

## A MYSTICAL VIEW OF THE WORLD

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Between August 7<sup>th</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup> of last year I experienced a transformation in consciousness the characteristics of which reveal when a comparative study is made, that it was a case of awakening to what is frequently called Mystical Consciousness or Cosmic Consciousness. The primary effect of this awakening was a permanent shift in the base of my consciousness so that now I find assurance, security and certainty on a level that is quite different from that of ordinary or relative consciousness.

This assurance is not based upon thought or experience but upon an indescribable “somewhat” with respect to which all time-categories are irrelevant. In its purity it transcends definition and is incommunicable, but when translated, as far as is possible in terms of relative consciousness, it appears as of a certain character that is the diametric opposite of those modes of consciousness and forms of knowledge that originate in experience.

I, therefore, call this consciousness “immediate, transcendent Consciousness or Knowledge,” it being understood that this is not a consciousness or a knowledge in the subject-object sense. It is characteristic of this transcendent Consciousness or Knowledge that it is much closer to the most universal or, so-called, abstract forms of subject-object consciousness than it is to the more particular or, so-called concrete forms.

Thus I now find myself in relatively immediate relationship to universals, while concrete particulars take on the character of distance and of being derivative and instrumental. The Infinite seems to stand in much closer and immediate relation to me than the finite, the latter rather than the former having the mysteries requiring resolution.

The assurance underlying this transcendent Consciousness is of such an order that in case of a conflict between the cognition flowing from it and concepts derived from experience, I most certainly doubt or distrust the empiric concepts and place the burden of proof upon them. Thus I can much more easily adjust myself to the view that all experience gives knowledge that is unreal than to conceive of the transcendent awareness as a delusion.

I do not assert that the above transformation and recognition must, of necessity, be accepted as the base of assurance by everybody regardless of whether he has had a mystical awakening or not. I simply assert it as an established fact with me and, further, that I find myself in a position of substantial cognitive congruency with an important number of individuals who claim to have realized the mystic awakening, these individuals being well represented among those who have been leaders in important religions and philosophic systems.

I acknowledge that without the original assurance, the consequences in terms of a system of thought do not carry authority. Hence, there can be no such thing as demonstrating those consequences so that agreement on the part of all necessarily follows. Demonstration, to be effective, requires agreement at the starting point. Assuming, then, the position with which I start, the consequences which follow may be entertained by the reader simply as the working out of a hypothesis, when they do not arouse in him an immediate assurance of truth.

Certain concepts reflect with a high order of validity the significance of my primary recognition; whereas others do it more or less violence, I, therefore, call the former true, at least

in high degree, while the latter are clearly false. I do not claim that any concept is fully true or completely representative of the Reality given by the Recognition. This should be born in mind in what follows.

In the first place, it is of the very essence of the Recognition that I find myself, as a conscious and self-persistent center, identical with a transcendent somewhat which is best expressed as a primordial Consciousness that is incapable of division or limitation. At the same time this "Somewhat" is an illimitable and indivisible Substance and also a Force or Energy.

The Consciousness, the Substance and the Force are not to be regarded as three independent facts but simply as three facets or modes of the indefinable Somewhat assumed when cognitively apprehended. The ultimate Reality here is not properly one thing or three things but rather that which is not-many and not-one. In other words, it is not comprehended by any relative classification. However, as compared with the multiform relative consciousness, it appears as a Unity, and hence, for men in general, it is more correctly represented as a monism than a pluralism. But since unity implies the potentiality of plurality, the absolutely indivisible is therefore, in strict logic, not to be regarded as one any more than many.

The Substance is to be regarded as also conscious and manifesting as a force. Similarly, the Consciousness is likewise substantial and a real energy. Finally, the Force manifests Substance and rouses consciousness. The three are inseparable.

