

Reflexive Self Consciousness: Tutorial Version.

with commentary and headings

by Alan Roberts - February 2007.

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1 Commentary

This Tutorial begins with a preamble of 8 pages of introduction to the book *Reflexive Self-Consciousness* by Eugene Halliday and then the text itself, with some added headings to help easy access to sections of the text. I stress that these are my additions to aid study. They are not meant to add anything to the substance of the book; that is complete in itself. The text of the book is the same as the one available at Eugene Halliday Institute for the Study of Hierological Values (ISHVAL)

My additions will be in square brackets [] and in a different font from Halliday's text.

2 The Book Itself

Reflexive Self-Consciousness was published during Eugene's lifetime .

A copy of this book (and also many other writings by Eugene Halliday) can be freely downloaded from the 'Text' page of the 'Parklands' section of Eugene Halliday Archive - accessed from the Menu Bar of the 'Eugene Halliday Institute for the Study of Heirological Values' website.

Further information regarding Eugene Halliday's currently published works can be obtained from the 'Collected Works' page of the 'Eugene Halliday Institute for the Study of Heirological Values' website, where limited edition hardbound copies, published by the Melchisedec Press, may be purchased.

3 Is Reflexive Self-Consciousness a System ?

In his talks and articles the statements when taken together present a coherent whole viewpoint. They describe a logical and responsive universe, certainly they did for me, and most of my companions as we struggled to absorb them, but this may not have been how Halliday saw the process. There is a tape for example, that strongly states that this was not how he saw it and it too is named *Reflexive Self-Consciousness 220*. In this tape, in which despite its name, he actually only talks a little of reflexive self-consciousness directly, within the first few moments before digressing and in response to some tartly written questioning about his 'brilliant philosophical system' he says:

“Factually, I am not presenting a philosophical system at all, nor a system of any kind, but a mode of approach to certain problems. We’ve said before on many occasions that there is no system other than a group of ideas that will help us for a time. Sys-tem is a saviour for a time.”

To my knowledge he never laid claim to any system and always, as here, clearly stated that any system could only be a saviour for a time. He is emphasising that here in his analysis of the word 'system' that is literally what it means sys-tem – a saviour for a time. He is then stating simply that he does not consider that he is expounding a structured shape of the world, as we know it at all. He then goes on to emphasise the point;

“To be philosophical, it would have to be, by definition, purely rational in structure. And a large amount of what we are dealing with is based on feeling, super-rational feeling. And therefore it cannot truly be said that what we are talking about is a philosophical system at all.”

Now I read that as Eugene saying that he is presenting an 'approach', a process which he describes as 'super-rational feeling', which I interpret as a process of 'sensing'¹ or 'feeling' at a level above the rational for the responses that will guide his thought. The 'feeling' is here distinctly directing the thinking, the logic. Which means that he had not pre-thought the world and all its problems to present it to us in lectures, but rather had found a centre in himself from which understanding of

¹ Here I am using his definitions of 'sensing' and 'feeling' taken from the 9th paragraph of the text, usually page one of the prologue to the internet version of *Reflexive Self-Consciousness*

the world flowed and from which the problems unravelled through this process as we looked on.

I am labouring the point here in that many people, including myself, first assume that there is a system or at least a body of knowledge to be learnt. It is a standard way to involve oneself in a new area and most of us seem to start that way. And there is certainly a body of knowledge or of work, but that learning it, apart from being very difficult and time consuming, is not the way he recommends for us to understand these works. He directs us to 'experience' what he is talking about.

Reflexive self-consciousness, the human capability itself, is as a profound enlightenment² is, for want of any other description. That is, it is a practice not a concept. This makes the book dedicated solely to describing it a very important text in the canon of his works. The most important I would argue. Important enough to be the key to all the other works because it outlines the practise of enlightening oneself, distinctly and directly more than any and all of the other writings. In setting out to write the book Eugene's objective was to give a practice that is the direct – that is immediate - experience of that 'resec' state. And that that practice is also, at one and the same time the process of establishing it permanently. And without digression and taking us step by step, that is exactly what he does.

4 The Prologue

The book begins with a prologue of some six pages that serve to define the terms that Eugene will be using to describe the shades or levels of consciousness that he will be talking about. This is no mean feat in itself, and is a really valuable section of the work. He sets out the problem in the first paragraph;

“There are several words often used more or less indiscriminately to express what we mean when we say we know anything, and as knowing is known only to a knower, words relating to knowing are not definable ultimately other than by appeal to the knowingness in a knower.”³

Words here are bending back on them selves and such sentences can sound complicated because of their repetition. This 'bending back' is, as Eugene will outline' the very nature of reflexion (as in *reflexive* self-consciousness) and is to describe any act of knowing ourselves knowing, watching ourselves watching or

² This is my word not his, he consistently uses resec, a word which he coined probably to avoid the very associations I am grasping for here.

viewing ourselves viewing. It is that the self includes itself and its knowing in its picture of the world. And it is this ability to do this continuously that Eugene will describe as being reflexively self-conscious or as he abbreviates it 'resec'.

The practice which he describes will lead to a state that he will equate with complete creativity, unencumbered with egoic distractions. The parallels with meditation and enlightenment are obvious to me but I stress are unstated by him. So that this book is in my opinion a distillation of the essence of such meditative practices and achievements outlined by other disciplines; and Eugene is saying only that we cannot explain these words to do with these self-conscious processes except by the use of words that already assume that we are conscious selves to begin with. So that they are not really definitions and they don't take us much further – consciousness is self-referencing and self-proving .

Most words can be defined without recourse to themselves in their definition. A swan can be described as a white bird, or more closely defined as a large, web footed member of the genus *cygnus*. A full blown definition would have to accommodate all the black Southern Hemisphere swans etc. and all the relevant feather patterns and bone ratios known only to a few dedicated biologists. It would also be constantly being updated and getting more and more complex as the creature's D.N.A. reveals its secrets and we analyse its behaviour and habitat with more and more meticulous instruments.

With consciousness, and perhaps only with consciousness, any definition needs, like the activity of awareness itself, to bend back, to mirror or reflect and reflex on its looking - for its quality is its endorsement of its own looking. Eugene distinguishes between the various levels of clarity that consciousness may attain. He defines 'consciousness', 'feeling', 'sensation' as gradations of awareness, and as a blanket word for all these general levels of awareness the word 'sentience'. He is describing this sense of a conscious self as it is experienced and generally considered outside of the cockpit of scientific and philosophical debate on the subject, but his definitions imply a strong underlying familiarity with this cockpit. So here we need glimpse some of this area of scientific and philosophical debate that has developed around consciousness in the wake of discoveries in neuroscience. It behoves us also to see the context of some other philosophical opinions on the subject matter and to learn to use some of their concepts and vocabulary. The field

³ Halliday E. *Reflexive Self-consciousness*. p1.

is large and our glimpse only small but it may whet your appetite for further research.

5 Some Context of the Study of Consciousness.

The origin of the word consciousness does not begin with the French philosopher Rene Descartes although perhaps our modern meaning of it does. It stems from the Latin *scire* – to know with the addition of *con* – together, as ‘sharing knowledge’ or ‘to know at the same time’.⁴ In Latin it was first used as a legal word *conscientia* and concerned with knowing in terms of having witnessed some deed or action.

It is this word *conscientia* that Decartes uses in his book *Meditations* (1641) but he gives it a new meaning or spin to refer to self-knowing and self-witnessing, much in the way we use it today. He shifted the meaning away from its legalese witnessing of others to self-witnessing, and he made this self-witnessing the bedrock of his view of human knowing.

Interestingly Nietzsche, one of Halliday's most quoted philosophers⁵, was to consider that the very nature of an individual as a conscious agent was similarly a legal construct. Nietzsche considered that it became defined by civilisations developing a penal system looking for self-witnessing individuals to blame and to make responsible. ‘*conscientia*’ allows for this interpretation being synonymous originally with conscience and from the same root word. To Nietzsche the gift of free will that self-consciousness gives is tempered by the responsibility for our actions, the future threat of being brought at some time to account for them or punished for them constantly speaking in our head.

We can link science and philosophy quite closely on this subject matter because ‘consciousness’ is itself a hot potato, or a focus point shall we say in both areas at the present time. By present time is meant specifically the last century as biology and psychology have pressed for clearer and clearer understanding of the processes involved in what we would call our ‘Self’. Eugene was writing probably in the late 1950s⁶ which would place him just after and perhaps in response to Gilbert Ryle's attack on the existence of a ‘self’ in *The Conscious Mind* (1949). Ryle's idea that the problems with the nature of ‘the self’ were the result of an inappropriate and ‘redundant’ language was very influential in academic circles during the fifties. It

⁴ Partridge E. *Origins* (1958) p594.

⁵ I would place Nietzsche as second most quoted philosopher in Eugene's writings, after Socrates.

was he who turned the ancient theatrical term *deus ex machina*⁷ – ‘the ghost in the machine’ into a standard materialist epithet for self-consciousness.

The current aspect of this present focus point⁸ is in fact a distillation of many centuries of similar arguments. It now centres on David Chalmers generating the notion ‘the hard problem’ of consciousness. This hard problem is essentially that, apart from the wiring of the nerve endings that rattle and hum when we see or hear something, there is, or seems to be, some scientists and philosophers would say, something more. For we don’t see wavelengths or data as science describes it to us, we see red or greens, sunsets etc. – a rich range of experience which is called in the language of this subject we are engaged in, ‘qualia’. This ‘qualia’ is the nub of the debate as I see it at present. A robot’s or a computer’s sensors may hum and crackle, similarly to ours. They would receive the wavelength, the bits of the information, similarly to us, and presumably could even act upon it; but would they see, could they see – experience as we do – the red, the greenness, the sunset. Chalmers puts it like this:

“When we see, for example, we experience visual sensations: the felt quality of redness, the experience of dark and light, the quality of depth in a visual field. Other experiences go along with perception in different modalities: the sound of a clarinet, the smell of mothballs. Then there are bodily sensations, from pains to orgasms; mental images that are conjured up internally; the felt quality of emotion, and the experience of a stream of conscious thought.”⁹

The more prosaic attitude would see no problem here at all, the ‘qualia’ - the experiential quality, is nothing different in itself, only what the wavelengths, the hum of the busy nerve endings etc. look like from the inside. And all the processes are us; there is no watcher no audience other than other processors. They would see us as extremely complex information processors but only more so. A little more complex than the machine I am here writing this article on. And they would argue that there is only information processing going on in both the computer and the human me sitting here typing. Different levels or degrees of processes perhaps, but of the same order. Daniel Dennett is probably the clearest exponent of this materialistic view today.

