

9 DISCRIMINATION

9.1 General about the Faculty of Discrimination

¹Every kind of matter, every kind of consciousness, makes it possible to acquire a discriminative principle that subsequently cannot be lost: in physical reality, discrimination between objectivity and subjectivity; in emotional reality, between harmony and discord; in mental reality, between identity and non-identity. In vibrational respect everything can be said to consist of vibrations. Every kind of matter, aggregate, condition of matter, has its peculiar vibration. Harmony, unison, concord becomes understanding. Dissonance divides. The emotional principle has an undreamt-of significance. It is the basis of the conception of all true art (which becomes possible only at the stage of culture), the understanding of everything refining, ennobling, the ability to distinguish in many respects between what is genuine and spurious, true and false.

²There are three kinds of discrimination: discrimination between the self and the environing world (including other individuals), discrimination between the self and its envelopes (between self-consciousness in the causal envelope and the consciousness of the envelopes of incarnation), discrimination between self-consciousness in the second triad and in the third triad. The first kind of discrimination is universally developed and has reached a fairly high stage of evolution. The second faculty is found only in a small minority of mankind, the mystics, the esotericians, the advanced thinkers of the race. The third faculty is possessed only by perfect second selves (45-selves, esoteric masters, initiates of the fifth degree), who are extremely few as yet. In all these expansions, the discriminative faculty of intelligence is utilized.

³The separative instinct of man has been the nursery for the development of man's discrimination. The faculty of discrimination balances the striving for unity when this is pushed too far and is not expedient. Only the voluntary merging of individuals and groups motivated by common interest and aim is of value. Such a merging is seen only in the final part of the human evolution. It is incident upon an earlier stage of intense self-assertion and intense self-realization.

⁴In the reality of exoterists, the most important discrimination is that between things and persons, between views and those holding the views. Something may be factually correct, even if the Devil says so. It may be factually wrong, even if God Almighty says so.

⁵In the reality of esotericians, the most important discrimination is that between the first self and the second self, the monad in its envelopes of incarnation and the monad in the causal envelope, false personality and permanent individuality.

⁶Real thinking begins with the ability to distinguish, to differentiate, to discriminate, to keep main issue and side issues apart.

⁷Always useful exercises include: to distinguish between higher and lower (ideas, ideals, and principles), essentials and non-essentials, harmless things and harmful ones, imperishable things and perishable ones, immortal things and mortal ones, necessary things and unnecessary ones, needs and desires, quality and quantity, what you know and what you do not know.

⁸You must learn to distinguish between the individual's envelopes and his self. Anybody who does that helps the individual's Augoeides in his endeavour.

⁹It is important to learn to tell the difference between the knowledge of the first self and the wisdom of the second self. Thereby you also learn to distinguish between the energies of the first self and those of the second self. Anyone who has done this has solved the basic problem of life, a problem that the individual must solve himself.

¹⁰By our unchecked habit of absolutizing instead of relativizing we counteract what we must learn: the sense of proportion, a sense that is included in perspective consciousness.

Every situation always contains something unique and so requires a special application. Like principles rules may orient us. But they must be applied with discrimination, be modified, suited to each particular case, and that is what loving understanding will help us to do.

9.2 *How Esoterics is Distorted*

¹The following discussion is not concerned with those intentional distortions of which the enemies of the knowledge are guilty, but only the unintentional ones usually made by beginners and immature people.

²Such distortions can be roughly sorted into six categories. Of course, boundaries between them are fluid, so that some certain distortion can be classed among the one or the other category. But even if this division is sketchy, yet it is useful for students as a first instrument of orientation. For it is essential to know not only what is correct, but also what is erroneous, and the acquisition of reality ideas is not more important than the elimination of illusions and fictions from one's own consciousness.

³1. Distortions due to wishful thinking.

⁴2. Distortions due to emotional thinking.

⁵3. Distortions due to the illusions of sentimentality and moralism.

⁶4. Distortions due to confusion with fictions of exoteric life (the views of profane science, the certitudes of physicalism, etc.)

⁷5. Distortions due to formatory (undeveloped, too primitive) thinking.

⁸6. Distortions due to misinterpretation of esoteric symbols.

