

# Purpose, Method, and Policy of this Work

## Part 2 of 15

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Before entering into the discussing of the subject of reincarnation, we feel that it is important to come to some understanding of an important conception which will be employed in that discussion. In fact, this conception is so important, that it should have been included in the series of assumptions or postulates. It is the conception of the “Monad.” By a ‘Monad’, we mean the entity which proceeds forth at the beginning of any manifestation and travels, it is said, through all kingdoms of nature, ultimately entering the human kingdom, and then passing on beyond into the domain which belongs to the ex-men.

What is the nature of the Monad? Let us think of it this way: first, that the All is a microcosm<sup>1</sup> and that in manifestation this macrocosm reproduces itself in an enormous number of reproductions of itself which will be called microcosms, and each microcosm strikes a particular keynote, or a particular quality, in which the reproduction is produced. Thus each microcosm is the original macrocosm as it appears under the limitation of a certain quality, or a certain keynote, or a certain color, if you please. Nonetheless, all of the elements in the microcosm correspond to elements in the macrocosm; and every element in the macrocosm is reproduced in the microcosm, with the result that he who fully understands the microcosm which he is, has a key to the understanding of the macrocosm. And that explains the importance the Greeks attached to man’s knowing himself. By fully knowing himself, speaking metaphorically, man understands God.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* there is a place where Krishna is represented as saying, “I produce this universe from an infinitesimal portion of myself, yet remain apart.”<sup>2</sup> Here think of Krishna as representing the macrocosm, and what is meant here appears to be this: that the macrocosm can reproduce itself indefinitely and unlimitedly, yet remain unreduced. Is this a statement that defeats all reason as the existentialists might maintain? No, on the contrary, he who knows his mathematics finds it completely reasonable and understandable. For this I shall use an illustration that is really very simple from the mathematics of the infinite. I’ve used this illustration before, but shall recall it to your memory at the present time, for it is really very simple. Consider the manifold of all the positive integers, that is, 1, 2, 3, 4, on to infinity. Now, set that down as a series and below each number, the 1, 2, 3, 4, and so forth, place a second number that stands in the relationship of the double of each number. Thus, the second series would be: 2 x 1, or 2; 2 x 2, or 4; 2 x 3, or 6; and so forth. We get a series that consists of all the positive

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<sup>1</sup> Wolff clearly meant to say, “. . . that the All is a macrocosm . . .”

<sup>2</sup> Yogi Ramacharaka, trans., (Chicago: *The Bhagavad Gita*, The Yogi Publication Society, 1907), 109: “Know thou, Arjuna, that I manifested all this Universe with but an infinitesimal fragment of Myself—and still I remain, its Lord, unattached and apart, although pervading all.”

integers, but we have a one-to-one relationship between the elements of each series—corresponding to 1 there is 2 in the second series, to 2 there is 4, and to 3 there is 6. Since we have a one-to-one reciprocal relationship, we know that the cardinality of the two series is the same. The cardinality of the second series is as great as that of the first series; yet, every element in the second series is to be found in the first series; yet in the first series, there is an infinity of elements not to be found in the second series, namely, all the odd numbers—1, 3, 5, 7, and so on. Therefore we know that the second series is a proper part of the first—proper part meaning that it does not have all the elements that are in the first series—but every element in the second series stands in a relationship to the first series such that there is a one-to-one reciprocal relationship between the two, which is a definition of equal cardinality. Let the first series represent the macrocosm; the second series, one example of the microcosm. Between the two there is a transforming relationship which in this case is the following: that every element in the second series is the double of the corresponding element in the first series. We can now derive the first series from the second by the complementary transformation of taking the halves of each element in the second series. Thus, one half of 2 is 1, one half of 4 is 2, one half of 6 is 3, one half of 8 is 4,<sup>3</sup> and so on. Thus, by applying the proper transformation to the microcosm one can derive the macrocosm. The macrocosm may be called *Parabrahm*, or God, or the All, or by any other designation that means the Root Source.

