

On the Awakening of the Heart Chakra (First Draft)

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Dr. Brugh Joy has asked me to share with you some of the intimate facts connected with the awakening of the heart *chakra*. These intimate facts are not often available. Those who have passed through the experience are often diffident about giving expression to them because they are very intimate. This is particularly true of the Oriental illuminati; not so true in connection with Western mystics, as William James found out when he made his search upon the subject.

A good example would be the story of the search of the Blessed One for the solution of the problem of human suffering. The story as told to us is as follows. When the child first was born, a Sage told his father that he would either become an outstanding ruler, or if he ever learned of the suffering to which humanity was subject, he would abandon that course and become a sage. The result was that the father, who wanted a great ruler in his son, surrounded the child with every possible comfort and saw to it that he did not become acquainted with the lot of humanity in general. The prince was thus cared for until he had reached the age for marriage and he had a child. Then one day he asked his charioteer to take a trip out into the countryside. On that trip he saw a man who was begging and was obviously in a state of great poverty. He also saw another man who was in a state of deep illness, and finally he saw a corpse. He asked his charioteer if this was something that was rare or if it was very common, and the charioteer told him that it was very common. This was the first experience Gautama had of the suffering with which humanity is afflicted. The result was that he could no longer be content in his sheltered life. It is said that in the deep night he left his couch with his wife and child, and went forth to make a search for the solution of the problem of suffering. He spent six years in deep, severe austerity with a group of austere aspirants, and carried out the practice with greater severity than the other associates with him. And it is said that he had carried his intake of food down to one grain of rice for a meal. And then, once when bathing, he almost collapsed and realized that this extreme austerity was not producing any satisfactory results. He then abandoned it, took a good and substantial meal, and then set himself down beneath the bodhi tree, and said he would not leave it until he found the solution. Ultimately under the bodhi tree he attained Enlightenment, and then his lifework proceeded from that point forward to the end of his life.

Now here we learn of the external facts, but we do not learn of the inner experiences he may have had. Did he grieve for his wife and child? Did he face discouragement, despair, or desolation during that period? What was it he went through? Of this we know nothing. And yet these are facts that are of, not only great intimacy, but are facts that we may experience ourselves when we are also on our search for Enlightenment. Something of these might be told that may help us to understand what the inner experience may be like.

I, too, along with many others, have entered upon this search. But the motivation for my entering upon the search was not the consideration of the general suffering of humanity and other creatures; it had a more technical basis. It happened at the time when I was a student in the Graduate School of Philosophy at Harvard. At that time I took some seminars and other courses. In the seminar in metaphysics, on one occasion, one of the students gave a paper which was a form of a Vedantic philosophy and he defended it successfully against the adverse criticism of all the other students and the professor. This impressed me. It implied that here this other way of thinking actually had positive value and might be true, although it was very different from the thinking of most Western students. I was so impressed that I decided that if this way of thinking is indeed true, than any philosophic orientation that neglected this source of truth would be incomplete. The result was that after a brief period of teaching in Stanford University, I decided to enter upon a search to see if indeed this way was in fact a possible way. It required the withdrawal from the university world, which prior to that time, was the domain towards which I was oriented, and resulted in a search that took twenty-two years.