⁹1. *Distortions due to wishful thinking*. Examples:

¹⁰a) The belief that the "high feelings" you experience when reading about higher (super-human) states of consciousness are those higher states of consciousness.

¹¹b) The belief that you choose to incarnate as that person, with those parents, in that environment, etc. In reality, this privilege of choosing can be claimed, at the utmost, only by very advanced members of the human kingdom.

¹²c) The belief that higher beings can arbitrarily relieve you of bad reaping ("karma"), that such higher beings exist to run errands for you or do you favours in egoistic matters of all kinds. Augooides helps you to sell your house at the best price.

¹³d) The belief that the human kingdom can be covered in just a few incarnations, or, at any event, that I can do it, and that I have only a few incarnations left or even no one left, that this life is my last one as a human being, because "I feel I have finished".

¹⁴2. *Distortions due to emotional thinking*. Emotional thinking is characterized by its inability to apprehend the mental contents of concepts, but rather chiefly attributes to them a positive or negative emotional charge, so that they are conceived of as "good" or "bad". Examples of this:

¹⁵a) Seventh ray is good, sixth ray is bad, because seventh ray represents "what is new", whereas sixth ray stands for "what is old".

¹⁶b) Principle thinking is bad, perspective thinking is good. However, for many people who have not yet reached up to principle thinking, this being their next goal must be very good. And perspective thinking is too remote for them to be really good.

¹⁷Other expressions of emotional thinking are projections of individual emotional reactions on to higher beings, thus attributing to them feelings of the kind cherished by the person himself. Example:

¹⁸c) "Why should the planetary hierarchy be interested in helping mankind? Anyway, when I reach those levels, I will not help this ungrateful mankind."

¹⁹Emotional thinking tends to personalize everything, bring it down to the human level.
Example:

²⁰d) “It is hard to believe that the Law is above the gods. Even if hylozoics does not recognize it, there probably is a supreme god who made the Law.”

²¹3. *Distortions due to the illusions of sentimentality and moralism.*

²²a) The sentimental notion that discipleship is something you are “given as a reward”, because you are such a “good and noble” person.

²³b) The sentimental notion that serving people means giving them everything they desire.

²⁴c) The moralistic notion that the planetary hierarchy after Atlantis withdrew from mankind to “punish” it or because it was “cross” with mankind.

²⁵d) The moralistic notion that the esoteric teachers (the “masters”) are very interested in the faults and failings of aspirants, judge and assess them on the basis of those shortcomings.

²⁶4. *Distortions that are due to confusion of esoterics with the fictions of exoteric life (physicalism).* Examples:

²⁷a) The belief that the genetic inheritance determines the personality, capabilities, talents, understanding, etc. – as though esoteric students had suddenly forgotten what they have learnt about the fact of reincarnation.

²⁸b) Reasoning about “male” and “female”, in a human sense, in relation to causal and higher consciousness, discipleship, the planetary hierarchy, and other such superhuman realities.

²⁹c) The categorization of man as an “animal” merely because he has an animal body. In doing so they disregard the decisive difference, namely that man possesses an envelope that is immortal in the human kingdom, the causal envelope, which enables him to be self-conscious, whereas no animal has such an envelope.

³⁰d) The confusion of esoteric teaching on the advent of the “Lords of the Flame” to Earth with notions of space visitors of the ordinary UFO popular kind.

³¹5. *Distortions that are due to formatory thinking.* Examples:

³²a) “Energy follows thought” is interpreted so as to mean that even the least anxiety vibrations can cause full-blown disasters. Such a conception demonstrates that a sense of proportion is lacking.

³³b) The fact of evolution, true in a very large scale, is interpreted so as to mean that there is a constant progress, also in the smallest scale: “Every day, in every way, better and better”.

³⁴c) The notion that you could “stand in the way” of karma, that the person in question “must be allowed to suffer”, or that “I have a right to this knowledge since I have come in contact with it”.

³⁵d) The inability to understand that there must be such people as know something that I do not know and even cannot know. (Unconscious and mechanical conviction that one’s own level is the highest possible level of knowledge and understanding.) This inability is demonstrated in such questions as: “How can we know that there are 49 atomic kinds?” etc.

