

Triune Nature of Man

Part 1 of 2

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This may be my final tape, but by that I do not mean that it is a tape restricted to one hour. This tape may not end until I am no longer able to think and at the same time formulate that thought. I propose to give myself complete freedom in the formulation of the thought as far as that is possible. By this I mean that I propose to ignore the rules of formal presentation in terms of logical development of a thesis, the obedience to the laws of syntax and of rhetoric. I fully respect developments of this formal thought. I know that they are the preferred forms of formulation respected by academic institutions, and I appreciate such formal development, as indeed must anyone who has a protracted mathematical discipline where formal development is most completely achieved. But this is not the way thought actually arises in the mind, as I know it. It tends to arise as fragments out of relation to any discernable formal organization that we know. The question as to how thought arises is a psychological question. The question as to whether the thought is sound or not, whether it is true or false, is a logical question. The difficulty with formal organization is that it tends to stultify the spontaneity whereby fresh and even significant thought arises. That which may come from intuition, insight, and vision seems to come at its own time and not according to the rules of our preferred principles of organization. If one imposes these rules upon the creative process itself, he's apt to destroy that creativity. After it has been produced in initial form in this way, then it may be formally organized for presentation. But the formal presentation is primarily of pedagogical value.

Thought presented in this way is in a sense autobiographical, but it is not autobiographical, save perhaps incidentally, in the sense of a record of a living human personality who is sensuously apparent. It is autobiographical in the sense that it reveals the way of thinking as a psychological event. Now, a point must be made here; psychology is concerned with *existential judgments*, as is also physiology and most of the empiric sciences. Existential judgments are judgments concerning empiric fact and circumstance; they are not concerned with the *judgments of meaning*. Out of very unusual or atypical circumstances, a material may be produced that has excellent standing from the standpoint of judgments of meaning, but are not in accordance with the norm of ordinary action and process in life. A careful distinction must be made between these judgments, in the existential sense, and judgments of meaning. Judgments of meaning are concerned with truth and error. Judgments in the existential sense are concerned with associated fact in the existential sense. The latter may not be in accordance with the norm of ordinary conduct or development, but they are irrelevant, or at least mostly irrelevant, with respect to the value and truth interest of any presentation. Thus, for instance, the truth of a mathematical theorem is determined by logic. The psychological circumstance under which that theorem arose in the mind of the thinker is totally irrelevant as to whether that theorem is true or false. Thus, he who says that "if a equals b and b equals c

then a must equal c " has truth on his side whatever the psychologist or medical materialist may say about him as a psychological or physical entity.

Dr. Jung in the section of his autobiography in which he dealt with Sigmund Freud makes a remark to the effect that Sigmund Freud lost Yahweh and had only sexuality left to him. And Dr. Jung further remarks that whenever an individual made a metaphysical remark, Dr. Freud gave to it the value of a sexual perversion.¹ Now, if this is in fact true as there stated, then we have a tendency represented in Sigmund Freud, and also in other psychologists who operate in the same sort of scheme of valuation, an influence that is malefic in the highest degree. Now, the metaphysical statement may not be provable to the unilluminated mind, but as I have attempted to show elsewhere, in pure mathematics we have a counterpart of the metaphysical orientation. These two I view as two sides of the same coin, and the mathematician can fully justify his statements. So that by implication, Sigmund Freud would have to view the determinations of, say, a non-Euclidean geometrician such as Riemann as a form of perverted sexuality. Now, I submit that men who take this point of view as psychologists, or similar points of view, are among the most malefic forces in the human whole. They tend to denigrate man to the level of mere animality, whereas, in point of fact, man is the thinker, not the entity of mere animalistic sensuality, and is further, a potential divine being. And a tendency which leads to the denigration of manhood to mere animality is one of the worst influences to which mankind can be submitted. I consider all such as exhibiting the worst influence possible upon the human entity. Man being reduced to the status of only an animal is worse than being neurotic or psychotic.