Most of this search was simply a groping since I did not have the guidance of any of the proficients in the field. The searching was a groping, and as time passed I frequently became discouraged and even felt that I had made a mistake, that I had indeed sacrificed a possible career for a search that was leading nowhere. Ultimately, however, I came to the discovery of Shankara. This was in a work by Paul Deussen called *The System of the Vedanta*, based upon the Shankara commentaries related to the *Brahma Sutras*. As I read this material, which included many extended quotations, I found myself realizing it as a very familiar field. I often knew what Shankara was going to say before I read it, implying that somehow, perhaps in some other life, I had been acquainted with this material. At one time I felt the urge to read the section upon Liberation. I did this, and afterward while meditating upon the material just read, I had this recognition: I am already that which I seek. In other words, I was seeking my true identity, which in the literature, is defined as *Atman*. If I am already that which I seek, then there is no point in seeking further, and I gave up the search at that moment. But, also at that moment, the breakthrough came. I suddenly found myself in the state of a deep *ananda*. I felt myself as standing upon sacred ground. I felt the presence of the ultimate Divine surrounding me on all sides. I also found that in principle all the great metaphysical problems that badger us were already solved in principle. In other words, I found that behind the veil there is a great beauty, and that there is a benign quality that ultimately rules the universe—that the suffering and the mal-features of this world are only an appearance on the surface, that beneath that there is a benign principle governing all.

Upon the suggestion of a Sage, I wrote this material up in the volume called *Pathways Through to Space*, and later a recapitulation of it in the volume *The Philosophy of Consciousness Without an Object*. Both of these volumes are available. There was no major personal suffering connected with this experience. The suffering, such as it was, was connected with the fact that over the twenty-two years there seemed be no progress made, and I often felt that I made a mistake and that this was a useless search, but otherwise there was no acute suffering. But as will be shown later, the story is quite otherwise in connection with the opening of the heart center or *anahata*.

Prior to the breakthrough of August 7, 1936, I had not resolved to go the way of the Kwan Yin vow, or the way recommended by *The Voice of the Silence*. Nonetheless, I was impressed by the moral force of these indicated ways. This is the point that one should not regard the Realization as a value which exists only for himself, but that one should embrace the collectivity in the enjoyment of the fruit of the Realization. The moral force of this decision impressed me. To remind you what this is, I shall quote the Kwan Yin vow. It is to this effect: Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation, but forever and everywhere will I strive for the redemption of all creatures throughout the world. And in the terms of *The Voice of the Silence*, we have this statement: Do not make of the stream which flows from Sumeru a private pond, but make of yourself a streambed whereby this value may flow to all creatures.¹ I was impressed with the moral force of this program. I was not emotionally moved by the suffering of all creatures, but I was impressed with the moral force of this line of action. So as a rational decision I decided to go this way and not go the course of a private withdrawal in a state of delight. This is different from a decision made on the basis of a strong feeling concerning the lot of human creatures. It was a rational moral decision.

Thirty-three days after the Realization of August 7, 1936, there walked into my consciousness a second Realization which had been totally unexpected and was of a character for which the literature had not at all prepared me. The keynote of this Realization was the principle of balance or equilibrium. It involved a viewing of both the *sangsaric*, or the universe of objects, and the *nirvanic*, with equal eye. The effect of this was to produce an attitude of dealing with the *sangsaric* along with the *nirvanic*. It involved a capacity to move either way, and to bring something of the *nirvanic* into the *sangsaric*. The result was that the book *Pathways Through to Space* has had the effect of inducing certain degree of consciousness with a degree of *nirvanic* coloring, and this has made it book of especial importance.

With these two Realizations, I had a message to contribute that was not simply a rehashing of the material in the literature. And this message I have developed over the past forty-two years. The main thrust of this was a contribution to what might be called the Western Way. It is basic that every individual, or every people, has a way that is valid for him or it. A way that is valid for Eastern man is not necessarily a valid way for Western man. One must start from the base where he lives, and Western man has a very different orientation from Eastern man. The way that's valid for Eastern man, if

¹ H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence* (Los Angeles: The Theosophy Company, 1928), 72-73:

Would'st thou thus dam the waters born on Sumeru? Shalt thou divert the stream for thine own sake, or send it back to its prime source along the crests of cycles?

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

Know, if of Amitabha, the "Boundless Age", thou would'st become co-worker, then must thou shed the light acquired, like to the Bodhisattvas twain, upon the span of all three worlds.

Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of Alaya be poured forth into another bed.