³⁶6. *Distortions that are due to misinterpretation of esoteric symbols.* Examples:

³⁷a) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol of “twin souls” into the belief that “human souls” are paired together in a more or less erotic sense.

³⁸b) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol “know thyself” into the belief that self-knowledge is possible for man.

³⁹c) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol of “purification” (which simply meant consciousness development) into the belief that it is about “clean living” and that this is the

meaning of life, thus the notion that the mere overcoming of certain bodily desires makes you at once fit to be a disciple, etc.

⁴⁰d) Misinterpretation of the esoteric symbol of the “promised land” (which has reference to the higher worlds and kingdoms attained by the monad in evolution, through initiations) into the belief that a certain physical territory is to be conquered using guile and violence.

9.3 *Confusion of the Psychic and Spiritual*

¹The confusion and mix-up of the psychic with the spiritual is one of the most important characteristics of quasi-occultism and of new age teachings in particular. By “psychic” esoterics means what belongs exclusively to the first self’s kinds of consciousness, thus emotionality and mentality. By “spiritual” are meant the second self’s three kinds of consciousness: causal (47:1-3), essential (46), and superessential (45). It is necessary to uphold the distinction between psychic and spiritual for practical reasons above all: as regards the orientation of aspirants and disciples and what they should give priority in their work at their own consciousness development. The esoterician should not strive to acquire psychic powers such as clairvoyance and astral projection, because such faculties usually become hindrances to the acquisition of higher mental and of causal consciousness. The fascination at the exhaustless imaginative creations of the emotional world reinforces the power of illusions over consciousness.

9.4 *Erroneous Perception and Erroneous Conception*

¹In the *Yoga Sūtras*, Patañjali distinguishes between two kinds of error, which could be called in English “erroneous perception” and “erroneous conception”. Erroneous perception (Sanskrit: *viparyaya*) is a subjective misperception in the observation of objective reality, such as when in darkness you believe you see a snake lying curled on the ground, whereas in reality it is a piece of rope. Erroneous conception (*vikalpa*) is “knowledge of mere words which are devoid of a factual content”.

²Examples of erroneous conceptions: theological, philosophical, scientific, political fictions. A few examples of erroneous conceptions in theology: the god of the Christians who is above all laws, and who arbitrarily punishes and rewards people; sin as a crime against god who is an infinite being and who consequently exacts an infinite punishment in eternal hell. *The Knowledge of Reality* by Laurency affords us many examples of erroneous conceptions in philosophy, such as the theses that reality conforms to our concepts, that consciousness cannot “pass” to the object. As an example of political fiction may be cited the pair of opposites, “reactionary – progressive”, which has no conceptual content in accord with laws of nature or laws of life.

9.5 *Subjectivism*

¹Laurency: “Subjectivism in regard to the matter aspect is so ingrained in human thought that it can scarcely be elucidated in too many contexts.” A few such elucidations are made below.

²There is a typical subjectivistic constant error in how scientists approach phenomena and facts that do not conform to prevailing hypotheses. They assert that superphysical realities, factors, energies, etc. are “improbable”. Now “probable” only means “what you may reasonably expect on the basis of what you already know”. In other words: an explanation or a hypothesis is more probable the better it conforms to established views. And since they have chosen to remain ignorant of superphysical realities, explanations starting from those realities must always be “improbable”. They do not see that their reasoning runs in a circle: “We cannot believe anything that is part of what we cannot believe.” It is like fishing in the lake without having baited your hook, and then proclaim: “There is no fish in the lake.”

³Those who make comparative studies of religion are astonished that among widely different peoples in all times there are to be found descriptions of a “higher reality” that agree on important points. They have tried to explain this by what they call “intercultural influences”. In other words, it is only a matter of echoing and copying in an endless chain from individual to individual, and from people to people. Thus Romanian historian of religions Mircea Eliade explains the “sacred number seven”, occurring in all nations, as a borrowing or influence from Babylonia.

⁴These scholars do not realize that the simplest and most natural explanation is the objective existence of a higher reality, which of course is the same for all, independent of cultural background, and this reality is what mystics have contacted and described in similar terms.