There is a point that I wish to make perfectly clear, namely, that the present critique that has just been produced does not apply to all physicians and psychologists, but only to those who employ as exclusively valid the reductive principle in interpretation. The reductive principle may be described in this way: it is the thesis that any subsequent state of an entity may be interpreted by an analysis of earlier states, namely, implying that all which emerges is no more than that which would be derived by a comprehensive study of the earlier state. This would be equivalent to saying that one could understand fully the nature of a butterfly by a thorough knowledge of the caterpillar.

This is not the only possible method of interpretation by any means. I will illustrate this point by a reference to the first sentence of the *Critique of Pure Reason* produced by Immanuel Kant. That sentence runs this way, "No doubt all knowledge begins with experience, but it does not therefore follow that all knowledge comes from experience."² In other words, some portion of the knowledge which begins with experience is not reducible to a thorough analysis of the content of experience itself. This would imply that with respect to this knowledge which is other than that which is reducible to experience is aroused simply on the occasion of experience. The acute analysis of David Hume revealed that if we assume that all knowledge comes from

¹ Carl G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 148-153.

² Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), 41. The text actually reads "But though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience."

experience, then we could have no knowledge whatsoever of law. We could not predetermine any action in nature whatsoever. We could not even assume that because we had seen the sun arise, apparently, a million times that therefore we have any assurance that it would arise tomorrow. If there is a knowable law in nature it would require something more than experience itself to determine what it is. Kant reestablished the possibility of knowable law by his *Critique* and thus performed a valuable service for our thinking. Experience alone can give us no universals or general principles, and such being the case, from experience alone we could never derive a true science which enables us to predict. We have verified that such a science is possible, and therefore indirectly proven that experience alone is not the sole source of our knowledge.

Now, the reductive interpretation of psychical states is a reversion to the old position of John Locke that all knowledge comes from experience, and it implies that the later state is no more than its previous and earlier manifestation, and that by analysis of that previous earlier manifestation we can know all that can possibly emerge. An example of this would be the view that our language comes from the cries of the animals, and that therefore the ultimate real meaning of all our language is no more than that contained in those cries. If this were so, no science, no mathematics, and no metaphysics would be possible. But if there is another way of knowledge that emerges with experience, all this is changed. The cry of the animal is not the ultimate meaning of our universals; as examples, consider the highly sophisticated language of Sir Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein. Sir Isaac Newton gave the law of gravity in the following form: G equals m major multiplied by m minor over d squared. This means that the force of the gravitational pull is equal to the product of the masses of the two bodies, such as the sun and the earth, divided by the square of the distance between them. I shall not consider the complications of the attraction of other bodies, namely, the famous three body problem, as it is not necessary for my purposes, but Newton proved that under this law of attraction between two bodies the path of the minor body about the major body would be one of the conic sections, namely, a circle, an ellipse, a parabola, and a hyperbola. In the case of the earth about the sun, it is an ellipse that is nearly circular, namely, one of low eccentricity. In the case of a high speed comet coming under the attraction of the sun, it would take a parabolic form. Or again, consider the Einsteinian theory of the energetic value of a piece of matter. It has the form: $E = mc^2$, where E represents the energy, m the mass of the piece of matter, and c the velocity of light, which implies that the amount of energy contained in a piece of matter is simply enormous, so much so that one one-thousandth part of 20 pounds of an unstable isotope of uranium when reduced to energy was able to destroy a city. Now, I submit that this language, the meaning of this language, is not reducible to the cries of the animals. To be sure, there probably never has been a medical materialist or reductive psychologist who has ever attempted to achieve this determination, but if they were logically consistent, they would have to do so.

