Purpose, Method, and Policy of this Work

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This tape will be called "The Purpose, the Method, and the Policy of this Work." We shall consider these three items in sequence. The purpose of this work is three-fold: first, the rendering available, as far as may be, the attainment of that which is variously known as Enlightenment, Realization, Awakening, and the attainment of Cosmic Consciousness. Second, to establish the base of reference or viewpoint from which the problem of Awakening is approached, I shall formulate ten fundamental assumptions or postulates. These are treated as assumptions, not because there is not a well established evidence and proof of their validity, or because there is any doubt concerning them, but they are presented in this way with this implication, that while all of the assumptions have been discussed elsewhere, if not on the tapes and writings that we have produced, they are otherwise presented and well established. There is not to be implied, therefore, any essential doubt as to their validity so far as we are concerned. They are presented as assumptions for the purpose of eliminating them as subjects for discussion at this time. They are assumed as valid. Elsewhere they have been discussed, and arguments for and against them are perfectly valid, but not at this time. We are delimiting a field and these assumptions are to be taken as the base from which we approach this field.

We shall present this list of assumptions at this time and then elucidate them to bring out their relevance and meaning subsequently. The assumptions are as follows:

1. That this cosmos and this world with all the creatures in it are developed by a process of evolution.

2. That the principle of a periodicity governs, in part, this process of evolution.

3. That reincarnation of man is a fact.

4. The journey through all kingdoms of nature is a necessity in the progress of the Monad.

5. The development of objective consciousness is by means of steps involving different stages or forms of consciousness.

6. The All is not completely determinant, but is a complex of determinant-indeterminant.

7. At least man has a range of freedom which becomes greater as he evolves; and a subordinate point under this, that therefore he is a responsible, moral being.

8. Assistance may be given to the evolving entity.

9. Ultimate death or annihilation is an impossibility.

10. Creation of an existent out of absolute nothingness is also an impossibility.

We shall proceed now to the elucidation of each postulate or assumption one-by-one. First, consider the principle of *evolution*. Evolution as here understood is not restricted to the view of organic evolution developed initially by Charles Darwin, nor the view of cosmic evolution that has been developed in astrophysics, but is to be understood in a more comprehensive sense; and it is not necessarily a rejection of either the views of organic evolution or of cosmic evolution, but is more comprehensive. To initiate or introduce the idea I am suggesting here, I'll direct your attention to the conception of *evolution* and *involution* as used in arithmetic. There, involution is a process of raising a number to some power, as for instance the sixth power of 2. In that case, the number 2 is used six times as a factor, and we derive the number 64. Evolution is the inverse process by which we seek the root of a given number, *a* for instance. In the case of 64, the sixth root would be the number 2. Evolution is, thus, an unfolding of that number which is infolded by involution in the number 62.[1] The evolution, thus, is a process of rendering explicit that which is the root from which the 64 is derived by being used as a factor 6 times.

This is an illustration only. Applied to the universal process, it implies that the initial process in the development and manifestation of the All is an infolding of the Root of All in an outward manifestation—that Root, thus, being hidden within it. The evolution is a process by which that Root becomes explicitly conscious on the surface; in the beginning, hidden in the depths in that which the psychologists would call the collective unconscious, but which we prefer to call a Root Consciousness. Man, as he exists, is in a state commonly where an awareness of that Root does not generally exist. His redemption or development is to be attained by becoming aware of that Root; and this is the process of yoga and of religion. 'Yoga' etymologically means yoke, that is, a bringing together of that which exists on the surface and that which exists as the Root so that they are part and parcel of each other; and 'religion', in the fundamental sense, means the same thing, for 'religion' etymologically means binding back—binding that which is explicit and apparent back to its Root Source in the Consciousness that exists on the surface and not merely as an unconscious fact in nature.[2]

We shall now consider the second postulate, that is, the one which I called *periodicity*. As the result of further reflection, I have extended this item to include two other features, namely, *equilibrium* and the principle of *dualism*. These three are all interconnected and represent the principle of *law*, in the fundamental sense, which governs the manifestation of the All.

Periodicity refers to the familiar experience spreading throughout all nature that any particular manifestation of a phase, aspect, or quality, is balanced by the presence, in some sense, hidden or explicit, of the opposites of these. Thus, there is no day without a

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[1] Wolff obviously meant to say, ". . . in the number 64."

[2] Wolff may have meant to say, ". . . Consciousness that exists in the depths . . . " rather than ". . . on the surface . . ."