But we can make other transformations. We can multiply each unit in the first series by 3, by 4, or by any other number, and get a series of which the cardinality is the same as the first series. Or we can use another relationship such as that of taking the squares, or the cubes, and so on. In fact, one may devise many transformations. Thus there is a possibility, quite obvious, that an infinite number of microcosms may be derived from the macrocosm by a certain one or another transformation. Each series will be of equal cardinality with the first series. And this suggests something that was written by Silesius Angelus, “I am not less than God and God is not more than I.”<sup>4</sup> And this idea remains completely rational, for it is part of the process that exists in the most rational of all sciences, namely, mathematics. In fact, it is known that an infinite number of infinite series can be derived from the original infinite series without reducing the latter at all. Thus, it’s perfectly reasonable for Krishna to say, “I produce this universe from an infinitesimal portion of myself and yet remain apart.”

Now, it has been said that each microcosmic Monad must pass through every kingdom of nature—that means through the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, into the human, and beyond the human, and possibly through unknown kingdoms preceding the mineral. There is a question here: what does this mean? Do the kingdoms of nature exist apart from the All, and that the journey of the Monads is projected into it? But in that case it would not be the All, for nature would be left out. Perhaps we may see it this way: that nature itself is a complex of microcosmic Monads; yet, each Monad must pass through this complex, so it’s a movement of Monads with respect to other Monads. Here we come into one of those situations where we inevitably are involved in paradoxes. Let

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<sup>3</sup> Wolff obviously meant to say, “. . . one half of 8 is 4 . . .”

<sup>4</sup> The text reads, “I am like God and God like me. I am as large as God. He is as small as I. He cannot above me nor I beneath him be.”

us leave that alone for the present. There remains something for us to yet understand in the future.

The journey of the Monads through all kingdoms of nature is not yet the meaning of reincarnation, which applies to a special stage, namely, that when we come to man. It is said that in this process below the level of man, the individual entities, like the animals, the plants, and the specific rocks, are not themselves reincarnated as individuals, but that, as it were, that which they have learned from experience is drawn back into the collective soul of the species. Perhaps, in a way, a given species is itself the Monad rather than the individual entities like the specific rocks, the different plants, or the different individual animals. And that in this stage there is no freedom. We have determination by law without freedom. Freedom comes only at the stage of the human evolution. Here, for the first time, there appears the development of that, of individuation in each individual. Perhaps we might think of this as a stage where we have a secondary order of microcosms, namely, microcosms of the main microcosm, which in its turn is a microcosm of the macrocosm.

However that may be, let us now proceed to the consideration of reincarnation as it applies to the evolution of men. We have pictured so far a process of the Monads passing through all kingdoms of nature, and it's very doubtful that we could identify a single human being as having passed through the state of a rock and of a vegetable and of an animal; but rather that there was a collective transmigration of the Monads through these kingdoms, and that reincarnation begins only when the stage of reason has been reached and man becomes, in greater or less degree, a free entity—in the beginning in the primitive, limited in his freedom, but when he becomes a full Buddha, possessing maximum freedom.

At what point in the evolution does the reincarnation of the individual entity begin? Is it perhaps at the point that is designated by the classifications of our biologists? Man is classified as a species under the general classification of the primates, and the primates in their turn are classified as a subdivision of the mammals, and so forth. Thus, man is conceived as merely another animal. This we find very questionable. Man is in part a biological entity and has a certain commonality with other biological entities as the primates and the mammals and even other forms of life that are more humble or more elemental in the scale of being, but that is not the whole of the story. He is also a mental being, an entity of consciousness; and in our opinion, we will have more success in finding the critical moment when reincarnation begins by regarding him as a mental entity superimposed upon an animal vehicle. To throw a bit of light upon this position, I'll direct your attention to a certain statement to be found in *The Secret Doctrine*.

In the story of evolution as given in *The Secret Doctrine*, there is a certain event that is of striking importance. It is called the descent of the *Manasaputra*. While with our present resources we are unable to verify the correctness of this statement, it is claimed that it is known by certain men who have evolved powers of the psyche far beyond that which is common to us as human beings, although said to be potential in all of us, and that it is through the researches of these men that this knowledge has been attained. For the purposes of our presentation here, we will assume the correctness of this statement; and, in fact, if we assume it, a great deal becomes clear that otherwise would remain obscure.