However, fortunately for us not all medical men and psychologists are oriented to the idea of the exclusive validity of the reductive hypothesis. There is another principle of interpretation, namely, that of the orientation to ends. The given state in which an entity is now may be understood by the end toward which it is aiming. To illustrate what is meant here let us return to the image of the caterpillar and the butterfly. When the caterpillar reaches the state where it enters the condition of the chrysalis, there would be two ways of viewing it. From the standpoint of the reductive hypothesis, it might be

regarded as a major illness and that the aim of possible treatment of this chrysalis would be to transform it back into the caterpillar state. That represents the reductive position; in other words, the sexualistic position of the Freudians. But if one were to render aid with real understanding to the chrysalis, one who was rendering this help would envisage the meaning of the chrysalis as being exemplified in the emerging butterfly, and if help were needed, perhaps providing the right temperatures, that would be what the one who was giving aid would be able to do.

Now, the application of this is that when the human being is going through the process of transformation in consciousness, he may very well pass through a stage corresponding to that of the chrysalis and seem thus to be in a state of illness from the perspective of the observing individual. There is a condition of change taking place in which old behaviors become stultified and the new patterns have not yet been established. The individual passing through this stage may need help, and that help could be supplied by the understanding psychologist. But such a psychologist would have to know what the purpose of yoga really is, namely, that it is oriented to a state that corresponds in our figure to the state of the butterfly and not a continuation of the state symbolized by the caterpillar.

I postulate that the human being that we see in this world is primarily a triune being.

And here I enter a footnote. In a substantial portion of the literature including Theosophy, the conception of man is in the form of a septenary being, but there is no contradiction here, for if we take three elements, *a*, *b*, and *c* and consider the various combinations that are possible taken one at a time, two at a time, and three at a time, we get a septenary pattern. Thus *a*, *b*, and *c* is 3. Combinations of *a*, *b*, and *c* give us *ab*, *bc*, and *ca*. That gives us 6. And finally, the combination of all three gives us 7. I assert the primacy of the triune constitution, but accept the septenary constitution as derivative. End of the footnote.

Returning to the text:

The triune being consists of the following three entities: an *animal*; second, a *man*; and third, a *spiritual being*.

Here I introduce another footnote. In many discussions the third form that I have called the “spiritual being” is spoken of as a divine being or as a Buddha. I do not at all reject this usage, but to be less identified with a specific point of view, such as that which envisages the idea of a God or the idea of a Principle as supreme, I use the term spiritual being.

Returning to the text:

The animal is all that we see with our ordinary senses, or rather sense with our ordinary senses here in this world. To be aware of the man, we have to perceive in a more subtle way, and especially is this so if we are to perceive the latent spiritual being. The first or lowest aspect is none other than an animal, just as the placenta animals require material food in order to exist, so this entity requires material food. It requires air. It requires water. It is composed of flesh, bones, blood, and other elements—the same in the ordinary animal and in the animal portion of the human being. It propagates itself through the use of sexual union—the same with the animal and with the human being. I could

continue and in more detail carry out this identification, but I think that is enough. This is what most mean when they speak of a human being. They mean that animal that is seen or otherwise sensed. But within this human animal there is something not possessed by the animal, and that is the thinker who is capable of pure thought. We are aware of this indirectly and most particularly when we function on the level of pure thought. There is also latently, and something much more difficultly discerned, namely, a spiritual entity.

Now, corresponding to this triune division there are three modes of cognition, which I also postulate. These are: sense perception; second, conceptual cognition; and third, introceptual cognition, based upon the principle of “knowledge through identity.”

I posit further that the manifestation of creatures in this world is not by arbitrary fiat of any being, but rather by a process of evolution or development; however, I am not here maintaining the adequacy of the conception of organic evolution that was originally initiated by Charles Darwin. The discoveries of Darwin may have a considerable validity in the detail of some part of the technique of evolution, but I do not conceive it as an adequate interpretation of the whole meaning of evolution. I conceive, rather, of this evolution as an emergence outwardly of that which is already “involved” in a hidden sense—a process, in other words, of emergence to the surface of that which is hidden within. That places me in essential agreement with the position of the Theosophical teachings and of the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