⁵It is remarkable that scholars cannot try this explanation even as a hypothesis. But they have for so long been occupied with mere subjective things, mere opinions without counterparts in reality, that they seem to have quite lost the sense of the existence of an objective reality “out there” and “in here”, common to us all.

⁶Such hypotheses of borrowings of views between cultures as the only factor tell us more about the scholars themselves than about the cultures they believe they understand.

⁷In an article in the Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter* (9th April, 1981), Tor Ragnar Gerholm declared: “Anyone can consult a statistical yearbook to easily convince himself that the world’s assets of non-renewable energy raw materials, metals, and industrial minerals have never been greater than they are now.” In writing this, this physics professor, fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, and fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences evidently mixed up two different things: 1) the objectively existing non-renewable natural resources, which of course can never increase but must constantly decrease as mankind extracts them, and 2) mankind’s collective subjective conception of quantities available for extraction such as they are indicated in various publications.

⁸The rejection of the “ether hypothesis” by scientists is an instance of subjectivism. At first they formed conceptions of the ether where they assumed it had certain qualities, such as producing an “ether wind”, etc. Later, when in the experiments they made they could not establish those qualities, they concluded that “the ether does not exist”. They did not see that the ether could exist nevertheless, although having other qualities than the assumed ones. Naïvely they started from the assumption that subjective conception equals objective reality.

⁹Axiom: It is possible to formulate hypotheses without number on every unknown, yet-to-be-discovered thing. However many of these hypotheses can be exploded without therefore refuting the existence of this unknown thing.

9.6 *The Aspirant Need See Through His Subjectivism*

¹Our teachers say that it is very characteristic of aspirants in general that they form definite conceptions of the teacher, the teaching, the work, the tests, etc. in advance, and then try to lay down conditions of their discipleship on the basis of these conceptions. Instead they need to empty themselves of all preconceived opinions on all such things of which they cannot know anything essential. The information about discipleship they have obtained through theoretical study affords them just an elementary orientation, as such barely adequate. Reality is, as usual, something quite different.

²When aspirants learn that the disciple is characterized by his service of mankind and work for mankind, many of them jump to the conclusion that they can start doing such service and work at once, and then do it in accord with their own views and wishes. In such a case they have not asked themselves questions such as: What needs to be done? What are the most important tasks to be done, as seen from the objective viewpoint and quite apart from considerations of “me” and “mine”? What tasks are seeking their doers rather than doers

seeking their tasks? What kind of preparation is required in the doers of the tasks, if they are to be successful?

³Having found esoterics and having seen its priceless value for himself, the aspirant desires to share it with others to help them in their walking the path of life. In itself, the desire of spreading the knowledge is good thing. If he has not yet a clear conception of it, however, there is a big risk that he will not spread the knowledge, but rather his own misconception of it, if he talks to other people about it. And if those other people have not undergone the preparation he should have received himself, then misconception is unavoidable. Then a subjectivistic distortion in giver and receiver is the result. Just referring interested people to books is a more secure way, after all. Many aspirants who are eager to spread the knowledge have experienced that “people prefer listening to me telling them things than reading a book”. But if the interest of those people is not strong enough to make them read a book, when it is offered them, then they clearly are not ripe to receive the knowledge. In such a case the aspirant has proved too eager to “recruit” quantity without quality. Esoterics shall not have anything to do with the “reign of quantity”, however.

⁴Yet another expression of subjectivism is apparent in the attitude taken by some aspirants and disciples to opportunities offered them. It is very often seen that they let such valuable possibilities pass them by, as if they would soon come back. Their arbitrary assumption that favourable opportunities will come back without end seldom corresponds to objective reality. Even if a similar opportunity may appear later on, it is a bad thing to have let this wrong attitude start establishing itself in their consciousness: the belief that you may turn down offers with impunity. That wrong attitude becomes a weak spot. According to the law of repetition, it will be a little easier the next time to miss such an opportunity. Finally, you are hopelessly behind, so that you are unable to keep up with the ever accelerating pace of evolution. All of this is aspects of the subjectivistic tendency there is in certain individuals to prescribe the conditions and rules of discipleship. Instead, those individuals should heed the warning, “an opportunity missed will not return”.