As the Three are without division and without limit they are clearly quite other than that which is apparently given through experience. The world of experience seems to be multiform, and so long as consciousness is confined to the relative world, this multiplicity cannot be completely resolved into a unity. Hence, the empiric systems of philosophy are forced to a pluralistic interpretation of the universe. But the mystic insight, particularly of the type here given (but likewise apparently as a general mystic tendency) opposes to the pluralism of experience an urge toward unity. This urge is clearly widely felt and is reflected in the characteristic of science where the motive is almost always toward generalizations of as wide a character as possible. I suggest that this is due at least to an unconscious mystic tendency resident in the inner core of the human psyche, and acting there as a force felt by all or nearly all men but a self-conscious fact only in those who have awakened in the mystic sense.

Experience apparently gives multiplicity, divisibility, becoming, etc. The transcendent Consciousness gives an immediate assurance that, in contrast, has a unity, an indivisible and non-becoming character. Is it possible, in the cognitive sense, to reconcile these two? The effort has been made repeatedly and recurs as one of the greatest problems of philosophy. The classical form of the chief resolution offered is to regard the one as real while the other is called an illusion. From the standpoint of the transcendental State It is real, while the relative world has the significance of an unreal dream. But the empiric philosophers in effect reverse this. A few take the bull by the horns and deny that a cognitive reconciliation is possible and assert that an unreconciled predication of reality in both senses is possible and that is the best that we can do. For my part I do not share the pessimism of the latter, since I do not think that the cognitive powers of man are so restricted as they assume. I think that I have something to offer in this connection which will allow requisite freedom for both domains and yet will achieve something of cross-correlation.

Taking as a base the transcendent state of consciousness, conceive the universe in the primordial sense as an utter Fullness in every sense, and potentially capable of producing every

discrete particularization. In the primordial sense there is full Consciousness without self-consciousness. Now, to complete Fullness nothing can be added, except awareness of this Fullness as Fullness. But we can conceive of something less than fullness. Without undertaking to explain how the process could start, predicate an effect produced in the Fullness which we might call a partial blanking out by a willed act of negation. The effect produced by this would be something on the order of emptiness or a true void. This void produces the only possible contrast with the Fullness and, for the first\*time, relative consciousness becomes possible. This we may call a process of partial blinding or blanking out.

As to Consciousness it is a blinding, while to Substance it is a blanking out. Now absence in some sense stirs specific awareness within the primordial Fullness, and the cycle of evolution or life begins in terms of relative voids within the matrix of Fullness. The voids form what we call sensible or ponderable matter, and the partially blinded consciousness produces our familiar subject-object or relative consciousness. Thus in the evolution of the world-field man witnesses and acts upon instable and therefore ever-becoming voids.

Now it is these voids that we call bodies and objects. But these voids are centers of tension, by the action of a principle analogous to the familiar principle that nature abhors a vacuum. A void-center is necessarily a focal point where the primordial potential energy becomes kinetic. The energy producing the void in, what we might call, the initial sense, calls into action the counter energy which tends to neutralize the void. By the conflict of these two forces the universe of time and becoming is produced. Relative consciousness is aware of this energy only in one sense and hence it sees the universe in terms of development and direction in time. The balancing counter energy is unknown to objective relative consciousness, hence the instability of the so-called scientific constants that have become so evident in recent decades.

Let us conceive the primordial Substance as being a matrix containing the evolving universe<sup>1</sup>. There now seems to be no difficulty in viewing the matrix as an absolute continuum while the contained universe would appear as -a discrete manifold. The sensibly given or ponderable would be contained within a continuous and super-sensible Substance. The sensibly given we may call the manifested world. This manifested world is an object for relative consciousness but only for relative consciousness. For that state of consciousness where the energy is realized in the two complementary senses at the same time, the balance is realized as unbroken and the manifested universe is blanked out. If the energy is realized only in the ordinary objective sense, the external evolving universe is experienced. If it is realized exclusively in the inner complementary sense then we have the complementary psychic world reported by Swedenborg and other Seers. But the simultaneous realization of both modes blanks out both these worlds, as one negative negates another, and the resultant is formless spatial Consciousness. If the latter step is taken while retaining full self-consciousness, the resultant state of consciousness may be called primordial Consciousness plus self-consciousness. This is self-conscious attainment of Nirvana.