Know, O Narjol, thou of the Secret Path, its pure fresh waters must be used to sweeter make the Ocean's bitter waves—that mighty sea of sorrow formed of the tears of men.

transferred to Western man and he applies it in imitation of Eastern man, we may have the condition that the right way with the wrong man leads to wrong results.² So the thrust of my work during the past forty-two years has been to make a contribution to what might be called the Western Way. But this work now appears to have been finished and now something enters into the picture that was totally unexpected.

To understand what now transpired will require a bit of personal biography and the acquaintance with a major archetypal dream that had occurred on the order of fifty years earlier. The personal biography is as follows. In 1959, my first wife died after an association of forty years. This combination had been achieved for the purpose of the work in which we had been engaged and was not for the usual biological reasons. With her passing I was thrown into a state of such psychological depression that I was unable to continue with the work; I was no longer productive. But it became evident to me that if I was to continue with my work, I would have to find another companion. So I made a search for such a companion and found one who is called Gertrude. By reason of this association, the depression was lifted, and I was able to produce again. And with this second combination with a feminine companion, I produced perhaps half a million words on tape, so it was a productive relationship.

We had lived together in a life of idyllic relationship. It was a combination in which there was no friction whatsoever, and she gave to me the inner support that enabled me to live a productive life even though at the time I was seventy-two years of age. Because she was twenty-four years my junior, I assumed that I would be the first to depart from this plane and had laid my plans accordingly, both on the practical and on the emotional level. But on last May 28th, she had a stroke and departed from this realm leaving me in a state of shock. It appears that because of the great harmony in the relationship between Gertrude and myself, the “great dream” of fifty years ago was unable to become activated, and one of the analysts of the dream has suggested that Gertrude was withdrawn for the very purpose of leading to the activation of this dream. So it now becomes necessary to report that dream so that its action may be understood.

The dream was as follows. It was placed in an empty theater. There were no persons present in the theater other than those who participated in the action. The stage was so oriented that there was a means of descending from the stage to the aisles; it is not much above the orchestra pit. There were two aisles running to the back portion of the theater, one on the right and one on the left. Over the right side, there was a box at balcony level, so placed that the box was right over the right aisle. In that box, seated just above the right aisle, there was the figure of a Sage or Master, a bearded figure. I myself, in my proper person, in some way was fused with this Sage and saw the action of the drama from that perspective. But I did not know what the Sage would do before he did it. Before the beginning of the action, it seems that the Sage had spoken to someone to his right, saying that the drama about to take place concerned him and that he should go down to the wings beside the stage. I never saw this figure. I have assumed that it was the shadow, which is one of the Jungian archetypes, but I do not really know whether it was a

² Carl G. Jung, commentary to *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (New York: Causeway Books, 1975), 79: “An ancient adept has said: But if the wrong man uses the right means, the right means work in the wrong way.”

masculine or feminine entity. On the stage there was a bed, and in the bed was a young woman in advanced stages of exhaustion. The drama opened with the entrance of Mephisto, who began a dance of heroic portions. The dance grew in fury and seemed to build up a kind of magnetism which roused the young woman so that she left the bed and participated in the dance. The dance grew in fury until finally it could not be contained by the stage, and the young woman leading, she carried the dance down from the stage to the right lane, followed by Mephisto, rounded in the back part of the theater, returned by the left lane to the stage, and continued through a series of roundings. Meanwhile the Sage observed the process with concentrated attention.

It soon became evident that the young woman was losing out in the contest—the aim of Mephisto being to absorb her energy and make it part of his own. At this point the Sage intervened. Now, it was somehow known in the dream that the power of Mephisto was almost equal to that of the Sage. When the Sage intervened, he threw at Mephisto two forces in rapid succession; namely, the force of love and the force of hate, it being known that either a continuous force of love or a continuous force of hate could be handled by him, but the rapid oscillation upset his control. As he came back down the right aisle from the stage for the last time, he looked up at the Sage and I saw anger in his eyes. And he threw at the Sage a force which came in the appearance of bullets. The Sage caught these bullets in his mouth and spewed them back at Mephisto, and I awoke at that moment with a sense of victory. And the glow of this victory lasted through several days in my waking life thereafter. And it was my conviction that if the outcome in this case had not been victorious, there never would have been the Realization that took place in 1936.