Now, as we are dealing with an entity conceived of as triune, a combination of three primary elements, it is necessary to consider how the principle of evolution applies to these. As to that portion which we call the animal, the conception of organic evolution probably has a high order of validity, but I deny that sheer development in this sense of the animal can lead to the man and much less to the spiritual being. The process of evolutionary development, if it applies to the man and the spiritual being, is other than that known to our science. I conceive of these three as essentially entities that are not derived one from the other. Let me illustrate the problem here. No doubt, the animal entity, whether the subhuman animal or the animal portion of the human being, is not a thinker in the true sense of the word; no doubt, he has a certain principle of mind, but it is a kind of controlled mentation which is not free. It is not freely self-determinant. The action would be wholly pragmatic to the end of meeting the needs of the living organism in the environment of the world. If we study the most primitive kind of cognition, namely, that of sense perception, we find that it gives us only the concrete particular. It gives that sensuous impression as a fact here and now without any essential relationship to any other fact. We experience trees, not tree-ness. We experience, thus, particulars essentially, not the universals, which are of another order of cognition. The thinking in terms of universals is what I mean by conceptual cognition, the characteristic of the man. And it is possible to achieve a considerable freedom from the dominance of sensual cognition in pure thought. The processes of the spiritual entity are different again, and I may attempt later to enter into some degree of identification of them.

Now, what I am suggesting is a certain kind of entity independence between these three components; in other words, implying that they are not so interlocked that they are incapable of separate functioning. In this connection, I would make a reference to a statement in *The Secret Doctrine* connected with the Taraka yoga. In this yoga, man is divided into three principles akin to the three divisions that I make. Above the

three principles is the *Atman*. These are known as the *Karanopadhi*, the *Sukshmopadhi*, and the *Sthulopadhi*. Now, it is there stated that the adept can divide himself into these three parts and function on three different levels independently of each other and then can draw all three back together again.³ In other words, the interconnection between each of the members of the three is not a rigid one, not what we might call compulsively organic, in the sense that the total entity could not function in any sense unless all three parts were present. In other words, there is a certain independence between the three parts and not a radical interdependence, though there is an established interaction between the three aspects.

There is a correspondence which I wish to draw into the total picture, and I shall do so at this time as a sort of interlude:

Consider the theory of *Kundalini* yoga. This posits as a basic fact that there is a root energy centered at the base of the spine in the subtle body which corresponds to this gross physical body, and that there are certain channels called *nadis* and corresponding to the nerves of the physical body but not identical with those nerves, that among these are three associated with the spine called *Sushumna*, *Ida*, and *Pingala*, of which the *Sushumna* is identified with the central channel of the spine and the other two weaving about it. It also posits the conception of certain *chakras*, seven in number: *Muladhara* at the base of the spine, *Svadhithana* in a position low in the spine, *Manipura* corresponding to the solar plexus approximately, *Anahata* corresponding to the heart, *Visuddha* corresponding to a *chakra* in the throat, *Ajna* corresponding to a *chakra* said to be located in a position behind the center between the eyebrows, and finally *Sahasrara* at the top or crown of the head.

In the *Kundalini* yoga it is maintained that the process of development is by an arousing of the latent power resident in *Muladhara*. This is to be viewed as a principle of pure energy which becomes differentiated into various forms as it arises and awakens the various *chakras*: in *Svadhithana* it awakens an energy corresponding to the sexual side of man; in *Manipura* at the solar plexus corresponding to the emotional aspect; *Anahata* corresponding to the heart and carrying the principle of affection or love; and *Visuddha* corresponding to the power of articulation; and *Ajna* corresponding to what we might call spiritual insight; and finally *Sahasrara* corresponding to what we might call the very spiritual essence itself, which may be viewed as the foundation of all but in a relation that is inverted in the manifestation.