⁶ The book is in various editions but is unfortunately always undated. Gordon Smith obtained a copy in 1960, which he believed had been produced just a few years earlier.

⁷ In Greek drama, gods (*deus*) would be lowered into the play from above in a device (*machina* – machine) to sort things out in the nick of time and bring about a tidy ending. Much as a fairy godmother would do in modern day pantomime.

⁸ February 2007

⁹ Chalmers David. J. *Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness*. (1995) *Journal of Consciousness Studies*.

One of the many things that Dennett outlines very clearly is an aspect of this problem - which to him is of course no problem at all - 'qualia' just don't exist. In dismissing the watcher within, he clearly delineates the problematic nature of this experiencer. This 'ghost in the machine'¹⁰ the epiphenomenal being who not being a thing of materials, atoms and such, is therefore untraceable and un-testable, but also perhaps un-provable and hence completely ineffective in the world. Such an immaterial ghost or spirit is surely useless.

Most western philosophers trace this separation of mind and body back to Descartes with his use of *conscientia* to describe his knowing self as the only sound foundation of his system of reasoning. He analysed his experiencing back and back to the only certainty that he was sure of - without which there was to him in fact no knowing possible - the processes of his own mind. The traditional translation of his bedrock statement is 'I think therefore I am'. This apparently obvious statement immediately creates the subject, the I, and the object - the world to be thought about - as discreet and separate. He even decided the pineal gland¹¹ in the skull was the probable point where mind met body.

We now know much more about the linkages and structures of the brain and this placement seems far too simple, although the siting of the seat of consciousness is still central in the debate. This, as you can imagine, is literally of vital importance in subjects like neurosurgery but also has major significance in other areas such as psychiatry and education. Many disciplines and leading individuals, it turns out, are involved in considering just what are the 'neural correspondents' and the legal or linguistic meaning of what self-consciousness might be. So our curiosity about consciousness puts us in good and diverse company. When studying Eugene's text directly I feel we will be in even better company.

And this contention of Decarte's is the classic statement of 'dualism', that there are two types of stuff, material stuff and mind stuff. It is sometimes called the

¹⁰ Please excuse the excessive use of quotation marks but these are to emphasise particular uses of words and phrases which are necessary to this subject area. An area which I heartily recommend to readers. Daniel C. Dennet's book *Consciousness Explained* (1991) and *The Intentional Stance* (1987), although distinctly partisan, give good accounts of both sides and all complexions of the arguments surrounding the nature of consciousness and for very complex books are deftly and entertainingly written. Chalmers article is available on the net and is again valuable analysis. It is also well worth knowing that there is a 'Journal of Consciousness Studies'.

¹¹ In the diagram at the beginning of the book this is where Eugene has similarly placed the 'third eye' drawn on the forehead. It corresponds also to the *ajna* centre or *chakra* of yogic terminology.

Cartesian Theatre (Cartesian - after Descartes), with the real world happening like a play with the consciousness as the audience. This dualism has many forms and descriptions, the ghost or spirit in the machine we have already mentioned, but also the mind and brain, spirit and matter, body and soul all denoting this separation of the conscious self from what it is conscious of, its content.

But the problem and the interesting point with any dualism is how the two can relate. If, as with Descartes' 'theatre' the two substances are considered completely separate and of different stuffs completely, how can they possibly interact. So if consciousness is to be able to act upon the world it must be in some way - some measurable way the materialists might say - part of it. Measuring any effect of consciousness has proven very difficult to do although there are some strange anomalies at quantum levels when observers get involved with sub-atomic processes¹². But as most children soon realise, if the ghost can walk through walls how can he possibly be any real danger to anyone. His dagger will pass right through us, as his hand would pass through any object he tries to pick up to attack us. So if our consciousness is a ghost, is not made of atoms, how does the ghost control the machine?

Eugene was very aware of this problem, he knew it from Decartes work and he knew it from classical *Vedanta* philosophy¹³ where it is clearly discussed as two essential aspects of the nature of the universe *pracriti* and *purusha*. For these topics and this subject matter are not only represented in western philosophy and science. For him they were also resolved in *advaita* 'non-dualism' or the 'not two' as he would translate it, where consciousness is a quality of power, of energy, of motion itself. At its most fundamental level power feels itself move.

For Halliday, in his experience of 'non dualism', energy was always sentient. For about a century now science has thought of the universe as energy. Halliday is re-introducing the concept of this energy being able to feel itself. Aware of itself right from its beginning, it is always a *sentient* power. Complexity, evolution and education may structure the clarity of this awareness in us, may give us the

¹² This subject known as conscious collapse seems to show conscious observation of a quantum process breaking down the wave function and has led to a fascinating area of speculation of a quantum - that is sub-atomic - nature to consciousness. This is particularly relevant to Halliday's description of consciousness as a catalyst.

¹³ Vedanta Philosophy is the discourse surrounding the ancient Sanskrit books *The Vedas* which are dated widely as from 2000-600 BC. These writings are the basis of Hinduism, and establish a culture within which and from which the discourse and the enigmas surrounding consciousness have a long history of examination and exploration.

reflection or reflexion to sharpen this experience but we are 'awareness'
fundamentally, at our root, as is the universe.

We are awareness, it is not something we have but something we are. This is the
experience woven into the text of his work of on self-consciousness.

The Text of *Reflexive Self-Consciousness*

Editor's Note

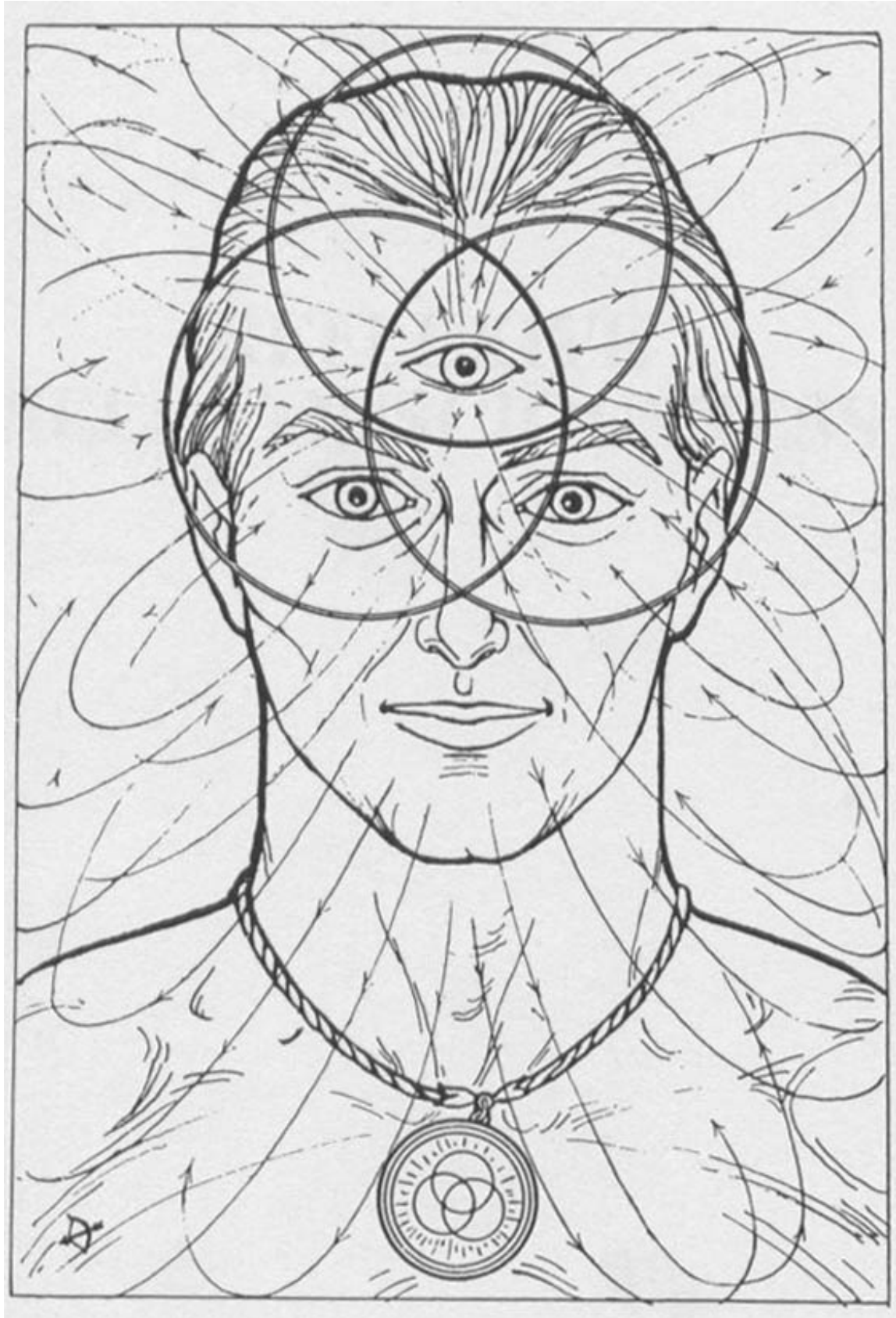
This short work is the highly compacted seed-kernel of Eugene Halliday's teaching. It informs all his writings, and the psycho-therapeutic techniques which he developed, and through which he helped so many towards reflexive selfconsciousness.

