

5 June 1978

READING 5

The subject chosen for this term – Vyashti and Samashti as a lead up to the Western teaching on Cosmoes – has again last week led to questions and discussions which have been enthralling and interesting to me. I've only managed to read reports from the two new group meetings, but have no doubts the others were just as rich. We plan this week to have another short interim paper before essaying a fresh description of Cosmoes which we intend to give out at the Meditation meeting the following week.

The Shankaracharya keeps speaking of two methods of approach to study, both of which should be used and both of which have Sanskrit names usually translated wrongly as 'addition' and 'subtraction'. They really contain a much bigger meaning – rather more like 'differentiation' and 'integration' as used in our calculus. The tedious old 'dominant hemisphere' is always picking things to pieces; the scientists mostly break down everything into constituent parts hoping to find some really ultimate particle. This mechanical process when over-done is (as we find in our own thoughts and at our meetings) the best way of rapidly destroying some creative idea. But 'All the king's horses and all the king's men will not put Humpty Dumpty (the idea) together again'.

The process to which the quiet hemisphere can bring such a useful contribution (when full of energy and playing its proper role), *integration*, is far more difficult and is achieved only by what we sometimes recognise as 'inspiration'. At its best it demands presenting the problem to the Causal level in all its stillness and receiving an answer from the Atman. This is how we want to use the Doctrine of Cosmoes this year; because always before we seem to have taken it analytically. You will hear it as a very simple framework rather like one of the long-lasting symbolical expressions (like the one Joe Skeaping quoted at the new group: 'As above so below'.)

In an attempt to define the relation of the *unit*, Vyashti, to the *whole*, Samashti, or the relation of one Cosmos to the next, the analogy of the tree and the seed was given to one of the new groups somewhat in this way:

Any shrub or tree produces myriads of seeds every year; the tree is infinite in relation to one of the seeds and is far greater than all the seeds put together; yet each seed is a replica in miniature of its parent tree repeating again and again in all details the characteristics of the species.

Joe Skeaping, again, had this to say about that analogy: 'I feel this is a very good description of the relationship of the Samashti and the Vyashti – the bigger and the smaller. (but *which is the Greater?*) That's as far as I can see it; it is the potential that is finally to be realized for the one to become the other. If we wanted (he went on) to see and understand the structure of Cosmoes what would be the best way to approach that side of things? I find it so very interesting. Is an emotional approach needed?'

That perhaps could be our chief question this week: though there were other constructive remarks made at meetings into which one longs to go deeper. In this paper there's only space for two of these, both asked at the Guyatt's new group:

1. Chris Grant. Cells don't regard themselves as unique do they?
2. Martin Redfern. The main categories fit so well together. I would like to hear the parts in between. What is between us and a jellyfish?

Both these questions lead to two fundamental points:

First. Which cells is he speaking of? There are almost as many different kinds of cell as there are families of species in organic life. In both cases, from the physical point of view contemporary science knows all these down to the smallest detail. But all *that* really doesn't help much when you come to the subtle level which is about how these different species regard *themselves*. For example, different species of jellyfish all come under the label 'marine hydrozoan coelenterates' but students of Consciousness might want to know how cells or jellyfish regard themselves and that fraction of the world of which they can be aware, to see by comparison our own potential.

Take Martin Redfern: We know he belongs to the family *Homo sapiens*, that he is English in race and white in colour; but anyone who knows him really well could infer what small fraction of the world he *could* be aware of. But God Almighty couldn't tell what he is actually going to make of his endowment, how he is going to regard himself and other people in the world around him. A fully Realized man would have to get to know Martin and see him in action in different situations before he could even assess the probabilities.

Secondly. As regards the 'cell cosmos' next to ourselves (referred to by Chris Grant). Sherrington pointed out in *Man on his Nature* that it requires the synchronous action of many thousand cells to make any impact on man's consciousness at all; and even a large nucleus of cells cannot work *separately*; each cell has up to some two hundred local connections with neighbouring cells and through their main trunks with other nuclei at a distance.

So we quickly get lost if we go into too much detail. What is important in trying to answer Joe Skeaping's question is to think like this:

'If mankind is the growing-point or spearhead in the evolution of organic life what kind of cell is the growing-point of man? That is, what kind of cell contains potentially *all* the possibilities of man?'

And in answer to Martin Redfern:

'What are the different intermediate stages between ourselves and men who have realized the full human potentiality?' Jellyfish don't matter so much: when I was a small boy I was stung by one in the sea near a beach in Ceylon. Much dismayed I asked my mother, 'Did he do that *on purpose*?' She couldn't answer – nor can we!

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