

EXPERIENCE AND THE TRANSCENDENT

So far, we have seen that an analysis of the human psyche reveals a structure of which the main outlines are fairly clear. Perhaps, if we could recapture the immediate state of a new-born infant and, then, introspectively observe the development of its consciousness, we would find a confused unity in which there were no distinguishable functions, nor even an "I" standing out in contradistinction to the world. It is very likely, indeed, that the state of consciousness of the infant is very similar to that of the mystical state, with the important difference that, whereas the infant ^{is} would be incapable of self-conscious awareness of his state, the mystic, who has first developed differentiated consciousness to a high degree, is enabled to be the witness and analyst of ~~the~~ ^{his} synthetic mystical state. Unfortunately, within the limits of the methods known to western psychology, we have no means of acquiring the inside view of the infant's state of consciousness and can infer its character only by observation of behaviour, ^{but unfortunately} and all inferences relative to inner content or character based upon such observation are questionable. No individual can possibly know the consciousness of another, simply by observation alone or even that there is any other conscious being beside himself. The only sound conclusion that the observer can draw is that other creatures behave in a way ^{which} ~~that~~ he in his own experience finds correlated in some sense with consciousness. To go further than this requires that the consciousness of one individual should be superimposed upon the consciousness of another, whereby the reality of the latter would be known immediately. Oriental psychology maintains that ^{this kind of} such superposition is possible but, ~~apparently~~, such technique is totally unknown to western psychology.

However, the preponderant evidence derived from the study of the infant and the primitive points to the conclusion that consciousness, in its less developed phases, is a ~~sort~~^{kind} of inchoate unity, a sort of analogue of the nebulous state of matter before it is organized into a system of stars and worlds. But as consciousness approaches the maximum of development in the field of maturing experience a certain structural organization becomes progressively clearer.

Without self-consciousness there can be no ~~analysis~~^{study} of the psyche so that it can be analysed into a determinant structure. If from birth to death the flow of our consciousness ~~was~~^{were} completely smooth and freed from all interference in the objective world ~~it seems that~~ we would never attain the realization that we ~~were~~^{are} conscious beings. The notion that there ~~was~~^{is} a difference between consciousness and unconsciousness could hardly arise. But life, as we know it in the empiric world, is a state of almost continual ~~conflict~~^{battle} between the individual and the objective field in which he moves. In addition he finds a conflict between the different phases of his own nature. That which is achieved in the direction determined by certain urges or desires is, quite commonly, purchased at the sacrifice of other urges and desires. So we find, as the greatest common denominator of all empiric life, a state of frustration. Desire arises and seeks its objective only to meet innumerable obstacles which are never completely mastered without the necessity of accepting some degree of renunciation. And then, when the objective has been attained with reasonable completeness it fails to afford the satisfaction originally envisaged. The craving continues and new objectives are defined in a seemingly endless series, but the durable satisfaction recedes like the

foot of the rainbow that is never reached. Apparently, most men throughout the whole of their lives are so engaged in the effort to attain the rainbow of durable satisfaction that they fail to realize the significance of their unbroken failure. But ^{experience of} some there are who awaken to the fact that the stream of failures is not due to lack of skill. They ~~awaken to the fact~~ ^{come to realize} that defeat is the very essence of empiric life, for the rainbow of the objective field that they individually have failed to reach has been attained by no man in the whole range of history. Then it is realized that objective life is pain. Then it is that consciousness turns about on itself and self-consciousness is born. The chasing of the rainbow has born a valuable fruit, but ~~it~~ ^{this} is not the pot of gold supposed to lie at the foot of the rainbow. Out of the long travail, consciousness of consciousness is born, and with this there comes, sooner or later, the realization of a new world where, at last, durable satisfaction is attained.

The birth of self-consciousness is achieved but slowly. Step by step the process continues. But always the mother of the newly born self-consciousness is failure and therefore pain. That which was sought upon the objective field is not attained or, if attained, is found to be ^{only} ~~but an~~ empty shell. But out of the travail, consciousness has grown and therein lies the one durable and worthwhile fruit of all effort. In time the maturing soul realizes that it is not the envisaged ~~object~~ ^{through} but ever-receding object that is valuable, but rather the heretofore neglected fruit of a consciousness that has become in some measure conscious of itself. At this point there comes a change in the focus of life and desire. Man turns from the world to the psyche. Now he faces a new set

of problems.

