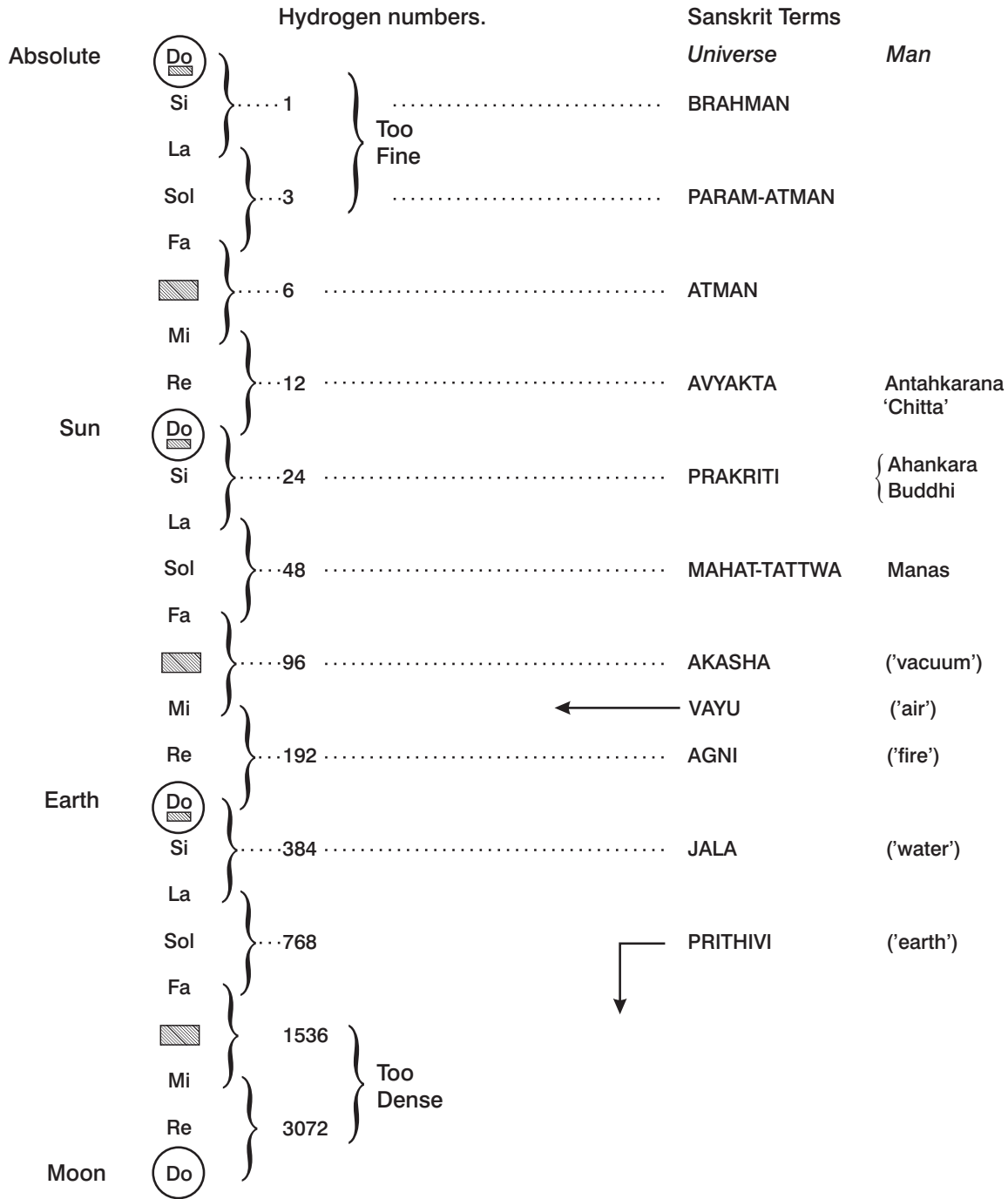
So today we can only make a start – again with the diagram of three octaves before us:

One of the earliest stories we heard from him was the one about the 'Seven Gates'.

Briefly:

A certain king announced to his subjects that he intended to abdicate and would hand over the keys of his kingdom to the first person who came to him at 4 o'clock in the afternoon on the same day in a week's time. Many of his subjects thought it a good idea to get out. But the king had set up a series of attractions at each of the seven gates from the edge of the city to his audience chamber, with the object of selecting the best candidate. People stopped off to enjoy these enticements and all forgot their quest, except one single man who reached him at the appointed time and inherited the kingdom. That 'one man' we were told, was the Atman – the True Self – of the same nature as the King.

(Record, 29 November 1963)



(FCR refers to the simple diagram in 77/8 p.36 but for greater clarity the diagram given to the Senior group in 77/6 p.29 (Figure 2) is printed here.)

Nine years later R. opened the discussion by asking him to explain the story further. This was his advice (to which we have now added the Hydrogen numbers in the diagram):

The seven gates are the seven covering layers of Prakriti or the manifested nature of each individual human being (24 and the two lower octaves); such are the five elements – earth, water etc. (Hydrogens 1536, 768, 384, 192 and 96); and two elements of 'Mind' – Manas (48) and Buddhi (24); enclosing in the most inaccessible centre of the Antahkarana (12) the Jiva-Atman and Param-Atman (Hydrogens 6 and 3). The individual Self (Jiva-Atman) actually sits in the lap of the Universal (Param-Atman); but the trouble is that Jiva-Atman, in spite of such close proximity, possesses an external outlook and feels limited and constrained by those external layers of man's nature,

Prakriti; i.e. the seven gates. If Jiva-Atman would only turn its eyes inwards through meditation, then it would see where it really is, namely in the lap of Param-Atman. Then the seven gates cease to matter, and there is a state of unbroken joy all round.

(Record, 28 January 1971)

(Pause for Meditation)

Comment: this is the wonderfully simple truth, carefully preserved over twenty-five centuries from the first Shri Shankara the great champion of Advaita (non-dualism). Only the top three Hydrogen levels (like the Christian Trinity) are permanently and fully real – the rest (though all too substantial) are changeable and impermanent. Self fulfilment therefore is not a matter of creating anything new, but simply of purifying our nature till we can pass straight through the seven gates, whenever we meditate, to that state of unbroken joy.

Here then, are two very different languages both expressing the same truth. Which do you prefer? Which in other words gives you most Sattva – the much-needed Nitrogen or ‘Third Force’ on all levels?

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