9.7 The Aspirant's Work at Overcoming Formatory Thinking

¹In many aspirants, formatory thinking – that primitive, too mechanical thinking – is their truly serious hindrance. If your mentality is strongly characterized by formatory thinking, you cannot advance, you cannot conceive esoteric ideas correctly. Such aspirants should make it their top priority to eliminate their formatory thinking.

²The process of eliminating this inefficient thinking is undergone in three stages. First you work at gaining an ever deeper, ever better understanding of what formatory thinking is, how it manifests itself, and simultaneously a deepening understanding of its opposite – perspective thinking – and its manifestations. This is not done merely by pondering theories and definitions of formatory and perspective thinking, but by studying the many examples given of the one and the other kind of thinking.

³Then, guided by these examples, you make your own observations in other people and in yourself. Usually it is easier to see this in others than in oneself. You observe the expressions of formatory thinking and those of perspective thinking, however rare the latter. You collect those observations, studying recurrent patterns.

⁴Finally you make efforts to catch yourself in situations when you think in a formatory way; then you check yourself, withdraw your failed thought-form, and refashion it into a more perspectivistic one.

⁵In such work it is especially suitable to ponder on all such esoteric facts as must be conceived with perspective thinking, such facts as cannot be conceived with formatory thinking, since then they would appear as sheer self-contradictions, paradoxes. One example:

⁶“The way to the fifth natural kingdom is open only to a small number of people.” “The

way to the fifth natural kingdom is open to all people.” Both statements are correct, and the simultaneous affirmation of them involves no contradiction. The apparent contradiction is dissolved through the insight that the first statement is correct with respect to a short perspective of time (the current eon), whereas the second statement has reference to a much longer perspective (including several future eons).

⁷In esoterics you are taught to “forget yourself” as well as to “remember yourself”. To formatory thinking this implies an unsolvable contradiction. The contradiction is dissolved through the insight that the “self” referred to in the first case is not the same as the one referred to in the second case; generally it is about the opposition between the dominant first self (the “personality”) and the awakening second self (the “soul”).

⁸By considering the three – the right time, the right place, and the right people – it is possible in many cases to avoid falling into the traps of formatory thinking. Something can be “both right and wrong”; that is to say: largely right, but the time may be wrong, or the place, or the people. Also the problem that many beginners in esoterics set themselves by asking “how can they possibly know that?” is dissolved through the insight about the “right people”; that is to say: you should not thoughtlessly assume that either all people must be able to know it or no one, but that there are “right people” who may know something that I (or my peers) cannot know (yet).

9.8 Discrimination as to Your Own Status

¹Occultists commonly misjudge their stage of development. Merely because they have acquired a theoretical learning about various stages of development and managed to put on a pattern of behaviour matching a higher stage, they believe they are somebody they have no prospects of being within the next few incarnations. When in a new incarnation (prior to remembrance anew) they are put to the test, they fail as they do not have the support of a theoretical learning. Most of them either overrate or underrate their prospects (the latter more seldom).

²The individual’s misjudgement of his level sometimes depends on the fact that in previous incarnations he one-sidedly acquired certain abilities belonging to a higher level but failed to develop others, equally necessary ones. Frequently there is also too great a distance between learning and ability of self-realization.

³If occultists did not let themselves be blinded by the consciousness aspect and (as many of them do) imagined they possessed cosmic consciousness but if, on the contrary, they understood that in evolution the will aspect keeps pace with the consciousness aspect, they would perhaps sober up. Those who possess cosmic consciousness are not merely omniscient within the solar system but also omnipotent. Occultists may well think they are omniscient. It is certainly somewhat harder to imagine you are omnipotent in the same worlds, if you have a wee bit of reason left.

⁴It is infinitely valuable for the esoterician to know where the limits are to the knowledge, understanding, and ability possible for the individual at his various stages of development.

⁵If he is in doubt about his status, he might get some guidance from his answer to the question what he could possibly do under trying conditions.

9.9 The Aspirant’s Discrimination

¹The aspirant to discipleship is taught how to distinguish between himself as a first self (the “personality”) and the incipient second self (the “soul”). A good lead-off is learning how to distinguish between persons and things, or causes; the esoteric cause, the cause of the knowledge. He is taught to disregard the personality of his fellow man as far as possible, and to try to perceive his “soul”. This budding aspiration and incipient tendency are hampered by everything in the surrounding society that attracts attention to what is personal, what is too

personal and too individual, what is without contact with the “soul”. The aspirant is taught that all human judgements that originate from or are based on the personality are erroneous and misleading, always in some respect. He may just consider how little truth there is in all that which the public “knows” of esoteric personalities.