The first great fruitage of the maturing self-consciousness is the development of the critical valuation of experience. To our earlier naïve view it has seemed that we were born into a pre-existent world of things, that we as living beings were something like visitants in an alien world ^{which} ~~that~~ existed quite independent ^{of} us. But as we become acquainted with the nature of our consciousness presently it is realized that the only world which concerns us is an object which exists for our consciousness. What the world may be apart from that we do not know and never can know, nor can we know that there is such a world. To be sure, we may assume the existence of a world apart from all consciousness, in every sense, and in our acting and thinking we may proceed as though such were so, but we do not and cannot know it. All we know is that the object which we call the world has a character such that it is not determined or not wholly determined by our private wishes and hence opposes us in such ways that we must come to terms with it. But, then, as we carry our search into the inner deeps of the psyche we find other features which have this same character. Subjective determinants condition our wishes just as truly and no less imperatively than the objective situation. Hence we realize that the experience of a somewhat which has a persistent character with which we must make terms is no proof of an extra-psychical nature. Who can prove that the world is other than a sort of frozen universal thought ^{which} ~~that~~ sets limits upon the private individual thoughts; ^{and experiences?}

Of one fact alone are we certain and that is our own consciousness. Concerning the significance of our ^{innumerable} ~~many~~ experiences we may

have many uncertainties, but that the experiences are, we cannot doubt. Thus whatever haze of uncertainty may enshroud the world we believe we experience, ~~we~~ ^{we} yet remain absolutely certain of the fact of our consciousness. Here, then, we have a reliable foundation upon which we may build any super-structure, and which will not be involved in ^{such} any failure ^{as may befall} of that super-structure. And to be certain of this much is to have attained a great deal. Within a sea of unplumbed darkness ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ there is a sphere of light and I at its center, Beyond the rim abides the mystery I do not know, but the light I do know unequivocally. ^{However,} ~~But~~ when I interpret the Light and its contents in relation to that which lies beyond the rim, then I stand upon uncertain ground. As I look forth upon that, which we agree to call "matter", presently my vision becomes blurred where the known fades into the unknown; but likewise when I look inward to the psychic depths soon I find a border-land of translucent darkness with dimly seen creatures peering forth and behind them, the deep dark. Before me a mystery and behind me a mystery while between, a luminous zone where I know my way. And I who speak am the Self that looks forth through the self of every creature.

As a child I was interested in many things and this intrigued me into activity in many directions, ^{though} ~~but~~ as I grew older I found those early objects of interest mostly empty. But meanwhile I had builded various capacities which then became useful in a more mature search. The real value that I had attained did not lie in the objects of childish interest but in something else I did not then know. This relatively durable value was a capacity which became the means for a more mature kind of functioning. So is it with the some-total of all relative life. The apparent

object of interest is a rainbow's end that can never be attained, but all unbeknownst power has been builded in the zone of consciousness lying ^{within} in the matrix of enveloping darkness. Soon or late, there comes the day when the emptiness of the outer search and striving becomes clear beyond all doubt and then the soul awakes to the ubiquitous pain of all life. It is no longer any use to struggle on to the rainbow that can never be reached. Perhaps now the soul gives voice to the despairing cry, since the age-long effort has been so useless, and ^{it} now seeks the rest of eternal darkness. Perhaps it sees the emptiness and resolves to make the best of it, cultivating the power to draw from life the little passing joys and hoping for no more. But there are the souls of greater courage who refuse to accept the defeat and who have finally found another Way that leaves behind the path of pain. These have turned their backs upon the rainbow and manfully waded ^k the other way. They have turned from the world without and moved within. It is the path of renunciation. ^{at this point} But now a strange thing happens. The rainbow that was sought for so long and yet never receded, now follows the man who walks away. Thus is revealed one of the greatest of all truths: "The object becomes the servant of him who has learned to renounce it and to turn away from it." That which we seek and grasp we lose in the ^{hour} moment of grasping, but at the moment of genuine "letting go" it attaches itself to us and recognizes us as its master.

