

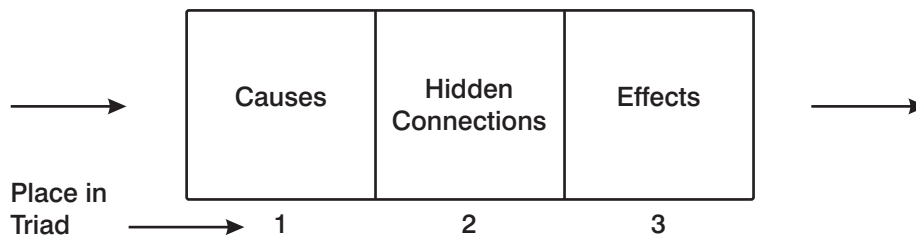
17 November 1980

READING 4**'LAW OF THREE'**

(for 2 weeks)

PART 1

The increasing interest and the penetrating questions the two newer groups are asking about the 'Cosmic Law of the Three Forces' of which so far they have had only a very sketchy account, demands that they should now be gradually introduced to the grandeur of its fuller form. May I ask you to keep just now to the Sanskrit terminology of the Gunas; but in applying them to the Law of Cause and Effect, to take the Primal Three Forces or Aspects of Energy as respectively the inception, maintenance and effect of any new event – like a rigid box of three compartments the contents of which will be changing and infinitely varied. There must be six different combinations of forces taken three together (six triads).



We see that, though greatly tied by tradition and the difficulties of translation, the Shankaracharya in his stories and similes is using the name 'Guna' really for 'Triad' in much the same way as Mr. Ouspensky.

Two triads depend upon movement at every stage and arise in the 'moving centre' (C), two arise in the intellectual department (A) and two in the emotional department (B). Let us take examples he has given of those which depend on moving centre:

1. If you give a good piece of wood to a skilled craftsman, he will be sure to make something beautiful or useful out of it; whereas an ignorant and untrained man will spoil it, or leave it lying about until it rots. In the first case the result has a new life of its own, even continuity since others can copy it. In the second case the result is just nothing at all.

This shows how to answer Joan T's valid objection in the newest group: 'From the reading, both Tamas and Rajas seem imbued with negative qualities. This surely can't be the case?' That was also Mr. Ouspensky's objection for that is how they are written and spoken about in India (hallowed by a rigid interpretation chiefly of Chapter 14 of the Bhagavad Gita). In reality, whether they have good or bad results depends upon their appearance in the right place in the machine and at the right moment.

2. A story illustrates it:

A rich landowner wanted to reward one of his gardeners for faithful service, so put him in charge of one of his estates which happened to contain some sandalwood trees – very valuable wood in India. Returning after some time he was horrified to find that the man had been cutting down the trees and burning them for charcoal

which he sold cheap in the market. Driving the man from the estate he said, 'Do you not realize that quite a small piece of polished sandalwood could be sold for very much more than all the charcoal you would have got by cutting down the trees?'

Try to proceed by finding examples of those two triads which Mr. Ouspensky called 'skilled labour' and 'destruction'; and when you've found good examples on the right scale – not too small (perhaps national or international) – try to find what is needed in the unknown middle compartment to give the result you want. For, of course the Law of Three applies to all three levels, physical, subtle and causal.

Conclusion. Taking those two triads which apply to the external movement, you can see that they are based on the difference between the mechanisms for *voluntary* and *involuntary actions*. Though we often get away with 'thoughtless' or involuntary actions, yet they are the agencies for all 'the evil that men do'. There is a prayer belonging to our Western System. 'Help me to remember myself and avoid all involuntary actions through which alone evil can manifest itself.'

So now try to observe how many of your habitual actions are partly or entirely involuntary. How often do we get away with it, but when does it really matter?

PART 2

There was a reply by H.H. to a question asked by J. R. at our last visit in 1977 which (if you take it slowly paragraph by paragraph) will answer a number of your questions last week.

J.R. At our previous visit (in 1975) H.H. spoke of Sattva as an aid to living in the same way as salt improved the food we eat. We have proved some of the benefits of Sattva which seems to increase rather than diminish with use. Yet there are situations when we long for it, but cannot find the vessel which contains it.

S. As long as this Creation prevails, or we have to live in this Creation the imbalance of these Gunas will always be there, so they cannot come to complete equilibrium, or the Creation will cease. This indicates that we have to accept the fact that all these three Gunas will keep on imposing themselves on certain situations – one has experienced the abundance of Sattva at some times, the abundance of Rajas sometimes, and the abundance of Tamas sometimes. The introduction of the meditation is to bring some sort of shell of Sattva over our lives, so that we have a little more Sattva and we are not agitated by the other two Gunas which are bound to remain there.

The usual situation is that there may be an abundance of Sattva, then Rajas with added Sattva, and then Tamas with added Sattva, and in these situations one performs whatever one has to do, and the ultimate result is a fairly happy one. When there is Rajas only, and one cannot find any Sattva, no traces of Sattva, or Tamas alone seems to take over then one will see that there is Vikshepa, and one will become agitated, or one will become lethargic if Tamas has taken over. But because of our natural disposition we find some kind of balance to eliminate the predominance of those Gunas which are not useful, and there are good reasons to believe that you all manage to do that, but this does not mean that there will never be a situation again where you will be almost overwhelmed by Rajas or Tamas, but this situation is a part of nature, and we can't help it, because nature itself has certain

other plans to keep going. If it does happen, one need not worry really because very soon this will pass over, and like the example given yesterday about the darkness between two lights having no legitimate existence – when there are situations where you feel the need of Sattva, or you are looking for the vessel of Sattva, even if it is not available at that time, there is no reason to feel sorry about it, because next time you will come to the usual natural Sattva which you have, through the system of meditation accumulated in your being, and in your Sanskar – there is no reason for us to be sorry for situations when you can't find the Sattva vessel.

S. continued:

In the 14th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita which describes everything about the three Gunas, Sattva is said to be the symbol of light, Rajas the symbol of activity and Tamas for putting everything to rest, and whatever happens in the whole of Creation, these three things must always be going together, all the time. One cannot select one or the other, because this triformal nature will not work if any one of them is removed, so we have to accept that these three must be there, and they are there for our use. If one wanted to be simply in Sattva, then all the household activities would come to a stop, because it requires some Rajas even to cook our food, and to eat it! To run the School also requires some Rajas, but one cannot allow oneself to be Rajasic all the time, because if you are always active, and do not allow yourself to be happy with Sattva, then the body will very soon become diseased and will run down, and the same goes with Tamas. So one has to accept this situation, and just let it happen, and only through the Tradition which you are following, and the meditation which you are carrying on, will a situation gradually emerge where you will have more Sattva, and it is going to be very slow and gradual.

Even in the medical and physiological set-up every human being is governed by the predominance of one of the humours. According to the Indian tradition there are three – water, fire and air. The man who has abundance of water is always subject to colds and coughs like Mr. Jaiswal (present with a chesty cough!) and the one who has abundance of air, even if he doesn't eat much, you will see that he is always well-built and robust, and the one who has abundance of fire – though he may be very lean and thin, yet he is very active and can keep on doing his work. All this is very natural – it is in the nature of the individual, and so is the interplay of the three Gunas which is in nature itself. If there are situations when one feels the need of Sattva, and if it is not available at that time – don't despair, just allow it to pass because it won't have much effect on you.

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