At this point an interesting implication appears. The complementary energetic moments give, among other things, direction to time, i.e., from past to future. The outer phase gives us our familiar time. The inner phase would give a complementary or reverse time; hence, its past would be the objective future. Thus real prophecy would become a cross-translation to the objective world of inner memory.

One consequence of the present interpretation is that matter in the familiar sense, in so far as it is substantial and not a mere void, is really a tension of forces. There is no conflict here with the essential standpoint of intra-atomic physics of the -present day. For the atom of matter is conceived as a force-field in which there lie complemental entities such as electrons and positrons. These entities are conceived as unites but not as hard, durable particles of matter. They seem to be wave-systems that persist as entities only while in relationship of distance and tension with respect to each other. If two such entities unite they have a mutually cancelling effect and vanish as matter, becoming disembodied, radiant energy. Here we have an idea that makes possible the conception of the complete annihilation of ponderable or sensible matter. The ponderability of familiar matter is merely a phenomenal resultant of an energy relationship. I submit that this is logically equivalent to my concept of matter and bodies as being essentially void, only I have arrived at this conclusion from a metaphysical premise,

The usual idea of familiar matter being a real, objective and substantial existence is very largely, fortified by the experience that material relationships can produce work, and effort is experienced in dealing with this matter. My interpretation does not involve a denial of the reality of this experience of effort, but simply gives a reversal of meaning. Voidness, of necessity, implies an energy field and it is quite natural that the experience of effort or of energetic impress should be realized by embodied consciousness. However, the focal points of such discretely existent energies are voids, rather than real objective entities. The Space of pure Substance and Energy would have no pensions and Consciousness would 'flow' freely within it, no resistance being encountered.

Two worlds of consciousness in form are implied, an inner psychic realm and an external one, corresponding to energy or life and time-streams in reverse and complemental senses. The one domain is the shadow of the other. The whole is conceived as conscious. But consciousness which is not self-conscious is indistinguishable from unconsciousness. Hence man is knowingly conscious where he is self-conscious; that is conscious of being conscious.

Ordinarily man is self-conscious only with respect to one level. But if self-consciousness awakes on another level retaining correlation with the first level, then consciousness crossing levels is that which we know as mystical. The mystical quality of ineffability is due to the inability to integrate rationally the incommensurable consciousness modes of the two levels. Mystical awakening is really the awakening of self-consciousness on a new level while the self-identity of the former level remains unbroken.

More commonly, mystical awakening is an awakening to the inner form world that I have here called psychical in the broadest sense (I might have called it subtle). Such an awakening gives an awareness of a domain of relations and entities, but so organized as to be only imperfectly communicable in terms of our familiar consciousness forms. This tends to make formulations from the level of mystical insight often seem unintelligible and irrational. But this does not imply that the subtle or psychic realm is irrational from its own standpoint. It is simply the cross-translation that affords the difficulty. Further, the individual mystic may not be skillful in his cross-translation and thus give impressions that are incorrect. But this does not imply the invalidity or irrationality of the subtle realm reported.

Which of the two realms is positive and which negative? I think that the answer to this must be given in connection with the idea of creative impulse. The creative impulse is positive, while its complemental and balancing impulse is negative. As man is creative, being in his core

identical with the original primordial Consciousness, he can manifest creativeness in that external world. This produces a reverse psychic impulse that is negative. Here we have the complementary psyche of Freud, Jung and Adler in which they have noted the tendency to be complementary. They call this psyche unconscious. I call it simply not self-conscious, and thus seeming like unconsciousness. By regarding it as conscious in the simple and not self-conscious sense there is no problem of how something quite other than consciousness could rise into consciousness. All dreams thus are cases of a sort of micro-mystic consciousness.