He who turns his back upon the object, faces the source of Light. Before him now lies the luminous zone of consciousness. Now, at last, the fruitful search begins.

In that moment when man first becomes aware of the world he also, however dimly, has attained some awareness of himself.

The world is that which stands opposed to or other than something else which is aware of it as a world. It is I who am that other. I and the world thus form the primary duality. Presently I realize that I stand at the center of a great sphere of which the circumference is the world of all possible objects. But as I carry the analysis further ^{later} ~~presently~~ I find that it is necessary to change the figure ^{so that} ~~wherein~~ the sphere of all possible objects is reduced to a focal point standing opposed to the focus which I am, and through the interaction of these two foci a field is generated which is called consciousness. Our consciousness, like our vision, is bifocal. Second only to the fact of ^{consciousness} ~~of~~ is this actuality. However little we may yet understand the ultimate nature of the world and of the Self at least we are certain of the interplay of these two foci and of the field of consciousness which they define.

He who is oriented exclusively to the objective focus, the world, is scarce more than one third of the complete man. Herein lies the reason for the failure of the empiric kind of life. This is why the object of desire is found empty when attained and the hoped-for satisfaction recedes. For satisfaction comes only to him ^{who} ~~that~~ is complete. But when the man who has been so long engaged with the object that he has fully realized the pain of empiric life and then effects the first turning about in consciousness then there comes to him a tremendous sense of release. He enters into realization of that which he always ~~failed~~ ^{failed} to find in the object, i.e., a quality of substantial depth. The attainment of the object may provide a passing feeling of success and exultation, but it is not long before the emptiness of the object becomes apparent and this realization ordinarily leads on ~~the~~ to the endless objective search for the

durable satisfaction never attained. But the "turning about," when successfully effected, changes all this, for there is now supplied to the individual consciousness just that durable satisfaction which was the real object of the search. The fact is that all the while man was seeking a multiplicity of objects he actually was hunting for completion. The urge that drove him and the desire that led him grew out of the need for conscious completion. The failure of the objective search lay in the fact that it was oriented to a field that could supply only a fraction of the total need. The totality of consciousness is both subjective and objective and neither focus constitutes the whole of man. The emptiness of the object requires the filling of the Subject. Thus it is that by the "turning about" in consciousness man experiences a most tremendous sense of satisfaction.

Just as the path in the field of outer experience brings an all-encompassing pain, alleviated by only passing joys and ever-renewing hope, the Path of the consciousness that has turned about on itself leads to a corresponding exaltation of Joy. This Joy is of a totally different order when compared to the temporary pleasures of empiric life. Its first impact is actually over-powering as it so far out-reaches anything formerly desired, hoped-for or even imagined. Its nature is genuinely transcendental rather than empirical. For this higher Joy is not a mere effect of an attained object or experience but a substantial Presence of essentially universal, impersonal and timeless nature. It is incorrect to speak of it as experience since experience belongs only to time-bound consciousness, ^{however} but it is a genuine realization that is humanly accessible.

When consciousness successfully turns upon itself and effects a genuine realization of the Self, an astonishing thoroughgoing transformation of valuation is effected. In broad terms, it may be said that the transcendent order is that which experience is not. The effect is an inversion of consciousness. In no ~~respect~~^{way} is this more notable than with respect to the nature which the self-identity assumes in the transformed state. During the stage of consciousness before transformation the subject seems like a center contained within and circumscribed by the objective or experienced world. Thus the subject appears as conditioned by the object. But with the successful ~~turning~~["] turning about of consciousness the subject assumes a diametrically opposite character. It becomes the zone which circumscribes and contains the object. Instead of being a center in a field it becomes a space within which the world of experience lies. As a result the self is known to be that which conditions the object rather than the other way around. From this important consequences follow:

1. The new Self is free whereas the old self or personal ego was bound by surrounding conditions.
2. The Higher Self is not determined by time, space and causality but imposes these three forms upon all the contents of experience.
3. The Higher Self stands above the relativity of good and evil as these moral qualities are valid only in the system of relationships between the ego and the object.
4. Evolution and degradation are genuine processes in the experiential field of the object but have no effect upon the Higher Self.
5. All categories may be viewed as a description of the form

imposed by the Higher Self imposed upon experiential consciousness but ~~is not itself subject to those categories.~~ *to which the self is not subject.*

6. The object or the world ceases to carry the effect of being at a distance and other than the "I"; the Self and the object stand in the relationship of identity although the object remains distinguishable.

