

TWO

2.1 Reality

¹Many philosophers and also occultists have thought that reality is not what it appears to be. They have denied that visible physical matter is what it is and have asserted that it is something else – an illusion, a dream, only our subjective conception of it. They have thought that just because our conception of reality arises in the mind, therefore reality must also be a figment of the mind: “When we turn away from the world, it ceases to exist.” Strange then that we share the same illusion. Strange indeed that human beings constantly obtain new knowledge of, and from, that illusion by means of sense organs and scientific instruments.

²Against such vagaries hylozoics holds the same view as common sense. Namely, that reality is of course objective; that is: reality exists outside us and is such as it is irrespective of our imaginative views of it.

³Only if reality is objective can it be common to all. Only if reality is independent of man’s imaginings and (in our perspective of time) unchanging can it be explored and known by man. And objective knowledge alone can afford us greater freedom, increase our power over destiny as individuals and as a race. Objective reality is a condition of knowledge as well as of unity and freedom.

⁴According to hylozoics, reality is above all what it appears to be, namely physical visible reality. Besides that, reality is always something totally different and immensely more.

2.2 More About the Three Aspects of Reality

¹Reality is physical visible matter. At the same time, however, it is something other than matter. That “other” is consciousness and motion.

²Matter is tangible – objective. No doubt that it is real then. Consciousness is our sense perceptions, urges, desires, feelings, imaginings, thoughts, ideas, perceptions of the will – everything that happens in our inner life. Nothing of our inner life is tangible. But is it unreal therefore? Hardly! Your life of consciousness is very real to you as mine is to me. Much in them is common to both of us. Else we would not understand each other and this book would convey meaning to its author only.

³Consciousness is intangible; expressed more exactly, it is subjective. Yet it is real. Of course “thinkers” have tried to conjure away that reality too. And for that purpose they have utilized that misleading “nothing but” philosophy. Thoughts and emotions are “nothing but chemical and electrical processes in the brain”, they say. Certainly it can be ascertained that such processes occur in the brain whenever we experience an emotion, think a thought, or make a decision. But are the chemical reactions or the electrical charges identical with the thought, with its content of consciousness?

⁴We started this section by stating that objective matter cannot be explained as subjective consciousness, cannot be explained as illusion or mere conception. No more can we go the other way round: reduce consciousness to mere material phenomena. Matter and consciousness are both absolutes. This implies that they cannot be explained by each other or by other factors but that they are basic factors of existence in themselves. As such, they need not be discussed as to whether they exist but can quite simply be ascertained as self-evident by everybody.

⁵Matter and consciousness are basic factors of existence. But are they the only ones? Let us return to our example of the thought process. The brain is matter, the mental content is consciousness. The picture is still incomplete. It is static, not live. The dynamic element, the very process, must be brought into the picture. The brain is in no way static. There is always activity in it of many different kinds and on all levels of the organization of matter; among cells, molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles. Nor is consciousness static: it shifts con-

stantly between different states, is ever active in various ways.

⁶The third basic factor of existence, which characterizes both the world of matter and the world of consciousness, is therefore motion, the dynamic. Motion is change and change is motion. Nothing in the entire cosmos stands still, not even for a fraction of a second.

⁷Everything said so far can be summed up thus: reality and everything there is in reality has three clearly distinct aspects. These are matter, consciousness, and motion.

⁸They are called aspects, since they are three different sides of the same reality. All three are perfectly real, but their division is an effect of our conceptual thinking when we observe a reality that is in itself unitary and indivisible. The world of matter is the world of consciousness and the world of motion at the same time. Remember the example of the thought process! None of the three can exist without the other two. Everything that exists is matter, but all matter has consciousness and is in motion.

2.3 *The Superphysical Reality*

¹Hylozoics speaks of a reality beyond the physical, the superphysical reality. Clairvoyant people observe superphysical forms, which are invisible to other people and penetrate the physical, the visible matter. Around living beings they observe some sort of psychic atmosphere, the so-called aura. An American physician, Dr. Shafica Karagulla, researched the aura and its medical implications. She became interested after meeting several colleagues who said they could perceive the aura as a “field of life energy” around their patients. They had learnt to use their clairvoyant faculty to make diagnoses. They said they could often “see” a disease as a defect in the vital field before it was pathologically manifest in the organism.