He believed that as the human mind grows in experience, it becomes more self-stimulating and less dependent on outside sources for its evolution. Ultimately, it is capable of generating from within a microcosmos which is in direct correspondence with the macrocosmic intelligence. This constitutes the state of reflexive self-consciousness, the highest level of individual development.

D.M.¹⁴

¹⁴ David Mahlowe

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¹⁵ Notice here within the lines of return flow of attention, the symbol of the bow with the reversed arrow, bottom left of Eugene's picture. The arrow pointing back at the where the

Prologue

Before entering into the discussion of our subject we will quickly examine a few terms relating to consciousness. There are several words often used more or less indiscriminately to express what we mean when we say we know anything; and as knowing is known only to a knower, *words relating to knowing are not definable ultimately other than by appeal to the knowingness in a knower.*

We may say we know a thing, we are aware of it, we are conscious of it, we feel it, we sense it, etc.

Awareness, consciousness, feeling, sensation; all these words refer to that whereby we know what we know. It is significant and important that we cannot indicate what we mean by one of these words without appealing to that in us which corresponds with their significance, that is, to that in us which *knows* that it knows. From this fact may be shown the ultimate infiniteness of sentience.

All these words refer to that in and by which we know. If we persist in asking what we mean by this we can reply only, "We *know* what we mean. Consciousness is its own evidence. Self-evidence is the means whereby sentience knows itself."

[6 *The Proof of Consciousness*]

Because it is not proved by other than itself to itself, we say that consciousness of consciousness is immediate. "Immediate" means "not mediated", not using anything other than itself to know itself.

Nothing proves consciousness or sentience to exist other than itself. But the existence of objects in consciousness is proved only by consciousness. Without consciousness or sentience, even if objects existed, there would be no actual proof of their existence.

Although the words "consciousness", "awareness", etc., all refer to that in and by which we know things, we may distinguish some difference in their usage.

The word expressing what is most basic in the knowing process is "sense", a word derived from the Latin "sentire", *to feel*.

We know what we mean when we say we feel. Feeling is basic in the sense that of ways of knowing it is general rather than special, universal rather than particular, undefined rather than defined. A

archer's heart would be, is symbolising the acknowledged return of all outgoing intentions in the world.

feeling is less clearly outlined than an idea, although a feeling of pain may be sharply localised. We may say that feeling is our state when we know the field of our experience: feeling is field awareness. To feel is to know a field-state.

A field in electronic theory is defined as a zone of influence of a force. Psychologically, we may say a field is a zone of feeling, or a place in which we feel some process, or sense something, without defining precisely what form it has. In principle a field is ultimately infinite. The field of sentience is limitless.

The Latin-derived word we may use for feeling is "sentience". It has a less particularised use than "consciousness", and therefore may be used to express that faculty in us whereby we know by feeling. By "sentience" we shall mean that which knows by feeling without sharply defined formal content, but which is the ground of the possibility of formally defined consciousness.

The word "consciousness" has a more specific significance. It is from the same root as "science". The "sci" in the word is seen in the Latin "scindere", *to split, to separate*. Consciousness knows things as separate from each other. Consciousness defines analytically what sentience experiences wholly and non-analytically. (one of the most efficient ways of developing consciousness is by verbalisation, for words help towards analysis of the content of consciousness).

The word "awareness" is derived from the Old English "waer", *cautious*. It is cognate with the Latin "vereri", *to observe anxiously*. To be wary is to be on guard in feeling, to be watchful.

Rather amusingly, the other word "ware", meaning *goods or merchandise*, is connected with the Old Norse "vara", *meaning skin or fleece*. No doubt in former times (!) it was occasionally necessary to beware of the ware-sellers in the marketplace to avoid being "fleeced".

Awareness then, we might say, carries with it a sense of being on guard. Consciousness or sentience qualified by caution.

All these words may be used interchangeably, with occasional preference for one or the other according to the requirements of the context. All refer to that in and by which we know what we know and *that we know*.

The objects in the field of sentience are limited or finite. The field itself is not. Every thing, every definable idea, every temporary feeling-state or emotion, may be considered as a finite datum within a sentient field itself infinite.

The field must be said to be infinite, because every limited object in it may be represented by a circle, and every circle, no

matter how large, may have another circle drawn round it, and so on to infinity. The environment of a thing is always larger than a thing, and is in principle ultimately infinite.

The infinite sentient field must be conceived to be the source of all beings, for the fact of being is a fact only to consciousness, and however abstract thought may try to eliminate consciousness from being, it experiences no being other than in and of consciousness.

When we consider the ultimate source of all things, we are forced to conceive it as such a source which has given rise to beings of our own order, that is, conscious beings.

[7 Consciousness is not formed from non-conscious material]

There is a peculiar fact about sentience, or awareness, or consciousness. If we exclude it from the ultimate source of being, if we do not posit it as a property of that source present from the very beginning of creation or evolution, we cannot find a point later at which we may logically introduce it. Sentience denied at the source of being cannot be later introduced into the stream flowing from it.

Attempts have been made by materialists to exclude consciousness from the source of being, and then to try to explain its presence in ourselves by saying that it has arisen by the aggregation of non-conscious material particles into complex patterns, like those we know in our nervous system and brain-structures.

Of this we assert, that whilst the complex brain-cell aggregate we possess may be patterned in such a way as to provide our consciousness with a machine complicated enough to serve as a vehicle for the expression of the complex processes of consciousness, if the brain is considered to be merely an aggregate of non-conscious material particles it cannot of itself give rise to consciousness. If each material particle is non-conscious or insentient, then the mere placing together of a large number of such particles, however arranged, cannot give rise to consciousness. If a material particle is a not-knower, then a million million like it cannot add up to a knower. No number of zeros ever adds up to more than zero, no matter how we arrange them.

The ultimate source and origin of our being is sentient and conscious. A stream cannot rise higher than its highest point. The consciousness of man cannot rise higher than its own ultimate source, and in the generality has not yet reached so high.

The greatest intellects in the world all bow their heads before the infinite potential of their origin. Only the ignorant lack humility.

To become conscious of our source is to become conscious of the source of all being and all consciousness. It is to become consciousness itself, and reflexively self-consciously so.

[8 Particular, General, Universal, Absolute and Reflexive Consciousness]

To confine our consciousness to the consideration of the finite objects of our five special sense organs is unnecessarily to limit its scope. The sentient field is itself infinite. To concentrate consciousness fully upon a particular object within that field is to deprive oneself of the knowledge of what lies beyond that particular.

To rescue oneself from the self-imposed ignorance of the particularising consciousness, one has only to remove the stress placed by consciousness upon that particular, and replace it in its source.

The particularising tendency of the lower mind is a product of the over-specialising activity of the five special sense organs, an over-activity initially imposed on them by the external stimulus situation. This is presented in the Eden myth by the Serpent which acted on the woman Eve¹⁶ (the feeling and the substance side of man), and so drew into the external world his sense-organs, capturing his mind in materiality.

It does not need a great deal of thought to see that full concentration on a given finite thing deprives us of data beyond it. The mind which merely sees separate particular things, and not their world context, is a mind deprived of universal concepts which could confer order upon his sense data. All contents of consciousness are functions of power. To confine oneself to particular sense concepts is to deprive oneself of the energy contained in concepts of universal validity.

The particularising man, tied to separate, serially-experienced finites, functions at a low level of consciousness. He is tied to the data provided by his five special sense organs. He reacts to stimuli like an animal rather than a rational being. Free will is to him a term with no other significance than stimulus-reaction, or taxism-response.

The generalising man has begun to free himself from particularised reactions. He has begun to see the Law which governs the world.

¹⁶ *Genesis 3 v 14*

The universal thinker carries the work further. His intellect has lifted him to the level where universally true concepts confer upon him power to order the particular and the general.

The absolute man is the man who sees beyond the universe as a formed thing, into the laws of motion which bring it into being. He recognises the relation between these laws and the laws of his own consciousness. He sees all things as produced by motion, and motion as produced by the Absolute, and the Absolute as infinite, eternal, sentient power. And he knows his own consciousness as that Absolute Sentient Power operating through the vehicle of his body. He knows what is meant when it is said, the Universal works through the particular, the Absolute through the relative. He centres himself in the Absolute even as he operates through the relative.

He does not conceive himself as separate from the Absolute. He says, "I and my Father are one."¹⁷

The absolute man, the man of the Absolute, is the reflexively self-conscious man who has turned his consciousness away from the particulars of the world, in order to become one with the principle of their being. For him, freed from the fixated identification with a particular finite body, there is no "outside". All beings are *within* his consciousness. In leaving all things to return to his true self he has discovered all things with himself in the Absolute from which he derived. In losing his life he has found it.

The particularising man is the prodigalⁱ son who drove forth from his father's house, and has not yet reached the point of realising that he is eating husks with the swine.

The man who begins to generalise is the prodigal son at the point of his first stirring of awareness that he has sinned.

The universal thinker is the prodigal son who recognises once more that he stands in his father's house.

The absolute man is the prodigal son sitting with his Father rejoicing in their re-union.

[9 The Beginning and the End of the Journey]

The reflexively self-conscious man knows these things, and more. He knows that reflexive self-consciousness is the beginning and the end of the journey into time and particularity. He knows it is the end because, after having lost it and entered into the time

¹⁷ John 10 v 30

process, man is driven by the Absolute to regain it. The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, are the same.

In between the beginning and the end stretches the time process, the realm of Saturn-Chronos¹⁸. Within this process, in this realm, fallen man who has not yet returned must receive the education which will bring him, the man who in leaving his source left himself, back to himself again in the supreme all-power-conferring act of reflexive self-consciousness and self-realisation.

Once returned, man with his catalytic creative consciousness, will gaze forth upon those of his brothers who have not yet returned, and by the power of his sentience and reflexive self-consciousness will be able to create in them the awareness of their position, which will place them at the point at which he once stood, the point of decision to return.

In what follows, the words "consciousness", "awareness" and "sentience" will be used more or less interchangeably, although their different significances may conveniently be borne in mind wherever a context justifies it.

E.H.