7. Whereas consciousness, in the sense of the ego in relation to objects, has a secular character, the transcendental consciousness is sacred. (For this reason the modern practice of viewing the transformation as merely psychological is inadequate since for the psychological outlook there is nothing sacred. The psychological approach is valid up to a certain point but beyond that point the psychological way of thinking becomes a destroyer of value. The attitude of complete self-giving feels itself injured when it is viewed as merely the subject-matter of science.) Actually the transformation is a profound religious event.)

8. The achievement of the transcendental Self-identity results in the realization of Presence in the sense of all-embracing Divinity. (This is an effect experienced by the restricted egoistic consciousness which is not really destroyed in the transformation. The ego is transformed from something that had been all important to something subordinate but reaps its reward by the realization of the all-embracing Divinity.)

9. The problem of immortality ceases to be a problem. This is true for the reason that immortality is a problem only for the ego. From the perspective of the Higher Self the duality of birth and death is merely one of the categories imposed upon relative consciousness.

10. The egoistic consciousness becomes illumined with the result that the tragic character of the life-problems is destroyed. This does not mean that problems cease to exist but rather that the ego has attained the advantage of a perspective which destroys the former deep concern. The attitude toward the problem becomes much more detached and this produces the superior affective perspective which is one of the characteristics of a genuine scientific point of view.

It now becomes necessary to modify the interpretation of the psychological unconscious. When we spoke of the unconscious portion of the psyche we assumed the perspective of ordinary relative or egoistic consciousness. From that standpoint there are vast regions of the psyche that function unconsciously, so the concept of the unconscious is relatively valid. But from the perspective of the Higher Self the notion of the psychologic unconscious becomes inadequate. The transformation leads to the discovery that consciousness exists in different senses and thus the unconscious is unconsciousness only with respect to a consciousness that functions in a given way. The transformation is not simply an extended assimilation of the unconscious by the ego, though such an extension does occur. Rather, self-identity is established on a level, such that, consciousness is realized in a different sense, whereby the psychologic unconscious is erased. The idea may be illustrated by a figure drawn from the physics of radiation.

Today we are quite generally familiar with the physical notion of radiant energy extending over sixty or more octaves of which only one is accessible to vision. Below visible light is the infra-red and above it ultra-violet. Now from the standpoint

of ordinary vision, the zones of the infra-red and the ultra-violet are indistinguishable from darkness. Now, ~~if~~ ^{if} we suppose the psyche of man to possess a latent organ capable of vision in these zones, but of such a nature that ordinary vision must be suppressed in order that the ultra or infra vision may be awakened, then we can develop an effective figure. The shifting from one form of vision to the other would correspond to the transformation. To the ordinary vision, in the process of transformation, the first impression of the transforming process could well be an envelopment by a sort of radiated darkness. But when the base of vision had been transformed to the new organ of vision this radiated darkness would become a new kind of light revealing a different field of experience. Meanwhile the old zone of ordinary vision would become darkness. Actually, however, light in the genetic sense continues in both zones. The shift has been from one organ to another.

I have introduced this figure ^{solely} ~~merely~~ as an illustration and do not intend it as an actual description of the process. It should make more thinkable the idea that unconsciousness is merely relative to a way of consciousness, but is not itself an absolute state. Speaking transcendently, it is necessary to abandon the whole notion of the unconscious, though the concept remains empirically valid.

From the standpoint of the humanist, in the strict sense, the most important feature of the transformation is the effect it produces upon the personal or egoistic consciousness. This is understandable enough as the Life of the transcendental Consciousness is tracable by only a few while the egoistic world is very real for the over-whelming majority. Also the effect

on the ego has the most direct sociological bearing. I shall therefore, give this effect particular attention.