This dream has been submitted to analysis by two exceptionally qualified psychologists. They both agree that Mephisto represents the intellect as it is so represented in Western mythology; that the young woman is the anima, or the woman, in the man. They both maintain that concentrated intellectual activity on my part had so drained her that she was near to the point of annihilation, that she was saved from this by the intervention of the Sage. Now, the identification of Mephisto as the intellect has been questioned in my own mind. Why should the intellect be identified with this negative power? It is through the intellect that Western science has been developed and all of the advantages of our applied science has come from this basic Western science. It has made an enormous difference in our lives, enriching them immensely. And in its application to agriculture has made possible a far greater population in the world than otherwise would have been possible. But then the thought came to me that also this action of the pure intellect in the West also brought to us the curse of the atom bomb, so that we live today under its shadow, never knowing but that sometime the power of the atom bomb may be released and render life in this world impossible.

A key to this problem may be found by a consideration of the Grail myth. In the form of this myth, which was employed by Wagner in his composition of *Parsifal*, it is stated that the Grail and the spear should never be separated. Now, the Grail represents the heart and the spear represents the mind. On one occasion, according to that form of the Grail, Amfortas, who was the head of the Grail monastery, took the spear in separation from the Grail to go forth and do battle with Klingsor, the black magician. But in this battle, he was worsted. Klingsor attained the spear and wounded Amfortas, leaving the latter in a state of suffering which was not cured until later when Parsifal came back

with the lost spear. Klingsor took the spear, which now is the pure intellect, and built a castle where he established his forces. He attacked all the Knights of the Grail that he could, and diverted them from their purposes in the Grail and took them over to himself. He was the negative principle. Ultimately, he was overcome by Parsifal, according to the story, but he while having the spear or the power of the mind in separation from the heart, had built a power which was of a dark nature. Thus it would seem to imply that there is a certain meaning in identifying pure intellectuality with Mephisto. It would not be identified with Mephisto when it functions in cooperation with the heart. This, I think, gives us a certain clarification.

Now, the significance of the Grail myth, as of any other great myth, grows out of the fact that it is a form of communication from the unconscious, just as dreams are a form of communication from the unconscious. It is a way of acquiring inner knowledge that is not ordinarily available to us by our usual means. In my work I had developed an intensive concentration on pure intellectual formulation. This, however, was not regarded by the analysts as a mistake; but rather, that this pure concentration was necessary in order to accomplish the results that were envisaged. However, the development was at the cost of the anima, or the inner woman, and ultimately there came a time when her very existence was in endangered. At this point, the Sage intervened, as was shown in the dream, so that she could be salvaged and regenerated. Therefore it was not a mistake. But the time had come when the dream process was in need of activation. I was too closely associated with Gertrude to be available for that activation, so it was suggested by one of the analysts, that she was deliberately withdrawn.

Here we will return to the biographical material. On May 28th, which was Sunday, Gertrude prepared my breakfast, and little did I know that it was for the last time. She did not eat herself, not feeling too well. Afterwards we started preparing the room for a taped meeting, as we were in the habit of giving the meetings in our household. She presently said, "Turn this meeting over to so-and-so, and come with me down to the emergency room of the hospital." As I was nearly blind with cataract and she could not drive, a friend took us down. She entered the emergency room and lying there she was moaning. I asked her how she felt. She said that she was suffering as she had never suffered before. I asked her if the moaning helped, and she said, "Yes." The last word I ever heard uttered by her. A little later she was sleeping having been given Demerol, and I went with a friend to eat lunch. When I returned, we learned that she had had a stroke and was on a life support system, which did her breathing for her, as she had stopped breathing. Here she lingered for two days and no hope was appearing that any result would come from the artificial support. I had checked upon the effect of such artificial support with respect to the process that followed death for the individual, and found that it was a serious drag upon them. So having brought in a consultant and verified that there was really no hope, I finally made the decision to have her withdrawn from the support as that was the last service which I could render her. I later learned that it was a great freeing act with respect to her, but for me, it hurt immensely, for here was the extinction of the last hope.