¹⁸ *Saturn* is the Latin name for the god associated with harvest who is linked to a similar god that the Greeks called Chronos or *kronos*, both are to do with sowing and reaping, action and retribution and hence are used to personify time. Both are represented carrying a sickle as does our cultures 'father time'.

Reflexive Self-Consciousness

The opening of the twentieth century forced into man's consciousness a serious problem. It is the problem of the attainment of adequate powers of reaction and stimulus-assimilation in an increasingly complex life situation, with a continuously accelerating development pace which threatens man's very existence.

Reflexive self-consciousness, which for convenience we abbreviate to "resec", is a state of transcendent self-awareness which confers upon the beings who attain it certain powers of adequate response and capacity of stimulus assimilation. These powers man must either attain, or perish from the earth as unfit for the next necessary step in the evolution of consciousness.

[10 First rule for attainment of resec]

First we must state the basic rule for the attainment of resec. It is THE OBSERVER IS NOT THE OBSERVED. What does this mean? Shakespeare says, "The eye sees not itself but by reflexion."¹⁹ When we look into a mirror to see ourself, we see not ourself but a reflection of our face. A simple fact, yet of tremendous significance.

The eye, of course, does not see of itself. Behind the eye is the ocular brain centre and the observing self. Consciousness of an object arises only if these three are brought into relation and directed to an object.

We can see another's eyes. It is possible that a man might have his nose removed and by violent squinting see his own eyes. But

¹⁹ Shakespeare uses the metaphor of a glass or mirror in a few places. Eugene is probably here referring to - *Julius Caesar* Act I sc ii line 51:

BRUTUS

No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself,
But by reflection, by some other things.

CASSIUS

'Tis just:

And it is very much lamented, Brutus,
That you have no such mirrors as will turn
Your hidden worthiness into your eye.

but perhaps also to Hamlet's chastisement of his mother - *Hamlet* Act III sc iv line 20:

You go not until I set you up a glass,
Wherein you see the inmost part of you !

through each eye would be seen not itself but the other eye. The eye which sees does not directly see itself.

[11 The Self]

Let us apply this physical fact to the problem of the Observer and the Observed.

If we look inside ourself in an attempt to see what we mean by the self, we discover, if we pursue our attempt to the end, that the self is not see-able in any objective sense. The Self is consciousness itself, awareness, sentience. It is that in which objects may appear, but it is not itself an object.

Consciousness is not an object, not a formed thing; it is that in which objects, things, forms and ideas appear. What follows from this is so deeply significant, so tremendously important for the attainment of freedom, that we must spare a little time to make clear its more important implications.

Somehow consciousness is, yet is not so in any objective sense. We know this to be so because we are immediately aware of our consciousness as soon as we turn to it. We say *immediately* aware because our awareness of our awareness is not mediated by anything other than itself.

When we are aware of some *object* through one of our senses, our awareness is mediated through the sense organ. When we are aware of our *awareness*, this awareness is not mediated, and we therefore say it is immediate.

Whenever we use a sense organ to become aware of an object, the sense organ in some degree conditions what we know. When we are aware of our awareness, our awareness is immediate and therefore unconditioned.

To be unconditioned is to be free. Awareness of awareness is therefore free. Consciousness of consciousness is consciousness conscious of itself. This is the key to resec and free self-determination.

Although we say that the Observer is not the Observed, we do not posit a dualism of two different substances, for the Observed is merely a motion-pattern in and of the Observer. The ultimate substance is sentient power. Its motions generated by its power constitute the objective content of its sentience, which brings us to our second important rule for the gaining of resec.

[12 Second rule]

Our second important rule is this: *An Observer knows only the modifications of the Observer.* Let us examine this.

When we are deprived of stimuli, whether external or internal to our organism, the content of our consciousness is reduced. We can see that if we were totally deprived of all objective stimuli, consciousness would have no *objective* content whatever. Such a state of consciousness deprived of all objective content, we call unconsciousness. Unconsciousness is not what people ordinarily suppose it to be. It is simply consciousness with no objective content; that is, objectless sentience.

The Observer is consciousness serving some object. But the object served is simply a form of motion within consciousness. There are no objects of consciousness other than within consciousness as modifications of it. Without modifications in consciousness there are no objects within it, and there is no objective consciousness.

All objects of consciousness, all the things of the world, all ideas and mental states, are simply forms of motion in consciousness.

It is quite futile for a conscious being to posit an existence beyond consciousness. The "existence beyond consciousness" is merely a concept *in* consciousness. Dr. Johnson's kicking a brick to refute Berkeley is just another evidence of Johnson's obtuseness, and unfitness to deal with the problem.ⁱⁱ

The Greek philosopher Anaximander saw the source of the world in the everlasting motion (*aidos kinesis*) of that which is limitless or boundless (*apeiron*). This idea is a true one. Each great philosopher has been a doorway for a part of Truth.

When we examine Anaximander's *apeiron*, the boundless source of the world, we see from his choice of name for it that he correctly conceived its motion to be a motion of pure translation, that is a non-circumscribed motion, a motion which did not close itself off²⁰. A motion which closes itself must, of course, be bounded or finite.

When we consider possible kinds of motions we see at once that we may consider them basically as of two kinds, motions which close upon themselves, and motions which do not close upon themselves.

²⁰ Anaximander (610– 547 BC) a philosopher and astronomer, his *apeiron* or original state of the universe was a formless mass containing all opposites and contraries –hot – cold, wet – dry.

Motions which close upon themselves we may call cyclic, circumscribing or rotatory motions. Such motions are symbolised by the serpent with its tail in its mouth.

Motions which do not close upon themselves we may call translating motions. Translation means "moving from one place to another." A translating motion is one which moves through space from place to place, without closing itself. It is symbolised by a serpent running freely in wave form.

There is a certain relation between motions of rotation and motions of translation. Both are motions, and motion is a concept we have built from our experience of the change of place of sense objects. We shall deal with this elsewhere.

We know today that material bodies are simply modes of motion. We know that whatever finitely exists must be composed of the motion form we call rotation; for unless the motion is of the type of rotation it cannot circumscribe a boundary in space and thus mark out that space as the place of its being. A non-rotating motion does not locate itself in space and thus cannot bring into being anything characterised by a boundary or formal limit; that is, it cannot bring into being any finite object whatever.

[13 Circumscribing and the Meaning of 'Being']

If we think very carefully about what it means to exist, what it means to be a being, we will discover that the idea of being is the idea of a circumscribed zone of action.

What is not circumscribed is not a being properly so-called. Thus the infinite power source of all being is not properly called a being, though all beings subsist in it and of it as motion-modalities of it.

Every *actual* being, every being *actually*, is a being constituted by a *form of action* circumscribing and confining itself in a certain place. When action or motion is confined to a definite place it must be considered to be circumscribed. A circumscribing act is a rotating motion.

Without rotation of motion, without a motion circumscribing itself, there would be no being, no existence, no world of stars, suns, planets, plants, animals and men; no thing whatever. Motion of rotation circumscribes, creates and keeps in being all things that exist.

What can we say about non-rotating motion, motion of translation? First we must say that it does not as such bring into being any finite thing or object whatever. Finite beings are constituted,

consist of, motions of rotation. A motion of pure translation brings no finite whatever into existence. It is an infinite motion, like the everlasting motion of Anaximander's *apeiron*.

If we conceive the motion of pure translation we do not conceive a finite - we conceive an infinite motion. This infinite motion is like the theologian's concept of the eternal motion of God's will, or the absolute motion of certain of the philosophers.

If we consider a being constituted only of rotating motion with no translation whatever, we are really conceiving a being which can only be an intellectual abstraction, for certain reasons we shall see later. But if such a being could exist, constituted only of the motion of rotation with no translation whatever, such a being would be static and of itself incapable of relation with other beings.

We must here break the inertia of ordinary thought and say that "static" means merely standing in one place, but that what is "standing" is simply a system of rotating motion. All standing and static beings are kept in being by motion of rotation, or recurrent cyclic impulses.

If we were to conceive all beings to be static in this way we see that each being would be isolated from the rest. No special grouping together would occur, and thus no complex beings would arise. Nothing of the process we call involution or evolution would occur. The dynamic world of complex beings and relations we know would not exist.

But if we conceive motions of translation to be added to those of rotation we see that such motions would confer on beings the possibility of dynamic relations, coming together and separating, integrating and disintegrating, which as beings constituted by mere rotation they could not have.

Motions of pure translational type do not as such bring to be any existential beings whatever. They simply pass through space, leaving no trace or evidence of their passing.

Motions of pure translation are like those attributed to the Absolute, the Infinite Motion presupposed by the existence of the finite things of the world around us.

Why does a finite being imply infinite motion? Because a finite being is a motion of rotation circumscribing itself in space, and beyond every circumscribed zone there is always an infinity of space in which further motions occur.

To illustrate this we draw a circle to represent a zone of rotating motion. No matter how big we make this circle we can always conceive that we might have made it larger. There is always infinite space for us to move in beyond our circle. The larger we make our circle the more its curvature approaches the straight line. The straight line, like the free running serpent, is a symbol of translating motion. It is a line of infinite curvature, that is, a line of no finite curvature.

When we draw a circle, we observe that its line rotates and circumscribes a zone in space. We say that it simultaneously includes and excludes. It includes, or closes in, a finite zone called a place. It excludes, or closes out, an infinity of space beyond. A fact we shall find most important when we come to consider the problem of identification.

The closed-in zone is a place of finite actuality, or an actual being, an existential entity, a reference centre for consciousness, an object on which the will may act.

The excluded infinite is the space of the translating motion. Pure translating motion travels infinitely, that is, to no finite end or limit. Travelling to no finite limit, not returning upon itself, pure translating motion does not constitute or bring into existence any finite beings: yet all finite or rotating circumscribing motions, which constitute the world of things, exist within and in virtue of the infinite motion of the Absolute, which constitutes the infinite field determining the relational possibilities of things.

[14 Sentience and Motion as properties of the Absolute]

The Absolute is an infinite sentient power, an eternal continuum of motion. Because it is sentient it feels its own motion. Its motion is the content of its sentiency. It is from this fact that is derived the principle that says that a being knows only the modifications of its own substance; or consciousness is aware only of its own modalities.