The transformation does not destroy the ego, provided it has evolved sufficient strength, but simply changed its position in the hierarchy of consciousness. The proviso of "sufficient strength" is, however, of considerable importance. It has required a long ~~ERISE~~ course of evolution for the ego to attain the stability and power so that it can affirm itself against the dissolving force of the psychologic unconscious. (The ^{note} researches of Dr. Jung have verified this fact conspicuously.) The actual experience of the transformation gives the fact even more impressive clarity. The transcendent consciousness does have a tremendous solvent force. The relative field is decidedly under the threat of erasure as being simply irrelevant. At first, it takes on a dream-like character and then there occurs a process analagous to the forgetting of the dream similar to that which happens upon awakening from an ordinary dream. To prevent this from happening the persistence of the egoistic consciousness must be deliberately affirmed by the will. Thus it is necessary that the conscious egoistic will should have become sufficiently strong to accomplish the persistence if the egoistic center is not to be completely erased. Further, even though this strength of will has been achieved there is the added necessity of a sufficient moral reason for invoking it. For from the perspective of the realized transcendent consciousness egoism is felt to be simply a burden. One simply does not wish to be bothered with it, but quite the reverse. Egoism is known to be a painful burden. Thus if one is to affirm the continuation of the egoistic consciousness he must have a reason of greater potency than mere wishfulness. This reason is found in the

realization that egoism serves a valid purpose in the life of the social body apart from its significance for the individual himself. It is distinctly painful to affirm the continuance of the egoistic consciousness and only a general moral consideration can offset the natural distaste for this painfulness.

After the transformation the egoistic life is no longer a source of private enrichment. The deceit of the desire-invoked chase of the receding rainbow of objective satisfaction is known with great clarity. The other-worldly Joy of the transcendent consciousness destroys the pain of empiric consciousness by destroying the state. The voluntarily continued egoism after the transformation still is painful, but in a different sense. The old pain lay in the constant failure to attain the rainbow of satisfaction, but it was more or less anesthetized by the ever-renewing hope of possible future success. The egoistic life after transformation is no longer fooled by this ever-renewing hope, but it is keenly aware of the profound emptiness of the object, since the contrasting fullness of the transcendent state is known. Hence egoism becomes life in an empty field, and this requires a considerable capacity for endurance.

But offsetting this negative effect there are rare positive powers. Among these is the capacity to fill the social object with meaning. This renders possible a very considerable reduction of the generally experienced pain of egoistic human life. The relief untold millions of humanity have received from the presence in the egoistic field of figures like Buddha and Christ is a clear illustration of this power. Without such men this life would be intollerable indeed. Here is an effect of the transformation which the humanist or sociologist can appreciate.

I would never suggest to any one, whose primary thought was for his personal comfort, to seek to ~~immolate~~^{immolate} the lives of men like the Buddhas and the Christs. They face the emptiness of the egoistic field while They fill it with a meaning that may be experienced by others but which is not derived from the object. It does not generally occur to human beings to ask how the Buddha-life or the Christ-life, while confined to the egoistic field, seems to these Men themselves. They are looked to as a source of Joy, of Light and of Meaning, which They indeed are, but all too commonly we forget Them and that They have their own points of view. The only thing They ask is that men should accept That which They are and represent.

The pragmatic dictum, ~~is~~, "a difference of truth must produce a difference of fact" in the empiric world", is satisfied in the case of the transformation of self-identity from the ego to the Higher Self. The remaining egoistic life enters into quite a different relationship with respect to the object. In one respect this relationship is negative since the object as such is realized as empty. But on the positive side there is a tremendous increase of psychical power. The transformed man can operate purposively upon the psychologic unconscious, not merely in the sense of having power in the region of his individual unconscious, but as well in variable degree upon the collective unconscious. This is a rare, but extraordinarily potent, kind of power. The social influence is simply incalculable, though, in general, it is not objectively traceable. Empiric man is conditioned, on one side, by the physically objective world but, ~~probably~~ in even greater degree, by the collective and individual unconscious. The problems of egoistic life take their form from this dual conditioning. Technology by producing effects in the external

object has notably altered the form of the social problem. There is a great difference between the age of the horse and buggy and our present day of the automobile and the airplane, and this difference has decided psychological and sociological effects. In an even more vital and thoroughgoing sense, purposive action upon the collective unconscious transforms the social problem. The weakness of the typical western approach to this problem lies in the viewing it as exclusively one of objective manipulation. Because of this one-sidedness we face empasses today. Only by operation upon the collective unconscious is it possible to attain the new perspectives from ~~xx~~ which the social problem may be successfully handled. But this kind of operation is possible only in the case of one who has passed through the transcendental transformation. It is just because of this fact that the transformation becomes a proper subject of discussion in a work devoted to the social problem.