Her body spent twenty-four hours lying in state at her home. We played music throughout the period, and had the lights burning all night. We played the German *Requiem* and *Parsifal*. A flower was beside her and a candle burned there throughout the

night. Every time that her body was alone, I came and spoke to her, for I had learned from some clairvoyants who knew that what was said to the body would be heard by the individual, and later I had this verified. I told her how I regarded her and spoke from out my heart, which was bleeding. And later I learned that she heard all of it, and that was a certain degree of consolation. The body was cremated so that now all that remains of her physical presence is a handful of ashes in a can.

Fortunately, I had some contact with certain clairvoyants who had the power to trace the course of the individual after passing from this plane by death. I learned that the experience for Gertrude was one of release, that she was indeed happy, even very happy, and had a sense of great freedom. So there was comfort in that fact. Actually, it is not the one who passes in who faces the hard facts of death so much as those who are left behind. Except in some cases like suicide, the evidence that we have is that in passing in, they enter into a finer and richer kind of consciousness than that which was known here. In fact, it has been even suggested that one should use care in giving out this information for there might be those who would seek suicide in order to attain that inner enjoyment.

The pain out of the parting is for those who are left behind. The greater one loves, the greater the pain of the parting produced by the separation caused by death. One could make a mistake here, and decide not to love, so he could avoid the pain; but this would be an egregious error, for life without love is an empty thing. I found that our home, which very largely we had built, and which had been cared for by Gertrude, and she had placed many additions within it—this home, which had been precious to us, suddenly became only an empty house with the heart gone out of it. And along with this experience of the desolation produced by Gertrude's departure, the processes of the dream became activated within me. I passed into a state where I lost the mental control that had governed my life heretofore, and I was the victim of the processes produced by the death of Gertrude and the activation of the dream. Ultimately, this complex psychical condition was precipitated physically into a major heart attack, with a relief on the level of the psyche. The heart attack proved to be painless, and I found myself more comfortable with a heart attack than I had been before.

Today I have become accustomed to the absence of the companion, but it still hurts, though I have learned how to live with hurt. But though all this seems to be ultimate catastrophe, yet life goes on with its obligations. Meals must be made, food purchased, and fuel secured, and bills must be paid, and the problems of the estate handled. Duty calls, one proceeds to perform it, but the end of plans with the beloved is gone. There is no seeming adequate reason for performing these things; still, they must be performed.

But this is not the whole of the story. There was a brighter development. Early in August, I gave a taped lecture with a group that had been coming to my lectures for many years. The lecture which had been planned to be taped, I abandoned, and gave an extemporaneous talk.³ At the end of the talk I entered into a major *ananda* that lasted for fourteen hours. When one has an *ananda*, all the pain in him is dissolved, and he lives for the time in a state of ecstasy. This *ananda* lasted for fourteen hours, the longest I have ever known such. When I came into breakfast in the morning, I spoke to the one who

³ See the audio recording, "Convention 1978: Extemporaneous Discussion of Personal Problems."

served me and said, “The journey through hell has been finished and the heart—*anahata*—has opened.” This was the end of the process. It cost monumental pain, but Realization is not alone to the end of attaining knowledge-wisdom, but there must be added to this the force of compassion, and compassion comes from the heart, not the head. And so, there was an ultimate culmination by the process of passing through monumental pain.