It is said that man became, at one time, the recipient of a descent of other entities who carried the mental principle. These entities are said to have been a certain class of *Dhyan Chohans* who had made some error in their own development that involved what might be called a karmic fall; that the error was of such a nature that it would not be comprehensible to our ordinary intelligence. However that may be, let us assume all this and that the penalty was, it is said, of the nature that this body of fallen *Dhyan Chohans* had to incarnate themselves in the human animal when he had reached the point of nascent man. In other words, the evolution heretofore had been autonomous from the rock, through the vegetable, through the animal, to nascent man when the animal was at the edge of becoming human but not yet human. They were said to be ape-like creatures, but not what we call apes today. When these members of the fallen *Dhyan Chohans* faced this *karmic* obligation, it is said, some incarnated at once, others rejected the idea and only projected a ray of themselves into these ape-like creatures, and still others only overshadowed. In other words, it appears that there was a certain repulsion at the idea of occupying the vehicles of ape-like creatures. But by this means, the principle of mind, in the true sense that differentiates the mind of man from the mind of the animal, was introduced into these ape-like creatures, and that from that point on we have the true evolution of man, and that now it is not simply evolution as an autonomous process in nature, but an evolution guided by the principle of mind.

This implies that man is not merely another animal, another genus and species, but rather that he is a mental being which occupies an animal vehicle; and as a compound, he has both mental characteristics and animal characteristics; and he may identify himself with either. If he is foolish, he will identify himself with the animal and indulge animal propensities; but if he is wise, he will look upon himself as a mental being occupying an animal body and hold himself in ascension above that animal body, commanding it and not permitting it to dominate with its animal propensities. As we look across the world, it would appear that most human beings have made their identification with the animal, and that may be the cause of the unhappy condition we find in this world today. In reality, we are not animals, but fallen *Dhyan Chohans* climbing again.

Now, in this account it is said that not all of the ape-like creatures received the incarnation of the *Manasaputra* or the fallen *Dhyan Chohans*; and two racial groups are mentioned who did not receive this incarnation, they being not sufficiently advanced. These were the natives of Australia and the Bushmen of Africa; but it is implied that there were others also. Now, we come to the point that I want to make. It seems more reasonable to believe that the principle of reason, and therefore that which makes freedom possible, begins with the incarnation of the *Dhyan Chohans* and, therefore, it is at this point that reincarnation of the individual begins; and, therefore, it would be implied that individual incarnation does not apply to those races which did not have the incarnation of the *Dhyan Chohan* or *Manasaputra*. This is our suggestion, there is no other authority for it, but it's put forth for what it may be worth.

Now, we will proceed to give a sketch of what may be the essential process of reincarnation. As we enter upon the discussion of the subject of reincarnation, it is important to note that there has been a great deal of misunderstanding of just what it is that is reincarnated. It is not the physical personality of the individual that we have known here. The John Smith of today does not become the Eric Coombs of tomorrow and

a continuation of that same physical personality. It is more complicated than that. And to come to a somewhat more comprehensive understanding of this subject, I shall refer to a suggestion which I made some years ago in a lecture before an academic class.<sup>5</sup> It was called the pseudopodal theory of reincarnation. The image of the pseudopod is taken from the amoeba. The amoeba is a primitive one-celled creature, I think an animal, that crawls by means of projecting a portion of its body forward so that it appears like a limb, an arm, for instance, and then draws back that, so advancing, then projects outward another portion of its body as another apparent arm, and so on. These are called pseudopods, 'pseudo' because they are not permanent limbs definitely organized like the limbs of the mammals, but apparent limbs that are projected and then disappear.

Now, I shall use the figure of the pseudopod to represent the Monad.<sup>6</sup> The Monad, then, from time to time, projects a portion of itself into outer incarnation and that is what we call the human being that appears here and has his concrete personal life in this world. Later, that particular projection is withdrawn by the event which men call death and is re-assimilated into the persistent Monad. Then after an elapse of time in which the projected individual goes through his after death experiences, which, it is said, involves a period in what is called *Devachan*, which is a state of consciousness that is delightful and in general is much longer in time than that in which the outer life experience took place, then, when everything has been assimilated, the seeds of which were sown in the outer life, there comes a time when the impulse to go forth again takes place. Now, what goes forth again is another pseudopod, as it were, of the Monad, and this pseudopod is the *karmic* heir of the first pseudopod. It is a continuation, in one sense, of the first pseudopod in that it is the *karmic* heir, but it is not the specific personal identity of the original first projection.