Now, the root energy is undifferentiated, but it becomes differentiated as it activates these different *chakras*. We can set up a correspondence between pairs of these *chakras* and the three entities: thus, sexuality and emotionality corresponds to the animal; the capacity for disinterested love and for articulation corresponds to the man; and the *Ajna* and *Sahasrara* corresponds to the spiritual being—a triune entity as a whole.

³ H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Press, 1893), 182:

Though there are seven principles in man, there are but three distinct Upadhis (bases), in each of which his Atma may work independently of the rest. These three Upadhis can be separated by an Adept without killing himself. He cannot separate the seven principles from each other without destroying his constitution.

Returning to the main thesis:

As I reject the idea that the man is developed out of the animal merely by a blind process of evolution, I replace that conception by this other conception that man is a superimposition upon the animal, and, ultimately, that the spiritual being is a superimposition upon the combined entity of the man and the animal. There is a statement in *The Secret Doctrine* that bears upon this point directly. In that book it is asserted that at a certain stage of evolution of the lower entity, it had attained a position that was called an ape-like creature, an animal that had achieved the status of a nascent man, but was not yet truly human. Now, at the same time, it is there affirmed that there was a certain class of ex-men called the *Manasaputra*, or entities that are otherwise known as *Dhyān Chohans* who had fallen because of having consummated some error beyond our ordinary understanding, and that the *karmic* decree was that they had to descend back down to the level of this nascent man, or ape-like creature, and enter into it. In other words, become superimposed upon it. Apparently this was a very obnoxious step for these representatives of the *Manasaputra*. Some of them, it is said, obeyed the command directly and did enter in, some merely projected a ray from themselves into these ape-like creatures, and still others merely overshadowed. Clearly the development of those creatures into which the *Manasaputra* truly entered would develop much more rapidly than those that had merely a projection of a ray or an overshadowing. It is said that not all races of men received these superimpositions, and some races were named as exceptions such as the Bushmen of Australia and the Bushmen of Africa, but it is implied that there were others. Now, the *Manasaputra* are otherwise known as the Sons of Mind, and I wish to suggest here that this is the source of the conceptual power we find in modern man. . . . this principle would be also weak in conceptuality.

Now, the implication here is that sensuality does not by straight-line evolution become conceptuality, but rather that conceptuality is a superimposition upon the sensuous entity, and is definitely a higher principle. This statement also confirms emphatically Plato's relative evaluation of the universals *vis-à-vis* the sensuous order of cognition. We have thus a higher principle superimposed upon a lower, but the story as given in *The Secret Doctrine* continues to say that here we have, as it were, two rays that become one ray, and become in effect one entity but with a different inheritance.⁴ It gives us two ways in which we may view ourselves: thus, we may think of ourselves as ape-like creatures, essentially animals, with a *Manasaputra* riding on our backs, namely, conceptuality riding on our backs; or we can think of ourselves as essentially *Manasaputra* riding upon the back of an ape-like creature. These two identifications make a simply enormous difference in the way one evaluates what his true nature is at this point.

As I look across the world and listen to the news, I am forced to the conclusion that the vast majority of the individuals of this humanity have identified themselves with the ape-like creature, and accept the *Manasaputra*, or the conceptuality, riding on their backs with reluctance. It seems that only the few have identified themselves with the fallen *Manasaputra* riding on the backs of the ape-like creatures. Thus we have this enormous emphasis of physical combat for determining outcome, the enormous emphasis

⁴ Ibid., 176-178.

upon the care of the physical body, and so little attention given to the essential reality of the thinker. It is a sad commentary, and it does, I think, explain why this world is in such a precarious condition as it is today.

At this stage in the evolution of the total human being we have two of the three primary principles awakened and more or less active, the third still remains latent, namely, the true spiritual entity. With the vast majority of human beings, only the animal nature is substantially awake and active and determinant, and the thinker, the conceptual entity or the fallen *Manasaputra*, is only in minor degree effectively functioning, though with a few the reverse is the case. The next big problem is the awakening to conscious function here of the spiritual entity, and this, as I conceive it, is the problem of yoga.