

Purpose, Method, and Policy of this Work

Part 6 of 15

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There is a principle or function associated with this work that is of premier importance. Yet, in spite of this, I have said little concerning this in the past. But now, in these latter days, I shall speak of it and present it as best I can from my experience of it. This is a principle that has occupied a place of primary significance in all religions and even in certain philosophies. It is also recognized in modern depth psychology as a fact of experience. It has been variously interpreted in the past, and however one may interpret it, it still is a fact for him who has a relationship with this principle that occupies an importance exceeded by nothing else. Those who have borne this principle have been known variously. Frequently they have been called prophets, but in modern language it is known by other designations. The definition of a prophet involves this quality or element: that the prophet speaks for the divinity or communes with the divinity, whatever the divinity may be defined to mean. It is, in any case, a quality in consciousness that takes first place. I have known this as something like a companion ever since that supreme day of August 7, 1936, and it is the most important fact in connection with this work.

Throughout history this principle has been known and identified by various names. Thus, Socrates called it a “daimon,” which in large degree governed his actions and his speech. It seems to have been regarded by him as something essentially external. This position was criticized in Theosophical literature, and it is there said that because he regarded this principle as external he failed of initiation. One can sense it as present in the writings of Plato, and in the “Seventh Letter” by Plato there is a statement to the effect that he acknowledges its presence. According to the Theosophical statement, it really is the *higher self*, something that belongs to the individual, as it were, or rather that to which he truly belongs. But there is a difference between the higher and the lower self. The lower self has a character which is discreet in the sense that I am different from these others about me and stand in a relationship that is more or less external to all other human beings and all other creatures; whereas, on the other hand, the higher self is more like a nodal point in a continuum. It combines both the quality of the individual and the universal; therefore, there could be a tendency to view it as objective rather than subjective. It has been very commonly known as “God” by the Christian world or as “Allah” by the Moslem. Thus, it happens that the prophet and the sibyl, the designations of those who have such a familiar, tend often to think of themselves as communicating with a divine being, with a tendency to interpret that divine being in the terms of the familiar theological speculations. There is another suggestion which I have made, that it may be regarded as direct communication with the Monad, which one essentially is. Another designation is found in the term ‘sense of presence’, a frequent feature which is reported by the mystics. Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan designated the “spirit of guidance,” a quality which is evident in it. It may also be called the “monitor,” that which guides and directs. Aurobindo called it the “overhead

divine,” that which serves as the witness and which guides—correcting, and encouraging, and directing. Even, it has been called the “mentor.”

Now, here we have quite a variety of interpretations given by the designating terms. It is viewed sometimes as objective, sometimes as subjective, sometimes as personal, and sometimes as impersonal. In order not to define a particular position, but to give the most general designation possible, which neither defines a personal element nor a necessarily impersonal element, but designates it with as abstract a form as possible, I have suggested two words, ‘transcendental component’ in the consciousness of the individual who bears this principle. In contrast to that, the outer human being, the entity that is seen in this world, the entity who has a history in this world, I suggest we call the “empiric man.” There is a relationship between the transcendental component and the empiric man. This may be understood as a relationship between the empiric man and a *quality* or an *entity*, either way. I shall leave this question open as to whether we are dealing with an entity, a quality, or a principle. I shall describe its action without defining it specifically in either of these senses.

I find that there is an important term that I left out of my list. This is a term that is employed by modern anthropologists and psychologists. It is the term ‘numinosum’ and sometimes used in the shorter sense of ‘numen’. This term was introduced by Rudolf Otto in his *Idea of the Holy* for the “inexpressible, mysterious, terrifying, directly experienced and pertaining only to the divinity.”¹ This term has been employed by Dr. Carl G. Jung in his psychology and he acknowledges that he has such a numen. In this connection, I would refer the hearer to his biographical work, *Memories, Dreams, [and] Reflections* and particularly to the chapter entitled “Confrontation [by] with the Unconscious.”