Now, certain things we can see would take place. First of all, not everything that makes up the total meaning and character of the Monad is projected into any one incarnation, but probably only a very small portion of that total meaning of the Monad. Since certain qualities are put forth in any given lifetime and certain other qualities are held back, the probability is that a succeeding incarnation would consist of the qualities that were relatively repressed in the preceding incarnation; and, thus, we would have an individual that might appear quite different from the individual of the preceding incarnation. It would take a deep and trained insight to recognize the identity of the two. Thus, a given individual might have an incarnation in which he developed the power of thought to a high degree and became an important philosopher, but at the price of a relative depreciation or denial of the feeling side of his total nature. It would be this feeling side which then would tend to be the quality most emphasized in an immediately succeeding incarnation; and one observing the two individuals might find it difficult to identify them as coming from the same entity, or rather as representing the same monadic entity. And this might continue over a wide range of qualities. Thus, in each particular incarnation, there would be only a limited manifestation of the total resources of the Monad. Some of those resources might be in a latent form that had not yet been developed explicitly or they might be in a highly developed form and yet held

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<sup>5</sup> See the audio recording, "Lectures to University Students," part 3.

<sup>6</sup> Wolff clearly meant to say that he uses "the figure of the *amoeba* to represent the Monad."

back since in this given incarnation certain qualities were to be specifically and concentratedly developed.

This process serves the purpose of developing explicitly the hidden resources of the Monad until the cycle of manness is completed. In that process there would come a time when new resources or powers of consciousness could break forth, the preparation having been completed over a long series of lives as reincarnations. When this occurs, the hour may strike for the breakthrough to another form of consciousness. This has specific bearings upon that step which is called the breakthrough to Enlightenment, Realization, Awakening, or the development of Cosmic Consciousness. Our work is specifically oriented to this—to the advancement of this development. It is not primarily oriented to the particular needs of those individuals in the world who are not yet ready for this unfoldment.<sup>7</sup>

The pattern of reincarnation which we discussed heretofore is only one among several possibilities. We have even heard the statement made that there is 1000 ways in which reincarnation can happen. But here I wish to discuss one that is of particular importance, namely, the *tulku* form of incarnation. And before we can deal with this specific form, it is necessary to have some view of the total meaning of *tulku*. The term is Tibetan in origin and it implies the power of certain well evolved entities to enter into other entities who are living in this world and either communicate through them or occupy a more or less persistent life within them for either a period of years or, conceivable, for the whole lifetime. The outstanding instance of this is said to be the incarnation of the Dalai and Tashi Lamas, whereby, when a given entity who has occupied the position of one of these lamas passes in, another entity is born which is occupied by *tulku* methods by the same entity that died. But this is a technical subject and some elaboration of it is necessary. And incidentally, this is a matter of very considerable importance to us.

We'll have to consider the fact that man is not a simple entity, but a compound of several principles. The view of these principles varies with different philosophers or different schools. They are not always the same. I will give an example of two or three of the different views of the organization of the principles.

We have that which in our own day was presented by Sri Aurobindo, which produces a rather complex picture, that the total entity of man has this from the bottom up: that there are at least two subconscious zones below the ordinary consciousness here; that on the level of the ordinary consciousness here, there are three divisions—body, life, and mind; that in the case of each of these three, there is that form of consciousness which stands before or outward or outside our consciousness—the view with which we are commonly familiar, the external world view—but that behind this there is a subliminal consciousness, so that we would have an outer consciousness of the body and a subtle, subliminal consciousness of the body, a outer consciousness of the vital and an inner, subliminal consciousness of the vital, and an outer consciousness of the mind and a subtle, subliminal consciousness of the mind. The subliminal portion and the outer portion are viewed as on the same level. But then above the intellectual mind, there is this

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<sup>7</sup> In the audio recording “Purpose, Method, and Policy of this Work,” part 3, Wolff asks that the statement on reincarnation that follows be transferred to this discussion.