The sentience and motion of the Absolute are not factually separable from each other. It is merely a process of abstractionist thought to consider them so. Sentience and motion are both properties of the Absolute and must be held together in thought with the Absolute. If we conceptually remove either one of them, the universe as we know it must also be removed. If motion is removed there is no action, no bringing to be of actual things. If sentience is removed there is nothing to know the world. Power is the name given to motion as cause, or to motion as imparting itself to other motion. The word "cause" is from a Latin word meaning *to strike*.

The Absolute is infinite sentient motion itself. Absolutely there is nothing other than this infinite absolute motion. What then do we mean when we talk of motion imparting itself to motion?

This is the same question as, "What is the relation between the circumscribing motions of rotation-complexes and between these and the motion of translation?"

[15 Avoidance of Dualism]

To avoid falling into dualism, which would posit two ultimately different kinds of motion, one of rotation and one of translation, we may draw an image from the behaviour of water.

If we watch any large body of water, say the sea, we observe that the motions which traverse it have a certain character we call undulatory or waveform.

The peculiar thing about the wave-form motion of the sea is that we know as a physical fact that it is really an illusion. We know that the apparent travelling of a wave over the surface of the sea is really the product of a cyclic motion of the water molecules. Each molecule of water rises and falls about a centre, but is confined in its motions within a very small zone of action. Each molecule's motion up and down, and its slight lateral displacements, are so related to the motions of adjacent molecules that the resultant effect of their motions on an observer is the creation of an apparent waveform travelling across the sea's surface. If we watch a piece of floating wood we see that the motion of the water in that place is more or less a rise and fall without much lateral shift.



We see here that the physically factual motion of the molecules of sea water is cyclic or rotatory, and that such cyclic motions, timed in a certain way, give rise to the appearance of a motion of translation.

We must be on guard at this point not to jump to the conclusion that the physically factual rotatory molecular motion of the water is "real", and the appearance of the translating wave-form is "unreal". For although the translating wave-form motion of the sea may be considered as a mere appearance arising from the rotatory motion of the water molecules, yet rotation itself may be viewed as a special kind of motion of translation, that is, translation about a point. Actually, all motions pre-suppose translation.

Let us examine the concept of motion. The concept arises from the observed change of position of bodies in space. In one moment we observe a body against a certain background. In the next moment we see it again against another background. We explain this phenomenon by saying that either the thing or the background or ourselves as observers have moved.

Our idea of motion arises from the observed change in the relations between a thing, a background, and an observation point; or between bodies in space; or between contents of consciousness. If we abandon the use of particular observation points or finite bodies, no finite motions are observed as such, and another order of experience arises. What this is experienced in the resec state.

[16 The Thing, a Background and an Observation point]

In order to measure a motion, we must have certain finite reference points. Such points existentially are what we call bodies. A body is simply a finite zone or place in which certain characteristic motion functions tend to give rise in consciousness to a relatively stable reference point.

Whether we consider a motion as rotating or translating, if we wish to measure it we must posit some fixed reference points from which to take our measurements. Such reference points must, *at the existential level*ⁱⁱⁱ, be finite bodies; that is, they must be constituted by circumscribing motions, for an existential body owes its existence to rotatory motion.

The concepts of translating and rotatory motions are both dependent on the observation of changes of relative position of reference points in consciousness, points constituting a background, points considered against a background, and points from which observations are made.

The concept of a motion of translation may now be stated as based upon the change of place of a body without reference to any fixed reference point such that the change of place could be

considered as having occurred round that point and having returned to its point of original observation.

Motions of translation and rotation now differ only according to whether they are considered as relative to some reference points assumed by an observer, and the motion defined in relation to this point as either cyclic or not.

Cyclic or rotatory circumscribing motions constitute finite things. Non-cyclic motions travel infinitely through space. Both cyclic and non-cyclic motion are functions of the Absolute.

Both cyclic and non-cyclic motions, when measured, are so by reference to some relation between a background, a body the change of place of which is determined, and an observer's viewpoint.

We can easily see the meaning of the bodies constituting the background and the body whose change of place is to be measured and the body we intend to use as an observation point. They are all points of reference within the field of consciousness, within sentience, within the observer, the self.

[17 The Observing self]

What is the observing self?

An *observing* self is simply consciousness focused on some reference point, sentience centred on an object. Prior to the act of focusing, sentience must be said to be infinite. Sentience is a property of the Infinite Eternal Absolute.

No philosopher has yet succeeded in defining consciousness or awareness or sentience. Why is this so? Because to define is to indicate limits, and sentience as such has no limits. Sentience is not a finite object. It is that in which finite objects are presented and known.

Let us look at the words "observer" and "observed". An observer is a watcher; the observed is what is watched. In order for an observation to occur there must be a watcher and a watched. The watched, the observed, is a finite thing constituted of rotatory motion. The watcher, the observer, is not a finite thing, though he may use a finite thing to observe or watch through. The observer is not a thing, but that which watches the thing.

No one has at any time seen *as an object* the consciousness which sees the object. In psychological terms we would say consciousness as such never appears to itself as an *object*. Yet in the resec act consciousness is aware of itself; but not as a finite, not as an object.

[18 The Object is to the Subject as the observed is to the Observer]

The observer is the subject who sees. The observed is the object which is seen. The subject is the awareness, the consciousness, the sentience. The object is a finited zone of formal motion within the subject, which stands as the subject's reference point in an act of cognition.

Sentience as such is infinite, being a property of the Absolute. The apparently limited observer, the consciousness in a living body, identified with that body, is limited only by its own act of identification. Identification for all practical purposes confines consciousness to the zone of identification.

[19 Pleasure and Identification]

Ordinarily we do not take notice of the identification process which ties our consciousness to our body. We simply *fall* into identification. The process of falling into identification is so subtle, so intimately mixed with desire, that we hardly ever stop to consider the nature of it.

The fulfillment of desire, the experience of pleasure, the avoidance of pain; these tend to throw a stress on the pleasure-pain aspects of identification and divert us from consideration of its more mechanical aspects.

The arising of pleasure from the experience of an object tends to lead consciousness to focus on that object. This tendency is so marked in general that it tends to assume almost the force of a law; sufficiently so in fact to have led many philosophers to formulate a hedonistic view of the universe, that is, a view which states life's aim as the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain.

This tendency of consciousness to focus on an object the presence of which tends to be accompanied by pleasure or pain, is the greatest misleader of the generality of the race of man.

Not that pleasure or pain as such is bad; but the identification of consciousness with the objects it accompanies leads to slavery of consciousness and the reduction of man to a pleasure-pain mechanism. As such a mechanism he is entirely at the mercy of those beings who know the principles governing such mechanisms. Standing as evidence of this is the great interest of business men and their advisers, and political power-pursuers, in motivational research.

There are degrees of pleasure and pain. These depend on the stimulus-assimilation capacity of the observer's body or his reference centre of identification.

[20 Pain and Pleasure as Assimilation of Stimulus Energy]

Where the observer's body (note, we do not say the observer himself, that is consciousness itself) is presented with a stimulus which it can easily assimilate, a degree of pleasure is experienced by the identified consciousness. Where the stimulus energy comes in too fast or at too great intensity for it to be assimilated, a degree of pain is experienced.

Whether a stimulus causes pleasure or pain to the identified consciousness depends on the body's capacity to assimilate the stimulus. Everything in the experience of pleasure and pain depends upon the identification of consciousness with a body.

Bodies are limited zones of cyclic motion. As limited, circumscribed zones their energy absorption capacity is also limited.

Stimuli entering bodies are constituted of quantities of motion. Motion considered as operating or working within a closed system is called energy. Finite bodies can assimilate only finite amounts of energy presented at a certain rate and intensity, and in a certain pattern.

Bodies are motion systems characterised in specific ways. If stimuli of the right type are presented at the right rate, that is, put in over a certain length of time, a body may assimilate their motion. If the incoming stimulus motion is in any way wrongly presented, either in formal type, rate or intensity, the body may fail to assimilate it. Such failure implies the disturbance of the body's equilibrium or its possible destruction.

At times of disturbance or destruction of a body, consciousness identified with it suffers as if it were itself disturbed or destroyed.

[21 Non Identification]

How are we to escape the disturbing or destructive effects of excessive stimulus motions on bodies? The answer is short: by non-identification.

Not matter how badly stimulus motion may affect a body; if consciousness is not identified with it, it is not affected by it. Identification, and nothing else, is the cause of consciousness suffering pleasure or pain. We say "suffering" because to suffer is to be in passive relation to something, to allow something to act upon us.

What is identification? It is simply *emotional charge* on a consciousness content. If we view a thing with no emotional charge whatever, if we remove from ourselves all feeling orientation in relation to an object, we are not identified with it.

What happens if we remove the emotional charge on a content of consciousness? the object becomes for us just a shape, a form with no value. Values belong not to objects themselves, but to the will. Values are will-stresses.

Value is the stress placed by act of will upon an object or consciousness-content. Even the division of values into intrinsic (inherent physical properties) and extrinsic (sentimental) is itself an act of will. A folksong about the Boll Weevil witnesses this, and receives hearty support from the micro-organisms which attack the Firth of Forth Bridge.

[22 Will and Consciousness]

Because value rests in will, value can be created or destroyed by act of will. To value is to stress by will. To de-value is to remove such stress.

The God Shiva willed to fold up the universe of things into his third eye. The other gods willed otherwise. They created for him to disturb his concentration a beautiful woman named Maya, which means cosmic illusion, or the affirmation of substantial activity. They succeeded; for the universe manifestly exists and Shiva wanders blindly through the world to the end of its cycle.

Yet yogis think highly of Shiva, because at least he knew that value rests in the will, and that the being who can centre himself in himself, centre consciousness in consciousness, instead of in its objects, can absorb the whole of creation into his centre, and thus break the dependence of consciousness on its object and regain original freedom.

We are not to be afraid that the non-identified consciousness will have no content. The content of consciousness is a function of the eternal motion of the Absolute, independent of the identification tendencies of particular beings.