²In her book *Breakthrough to Creativity*, Dr. Karagulla sums up her findings thus: Man has a vital field of physical energy which is at the edge of visibility. It expresses as a web of light extending several inches beyond the body. Moreover he has an emotional field extending to about eighteen inches beyond the body and a mental or intellectual field extending two feet or more. Commenting on her book Dr. Edward Aubert has written:

³“It seems that we live in a vast ocean of interlacing energies. These energies move in and out of our individual fields in a manner analogous to the process of breathing. Each person appears to have his own method of selecting energy; some do it predominantly through intellectual stimulation, others through emotional excitation. Depression and self-centredness greatly diminish the individual’s access to the cosmic energy supply.”

⁴This clearly indicates that also the superphysical reality has the three aspects of matter, consciousness, and motion. The aura is no effect of the organism, no radiation from it. It has an independent existence. In the projection phenomenon (see Chapter 1.2) man finds that he is alive and conscious in his “spiritual body” (that is: his aura), when he has temporarily left his organism. The aura also has its own structure, independent of that of the organism, and disease manifests itself regularly first in the aura and later in the body.

2.4 *Worlds in the Cosmos*

¹Physical matter is visible and tangible to us. Since superphysical matter is invisible and intangible to us, some philosophers call it subjective or “spiritual” and not objective or material. This, however, just evidences their ignorance of the nature of superphysical reality. The basis of physical matter is atoms, which we cannot perceive with our senses. Only when atoms gather together in sufficient quantity and in sufficiently gross composition do they become perceptible to us as objective matter. Of course atoms are in themselves not less objective than the visible forms they make up. We must try to avoid the logical error of ascribing to matter the abortive categories of our limited understanding of it.

²When Maxwell and Hertz discovered the existence of electromagnetic fields more than a hundred years ago, one consequence was that the concept of matter was extended to include

also fields, till then an unimaginable concept. Fields, as science conceives of them, are still just physical. However, our increasing experience of superphysical “vital fields” will finally enable science to widen the concept of matter even more, beyond the limitation of the physical.

³Hylozoics teaches the existence of many kinds of superphysical matter. These matters completely penetrate the physical, exist in the same space as the physical. Man’s aura penetrates his organism and also extends far beyond it.

⁴The entire physical world, not only our planet but the entire solar system and the cosmic space beyond it, is filled with and penetrated by superphysical matter of various kinds. This is possible since also the most solid physical matter mostly consists of empty space between and within atoms. In this vacuum there is seemingly unlimited space for the ever finer atoms that superphysical matter is made up of.

⁵In this manner the various kinds of superphysical matter make up different worlds in the same space as the physical world. Thus when different worlds are discussed in hylozoics, this does not refer to various planets or some such things, but to different states of matter, or dimensions, in the same space.

⁶Each world has its own kind of atoms, its own kind of matter composed of atoms, its own typical kind of consciousness, its own kind of motion (energy, vibrations). The three aspects exist in all the worlds but manifest themselves in totally different ways in each world.

⁷The atoms of the physical world are the biggest or coarsest ones. The next finer atoms are those that make up the emotional world. Finer atoms still constitute the matter of the mental world. Then there is a long continuous series of ever finer atoms.

⁸The finest atoms are the primordial atoms, the monads.

⁹The emotional world has its name from the fact that emotions, or feelings, are the typical consciousness of its kind of matter. The “emotional field” in the aura consists of emotional matter. Through their emotional auras all organisms (human beings, animals, and plants) are in contact with each other. “We live in a vast ocean of interlacing energies.” The individual emotional aura is a condensation of the surrounding emotional “ocean” and has a constant interchange of matter, energy, and consciousness with it. The corresponding is true of the interaction of the “intellectual field” with the mental world. The characteristic consciousness of that world consists of thoughts and ideas.

2.5 *Subjective And Objective Consciousness*

¹Subjective reality is consciousness. Objective reality is matter. There are no exclusively “subjective worlds” as contrasted with the objective physical world. All worlds are both objective and subjective, since they all have both aspects: matter and consciousness.