hierarchy of steps: higher mind, which is viewed as over the head; above that, illuminative mind; still above that, the principle of intuition on its own level, from which it is precipitated more or less in an impure form down through the outer consciousness; and above the intuition is “overmind,” which is the consciousness that directs the operation of the whole cosmos and which produces massive cognition where a complex of cognitions are produced at the same time that may in part stand in logical connection, but may in part stand in other connections that are non logical; then above this, in the higher hemisphere, there is the “supermind,” which in its turn has different stages—this is viewed as the executive principle of *Satchitananda*, and is a mode of consciousness pretty well beyond our power of imagining what it would be; then finally above this lies *ananda*, *chit*, and *sat*—the being which as a whole is called *Satchitananda*, the ultimate Divine in his system.

In Theosophical literature, we have at least three different systems presented. The principle one of these, the one most commonly known and employed, is a system that first appeared in *Esoteric Buddhism* written by Sinnett and based upon the material given in *The Mahatma Letters*. This is sevenfold in character and simply stated is as follows, in this case proceeding from the highest principle down: at the top, *Atman*, then *Buddhi*, then higher *Manas*—frequently called the upper triad; and below this, a quaternary consisting of *Kama Manas*, *Kama Rupa*, *Linga Sharira*, frequently called the astral body, and the gross physical, or *Sthula Sharira*. There is a variant of this to be found in a more esoteric statement in which the *auric egg* replaces the *Atman*, the *Atman* being viewed as not a principle but as standing above the septenary organization.

And finally, we have the organization given in the Taraka yoga system. This also is to be found in *The Secret Doctrine* and is discussed there at some length and is the system that is of most importance for our understanding of this particular form of incarnation known as *tulku*. It consists of four elements: first *Atman*, above three *Upadhis*. The three *Upadhis* are *Karanopadhi*, corresponding to *Buddhi* in the system of *Esoteric Buddhism*; second, *Sukshmopadhi*, consisting of *Kama Manas*, *Kama Rupa*, and higher *Manas*; and finally, *Sthulopadhi*, consisting of *Prana*, or the life principle, *Linga Sharira*, and the gross physical.<sup>8</sup>

One might raise the question, which of these systems is the true one? We conceive that they all may be sound, that the difference is due to a difference in approach to the total problem, a difference of viewpoint, perspective, or base of reference, or a way of viewing the total organization of man with respect to varying purposes. There will thus be no effort here to say that one is valid while the others are not; and it is not always possible, as Sri Aurobindo has noted, to develop a clear correspondence between different parts of the different systems.

Now, our concern in connection with *tulku* incarnation is most particularly oriented to the Taraka yoga system. It is said that this one which has three principles and *Atman* above represents a form corresponding to the possibility of an adept to divide himself into three parts and function in those three parts separate from each other but

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<sup>8</sup> See H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Press, 1893), 181, for the schema to which Wolff is referring.

upon different planes of being; whereas, it is said that it would be impossible to divide himself into seven parts and remain alive.

Now, the *Karanopadhi*, corresponding to *Buddhi*, is sometimes called the causal body. What do we mean by *Buddhi*? In *The Secret Doctrine* we find it referred to as the *spiritual soul*. But if we look up the word in a Sanskrit dictionary, it is translated *intellect*. And Sri Aurobindo follows this practice in his chapter “On the Methods of the Vedanta” in the *Life Divine* and identifies it with the *pure reason*. But a distinction must be made between the principle of intellect or reason here and some of its lower manifestations which we in our present world call the intellect. This is a principle which carries the power of discrimination, discriminative thought, that which Shankara called the crest jewel, and is the principle to which he attached greatest importance.

The *Sukshmopadhi*, consisting of higher *Manas*, lower *Manas*, and *Kama Rupa*, comes within the range of our ordinary thinking. *Kama Manas* may be identified with that form of thinking which has been called *wishful thinking*, for *Kama* means desire. It is the crude form of thinking in which all people engage and is not primarily oriented to truth, but to how one may get something which he desires. It is the kind of thinking that underlies our business activities, our social activities, and our day to day activities. It is a common function with which we are all familiar, but is not oriented to truth, whatever that truth may be. This is the function of the pure reason, or the *Buddhi*, or the principle of discrimination.