In giving a report of the action of the transcendental component, I shall strive to keep the report as accurate as possible without imposing theoretical interpretation upon it. There may later be a place for such a theoretical interpretation, but at this time I’m giving as pure an introspection as I can manage.

When this transcendental component manifests in my consciousness, it seems to descend from above and seems to flow down into the body perhaps as far as the solar plexus. It brings with it a quality of delight and a sense of well-being, a sense that all is well. There is a feeling of a satisfaction, a contentment, and peace. When this was first imperienced in 1936, it seemed like a current whose nature was bliss; and yet, in what sense was it a current?² The image of a current or of a stream is of something flowing somewhere, like the flow of time from the past to the future, but this was not such a flowing in that sense. It rather was more like something which you could call a “circulation of the light” as the Chinese have expressed it.³ But it was something very

¹ Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961), 397.

² For the definition of ‘imperience’, see the audio recordings “General Discourse on the Subject of My Philosophy,” part 10, and “On My Philosophy: Extemporaneous Statement.” In speaking of introceptual knowledge, Wolff says, “The third function therefore gives you imperience, not experience. It is akin to sense perception in the sense of being immediate, but is not sensuous.”

³ Richard Wilhelm, trans., *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (New York: Causeway Books, New York, 1975).

worthwhile. There were several qualities in the state of consciousness which it produced. Beside the sense of delight, there is the feeling of beauty, the feeling of benevolence or compassion towards all things, and an underlying quality of wisdom.

Now, these terms which are usually understood by us as the expression of qualities that belong to some substantive existence such as a benevolent act, a tangible experience that brings happiness, or an object that is beautiful, and so forth; rather, it was as though the qualities were themselves substantives, real existences in their own right apart from any act or any thing. Usually, we would think of an act or a thing as the substantive which might have qualities—the act being perhaps benevolent or other, and the thing being beautiful or other—but these were self-existent like substantives. It's a very different experience, or imperience rather, than that of our external experience. But there is no question about the value of the imperience. It was superlative. There was the sense of real wealth, as wealth of consciousness, not wealth as possession of things.

It is useless to ask, "What was it that flowed?" It was simply a sense of flowage that carried with it the value of the sense of *presence*. Speaking in a more or less theoretical sense for the moment, it is as though we are dealing with a somewhat which is not granular or fixed in its nature, not static, but something the nature of which embraces the notion of a flowage, a *becoming*, if you please, rather than a *become*, that this is the normal condition rather than that state which we call the become.

As I know the transcendental component nowadays, there is the sense of flowage downward, reaching apparently about the solar plexus in the body, and it always brings a sense of comfort; yet, it is so subtle that it hardly can be identified as a sense experience in the gross sense of the word. It is a subtle sense, and it may well be that it is an operation in the subtle body only and that it only indirectly affects the feelings of the gross physical body. This, however, applies only in the case when I'm giving direct attention to this subject matter. If I am developing a thought, it acts as a principle of guidance in that thought, and it seems to be embodied in the thought so that the expressed thought is a carrier of it which may be experienced by other individuals, as they have reported again and again.

There is a sense of communication with the transcendental component, but this is not communication by word, sign, or symbol, or by any tangible means. It is rather a communication on the level of unenrobed meaning. To illustrate this, I shall use a figure drawn from subatomic physics. Let the meaning of a word be symbolized by the nucleus of an atom and the enrobement of that word, or its *upadhi* to use the Sanskrit term, consists of the group of electrons that revolve about the nucleus. The exchange between the empiric man and the transcendental component is upon the level of the purely nuclear aspect of ideas. Naked meaning, we might call it. Yet, I am aware of the meaning intended. If it is a matter of formulation of an idea which is guided by the transcendental component, the empiric man furnishes the formal language which has been garnered through a lifetime, but the selection in that language, the organization of it, is guided by the transcendental component. It is a joint work therefore. The empiric man is not simply an amanuensis or a reporter, but a joint worker with the transcendental component in fabricating the language. It is a case of an interdependence between the two factors, not a case of a dictation which is merely reported by the empiric man.