The four functions of ~~xxxxx~~ the psyche form part of the description of the organization of the egoistically centered individual. Western psychology does not go further than this. Transcendental consciousness must be viewed as another way of consciousness which is not reducible to any one or more of these functions. To be sure, this other way of consciousness does bear a certain similiarity to intuition owing to its immediate character but there is a very important difference. Ordinary intuition is a means whereby the contents of the unconscious may well up into the conscious field, though the route is not ordinarily consciously traceable. Intuition does not know how it knows. On the other hand, transcendent consciousness

deals with a completely illumined field, rather than with a content ^{which} that has spontaneously welled up from unconscious depths. The order of assurance is incomparably superior. The fusion of the subject with the object or content results in the destruction of all distance between the knower and the known with the result that certainty is unequivocal. Intuition, in the ordinary sense, is not freed from the uncertainty of distance. There is thus an important difference between knowing intuitively and knowing transcendently. But transcendental certainty is reflected into egoistic consciousness through the function of intuition, with the result that the latter function becomes doubly important.

Whether or not transcendental consciousness has stages, degrees or phases is a question lying quite beyond the range of relative or egoistic consciousness. This question belongs properly only to that other World. This much, however, can be known, i.e., ^{that} that other Way of consciousness is super-functional in the sense that it is not reducible to the four functions. Dr. Bucke has suggested that it should be called Cosmic Consciousness. While this term is not without its faults it still is reasonably satisfactory. However, it can be misunderstood. In this sense, Cosmic Consciousness is not to be understood as a complete knowledge in the relative sense of the whole objective cosmos. It is cosmic in the sense that it has a spacial basis rather than being oriented to an egoistic center. With this proviso the term is acceptable.

Anyone who has read with understanding the discussion of the two attitudes and the four functions should realize how impossible it is for any individual bound within the limits of his individual psychology to define the social problem in

terms that are universally valid. Further, it is clear that if the definition is inadequate an effective social program cannot be created. This defect fatally marks all efforts in this direction so far. This brings us to the question: How can the problem be adequately defined and an effective program developed? The answer is now clear: It can be done only from the level of a consciousness which is centered on a ~~lower~~ plane above the four functions and the two attitudes, for only from such a level is a just evaluation possible. This means that solution by system or program must be abandoned save in the sense of a subsidiary adjunct. The active presence of illumined consciousness which is not conditioned by the form of any system or program is essential.

The question of how such an illumined consciousness may be made practically effective in the social world is one of great difficulty. Human beings in general must be able to recognize and accept the incarnation of such a consciousness if they are to receive more than hidden benefits acting through the collective unconscious. Barring this, the effort on the social problem must remain purely empiric and groping with the miserable results we have seen throughout the most of history. Another question is: How is it possible to secure the co-operation of an embodied illumined consciousness? First of all, it is impossible for egoistic man to command this kind of assistance. An illumined being is quite free and cannot be compelled to accept a responsibility in the egoistic field. If the responsibility is accepted it is done by free choice. The only hope there is lies in the expectation ~~in~~ or faith that there are ~~men~~ illumined men sufficiently motivated by compassion to accept a rather painful job. But we may rest assured that They will not impose

themselves upon human beings who do not want them or refuse to give them the recognition that is essential to effective functioning. We must remember that every man and every society has a divine right to go to the devil if they prefer to go that way, and no illumined being will trespass upon a divine right. So all that egoistic society can do is to prepare the way by being willing to give the necessary recognition and hope that the compassionate motive will do the rest.

In the final chapter I shall offer a plan in broad outline for social reorganization with due provision for a body of men who will occupy an extra-constitutional relationship to government. This provides merely a formal recognition of those capable of the higher function. Perhaps if we prepare the way they will respond. I see no other basis for hope with respect to the entangled skein of the empiric world.