²In their enthusiasm, beginners in esoterics often want to share their recently acquired learning with family members, friends, and acquaintances. To their disappointment, perhaps annoyance, they will experience that they cannot convey their insight, understanding, joy; that, on the contrary, the more eagerly they proselytize, the more they bore their audience stiff. They need to learn patience, tolerance, and trust in law. They need to learn understanding of understanding: realize the fact that understanding must be allowed to grow in the individual’s own pace, that it is better having a small amount of knowledge that you really understand than a great quantity of learning that you have accepted superficially like a belief without grasping its true significance. In the urge to force the knowledge on all and everyone there is a certain measure of intolerance: the propagandist cannot quite tolerate that other people do not know what he knows, do not think as he thinks. Trust in law includes the insight that, in accord with the law, the knowledge cannot be withheld from anyone who in truth is ripe to receive it, that no one can be “overlooked” by the powers of destiny.

³That you are tolerant does not mean that you consider all views equally right. But it means that you fully respect the right of other people to hold their own views, however crazy you think they are. That all people have the right to hold their own views does not imply that all those views are equally correct or right. Equal right to hold views does not mean equally right views.

⁴An agnostic attitude (thus rather doubt than belief) is of real value to the beginner and protects him from the snares of the world illusion and the lower psychic faculties.

⁵The speculations of theologians, philosophers, and occultists are typical of such first self fictions as become downright obstacles to the individual attempting to acquire the consciousness of the second self (so-called intuition, of three main kinds). The monad in the first triad makes serious hindrances to itself if it believes it can solve the problems of world view and life view on its own, like Nietzsche imagining himself to become a superman or like Rosicrucian order AMORC and Martinus fantasizing about acquiring cosmic consciousness. Only the man who thinks in accord with reality can reach the consciousness of higher worlds.

9.10 The Disciple’s Discrimination

¹The disciple learns how to assess things and people quite impersonally and matter-of-factly. Such assessment is a condition of right conception and possibility to help people. There is much he does not need to know or to have any idea of at all. This, too, demonstrates his power of discrimination.

²The constant discrimination between the self and its envelopes is one of the methods of liberation from the envelopes and from the interests of the envelopes in their worlds. The self in the causal envelope is independent of the mental, emotional, and physical envelopes. These lower envelopes are indeed detached on the conclusion of every incarnation. If they have held the self captive, then the self will have to incarnate until it has learnt to live in the world of causal ideas. The lower worlds are called the worlds of appearance, for when being in them the self just sees the effects of unknown causes. In the causal world the self sees the causes of those effects. Only then does the self know that it has knowledge of reality. Then the self sees also the meaning of life, sees that all are on the way leading to the same goal and, therefore, that all are fellow wanderers on the way, that it is the task of all to help one another: that holding the life view of unity and acting on it is the quickest way of reaching the goal. All this has been said before, expressed in innumerable ways. Only now it is living insight.

³It is essential that all disciples devote themselves to meditation, regular and daily medita-

tion, meditation in the esoteric and not mystic sense. The difference between esoteric and mystic meditation appears primarily in four respects: 1) the domain: esoteric meditation is both emotional and mental, not merely emotional as the mystic one; also it does not deal with those problems which typically beset the religious mystic and which are connected with theological fictionalism, such as salvation, grace, atonement, etc. but with problems connected with the esoteric knowledge and school and group work; 2) the direction: esoteric meditation proceeds “from above down”, brings down the superconscious into the waking consciousness of the physical brain; mystic meditation proceeds “from below up”, so that the individual generally is lost in the superconscious and therefore does not bring down any recollection into the physical brain; 3) the degree of purpose, or practicality; 4) the degree of self-determination.