The consciousness which is released from identification with particular objects is not deprived of them. When consciousness no longer identifies itself with objects, they still persist as functions of the absolute motion, but they are seen simply as forms within consciousness, having no power to determine the direction in which

new stresses may appear. New stresses ordinarily depend on the previous stress-patterns in the objects with which consciousness has identified. At the resec level consciousness is a catalyst able to initiate action without itself being in any way determined by it.

[23 The Function of Non-Identification]

Consciousness is therefore not to be released from identification with objects in order to annihilate all objects and stand in nothingness. That would be to inhibit the power of consciousness to act as a catalytic formative agent or creative intelligence.

Consciousness is to be released from object identification in order to be able to return to itself. It is to be released from identification with particulars in order to be able to grasp the universal which confers order upon them. Then it is to release itself from identification with the universal in order to return to its own absoluteness, which contains all things in its own pure motion. "Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all else will be added unto you."

Heaven consists in the equilibration of power, the equilibration of all motion. Identification with particular objects destroys this equilibration.

The disequilibrated man cannot act freely; for he is inclined to follow one course rather than another, and this inclination is bondage. To incline is to take the first step to the fall into identification and slavery.

The bound man is a slave to that which binds him. It matters little what binds him if he is bound, whether he is hound by iron chains in a dungeon, or by ambition and the lust for wealth and power in the world, or by what he mis-calls "love" for a woman in a dream setting, or by concepts of service to impossible nationalist or political causes. Bondage is bondage, whatsoever form it takes.

Inclination is a tendency to fall into action. The cause of inclination is the emotional resultant of experience and the emotional charge on the experience-records in the body. Every experience is recorded by the experiencing organism.

When an experience-record is re-stimulated, it replays not only the form of the original experience, but also (until it is discharged by the release of consciousness from emotional identification with it) the whole emotional content of the experience.

This emotional content is the agent which orientates the individualised or formally-identified consciousness towards or away from the situation correspondent with that in the experience record.

Within an individual organism the orientation of the psyche (or body-identified sentience) affects the distribution of its constituent motions, which we may consider as a field of forces, in such a way that its resistance pattern to incoming stimuli and to their outgoing results is altered, and thereby its mode of action and behaviour.

[24 Free Will]

For animals with nervous systems this means the alteration of their pattern of synaptic resistances, which determines the inner destination of an afferent nerve impulse, and the outer direction of the efferent nerve impulse, and its consequent behaviour resultant in the body.

The inclination-determined actions of the body must be considered for all practical purposes as mechanical. The man who acts only from inclination must be considered to be unfree

We often hear a person say, as if it were evidence of his free will, "I can do what I want." But the man who does what he *wants* and yet *cannot determine his wants*, must be said to be a slave to want. An act of free will is not an act of want. Want implies deprivation, lack of something. Free will is a pure positive, lacking nothing. Free will is pure creativity and can bring to be the forms it wills to project. Want is determined by experience records and their emotional content. Free will is determined by nothing other than itself, and can create its own objects. This is the way the Absolute has brought the world into being, not out of want, or lack, but out of the fullness of its own free will.

[25 Psycho-Analysis as a Freeing Agent]

Unless a man is able to break identification with the emotionally charged experience-records in himself, his actions will be conditioned by those records. Psycho-analytical procedures aim to uncover such records and remove from them their emotional charges by leading the patient to "see through" the situations represented in the records.

Unfortunately there is no guarantee that a given psycho-analytical procedure, even if the procedure is a correct one, will be properly applied in a given confrontation of two psyches in the analyst-patient relation.

Further, although psycho-analytical procedures may have helped some patients in some degrees to re-orientate themselves and adjust to ordinary everyday life and its demands, more than such orientation

is required for a man to gain full control of his response tendencies and attain resec.

The gaining by psycho-analysis of some degree of adjustment to socially necessary relational needs does not of itself confer metaphysical insight into the real nature of consciousness and its objects, or spirit and material beings. Only in properly directed conscious processes involving exercise of will and intellect and feeling is the needed metaphysical illumination gained. For this, in most cases, help and indication of the right direction in which effort is to be made are needed.

We say "in most cases" because it is true that in exceptional cases, from whatever causes, some beings are able to carry themselves towards resec.

Such, of course, are geniuses; but, if we were to uncover the roots of genius in the long continuous line of protoplasmic evolution, we would find operating even there what the theologian would correctly call "grace", that is, a capacity in an individual which that individual, considered as a finite being, has not itself created. We here say with the rabbis, "The fruits such men eat are plucked from trees planted by men they never knew.

Inclination-determined actions are actions determined by emotionally-charged experience records. Such actions must be considered to be in principle not superior to the conditioned-reflex behaviour of Pavlov's dogs. If action of this order were the only kind possible for man, we would have to abandon as meaningless the use of all terms referring to the concept of free will. Man would be merely a machine and the evolution of consciousness an illusion. Fortunately this is not so.

[26 The Mechanical Response and the Deus ex Machina]

It is true that the object-identified man acts as if he were a machine. It is not true that this mode of action is the only one possible for him.

How are we to escape from the determination of inclination and thus rescue ourselves from the mechanical response level of action? How are we to extricate ourselves from the machine?

Shortly, we may say that each one of us must become *a deus er machina*, a god outside the machine of the body.

To become a god, if we understand the concept correctly, is not impossible. "Is it not written," says Jesus, "Ye are gods?"²¹ "And, "Beye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."²² A god is simply a being able from within itself, from its own free will, to determine its own actions towards its good. How are we to become such? The God of gods is the Absolute Infinite Sentient Power which determines its own action towards its own good absolutely.

First we must accept that a being able freely to determine its actions from within itself, is a being not determined by inclinations arising from emotionally-charged experience-records within itself.

A free act, an act of free will, is an act not determined or conditioned by any emotionally charged experience-records whatever. A free act is an act springing immediately from consciousness not object-identified.

This kind of act is extremely difficult for the object-identified person to conceive. Such a person will say, "How is it possible to act without being determined by some object? How can I act without regard to the benefit to be derived from my action? And if I move with regard to such benefit, am I not moving by inclination?"

Such a person has not yet grasped the meaning of freedom, of freewill, and of the ultimate mystery of grace. The profoundly significant words "His worship is perfect freedom"^{iv} have not yet revealed their secret to him.

[27 The Free Act]

A free-willed act is an act absolutely unconditioned. It is an act initiated by pure consciousness aware of itself, by the pure awareness of consciousness of its own inscrutable creativity. All original acts spring from this source.

How are we to reach the level where such an act is possible? By breaking free from factors which condition consciousness, by releasing ourselves from object-identification, by conquering inclination ("blessed is he who overcomes"^v), by lifting consciousness above the level at which conditioned reflexes are brought into existence and operate, or by entering with consciousness into zones of experience-records and discharging their emotional content.

"Great is he who conquers a city. Greater still is he who conquers himself."²³

²¹ John 10 v 34

²² Matthew 5 v 48

²³ Proverbs 16 v 32

Identification arises from emotionally-charged experience. Whenever the experience of an object (or situation or event) gives rise to emotion, whether pleasure or pain, and the observer allows himself to focus on this emotion, a tendency arises to react to the object by moving towards or away from it, and to record it as a reference for future orientation.

If, therefore, we do not break object-identification, (and by object-identification in its widest sense we mean identification with any finite content of consciousness whatever) we tend to respond mechanically to situations in a manner determined by the emotionally charged records of our previous experiences, even when they have perhaps merely one element in common with the present extant situation.

[28 To Break Object-identification We Must Do Four Things]

To break object-identification we must do four things. First we must see that the object-identified state is a false one, a state which falsely represents consciousness, the subject, as identical with its content, the object. Next we must make clear to ourselves that by allowing ourselves to act by inclination, we reduce our action level to that of Pavlov's dogs²⁴, the mechanical reflex level. Thirdly we must see that such mechanically determined responses are incompatible with freedom and human dignity. Finally we must withdraw our will from the experience records and from the pleasure-pain aspects of the content of consciousness, and turn it back upon itself.

This withdrawal of the will from the objects of consciousness in itself, the turning back to itself, from the object, of consciousness and will, is the act of resec. So important is this for human evolution and the attainment of freedom and the power to produce an adequate response in every conceivable situation, that if its full import were grasped, the whole effort of humanity would be directed towards its attainment.

Let us look more closely at the idea of consciousness turning back on itself. The Greeks, of course, had a word for it - the word

²⁴ Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) began studying reflexes when he saw that the dogs in his research centre drooled without the stimulus of the food itself. The dogs were responding to technician's lab coats. As every time the dogs were fed the technician who served the food was wearing a lab coat. Therefore, the dogs reacted whenever they saw a lab coat. Pavlov then trained the dogs to respond when he struck a bell. If the bell was sounded with their meal, the dogs learnt to associate the sound of the bell with food. After a while, at the mere sound of the bell, or the sight of the lab coats and they dribbled.

epistrophe, a word surviving as a term in rhetoric for the repetition of the same word at the end of several sentences; as if we were to repeat the word "consciousness" at the end of every act of perception in order to return consciousness from the object to itself.

In the act of reflexive self-consciousness there is a re-statement of the fact that consciousness is consciousness, not only at the end of an act, but in each moment of consciousness. There is a continuous return or reflexive movement, a bending or turning back upon itself of consciousness during action, such that at no moment does consciousness fall into identification with its objects to the point of losing awareness of its own free essence. Not losing its self-awareness in object-identification, consciousness remains self-immersed in its own free essence.

[29 The Nature of the Self]

Let us examine the nature of the self.

Ordinarily when a person says, "my self", he is not at all clear to what he refers. He tends to think he means by "self" a being, formed in a certain way, and possessing more or less well-defined and recognisable physical and mental characteristics and behaviour patterns.

But these characteristics and behaviour patterns are not consciousness, not sentience. They are some of the *contents* of consciousness, some of its objects.

The sense of individual separate self-existence, and the ego-sense, arise by identification with form. Body, which stands as the centre of such identification, is known by its form and mass inertic resistance, a form of motion.