Since August 7, 1936, when I have written, or lectured on the platform, or dictated to the tape, there are times when the transcendental component is present and times when it is not, yet the dictation, or lecturing, or writing goes on just the same. Thus, in *Pathways*, there are certain sections called "The Record" which were in the nature of an introspective report that was not guided by the transcendental component, but was the introspective activity of the empiric man. I have terms to designate the difference between these two forms of composition. When the transcendental component is functioning, I call the thought "transcriptive"; when the transcendental component is not operating, I call it "speculative," which is thought is our ordinary sense. By transcriptive thought, I mean a thought that transcribes a meaning which initially is not in the form of conceptual language, but a pure meaning into that language. The authority comes from on high, from the transcendental component, not from the empiric man. On the other hand, when speaking without the presence of the transcendental component, the thought is of the form which is common everywhere, like the thought of the scientist, like the thought of the exoteric philosopher, like the thought of the marketplace, and of popular intercourse. I call that speculative thought to distinguish between the two types.

In all my work, there is an alternation between these two forms, and persons who have the appropriate sensitivity can identify the difference between them. Dr. Jung has said that the numen tends to speak in hieratical language, that means the language of authoritarian priests, and I must testify that this tendency does exist in the transcendental component. It tends to lay down the law, as it were, to speak in terms that are categorical, very much as the prophets of Israel have spoken heretofore. But I have, in effect, exchanged this thought with the transcendental component that such language would alienate the very people we want to reach, and, in effect, it said okay, you know better about that. And so, we have used the language of low profile most of the time, though I find in listening to my own material that an authoritarian element, nonetheless, does emerge. Apparently the transcendental component is not a diplomat.

There is another feature in connection with the transcriptive and speculative kind of thinking that is of importance. Speculative thinking tends to be systematic, that is, tends to follow a logical form of development, a sense of order that is apparent to our outer consciousness and is demanded of us. It is this order that is very characteristic, or preeminently characteristic, of mathematics. It is the order of all scientific reports and of all well organized philosophic statements. It meets the canons of logic and of rhetoric. On the other hand, the action from the transcendental component through transcriptive language tends to be spontaneous and to deal with subjects that do not seem to fit into our outer sense of order. No doubt there is an inner order in this, but it is not easy for the outer consciousness to discern it. It tends to speak more in the sense of the idea of stream of consciousness that was suggested by William James. Thoughts come of themselves spontaneously and in no systematic order as it appears to the outer mind; yet, it brings statements that tend to take aphoristic form and to bear upon them the force of authority. When this kind of thought comes to me and I'm away from any means of recording it, it leaves a light impress upon the outer mind and it fades away very easily. To hold it, I find, requires a thinking it over and over again in order to leave an impress that will enable me to remember it when the opportunity for formulation on paper or on tape is available. Many impressive ideas have come to me this way and been lost, possibly to

come again at another time in a different form, for there is a tendency in the transcendental component to never say the same thing twice in the same way.

I have employed a term to express the difference between the transcriptive formulation and the speculative type of formulation, and this is the term 'on-beam'. The transcriptive formulation, I call "on-beam." The reason for using this term is the employment of a similar term in connection with the instrument landing of airplanes when visual landing is not practical. So long as the plane is on-beam, everything is going as it should; the landing will be secure. On-beam thinking is authoritative thinking, as it were; whereas, "off-beam" thinking is simple speculation. I have found that since August 7, 1936, I am not in the on-beam status at all times. On the contrary, there are times when I am on-beam and other times when I am off-beam; and I have wondered whether it is possible or correct for one to be on-beam at all times. The on-beam state is a superior and valuable condition. It is not needed for the performance of ordinary functions such as dressing, such as eating, such as irrigating, or performing of ordinary chores, or the ordinary activities of life. It is rather a precious and valued condition to be used when there is a need for it.