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night, no rising of the sun without a setting of the sun, no birth without a corresponding death, no cold without a corresponding heat, and so on through all phases. Now, in a timeless sense, we may say that these manifestations of an aspect and of the counter aspect is simultaneous, but when spread out in time, they manifest as a periodic process—one phase followed by its counter phase. Thus, we see it in the process of the year. We start with winter, pass through spring to summer, and return through autumn to winter, and so on endlessly. And in the minutia of things, in the great conception of electromagnetic waves, which consists of at least sixty octaves which are called light, of which only one octave is our visible light, but which as a whole proceeds from the long electromagnetic radio waves, through the infrared waves, the visible waves of light, the ultraviolet waves, the radiation waves, and ultimately up to the cosmic waves, which covers the extent of our present knowledge. In all of these we have a manifestation of a certain rhythm, of a wave motion: in the case of light, of waves that are considered to be transverse with the direction of the travel of the light, a moving from side to side; and that again is periodicity manifesting in a very rapid form. And in the pages of history a similar pattern has been traced, as in the conceptions of Spengler, that a culture is born, rises through its primitive stages to its maturity, and then declines until disappearance from this world—reaching at its apex the crown of cultural development of that particular culture, and then, after a brief time relatively speaking, declining until its disappearance. But there is also implied in this principle of periodicity, a hidden movement, a movement into the unconscious, as the psychologists would call it, which is the balancing replica of the manifested phase.

Note for a moment especially the principle of dualism. This is not only essential for manifestation, it is essential for our cognition on the surface of things. We cannot know up without a corresponding down; we cannot know right without a corresponding left; we cannot know any quality or discerned feature without there being its opposite quality or feature. We know these by the principle of contrast. And there can be no good without a corresponding evil. And here an important point must be made: that those who conceive that it is possible to affirm the good and deny the evil are only hypnotizing themselves. They're only blinding their eyes to the whole of the truth. That which we call the negative side has as great reality as the positive side. The up is no more real than the down; the right is no more real than the left; and so it is through all dualities whatsoever.

And finally, let us consider the principle of equilibrium, which embraces the whole of this. Equilibrium means that in all process whatsoever there is a balancing process; that with any progress, there is always a decay, and so on through everything that can be identified as a quality, a state, or a thing. But the law of equilibrium implies that the final sum of all these various manifestations and their complementary opposites, considered in the timeless sense, has involved no break of balance. The whole is as it ever was, considered timelessly.

That which we have been here discussing is none other than the familiar law of *karma*. Mostly people in their understanding of this law have applied it in only a restricted sense as bearing upon the moral consequences of our actions as human beings, but the law really is that which bears the stars in their courses and, likewise, governs the way of the ant and of the electron. It is a universal principle which has, among other of its meanings, the application to moral consequence. In the latter case, no man can perform

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any action, good or bad, but he reaps the fruit thereof ultimately. No man can cheat without paying the price, if not in this life, then in that state beyond this life or in a later incarnation. There is no fooling that which we may call the officers enforcing the law of *karma*. The record is maintained within the psyche or the *Akashic* record. A fool is he who imagines he can cheat this law.

At this point, I would like to develop a figure which is designed to illustrate the action of this law. It calls for the use of a little, really very simple, mathematics—not more than would require that which is given in a high school education—but it will also require the use of the imagination. But this is a good exercise, for remember that visualization, which is a form of imagination, is an important part in much of the Tibetan yoga, and it will not hurt anyone to try to practice this.