One question may arise here. How does the principle of *Kama*, *Kama Rupa*, come to be classed in this, for *Kama Rupa* is the most fallen of all our principles—the basis of lusts of all sort, the sheer raw moralless animalistic principle of craving? But an answer to this problem is to be found in the *Theosophical Glossary* under the head of *Kama Deva*, where it is pointed out that in its redeemed or exalted form, it is the basis of compassion—a side of it that does not manifest in this humanity as much as we would desire. Fallen *Kama* is really the basis of all war; but the exalted side of *Kama*, that which is compassion, is the basis for human brotherhood, the very force of forces that would destroy the relationship of war, adversaryism, and competition.

The lowest principle, the one that involves *Prana*, *Linga Sharira*, and the gross physical body, is that which is necessary for the existence of a visible entity here. This is cut off at death, the other two *Upadhis* remain.

In the so-called third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* which appears as part of the third edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, there is a section called “The Mystery of Buddha” consisting of some eleven chapters, and in here we have some of the most valuable material to be found in the whole of Theosophical literature, and it bears upon this special form of incarnation known as *tulku* incarnation.<sup>9</sup> It is there said that when the Blessed One looked upon the results of his work which had aroused the opposition of the *Brahman* community and led to their persecution of his disciples, he said they have sinned, but I am the cause of their sinning and therefore I shall come to them. His compassion was so large that it included not only those who suffered from that persecution, but those who were responsible for the persecution as well. And then it is

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., vol. 3, 376.



said that he appeared as Shankara, a *Brahman*, in which he came solely to the *Brahmans* and made perhaps the most effective formulation of the philosophy that we have ever had.

Now, it is said in this volume to which I've referred that with the equipment of the *Brahman* mind, for the child Shankara was a *Brahman*, he was better able to formulate himself than he had been in his own natural body, which was that of a *Kshatriya*, and the result is the written work in ample proportions that have come down to us from the pen of Shankara. But Shankara was a compound of two entities: a *Brahman* child having the outer principles that belonged to him, and also said that the higher self was that of Shankara, but that an intermediate principle in his constitution was the corresponding intermediate principle of the Blessed One himself and that the wisdom that proceeded through him was that of the Blessed One. The intermediate principle that was indigenous to Shankara was withdrawn, and we are told that this withdrawn principle is held in a state, not of cold storage, but in a state of a kind of life in entities that are qualified to support such principles temporarily until they return to their proper owner. The period of Shankara's work, of which it was said that it was destined for him, occupied thirty-two years and then the *tulku* withdrew—the *tulku* meaning the intermediate principle of the Buddha—and Shankara's own indigenous principle was returned to him. But this, obviously, involved a sudden drop in the level of consciousness of the entity known as Shankara, for his own intermediate principle was not privy to the wisdom that had been flowing through Shankara for those thirty-two years. We have been told that if he had had the patience to wait, that all of the wisdom that flowed through him would have become his as the right of his own proper person; but, according to sources that are said to come from the Tibetan, that he disappeared into a cave and has not been seen since. And the implication is that he in effect committed suicide, therefore invoking *karma*, which, again from Tibetan sources, is said to be death by violence at the same age in a subsequent incarnation. The age was thirty-three, and the hint is strong that this subsequent incarnation that met precisely those conditions was that of the Christ himself.

It is clear from what has been said that in a *tulku* incarnation we do not have one single entity, but two. To make this clear, I have used the expression of a *senior* and *junior* partner in the combination: that the entity in Shankara that supplied the outer vehicle, and it is said also the higher self, was the junior partner, and that the wisdom carried in the intermediate principle was that of the Blessed One. Now, this is obviously a very important type of incarnation, one which can occur only in the case of those of adept power, and probably even high adept power. But incarnations of this sort may well be the most important for the good of this humanity of all incarnations.