²Consciousness is able to apprehend all kinds of reality: matter, consciousness, and motion. The content of consciousness thus can be both subjective and objective. Consciousness has a subjective content when it is occupied with itself: with feelings, thoughts, memories and so on. This is called subjective consciousness. Consciousness is also able to observe matter. It does so, for instance, when using our senses we perceive what is happening in the physical. This is called objective consciousness.

³Normal man has objective consciousness of physical matter only. Objective consciousness of emotional and mental matter means that you can “see” material forms in these worlds, for example the auras surrounding living organisms. This is usually called clairvoyance. Emotional clairvoyance is far more common than mental.

⁴Most people are not clairvoyant, however. Except for sense perceptions of the physical world, man’s consciousness is subjective only. His emotional and mental consciousness so far developed is subjective. This is the reason why most people reject the idea of superphysical (“spiritual”) worlds. The idea that feelings and thoughts are not only subjective states of consciousness but also objective things that have extension in space, force fields that have

definable rates of vibrations, must seem strange to them. Not so to people with higher (super-physical) objective consciousness.

⁵Every thought is the consciousness of a particular mental form, every feeling is carried by an emotional material form. Whether he knows it or not man fills up the mental and emotional worlds surrounding him with such mental and emotional forms. They can be observed by the clairvoyant, and their meaning can be deciphered by those who have learnt their language.

2.6 *The Self And Its Envelopes*

¹Casually examined your inner life, your consciousness, may seem unitary enough. After some self-observation, however, you see that you have consciousness on three different planes simultaneously: on the physical plane by your sense impressions and will impulses to the muscles, on the emotional plane by your desires and feelings, and on the mental plane by your thoughts and ideas. Thus it is possible to be simultaneously aware of the fact that you feel cold, are excited, and are occupied with intellectual work, for example calculation or planning a journey. Your consciousness is momentarily more concentrated on some one of the three planes. It is constantly changing levels and is unceasingly, restlessly active.

²Sometimes, when your attention is not entirely caught by the physical external world, nor entirely engrossed in your inner emotional or mental world, the self becomes aware. Perhaps it then observes, like a detached onlooker, your perpetually changing consciousness of three kinds. This can be experienced through some self-observation. Feelings and thoughts appear to come and go freely according to their own laws of association, but the self can intervene and control them if it wants to. What observes and controls must be different from what is observed and controlled. The self is sense perceptions, feelings, and thoughts but is also different from, above and beyond them. It can identify with these kinds of consciousness, but it can also renounce identification consciously. The self, as such, appears to be a centre of observing self-consciousness and a centre of will.

³According to the prevalent physicalist psychology, the brain produces every kind of consciousness. According to hylozoic psychology, the brain does not produce any consciousness but merely conveys the expressions of consciousness to the physical. The brain has very little consciousness in itself. The brain certainly is a condition of consciousness in the organism. But neither body nor brain is a condition of consciousness, as projection phenomena demonstrate. To give an analogy: A radio receiver is necessary to listen to a transmission in the physical world. But the transmission – and the radio station for that matter – is not dependent on the function nor even existence of the receiver.

⁴Only physical consciousness is produced in the physical body. Hylozoics teaches, however, that all consciousness has a material basis. Then man's various kinds of consciousness must have another material basis than the organism. According to hylozoics, that basis is the monad (the self-atom) as well as the monad's envelopes in the different worlds with their entirely different kinds of consciousness.

⁵Man's envelope in the visible physical world is the organism. He also has another, a finer envelope of (to most people) invisible physical matter, and three envelopes of superphysical matter.

⁶Enumerating them in the order of increasing subtlety, we call man's five envelopes:

- (1) the coarse physical – the organism
- (2) the subtle physical – the etheric envelope
- (3) the emotional envelope
- (4) the (relatively) coarse mental envelope
- (5) the subtle mental, the causal envelope, the "soul"

⁷The presence of four subtle envelopes in the organism enables man to lead his life in the physical world, at the same time having emotional and mental consciousness. Without his emotional envelope he would lack desires and feelings, and without his mental envelope he would be unable to think. Consciousness in the causal envelope is as yet undeveloped in most people. Fully developed, the causal consciousness affords immediate correct perception of everything it is directed at in the three worlds of man, clarifying the causes and effects of things irrespectively of distances on the planet or time past. The ancients (teachers of the old esoteric schools) called this “intuition” or “beholding the ideas in the world of ideas” (the causal world).