Imagine a plane surface which has no thickness whatsoever and which extends to infinity in every direction pointed to by the plane surface. Upon that plane surface, draw two lines infinitely long at right angles to each other. Call the point of their intersection zero. Consider one line as horizontal, which we will call the abscissa or *x*-axis, and the other line that is at right angles, we will call the ordinate or *y*-axis. With the point zero as a center, describe a circle of unit radius. The unit is not to be thought of as an inch or foot or any such number at all; we disregard all purely conventional units of measure. Just consider it as a unit length. Take this as a radius of a circle and it describes a complete circle, the center being at zero. Now, consider that you produce in that circle, one radius coincident with the *x*-axis. Conceive of the circle as rotating in a counterclockwise direction. Consider the radius that was coincident with the *x*-axis as fixed in the circle and rotating with it. We then rotate the circle a limited distance and stop it. Now, we will call the radius *r*, small *r*, and the point of its intersection with the circumference of the circle as large *R*, or capital *R*, uppercase *R*. Drop a perpendicular from the point of intersection to the *x*-axis. Now, there is an angle formed by this radius *r* with the *x*-axis which we will call *theta*. There are certain trigonometric properties, and I will not go into the details of them, but merely state the fact that the ratio of the perpendicular, which we'll call *P*, to the radius of the circle, the line lowercase *r*, is a function that is called the *sine* of the angle *theta*. Now, start the circle rotating again. You'll notice that the perpendicular becomes longer and longer until the radius *r* is coincident with the *y*-axis at which point the angle *theta* has become what we call 90 degrees, in our ordinary parlance, but in this case, we shall use a more scientific way of measuring that angle. Instead of dividing the circle arbitrarily into 360 degrees, we'll divide it by taking the length of the radius and measuring it along the circumference of the circle, and the angle subtended at the center by this length will be called 1 radian. In the complete distance around the circle, there are 2π radians, but for convenience, we do not say a π radian, we say the angle π, leaving the radian understood. Since there are 2π radians in the complete circle, which in ordinary parlance is 360 degrees, at the vertical point, where ordinarily we have developed an angle of 90 degrees, we now say it is an angle of π divided by 2, or in brief shorthand, $\pi/2$. Then when that rotating radius reaches coincidence with the left side of the x-axis, we have an angle of 180 degrees, which is exactly π radians, or the angle π. At 270 degrees, it becomes $3\pi/2$; and at 360 degrees, becomes 2π.

Incidentally, the number π, which I introduced as the number 3.1416 is not a rational number, and the figure given is only an approximation which is valid for

practical purposes. Actually, it is a very special kind of number, a kind which is called a transcendental number, which can never be completely expressed with a finite number of digits. The portion to the right of the decimal point is a nonterminating and non-repeating decimal. But this number is enormously important in certain symbolism and deserves our serious attention. There is much of mystery about it. It is said, according to Piazzi Smyth, who wrote *Our Inheritance of* [in] *the Great Pyramid*, that the Great Pyramid is a monument to this number and therefore must have occupied a very important place in ancient symbolism. And it recurs again in the Kabalah. It is said, also, that the letters employed to write the word 'Elohim' in Hebrew have numerical values which form an anagram of this number to five places. This is an important point to remember, and we will make use of this consideration later.

Returning to our figure of the circle on the plane with the coordinates known as the *x*-axis and the *y*-axis, there are certain further points to remember. Conventionally, we regard the direction from the zero point to the right as positive and to the left as negative, and that the direction upward from that point on the *y*-axis as positive and downward as negative. There are formed here four quadrants bounded by the *x* and *y*-axes and the arcs of the circle. The quadrant that lies to the right of the *y*-axis and above the *x*-axis is called the first quadrant; the one to the left of the *y*-axis and above the *x*-axis, the second quadrant; the one below the *x*-axis and to the left of the *y*-axis, the third quadrant; and the remaining one, the fourth quadrant.

Now return to our rotating circle; we start from the position of coincidence of the radius *r* with the *x*-axis on the right side of zero, and it rotates in the counterclockwise direction. The perpendicular from the intersection of the radius line with the circle, which we called uppercase *R*, the line that is dropped from that to the base, or to the *x*-axis, gradually grows in length until we reach coincidence with the *y*-axis on the upward side, and during all of this time that line has been becoming longer and longer until it becomes the exact length of the radius at coincidence with the *y*-axis. Then as we rotate further, it becomes shorter and shorter until it becomes zero length when the radius line coincides again with the *x*-axis on the left side of the ordinate. During all of this time, the value of that perpendicular line has been positive. It has developed in length and therefore, since it measures the *sine* of the angle *theta*, it grows from zero value to 1 and then descends in value to zero again. Then as we continue, that line grows downward, or in the negative direction, until it becomes −1 at the coincidence with the downward portion of the *y*-axis, and then decreases in length until it becomes zero when coincidence with the original position is attained.

Now, set aside your first plane on which you have the rotating circle, and construct in imagination a second plane with the same system of coordinates intersecting at right angles at the point zero. Upon this plane, we will produce a curve derived from the rotating circle on the first plane. Now, we will use the *x*-axis to measure the angular distance developed by the rotating circle. As we start at zero, as the angle described by the radius *r* is produced and made to grow, we will start on our second plane at the point zero and we will measure to the right a distance that will represent the angular size of the angle produced by the rotating radius. When that angle reaches the point of π/2, that will represent a point on the new *x*-axis that is just the distance to the right from zero of π/2; and when the angle reaches the position π, to the