For such identification originally to occur the form must, in being experienced, have been accompanied by some emotional change. This emotional content of the experience leads consciousness, prior to its gaining the resec state, into identification with it in the attempt to re-experience it if pleasurable, or to note it for future avoidance, if painful. Once identification of consciousness with a given body or motion complex centre of emotional change has occurred, identification tends by inertia to continue and maintain itself.

Let us look at the behaviour of consciousness in the case of a man experiencing a sudden great pain to the point of loss of consciousness. Is the loss of consciousness of the body on to the body Mechanistic thinkers might say that loss of consciousness is a loss by the body or

brain of its consciousness arising mechanically by over stimulation of the nervous system or brain.

We say rather, the over-stimulation of the body makes it unprofitable for a pleasure-orientate consciousness to remain in a state of identification with the body. This explanation covers more facts than the mechanistic one, including the behaviour of martyrs at the stake, for although their body is over-stimulated, yet because they are not pleasure orientated they do not lose consciousness, but continue to praise the principle of free consciousness which they worship as God.

[30 What is the Self]

If we think carefully about the nature of the self, we realise that by "self" we do not necessarily mean a physical or other body. Grenfell of Labrador's²⁵ story of the man who lost both legs and arms yet could still say he was he, most aptly provides an illustration of the non-identity of the self and the body.

Today, with the surgeon's art so beautifully developed, we are not surprised to hear that a man has had some organ of his body removed and replaced with a plastic one.

We can easily conceive an operation or series of operations in which a man's organs are one by one removed and replaced by artificial ones. At each stage of the operation-series, the patient would express his satisfaction with the change of organ. Finally, like the axe fitted with a new blade and a new handle, nothing would remain of the original body. Yet the same consciousness would still be operative through it. The self of man is not the body of man.

What, then, is the Self? Here we use a capital letter to show that the Self to which we refer is not the object-body self careless thinkers think they refer to when they use the word "self". The real Self is not a finite body. It is pure free-will consciousness. The implications of this in every field, physical, psychological and spiritual are tremendous.

The careful thinker penetrating into his being to discover to what he refers when he uses the words "I myself" knows that the Self is a free-will consciousness, the ground and possibility and actuality of all being, yet itself transcendent of being. (The word

²⁵ Wilfred Thomason Grenfell, known to people on both sides of the Atlantic as "Dr Grenfell or 'Grenfell of Labrador', was born on 28 February 1865, at Mostyn House School, Park Gate by Chester, England. He began medical services to the icebound coasts of Labrador. He died in 1940.

"being" may properly be used only of what is circumscribed, and consciousness as such is not circumscribed, and therefore not properly called a being.)

Consciousness and will are not two factually separable entities. They are two aspects or properties of the Absolute. Consciousness is that aspect of the Absolute in which objects appear. Will is that aspect of the Absolute which initiates change within consciousness or its objects.

[31 Consciousness, Sub-consciousness and Un-consciousness]

From modern psychological theories the word "consciousness" has derived a rather restricted meaning. There it is opposed to sub-consciousness or to un-consciousness. We may remove some of these associations by using a less common word, the word "sentience". This word implies feeling sensitivity and sense. It is from the Latin "sentire" *to feel, to know*.

We will use the word sentience to signify that kind of awareness to which we do not ordinarily attribute verbal formulations. Sentience is feeling awareness considered apart from any verbalization process. We may use the word "consciousness" when awareness is more closely linked to verbal forms. The more clearly anything is verbally expressed, the more conscious it tends to become. Consciousness analyses and synthesises its content.

What modern psychology tends to say about the sub-conscious and un-conscious we will formulate differently. We will say that sub-consciousness and un-consciousness are levels of the Self in which verbalisation is either minimal or non-existent for the individual.

There is no absolutely non-sentient level of being. The Absolute source of all beings, the ultimate reality, is itself eternal and infinite sentient motion. Whatever it produces or creates, it does so within and of itself as its functions. Nothing, therefore, exists but in and of the infinite eternal sentient motion, which considered as cause is called power.

The sub-conscious and the un-conscious are therefore not to be thought of as non-sentient, but only as not closely linked to verbal forms, not levels of analysis and synthesis of the contents of the field of sentience.

Verbalisation of experience helps to sharpen and clarify and organise the content of consciousness.

Prior to adequate verbalisation or logical definition the field of sentient motion must be conceived of as in a state of chaotic flux; yet

this flux at its own level, viewed as absolute motion, must contain the forms of the infinite wisdom.

[32 Logos as Formal Rationalising Motion]

In John's Gospel we read, "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."²⁶

The Greek word here used for "word" is Logos. Logos means not just word, but rational word, the ratio of cosmic order.

The Logos of St. John's Gospel is the formal rationalising motion of the eternal infinite sentient power of the Absolute.

Creation is formulation. Formulation is clarification. Clarification is illumination. The Logos is "The Light that lights every man that comes into the world." Which means that every man's consciousness contains the principle of logic.

Let us return to the idea of *epistrophe*. It means a turning back, a return to oneself. It implies a departure from oneself to an object, and the return of oneself to oneself. It implies the gaining or re-gaining of a lost knowledge of oneself, the regaining of self-determination.

The Self referred to is not a body. It is sentient power itself. The Self in the act of reflexion returns to itself. Consciousness, which is not a body, but a knower of the body, returns from the body to itself and thus rescues itself from identification with its objects.

[33 The Fall]

The Fall of Adam, the Fall in myths generally, refers to the fall into identification with the object world of finite things under the influence of natural stimuli, symbolised by the serpent, which, significantly, acts first through the female side of man's nature, that is, the feeling and body-identified side.

This fall into identification was the beginning of death, for identification with the finite is the death of one's free will and consciousness by its involvement in the phantasy of separativity, which is disintegration or mortality.

The fall into identification with the object world places man under the law governing that world. Only the rescued man can

²⁶ John 1 v1

truthfully say with Paul, "We are of the law but not under the law."²⁷ We are of the law insofar as we use finite reference points. We are not under the law insofar as we remain free from identification with such points.

The resec man reverses the Fall. He releases himself from object-identification. He turns back from the object to the real Self. He sloughs from himself the pall which fell on him at the Fall and returns to his naked consciousness, beyond all finiting conditions and body processes.

But when he returns to himself the world and its content still remains. The only change, the most miraculously freeing change, is that he is no longer identified with any particular part of it. He has sought the equilibration of power which is called heaven. He has found it, and with it all things have been added unto him.

The resec man sees the same world he saw before, the same world other men see. But he sees it not in the same way. He knows what Blake meant when he said, "The fool sees not the same tree the wise man sees."²⁸ He sees the myriad-branched tree Yggdrasil²⁹, but not as other men see it. For he does not fall into identification with any particular branch of it. He sees this tree in the nervous system of the body he uses as a reference centre, as he sees it in the driving radiating forces of macrocosmos.

The resec man sees the world *wholly* without falling into identification with any particular part of it. He is not identified with it, not inclined towards it, not enslaved by it. He can use it, as the Taoist uses an empty vessel to put things in. He can create within it the catalytic creativity of his awareness, his sentience, his consciousness.

The identified man, on the other hand, in the act of identification goes under the law which governs the object with which he identifies.

If consciousness identifies with a material body, it goes under the law governing material bodies. So with whatever else it identifies. If consciousness identifies with serial ideational processes, it goes under the formal and logical laws governing those processes. If consciousness identifies with emotional states, it goes under the law governing emotional states. Whatever finite things or processes it

²⁷ Romans 6 v14 seems to be the closest reference to this saying -

'For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.'

²⁸ This is the 8th of the 'Proverbs of Hell' from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-3) by William Blake.

²⁹ *Yggdrasil* the 'World tree', a gigantic ash thought to connect all the worlds of Norse mythology. The trunk is the world-axis piercing through the center of Middle Earth or *midgard* and its roots reach down into the three hells.

identifies with, consciousness goes under the law governing those finites.

Only consciousness identified with itself, reflexive self-consciousness, is free from the law of mechanical action-reaction processes governing all finites.

[34 Reflexion]

The word "reflexion", meaning *a binding back*, or return to Self, is used anatomically and physiologically of a nervous impulse in a reflex arc. Psychologically and philosophically it refers to the mental process of returning to oneself in meditation or contemplation.

The word "flex", from Latin "flexum, from "flectare" *to bend*, is related to the word "falx" or "falx", *a sickle*. The falcon, so-called from its sickle-shaped beak, was sacred to the resec priest-kings of the ancient world. The falcon, the hawk, the eagle are symbols of the high-flying consciousness which returns to itself as the falcon flies into the eye of the sun, that "medicinal eye"³⁰ which brings order to the planets and establishes a hierarchy of powers on earth^{vi}.

The act of self-reflexion, the motion of pure sentience turning back on itself, releases consciousness from identification with its objects and finite processes and events, and restores it to its original freedom.

Epistrophein, the self-relation of the reflexive self-consciousness, is the form of the highest order of being, and sees beyond being into the free spirit of the Absolute.

The material image of this return was seen by the ancients in the orbits and revolutions of the planets. Reflexive self-consciousness returns to its original as the planets return upon their orbits. This is the ground of the Eternal Recurrence which fascinated Nietzsche as it had spell-bound the imagination of the ancients.

But resec does not return, to use a figure of speech, in the same plane with the planets. Its cycle is at right angles to the material plane. It descends into identification with matter in order to experience the finiting processes of that level, and then returns to itself in pure transcendental sentience, awareness and consciousness.

³⁰ Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida* Act I sc iii

[35 Initiative as Freedom]

The motion of the Absolute produces within itself the modulations which its sentience experiences as phenomena. Sentient power creates an objective world within itself. It may identify itself with its objectifying motion-complexes, and thus become inertically carried by the necessary mechanical mode of action of their being. In which case we say it is "under the law". Or it can retain its self-awareness whilst it is creating, and thus retain its freedom and creative initiative, in which case we say it is "of the law, but not under the law."