⁸The etheric envelope is actually the most important of the two physical bodies. It conveys various life-sustaining energies (“vital force”) to the organism. Defects in the functions of the etheric envelope act upon the organism as decreased vitality and disease. Many people can discern their own and other people’s etheric envelopes as a thin, faintly luminous film surrounding the entire body. The etheric envelope penetrates the organism. It forms, as it were, a perfect replica of it, so that every cell has its own etheric counterpart, its own etheric envelope. Actually it is the other way round: the organism is a replica of the etheric envelope, which is its basic form or “blueprint”. Therefore, the etheric is sometimes called the morphogenetic or formative envelope.

2.7 The Three Aspects of Consciousness Expressions

¹Reality is a unity of matter, consciousness, and motion. If we consider any one of the three life aspects in isolation, then our view will always be imperfect and misleading. Biology views evolution just as development of forms and does not heed consciousness in the forms. Psychology studies consciousness as such but knows nothing of its material basis: man’s emotional and mental envelopes and the monad.

²Everything in the cosmos has three aspects, and so have the expressions of consciousness. The feelings we have and the thoughts we think are not mere subjective states of consciousness. Feelings and thoughts are also material forms. Finally they are also forces; they are effects of causes and, in their turn, become causes of new effects.

³Two esoteric sayings of immemorial age illustrate this: “Thoughts are things” and “energy follows thought”.

⁴There is a universal parallelism of matter, consciousness, and motion (force). Physical matter consists of the grossest atoms in the cosmos, emotional matter is made up of finer atoms, and mental matter of finer atoms still, and so on. Matter is the carrier, the medium of motion, of the vibrations that fill up the whole cosmos. The finer the atoms, the more rapid, intensive, penetrating are the vibrations conveyed by them. This parallelism between matter and motion is vitally important also for consciousness, since every content of consciousness corresponds to a particular rate of vibration in a particular kind of matter. There are physical, emotional, mental, etc., vibrations.

⁵This is perhaps easier to understand if we first study things in the physical world. As physical matter vibrates, a wave goes out in all directions. Depending on its frequency the vibration conveys, say, the colour blue, or (at a lower frequency) the note of *do*. Vibrations hit the respective sense organs in man. There they produce electrical nerve-impulses corresponding to them. These are discharged in the brain, but the recording organ is the etheric brain, not the gross physical brain. The self-atom, the monad, with its vast experience of the import of perpetually changing vibrations, interprets the impression immediately and correctly.

⁶The possibilities of differentiation appear inexhaustible. We can think of however many nuances of colour, musical notes, smells, etc. The same is true of emotional vibrations, various moods and feelings without end.

⁷A man’s feeling, be it strong or faint, lasting or fleeting, heeded by himself or unnoticed, gives rise to a characteristic vibration in his emotional envelope. The envelope is in direct

contact with the emotional world. The vibration reaches out in all directions. It travels faster than light and is weakened only at an immense distance from its source. All emotional envelopes that are in its way are affected by it. If the vibration is sufficiently strong, if the envelope is in a receptive condition and if the self is not occupied with some particular business, then a feeling is recorded as though it were the individual's own. This is how telepathy works, a universal phenomenon in the cosmos.

⁸We are more telepathic than we suspect. Much of what we think are our own feelings and thoughts are suggestions from without. They are more for evil than for good: the unprovoked depression you feel in the throngs of a big city is one instance.

⁹This shows the importance of being active, attentive in our consciousness. It is in passive states that we most easily receive bad influences from without. We human beings are still far from being able to exercise conscious telepathy, purposive transference of thoughts. We must first learn to be positive, not to burden other people with our negative emotionality, our depressive feelings.

¹⁰Our five envelopes in three worlds are hit by innumerable vibrations every second. Our senses record an exceedingly tiny fraction of all kinds of vibrations in the physical world. The corresponding is true of subjective consciousness in our superphysical envelopes. Less than a millionth part of all vibrations is apprehended by us. Everything else passes us by unnoticed. If we could apprehend and correctly interpret all vibrations that reach us over immense distances, then we would be all but omniscient.