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left, that will be the distance of exactly π on the *x*-axis; and so on, extending to the right as the rotating circle produces the angles below the *x*-axis until we reach 2π. That will mean that the distance π is exactly 3.14159, and so forth, and 2π would be twice that. Now for the *y*-axis, we will represent the length of the perpendicular *P* at different points in the development of this angle. When it reaches π/2, the distance *P* will equal exactly the length *r*, or the quantity 1, and then descend to zero at 2π. The points between will be measured by the length of the perpendicular *P* at various quantities of the angle that has been reached. We can establish a few of these lengths as points and draw through them a curve. This curve may look at first as though it were a semicircle, but it is not so, because the height is only 1 at the maximum, whereas the linear length is π, which is 3.14159, and so forth. It is a curve of variable curvature throughout its length. As we go on from π, the curve descends below the *x*-axis and produces a mirror image of the original first curve but below the *x*-axis, and finally rises to cross the *x*-axis a second time at 2π, and so on indefinitely, in fact, unto infinity.

We get here what is known as the *sine* curve, and is the representation of all periodicities. We are interested now in one, namely, the periodicity represented by the human life cycles. And here we will let the angle measure time. In other words, think of the growing angle as representing the process of growing time. A child is born at the point zero. He rises in his capacities and unfoldments until he reaches the point π/2 and then declines until he reaches the point π. Then he passes through the cycle below the *x*-axis, which represents the period after death, since he dies at π, and he duplicates this process on the hidden side between lives until the curve reaches the point 2π when he is born again. And then this process continues indefinitely, in fact, to the endless future and ad nauseam.

Now, remember that one of the significances of the breakthrough which is Enlightenment as presented in the Buddhistic literature is that it involves a breaking out of the cycle of endless birth and death and rebirth. And the way that that is achieved can be expressed in mathematical terms in the following way. In this case, I shall not ask you to imagine the process because here we begin to come into some difficulties and some complexities, but I'll merely state the facts. Conceive of our original state in which we move in the endless cycle of birth and rebirth as being a state in which we are oriented to the circle. Now, by a basic transformation, that orientation is shifted to what is known as the equilateral hyperbola. And this is the basis of the mandala which is represented in *The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object*. The equilateral hyperbola also has functions which are akin to the trigonometric functions, and among these there is the hyperbolic *sine* which corresponds to the *sine* curve which we have used to represent the life cycle, but it has a very different form. The hyperbolic *sine* is a curve which starts at minus infinity in the third quadrant and rises in a curve of varying curvature until it is parallel to the *x*-axis at the point zero, and then reverses curvature and proceeds upward in the first quadrant to infinity. Now, this we will let represent the movement to *Nirvana* which is a movement of ascension in place of an endless periodicity in the horizontal direction. It's a curve that moves from depths to heights and not merely in the direction of the horizontal dimension. The endless process of the *sine* curve oscillating from side to side suggests endless repetition, but no attainment. The breakthrough involves ascension to the Transcendent. For that state which we envisage as a combination of these two,

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which might correspond to the conception of *Paranirvana*, I do not yet have a figure, but that is a future possibility for our consideration.

Now, let us proceed back to our original *sine* curve and the rotating circle on our first imagined surface. Now superimpose upon the first circle a second circle, or if you prefer, think of the first circle as a wheel and the second circle as a wheel so that the two have not become merely one circle. Now we will start this second circle, circle two, rotating in a clockwise direction while the first circle rotates in a counterclockwise direction, and both start at the same instant and rotate at the same rate. We will then generate a *sine* curve, or the curve of periodicity, in this form: that as the second circle rotates, the curve produced starts from zero on your second plane, descends to −1 at the point $3\pi/2$ and ascends to intersection of the horizontal *x*-axis at the point π, then rises above the *x*-axis, duplicating the same form, and descends again at 2π and goes below the *x*-axis. We have a mirror image here of our first curve, and I shall use this to represent a further complexity in the whole process.

We turn to a consideration of two seemingly opposed positions presented respectively by Dr. Maurice Bucke and Dr. Carl G. Jung; and in this connection, I will recall to your mind certain points in type psychology as presented by Dr. Carl G. Jung. This point is that in differentiated individuals there is a development explicitly of certain functions and a corresponding repression of the complementary functions. Thus, in a given individual, if the function of thinking is the conscious and developed differentiated function, the function of feeling is relatively repressed into the unconscious. That is all we will consider in this connection to keep from becoming too complicated. Now, Maurice Bucke said that as a result of his study of cosmic conscious cases, that the breakthrough tended to occur at the time of maximum development; and in terms of solar time, this most frequently happened around the age of 35, but varied considerably—sometimes happening earlier in the life and sometimes later. In the case of Swedenborg, the point of apparent maximum development was apparently the age of 54. Now, Maurice Bucke noted that the point of maximum development tended to be the point of the breakthrough to Cosmic Consciousness. Dr. Jung took a reverse position and asserted that the breakthrough was through the action of the relatively repressed functions since they animated the unconscious, and thus the point of breakthrough would correspond to a nadir point; whereas, in Dr. Bucke's position it occurred at a zenith point, namely, the point where the curve reached +1, or its zenith; and in Dr. Jung's case where the curve reached −1.