I have noted something similar referred to in *The Mahatma Letters* where it is stated that the adepts are not always functioning as adepts, but that in their ordinary activities they function in ways that are similar to the activities of non-adept human beings. They have sharpened intuitions and thus have a general intelligence that is superior, but not always functioning as adepts. It is pointed out that in the quotation from *The Mahatma Letters* that an athlete is not at all times tensing himself up for a strong muscular activity, but does so only at the appropriate times.⁴ There is involved in the on-beam state a higher order of energy, and as a general principle, exercising on the level of a higher order of energy involves a degree of fatigue effect. It is not proper, in fact, to use a higher order of energy for the performance of a function than that which is required. If a lower order of energy is all that is needed, then it is most proper and right that one should employ only that lower order of energy. The higher order of energy should be invoked only when it is needed for serving a special purpose. I suspect that this is a general principle, but I am not certain on this matter.

In the dictation or writing of composition, I do not always know when I shift from off-beam to the on-beam position. Often I can detect it only afterwards when I listen to the material which I have produced. The reason for this is clear. When one is producing a formulation, there is a complex mental effort put forth. There is the formless thought, to begin with, for which one is selecting words that fit the meaning intended and the sentence structure, the syntactical problem. And when one operates on the typewriter, there is also the additional operation of spelling the words. In the sum total, the operation

⁴ A. T. Barker, ed., *The Mahatma Letters* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1923), 177:

The smallest exercise of occult powers then, as you will now see, requires an effort. We may compare it to the inner muscular effort of an athlete preparing to use his physical strength. As no athlete is likely to be always amusing himself at swelling his veins in anticipation of having to lift a weight, so no adept can be supposed to keep his will in constant tension and the *inner* man in full function, when there is no immediate necessity for it. When the *inner* man rests the adept becomes an ordinary man, limited to his physical senses and the functions of his physical brain.

is complex and calls for focused attention. Now, the detection of the presence of a transcendental component calls for subtle inner observation. When the mind is engaged on the complex problem of formulation, there is not the awareness in that subtle sense because the mind is far too busy. On the other hand, the hearer with the appropriate sensitivity may detect the shift more easily.

Composition that is on-beam is on a higher energetic level, although this may not be apparent at the time of composition. It is on a higher energetic level as compared to speculative thinking, even though one has a sense of laboring more when composing on the speculative level. But the higher energetic level is subtle and produces certain effects that are never produced by speculative thinking alone. Early after 1936, when I was on the platform, we soon noted the fact that many individuals had an experience of heat, even to a degree that was uncomfortable. I've seen the faces of persons in the audience turn reddish and perspiration break forth. Individuals have even taken off their coats. Now, this is not a phenomenon that happens in connection with purely speculative composition. This was a mystery to us and an item of considerable interest. Why the heat phenomenon? Why should an individual seem to become more or less hot?

I had an opportunity to observe something of this in myself when on one occasion I was on-beam, but at the same time in a state of affect, I too became warm. Ordinarily, in the state of on-beam functioning, the favorable state is one of peace, dispassion, and a complete absence of any affect or emotional disturbance. In that state there was no experience of heat; and, in fact, it has been only on very rare occasions that I have experienced the Current as heat. Generally, it is just a subtle flow. Now, if we liken the Current to certain phenomena connected with electricity, we have, I think, a ready explanation. If an electric current is put through a wire of high resistance, heat is produced in the wire. Now, with respect to the Current, if there is a state of affect or any other impurity in the nature of the individual who is feeling the effects of the Current, that acts like a resistance, and then a phenomenon of heat may be experienced. Heat, thus, is produced when there is some impurity in the nature. But there is reason to believe that under the action of the Current there is a tendency to clarify and eliminate such impurities, so that ultimately an individual will reach the point where he will experience the Current without heat. Nonetheless, the fact of this experience is an item of considerable importance. It is evidence that there is something operating in connection with this kind of work that is not present in ordinary speculative thought.