9.11 Esoteric Discrimination: General

¹The esoteric knowledge alone enables man to orient himself in the world of consciousness. The limits of consciousness are marked by the different envelopes and by the different molecular kinds in the envelopes. The self cannot be conscious except in its envelopes and in the molecular consciousnesses it has itself activated. This is not contradicted by the fact that the self is in addition able sporadically to contact consciousness of higher kinds than the ones it has activated or for which it even has envelopes. Such a contact, which is made possible by the fact that all the higher atomic kinds are always involved into the lower ones, does not entail any consciousness conceivable to the self.

²It counts as an esoteric axiom that only a higher kind of consciousness can clearly see the limitation of a lower consciousness. Only the second self (45:4–47:3) can see the limitation of the first self (47:4–49:7). Only the third self (43:4–45:3) can see the limitation of the second self. Only a cosmic self (at least a self in the second divine kingdom, 36–42) can see the limitation of the third self. And so on. The gist of what is said here is that nobody knows his own limitation until he is informed about it by a higher self.

³How difficult it is to acquire true knowledge of reality and not to make mistakes in this respect is clear from the fact that even members of the fifth natural kingdom always check their ideas with members of the sixth kingdom. The first self cannot acquire the knowledge of reality, which is a fact that cannot be too strongly emphasized. No fourth kingdom individual can judge the reality content of his learning correctly.

⁴Only the causal self can interpret the symbols correctly. The symbols are reproductions of the mental forms that mental consciousness shapes in mental matter consciously or unconsciously. It is true that mentality can understand their meaning. But it is unable to determine whether the symbols are fully exact and thus truly correctly render the realities intended.

9.12 Esoteric Discrimination: the First Self and the Second Self

¹As long as the monad can be fascinated by, dependent on, phenomena in the worlds of man, so long it will remain a first self. So long, too, the monad will be a victim of the first self's kinds of consciousness, a victim of the speculations of human reason (the dogmas of theology, the theories of philosophy, and the ephemeral hypotheses of science), a victim of the emotional and mental vibrations that telepathically pervade its emotional and mental envelopes and are able to penetrate into its brain.

²It is only through the contact with its Augoeides and through the faculties of unity (the aspiration to unity in all conceivable ways) it has acquired that the human monad assimilates the energies from the second triad and finds the right way.

³The first self is the self of ignorance, for without that “spark of reason”, which the monad unconsciously acquires in the triad envelope (47:3), man would not reach much higher than the highest animal species, and the higher mental (47:5) would lie beyond his reach.

⁴It is possible for us to acquire perspective consciousness because we have gradually, during millennia, received reality ideas from mental geniuses who were in contact with the causal world. Without them we would have remained at the stage of barbarism.

⁵All envelopes of incarnation except the causal triad envelope are robots affected by energies coming both from within, from higher envelopes, and, in the majority, above all coming from without. The mental envelope is affected by mental vibrations; the emotional envelope, by vibrations from the emotional world (which means vibrations from other people); the etheric envelope and the organism, by so-called cosmic energies (atomic energies of all kinds). Only when the individual has become a second self (an essential self, a 46-self) will he be able to make himself independent of other kinds of energies than the ones he determines himself. Most people are slaves to their robots, which means that “man lacks free will”, an esoteric expression that ignorance must misunderstand. The self is not free as long as it is dominated by its envelopes.

⁶The light can illuminate that intellect which is self-controlled and free from the domination of the intellect of another.

⁷It is inevitable that the human monad believes it is where its self-consciousness is active. Precisely this is what the initiates meant by the “great illusion”.

9.13 The Development of Discrimination in Mankind

¹Slowly through his incarnations man learns how to think more independently and critically, learns to see that mankind’s political and social history largely presents phenomena and behaviour of the stage of barbarism. This implies that he grows increasingly conscious in the higher molecular kinds of his envelopes. When he has once acquired the ability to apprehend the higher kinds of attractive emotional vibrations, he discovers that mankind is still controlled by the vibrations of repulsion in the lower regions of the emotional world.

²Many people remain unnecessarily long in emotionality, particularly those who have acquired clairvoyance in some way or other and believe they find the knowledge of reality and life in the emotional world. Regrettably, there are many people at the mental stage who through their emotional clairvoyance relapse to this lower stage.