There remains the possibility (and much in mystical literature tends to confirm the actuality of this possibility) that the Primary creative effect is produced within the broad field that I have called psychic. In that case this objective domain would be the negative or shadow aspect of the subtle or psychic world. This would imply that in the psyche there are two important distinguishable phases, the one more primary than the objective modes of consciousness, the other derivative from the latter. We may call these two phases the higher and the lower psyche. Of these two, the lower, being derivative from creative impulses originating on the objective level of consciousness would be more easily traced by the methods of our objective psychology. Since the predominant mode of human creative consciousness has been far from pure, it is only natural that the psyche which the psychologists have unearthed should have an Aegean stable smell. But the reports from mystical penetration in the psyche such as that of Swedenborg, give a very different picture, containing some elements that are sublimely beautiful. The latter, I submit, belong to the higher psyche and are, therefore, to be regarded as primary and positive with respect to the objective world.

In the foregoing, mystical consciousness in two radically distinct senses is implied. The one, which is apparently the much more common, is an awareness of the subtle or psychic world where I conceive energy and time as moving in a sense counter to that of objective time-energy. Let us call this Cosmic Consciousness, as it is a state of awareness of or within the Cosmos, being a consciousness in terms of form in some sense.

The other would be that consciousness where both movements of energy are integrated simultaneously and the resultant awareness completely transcends the subject-object form. It is timeless and quite formless. Let us call this Transcendent or Spatial Consciousness. On this level there is no sense of motion having direction, as from the past to the future. Yet it is a Consciousness involving the realization of motion that may be said to so turn upon itself so that all tendency in the sense of direction is cancelled. It may be said to be a mutually cancelling motion in all directions at once, so that the resultant effect is absolute permanence. Development, evolution, progress as well as the counter concepts of degeneration, devolution and decay may have no meaning on this level. In fact all polarities are blended in the mutual cancellation.

One implication of the present thesis is that all evolution is a dual movement in counter senses, instead of the single movement from past to future objectively apparent. These two movements consist of (a) the impulse tending to produce the voids (the objective bodies and worlds), and (b) the counter movement tending to destroy them. The resultant is a flow outward and downward through form and a compensating flow ever destructive to form. Objectively considered the first flow is creative and positive, the second negative and destructive. The first produces manifestation, the second resolves and dissolves it. The first is called birth and the second death. But transcendentally considered, the value of these movements is reversed. The first flow appears as a force tending to bind consciousness in form, the second tends to free it in space. Thus birth gives bondage and death gives freedom.

The field of physical science is the sensible or ponderable world. It thus seeks to discover laws which will define the behavior of the voids, without regard for the energy streams flowing in and out of the objective world. Our scientific laws have failed to be more than pragmatic devices simply for the reason that the material studied is taken in abstraction from the matrix in which it is contained. When, on the contrary, the problem of the universe is studied with full cognizance of the outward and inward flow of time-energy, another kind of science becomes possible. As this science is not dealing with a material that is taken in abstraction, it is capable of a reliable estimate of law. But this would not be a physical science, but one which would comprehend the physical as merely a phenomenal incident in a larger whole. For the realization of this science, the mystic awakening is an absolutely essential equipment. So long as physical science restricts its conclusions to that which is strictly implied by the observed facts, there can be no conflict between it and the inner science. Conflict arises only when physical scientists dogmatically assert over-beliefs based upon empiric data.

Both religion and ontological philosophy are related to the super-phenomenal reality and, when properly understood, cannot come into conflict with any determination of physical science. The last word of purely physical science relative to the domain that is properly religious and philosophical in the higher sense is simple agnosticism. The physical scientist who goes further than this is improperly imposing an unjustified over-belief. The proper field of the physical scientist as such is pragmatic utility in the domain of the sensibly apparent.