

20 November 1978

READING 4

STILLNESS

No doubt about it, Reading 3 *is* difficult; for in trying to please everybody we seem only to have crammed too much into it at one time. Two adverse reactions have been noted – as described in the old conundrum: ‘What is the difference between a hairdresser and a sculptor?’ Answer: ‘A hairdresser curls up and dyes; a sculptor makes faces and busts’. So this short paper must be for reassurance and clarification. We don’t yet want to abandon our objective of learning to use the Symbol, since a lot of our hounds have caught the scent and are in full cry – to change the metaphor once more!

Those groups who have not yet read Part 2 of Reading 3, could read it this week if they realise that what the Shankaracharya calls ‘Three Rooms’ we are calling ‘Three *Storeys* or Floors’ (each of which contains three *rooms* determined once again by his Three Gunas). Also that his labelling is different, for he is looking from above and we mostly try to see it from below. We want to use the letters A B & C for the three storeys since this will make things easier when we study Mr. Ouspensky’s six triads.

To clarify things we should start with the base (C) of the triangle which we call our ‘mind’ (subtle level) or ‘brain’ (physical level); for this is the part which we can observe at first-hand, and when *still* it reflects the others as in a mirror. Only mankind possesses this capacity. Though all parts of the nervous system contribute to our knowledge, yet only in C2 (the stilled or Sattvic mind) do we *know* that we know.

His Holiness tells us how to bring this about. Remember that he is calling this part (C) ‘Buddhi’, the right-hand side (A) of the triangle ‘Manas’, and the left (B) ‘Emotional Centre’. He put this very clearly on one occasion from which we offer you this extract:

S. Buddhi is subject to the Three Gunas; it is influenced by time and place, so the surroundings usually determine in which direction Buddhi is going to produce its decisions, ideas and thoughts. If people are subjected to Sattvic influences, their Buddhi will give rise to good decisions and better thoughts; but if Rajas or Tamas predominate, certainly it will react in those other ways. This is the condition of undisciplined people whose Buddhi is not stilled. But on a higher level where Buddhi is always *still*, then the outside influences have no effect; such a man could walk in anywhere and remain unaffected. But ordinary people can experience many shifts in one single day as if the driver of a motor car were to change with every change of gear he has to make on a single journey, according to the gradient and the traffic on the road. He should not be concerned about the gear changing but only about his destination.

In good company or in the presence of a Realized man, Buddhi would take the Sattvic influence; in active life one has to use Rajas, for there can’t be *any* activity without Rajas; and when going to bed one has to go to sleep in Tamas. In fact the predominance of none of the three in their proper place is bad; so one doesn’t have to feel guilty over the predominance at a given moment, for Sattva cannot predominate all the time...

...

In the realm of Meditation there is no activity of Buddhi; then we surrender the activity of Buddhi for it is only in the outside world that we need it. Manas is by nature full of movement; it will always move around. But when Buddhi gets involved with Manas and goes along with it, then it gets the illusion of movement.

(On p 68 of *A Lasting Freedom* three similes used by His Holiness were given.)

But if stilled, Buddhi can consider the situation and steer a proper course. As long as we are not governed and motivated by Manas we are safe. Buddhi *can* be stilled, for its nature is to be still as long as it is not identified with Manas. So let us ignore Manas and use our Buddhi in the right way.

(Record, 13 October 1965)

Note: The word Buddhi is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Budh' meaning to 'awake or come to, as when recovering from a swoon or fainting fit'. So practise this whenever you 'come to': say to your mind 'Be still! Be still!'

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