2.8 *What Esoteric Knowledge Is Based On*

¹Hylozoics describes the cosmos as a series of worlds in, dimensions of, the same space. If we call the physical world the lowest one, then the superphysical worlds can be termed the successively higher worlds of this series. Thus "lower" and "higher" do not imply lower and higher positions in space but lower and higher kinds. What then do lower and higher actually mean? Let us examine the matter from the viewpoint of the three aspects of reality.

²*The matter aspect:* The cosmos is a series of ever subtler states of matter. Higher kinds of matter consist of finer (less composed) atoms than do lower kinds. Each higher kind of matter in the series penetrates all the lower kinds.

³*The consciousness aspect:* The cosmos is a series of ever higher levels of consciousness, which are bound up with the corresponding states of matter. Higher consciousness is clearer and more extensive than lower. Just as higher matter penetrates all lower matter, so higher consciousness apprehends all lower kinds.

⁴*The motion aspect:* The cosmos is a series of energy levels. Higher energies are more intensive and powerful than lower ones. Each higher world implies an increase in the capacity of consciousness to control the ever mightier energies. The highest world in the cosmos consists of monads having the highest possible kind of consciousness. These monads direct the highest cosmic energies "down" through all the lower worlds, pushing evolution in them forward to the foreseen final goal: that all monads shall reach the highest cosmic world.

⁵A higher kind of consciousness apprehends all lower kinds. A lower kind of consciousness cannot apprehend a higher kind, however, but the higher seems non-existent. Thought, for instance, being on the plane next above desire, can apprehend, understand, and control desire. But desire cannot grasp thought, being "mentally blind". Correspondingly, desire can sort sense impressions into pleasant and unpleasant ones, but the senses themselves are blind to this selectivity.

⁶Consciousness is always consciousness in matter. Consciousness can be activated (developed) from being merely subjective into being also objective: awareness of matter. But even then it can apprehend only "its own" matter and all the lower kinds. In order to ascertain the existence of the higher matters and worlds we must acquire objective consciousness of

these higher matters. Emotional objective consciousness (that is: clairvoyance) theoretically and at best furnishes knowledge of the emotional and physical worlds. In practice, it does not yield much knowledge even of these worlds, as will be demonstrated presently. Thus the clairvoyant will remain ignorant of the mental world and all the higher worlds. Usually he does not even suspect their existence, which explains why most clairvoyants know only the “material world” and the “spiritual world” as they call the physical and emotional worlds.

⁷Clairvoyance is an insecure and limited source of knowledge, due to a number of factors.

⁸To see is not to understand. Mankind has come to know the physical world with its life-forms, natural processes, laws, etc., through our collective experience and scientific exploration. The clairvoyant, however, is thrown into a world of which he has no previous experience whatever. His scientific knowledge of the peculiar character, material forms, various kinds of consciousness, energies, inhabitants, etc., of that world equals nil. All his concepts are physical, have been formed on the basis of experience in the physical world, perception of physical time and physical space, for instance. He will see only what he knows, or rather, what he thinks he knows. Misapprehension will be the rule, even if certain details may be correctly observed.

⁹The greatest perplexing factor, however, is the fact that the emotional world is the particular world of desires. Everything emotional, all desires and expectations (also unconscious ones) immediately assume concrete forms in emotional matter. It is unavoidable that the clairvoyant takes those emotional forms for enduring reality. In the emotional world the religious see their gods, masters, spiritual guides. In that world you have all your preconceived opinions confirmed. For you see that they are realities, and your belief in them is even more fixated. Man will liberate himself from this illusionism only when he activates the highest mental, or causal consciousness. Only then will he be able to use emotional and mental clairvoyance correctly.

¹⁰If clairvoyance were a path to knowledge of reality and life, then mankind would have solved all its problems of knowledge long ago. For it is not very difficult to develop clairvoyance, and clairvoyants are found everywhere. When they try to make teaching systems out of their findings in the “spiritual world”, however, they never reach concord in essential things. This demonstrates all too clearly that they have but sporadically glimpsed enduring reality. Mostly they have seen the emotional forms they have made themselves.

¹¹This fact should not, however, deter researchers who, like Dr. Karagulla, try to determine to what extent emotional clairvoyants are able to observe superphysical processes that precede or cause physically ascertainable phenomena (physiological ones, for instance). Esoterics is something very different from emotional occultism. Therefore, esotericians have in all ages warned against developing clairvoyance. They have asserted as an axiom that “no self-tutored seer ever saw correctly”. Swedenborg, Ramakrishna, Steiner, Martinus were their own tutors.