Now, I think there is evidence that there is a part truth in both of these statements. In the Orient, particularly India, yoga is something that is consciously practiced for the purpose of attaining a breakthrough to Enlightenment or Realization. In the West, in the field of Christendom, the breakthrough to the Mystical Awakening has generally been purely spontaneous and not the result of a conscious effort. In the first case, it was through the action of the developed function, consciously directed, that the breakthrough was achieved. In the second case, it seemed to be something wholly spontaneous and exclusively an act of Grace—not something that one could achieve or work for, but it came when the Grace descended. I think we can see that both types of breakthroughs to Realization, or Mystical Unfoldment, are exemplified. I would suggest that the type of breakthrough by conscious effort is best represented by Shankara, and the breakthrough

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of the type suggested by Dr. Jung is well represented by St. John of the Cross; and, it then becomes significant that he wrote of the dark night of the soul, the period of passing through the unconscious, and from that welling up to effects on the conscious side, but wholly as a bestowal of Grace and not the result of conscious effort. Thus, I would say there is a part truth in these two points of view.

An interesting point in this connection is the following fact: St. John of the Cross, so far as our literature covers the subject, is one of the two outstanding instances of the experience of the sensible light—the other outstanding instance was the breakthrough of St. Paul—and it appears that this light was of such a quality that individuals in the vicinity are reported to have seen the light with their ordinary eyes. On the other hand, if the breakthrough comes by conscious effort using the preferred and developed function as the main instrument, and self-induced effort and self-devised means constitute the way, then the illumination does not take the form of a sensible light, but rather the form of an illumination of the mind. This, I submit, is the form characteristic of Shankara; and I was told once that when the mind is so prepared that it can assimilate the light, there is no manifestation of sensible light. Dr. Maurice Bucke reports that he had a personal experience in which the sensible light was very strong. In fact, so strong that he thought it was a building on fire in the vicinity, though a moment later he realized that it was truly subjective. These are interesting facts and they contribute to our understanding of the total picture.

There is a point made by Aurobindo in his chapter called "The Four Aids" in his volume *The Synthesis of Yoga*; and this is the first chapter of the section dealing with the yoga of action. Among these, the fourth aid is listed as *kala* which means time.[3] At the right time, the breakthrough comes. It cannot come at any time; and that time I would, in our present figure, represent as the zenith point or the nadir point in the *sine* curve. And bear in mind, we are not here using time in the solar sense or the sidereal sense, but in terms of the subjective development of the individual. When the time strikes—as it undoubtedly strikes in every life—if the pilgrim is ready, he can grab his opportunity, or if he is sufficiently sensitive, he may receive the Grace, but it is necessary to be prepared. And, if one has worked and prepared himself and has everything ready in so far as he can make it ready, still he may have to wait until the moment strikes. Then, being prepared, he is in a position to take advantage of the opportunity. So it becomes important to be prepared at all times and not sleep as did the foolish virgins, but be ready to grab the moment when it strikes.

While reflecting upon the material which was to be used in this tape, it suddenly dawned upon us that our circles here were actually a form of the Tibetan prayer wheels, or the "Wheel of the Law." And then I saw that these were not merely foolish activities—like continually keeping a wheel rotating, even setting up a waterwheel so that it could rotate—but that it had a significant meaning: a reminding of the consciousness that the process of *sangsaric* life is an endless periodicity, an endless turning around and around

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[3] Aurobindo Ghose, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, vol. 20 of the *Sri Aurobindo Birth Centennial Library* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, 1970), 47:

> Last comes the instrumentality of Time—*kala*; for in all things there is a cycle of their action and a period of the divine movement.

that leads really nowhere by itself, but only to an ever continuing repetition in the periodic play; and that it is important that one should break out of this so that he may rise to the Transcendent represented by *Nirvana*; to be continually vigilant for catching the moment when the breakthrough is possible.

But now, though more material keeps flooding into my mind, we have probably said enough on this subject and should proceed to the elucidation of the next fundamental assumption or postulate.