³The higher the kind of emotional consciousness, the greater the intensity of experiences had. The illusoriness of the highest spheres of the emotional world is so intense that also very advanced disciples of the planetary hierarchy (causal selves) have been deceived. In those regions you can find emotional replicas of everything that really exists in higher worlds.

⁴The life of feelings is the activity of the lowest mental consciousness (47:7) in emotionality, and the life of imagination is the result of the lowest mentality but one (47:6).

⁵The lowest two mental consciousnesses are said to belong to the emotional stage because those who have acquired them are still emotional selves. It is only when he has come into possession of perspective thinking that man is a mental self, that he can be independent of emotionality.

⁶At the stage of culture, man begins to consciously strive after what he considers to be right. The “noble middle path” between the extremes is rather broad to begin with. It narrows as the individual grows more sensitive to what is right and wrong and more careful in his choice of motives. (That is no concern of moralists, but everybody has to find his own way without interference.) Mental or causal discrimination does not suffice for this, but it requires also essential (46) unity consciousness.

⁷He also grows increasingly sensitive to, and impressionable by, energies from the essential world (world 46). Thereby he attains the stage of the mystic and comes under the influence of Augoeides whose task it is to make the individual acquire, through the requisite experience, the qualities and abilities that are necessary for him to become a second self. Man “is wandering in the dark” but does not see it until the “light” of the second self begins to pour down into

the monad consciousness. Then he begins to “seek the light”.

9.14 *Discrimination as to the Knowledge*

¹“Knowledge is remembrance.” (Platon) That is not to say that remembrance is knowledge. During all our incarnations, the subconscious has assimilated everything we have experienced, all false ideologies. Most of our latency is illusion and fiction systems we have worked into our subconscious. Such things become innate, firm certainty in a new incarnation, if we are born into an environment where these fictions predominate. This latent learning thus does not, as such, equal correct knowledge. It can be correct only in the case of those who have been initiated and have experienced reality. Knowledge was in Platon’s time and still is after 2400 years the same as esoteric knowledge, accessible only to those who have studied the knowledge of the planetary hierarchy, who have mastered hylozoics so that they are subsequently able to think in accordance with reality.

²Time and again mankind is given the same truths, which are unchanging even though the forms in which they are presented may vary. Subsequently, without exception, these truths are distorted by confused minds in less than one hundred years. Therefore, it is the duty of the knowers to keep the teaching pure and to clearly separate error from it, also to the service of those who are not yet able to see the big difference. If then the ignorant accuse the knowers of intolerance, the latter should answer: “Those who are happy with pseudo-knowledge may very well have it, and we do not wish to deprive them of it. There are such people, however, as desire to be set free from illusion and to enter the world of reality. It is exclusively those people that we want to reach. But you apparently want us to withhold the knowledge from them, too. In doing so you demonstrate that your ‘tolerance’ is indifference to the truth, if not downright hostility to it.”

³It is in the emotional world that the individual must learn to distinguish between true and false, between real and unreal. That is an esoteric fact which spiritists, occultists, yogis have not realized and cannot realize. The illusions of emotional consciousness are nothing but imaginative constructions, but they have an intensity that causes people to be easily captivated and fascinated by them, so that they are convinced that those illusions are reality. Their intensity is due to the possibility of directly perceiving the energy aspect in emotional matter.

⁴The clairvoyant cannot know that there is a mental world, since he cannot acquire mental objective consciousness. Subjective consciousness is not sufficient, but unshakable knowledge is had only through objective consciousness. And only causal objective consciousness cannot be deceived as to reality in the three worlds of man.

⁵Without the acquisition of causal ideas man can never become conscious in his causal envelope, never become what he is destined to be some time: a causal self.

⁶As a disciple of the planetary hierarchy the individual learns how to acquire mental as well as causal objective consciousness. Thereby he becomes sovereign in the worlds of man and sees that it is impossible for a first self to comprehend, even to judge correctly, realities in these worlds. The subjective essential (46) consciousness he has at the same time acquired is of such a kind that he is assured of the existence of still higher worlds. As a causal self in his old causal envelope, which he received as a gift from his Augoeides, he cannot acquire essential objective consciousness. In order to become an essential self, he must sacrifice his causal envelope. Subsequently, he is for the first time subjectively conscious in the collective consciousness of existence and thereby also conscious of his potential godhood.