¹²The basic epistemological standpoint of the esotericians the Buddha formulated most clearly of all, 2500 years ago: Man cannot, on his own, solve the great problems of the existence of god, the immortality of the soul, and the meaning of life. He cannot acquire a knowledge of existence. That is a task for superhuman intelligences.

¹³This is not to say that man could not comprehend a knowledge of reality, if it were given to him by superhuman intelligences, in a form adapted to his level of comprehension.

¹⁴Esoterics is that knowledge. Man is the lowest kind of being that can comprehend it in any form. Superhuman beings next to man have formulated it on the basis of their immensely superior understanding of life and of the additional knowledge they have in their turn received from still higher beings. In this manner esoterics is confirmed throughout the series of ever higher beings up to the highest cosmic world. Hence its authority.

¹⁵There is no ignorance in the absolute sense. Even in the mineral kingdom the monad has experiences and learns from them. And man has acquired immense knowledge of the physical world. Yet he is profoundly ignorant of the cosmos and its ever higher worlds; of the

evolution of consciousness going on in them; higher kinds of beings; the meaning and goal of existence, its rationality and conformity to law. And that knowledge is the essential one, more important than any technological innovation. Therefore, esoterics alone affords knowledge in a more profound, qualitative sense.

¹⁶In all ages man has formulated more or less idiotic life views, religions, and political ideologies, without knowledge of reality, without understanding of the meaning of life. As a rule, these were hostile both to knowledge and to life. Scientists as well as esotericians (sometimes in one person) have fought for the cause of knowledge and freedom of thought.

¹⁷In our times, many people, mostly in the West, have a new attitude, quite different from all the old ones, an attitude that makes knowledge possible. Traditions and old ways of thinking are not any longer seen as automatically right just because they are old and ingrained. People question, examine for themselves instead of relying on authorities, want to learn more and learn more deeply. This is immensely gratifying. Only with the spread of this new attitude has the publication of the esoteric knowledge become possible.

¹⁸Esoterics alone can present a tenable explanation of the enigma of existence. In its hylozoic form it has been made so simple that every school-child can learn to comprehend it. Yet hylozoics is the most comprehensive and complete thought system ever presented to mankind. It contains no contradictions and is impossible to refute. On no single point does it contradict the facts about reality which man has definitively ascertained through his own research. Besides, all new facts that mankind discovers will automatically find their natural places in the system. The explanations given by hylozoics for innumerable phenomena and facts, which otherwise would remain unexplained, demonstrate that this system is superior to all the others. Anyone who has studied the history of philosophy, theology, and science and has ascertained how easily the learned of all times have believed in any absurdity, has ascertained how little reason and truth there has been in human speculation about the super-physical, should be able to see that a system such as hylozoics cannot be constructed by a human intellect. By this hylozoics indicates its superhuman origin.

¹⁹Man cannot ascertain whether an esoteric system accords with reality. This makes esoterics authoritative. Therefore, critics have said that esoterics is only a matter of belief. The esotericians reply that their system must not be a matter of belief, must not become a new religion. Esoterics must not be accepted uncritically, on emotional grounds, only on mental grounds. It is a matter of analysis, comprehension, and understanding, not of wallowing in emotions of “how wonderful this teaching is”.

²⁰A critical attitude is absolutely necessary and was, besides, encouraged and taught in the elementary training of the ancient esoteric schools. Here critical attitude means matter-of-fact, detached, all-round judgement with a keen eye for merits as well as faults. Negative, one-sided criticism is emotional and, from the objective point of view, worthless.

²¹Esoterics, especially in its Western hylozoic form, should be acceptable as a working hypothesis to all intelligent people seeking the meaning of life.

²²The attitude taken to hylozoics as a working hypothesis is illustrated by the acute thinkers who have accepted it: “As far as we can see, it is rational and does not present any contradictions. As far as we can practically test it, it has proved to accord with reality. We shall reject it if this would not be the case in the future. We shall accept a more rational, a more correct view, if some such will appear.” Such an argument needs no defence and is above criticism.

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