The fourth assumption is to the effect that all Monads are obligated to pass through all kingdoms of nature. This we have already in some degree discussed under the heading of reincarnation, and it will therefore not be necessary to go further into this subject at this time. But here a point comes up: it is not possible to handle each of these elements or principles in isolation from the balance of all the principles for they are interconnected. And we may say that it is impossible completely to understand any one of the principles without first understanding all; and likewise, we cannot understand all without first understanding each principle. This looks as though it were an impossible task and is one of the mysteries involved when we are dealing with a holistic position. In

dealing with partial portions of the existent about us, we may be definitive and proceed step by step, but when we deal with the whole, or orient ourselves to the whole, we face a different set of problems where it is never possible to understand fully the part without ultimately dealing with the holistic view. Basically this is illustrated in the principle that in all our ordinary cognition the knower stands as though apart from the known and he can deal with it as though contained in forms that are apparently definitive. But dealing with any ultimate question, we have the fusion of the knower and the known and the knowledge in one whole, and this leads to the typical situation where paradoxes arise.

The fifth postulate concerns the thesis that the process of evolution in relative consciousness is in the form of progressive breakthroughs to more advanced stages of consciousness. In Maurice Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness*, the suggestion has been made that we can start with the consciousness of the animal, step to the normal human consciousness, and from that to Cosmic Consciousness. There the consciousness of the animal is called *simple consciousness*; that of man, *self-consciousness*; and that of the enlightened, or realized, or those who have Cosmic Consciousness, as this other kind of luminous Consciousness. The simple consciousness of the animal is conceived as being in the form of sense perception—the familiar form which is known to all human beings also, as, in part, man has an animal nature. But it is also conceived that it reaches up into that which is called the recept or the generic image. This would imply that the animal has more than merely meaningless sense impressions, but can identify them, can distinguish between a tree, for instance, and a rock as a kind of semi-generalized notion. Of course, here we're dealing with speculation in considerable measure, but we do have the opportunity to analyze this phase of consciousness by studying our sensuous nature and its progressions.

We have, in our work, employed a somewhat different classification. The orientation here has been to the cognitive function and the identification has taken this form: that in the lowest most primitive form, it is sensuous cognition, that is, cognition through the physical senses and this has often been called the *aesthetic component*. The next identified with the preeminently human, or man stage, is identified with *conceptual cognition*. The distinction between these two may be made rather simply in this way: that sensuous cognition gives us concrete particulars, just precisely that which we see or otherwise sense as concrete particulars; whereas, in contrast, the conceptual cognition essentially is oriented to universals—not to a tree, but to treeness, and so on through all the different categories of our experience. It has been evident to us that there is a radical step involved here. One does not reach from sensuous cognition to conceptual cognition by a larger and larger growth in sensuous cognition, but something is added on, something precipitated that is of a different nature. There is a suggestion given in the Eastern thought that may be helpful here. It has been developed by Sri Aurobindo by introducing the theory of *avataral* descent. When a new function is to be introduced into the world, an aspect of the Divine, as it were, descends and pioneers the new step so that you have in the series of *avatars*, one that's called the fish *avatar*, and so on up the line. Now, if the nascent human had reached the point where the next step was ready to be taken, the theory would involve the idea that the Divine descends and introduces the conceptual function into the nascent human being. Now, we have already considered this in an earlier portion of this discourse and identified this step with the descent of the

*Manasaputra*—thus bringing into the nascent human being, who is little more than an animal, a new function, a new power of consciousness.

Now, then, we come to the third step. When the evolution of the human entity, who is now a conceptual and a sensuous being, has reached a sufficient degree of maturity, it would be possible for a third function, faculty, or principle of consciousness to be awakened or to be introduced into his total constitution. This, I have called *introceptual* consciousness, and it is characterized by the quality *knowledge through identity*, a mode of conception<sup>10</sup> where the known is no longer separated from the knower as something distinct and out there, as it were, separate from myself as the knower, but rather a state where these two are fused and one knows by being identical with the known. This does not give knowledge in the conceptual sense—the kind of knowledge which leads to speech and all forms of written or verbal communication including the communication through signs and symbols—but is known in another way and can only be communicated by a process of *transcription* such that the material—immediate material of introceptual cognition is transformed into a conceptual statement involving, inevitably, distortion, since the pattern or style of conceptual cognition does not fit it, yet, nonetheless, communicating something of the value of the introceptual cognition—a communication of value, of something of truth, along with an unavoidable element of distortion.

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<sup>10</sup> Wolff probably meant to say, “. . . a mode of cognition . . .”