This retention of freedom and creative initiative is the mark of the resec man, the man who is able to bend back his consciousness upon itself, release himself from object-identification, and thus retain his freedom, even in the middle of the most intense creative activity.

Nothing truly exists in its fullness which is not turned back upon itself. A material body does not exist unless its constituting forces continually turn back upon themselves and thus avoid dissipation in space. Consciousness does not truly exist in its fullness until it turns back upon itself in the reflexive act of self-recognition. The consciousness which identifies with its object and becomes fixated upon it, is as if it did not exist for itself. We see this in its extreme form in certain mental disorders in which the patient is so identified with emotionally charged experience-records that he cannot release himself from the identification, and is there determined by his experience-records. Such a person may be held in a fixated state as long as the emotional charge on the records is not removed.

A material body, a finite thing, is constituted of motions of sentient power which, insofar as the body continues to exist, rotate within the zone marked by that body.

Insofar as the motions constituting a body are totally closed in upon themselves, the sentience aspect of those motions is held in a state of identification with that body. This state of the total identification of sentience with a closed system of motions is referred to in various ways. The ancients, who knew the value of resec, called the state of total identification with a closed system "Hell". The same state is called "Death", for in it one is dead to the larger possibilities of sentient power. To be "dead in one's sins"³¹ simply means to be so identified with the object of one's consciousness that one is unaware of the infinity of other possible objects or the meaning of freedom.

³¹ To be 'dead in ones sins' refers to the belief in the need to confess ones sins to a priest or church elder before death to receive release from them or 'absolution' which allows for salvation.

Insofar as the motions constituting a material body cannot break out from themselves, the body cannot leave itself. Not being able to leave itself, it cannot return to itself. Thus a body cannot as such become reflexively self-conscious. Return to self-consciousness is possible only for a non-body, for consciousness itself, for sentient power. The fact of reflexive self-consciousness proves the non-materiality of the reflexive Self.

[36 Object Awareness without Self-Awareness]

Reflexive self-consciousness is the highest possible form of awareness. This we may prove by showing that consciousness of an object without consciousness of the Self which knows the object, is valueless. There is no value for the self in object-awareness without self-awareness. Object awareness without self-awareness is identification to the point of loss of self, and is equivalent to *being* the object with which one is identified, a catatonic state of object-fixation which reduces the self functionally to the level of a not-self.

All purely mental disorders arise from identification with particular emotionally-charged contents of consciousness. The full return of consciousness to itself in the act of reflexion is the return of health to that consciousness.

[37 Consciousness as a Partless Continuum]

Disintegration can happen only to compounds. It can therefore happen to any motion-complex, to material or physical bodies, to ideas, to body or idea-orientated feelings and emotions.

Disintegration cannot happen to sentience as such, for sentience is not itself a compound. It is a pure continuum³², an aspect of the Absolute, the field in which objects are presented.

A pure continuum has no parts and therefore cannot fall apart, cannot disintegrate. The consciousness which identifies with the continuum of sentience thus escapes disintegration and death. Thus the release of consciousness from object identification and its return to itself, is the rising of consciousness above the level at which death or disintegration operate. This is the gaining of immortality.

Objective existence is the product of the motion of the absolute sentient continuum of power. By its modes of motion the continuum produces the forms of actuality we know as the world.

³² Wyld defines a continuum as - 'A whole the structure of whose parts is continuous and not atomic' p234.

Motions of translation intersect, and at their points of intersection produce rotations which constitute the primary points which aggregate together to produce so-called material bodies.

Although the motion of the continuum is necessarily itself continuous, yet it produces within itself by its own translation rotational motions which give rise to the phenomenal world of apparently separate bodies. Bodies, as motion-complexes of the continuum, cannot actually be separate from each other in any ultimate sense. Every body, as a function of the continuum, is influenced by the motions of the continuum and thus of all other bodies. No bodies are completely isolated or insulated from other bodies. All bodies reciprocally interact within the continuum which is the plastic power substance of their being.

[38 Infinite Continuum as Godhead]

In the infinite continuum of sentient power, the Godhead of the theologians, all beings "live, move and have their being."³³³⁴³⁵ The reality of beings is constituted by the functions of this continuum. To identify with this continuum as pure sentience is to return to the Supreme Self. The return of absolute sentience to itself is the return of God to God. The return of the relative awareness of man to the infinite sentience is the return of man to God.

The consciousness in man is the sentience of the continuum in the zone marked by the constituent motions of man's being. This sentience is "the light that lights every man that comes into the world", and is man's life force, pure sentient power, consciousness and initiative, God in man, the root of what dignity man may possess, and the guarantee of his ultimate return to the Self of selves.

Resec confers upon man the power to be himself; the power to fulfill the imperative, "Become what thou art!" the power to see Time as a function of Eternity, and to act in Time from the essence and form of Eternity.

[39 How to Gain and Retain Reflexive Self-Consciousness]

How are we to gain and retain reflexive self-consciousness? It can be gained only in an act of will in which the will of the self returns to itself.

³³ Acts 17 v 27

³⁴ John 1 v 9

³⁵ A frequently used phrase that sounds like a quote but as yet I have not traced it.

Ordinarily when one looks at an external object or at its internal correspondent in the mind, one tends, if there is an emotional charge upon it, to *fall* into identification with it.

To a certain degree, identification with an object must occur if one is to become aware of its special character and significance. The psyche must assume the form of the object in the act of perceiving it. Precisely because of this fact is it necessary to free oneself again from the object in the resec act. For if one does not return from the object to the self one remains locked in the object and falls under the law governing the object.

For illustration of this we may look at a man identified with a given functional concept. A soldier is a man identified with such a concept.

This concept includes subsidiary concepts, such as obedience to superiors, freedom from ethical considerations when acting under orders ("Yours not to reason why³⁶. Yours but to do and die"^{vii}), and so on.

Thus when a man is identified with the soldier concept he goes under the law governing beings identified with that concept. He therefore responds to orders from those conceptualised as his superiors, and performs actions which, as a human being not identified with the soldier concept, he would be ethically unable to do.

So likewise with men identified with concepts in other fields of action; the priest, the king, the politician, the business man, and so on. Some concepts have universal application, some have their function only in special fields of action, national, social, institutional, or individual.

[40 Concepts and Percepts with Emotional Charges]

A concept is an idea or general notion arising from a group of percepts possessing some common factor. A percept may be defined as a simple act of perception, the presentation of a stimulus, a single act of a sense organ, its correspondent brain centre, and the psyche conjoined with it. A concept is a group of perceptual elements held together by some similar form.

³⁶ From *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, by Alfred Lord Tennyson 1864. The poem was written as a response to the report during the Crimean War of the unquestioning bravery of a small group of cavalry ordered, apparently a 'blunder' to attack a much larger entrenched enemy position. See endnote for full poem.

Just as a percept may possess an emotional charge which inclines the psyche to conjoin with it or not (for a percept is a definite amount of characterised energy having a degree of assimilability for a given organism), so a concept may possess an emotional charge which similarly tends to orientate the psyche towards or away from it.

Concepts, then, as complex formed energy-packets possessing emotional charges, tend to condition the behaviour of the being identified with them.

It becomes clear that if we are to retain our freedom, we must gain the power to release ourselves from identification with conceptual forms. This power is what we exercise in the act of reflexive self-consciousness, the return of the Self to the Self.

To gain resec a certain exercise must be practiced, in principle continuously, in early practice probably intermittently. The exercise itself is simple. But that is not to say that it is, for man in his usual orientation, easy. The battle to overcome the inertia of man's established direction, his general ego-centred attitude, will not be easily fought. Nor should it be. The prize is too high to be gained easily.

[41 The Exercise]

Here is the exercise. When one is looking at something, or considering an idea or experience, a feeling or emotion, or performing any action, one must say to oneself, *"It is the Self which is consciousness itself which is looking at this thing (or considering this idea, etc). This Self I am. I return to the Self."*

On saying, "It is the Self which is consciousness itself", one must make oneself aware that the Self is consciousness itself, awareness, sentience.

When saying, "looking at this thing", one must make oneself aware of a directional flow of attention from the consciousness to the thing.

On saying, "This Self I am. I return to the Self", one must focus oneself again on the consciousness and again become aware of a directional flow of attention, but now from the thing back to the consciousness-self.

This back-flow of consciousness to the Self is what we mean by reflexive self-consciousness. It is the key to man's freedom.

[42 The Practice]

To practice resec is to change the whole quality of one's perception and conception of the world. It is to rescue oneself from identification with the object-world and thus from slavery to the law governing that world. We cannot get lost in things and events of the world or in ideas or emotional states if we are resec. And when we are not lost we have found ourselves, and the Self of all selves.

The Self of all selves is the Godhead of the theologians, the light and life of all selves, the Saviour of the world from the world. It is the Parabrahman of the Hindus, the Absolute of the philosophers, the centre of every enlightened being.

Without resec one is identified with the content of consciousness, with the things of the world, with ideas of the mind, with the emotional states of the psyche. One is like a man in a dream swayed and submerged in a sea of emotions and half-formed images of the world of phantasy.

When we identify with something, some idea, or some psychic state, our consciousness, which is the individuated expression of the sentient continuum of the Absolute, assumes the form of that thing, or idea, or state. Assuming the form of a thing, the consciousness becomes subject for the period of the assumption to the law governing that thing.

To break free from the law which governs the object, one must break identification of consciousness with the object and return to the Self which sees it.

One may identify with the object, with the subject, or with both simultaneously. When one identifies only with the object one goes under the law governing the object, one apparently becomes the object, acts and reacts like the object. One is enslaved by the object.

When one identifies with the subject only, the object disappears and only the subject remains. The Self is there with no otherness, sentience is there, yet as if it were only a potential.

When one identifies simultaneously with both subject and object, both the Self and its objects exist. Consciousness and its objects appear then as two poles of the Absolute.

But before one can consciously hold oneself in this polarised state of the Absolute, one must return from the object to oneself, from oneself to the Self.

There is a cyclic process of involution and evolution of sentience. Prior to creation, the Infinite Eternal Absolute Sentient Motion or

Power is as if it were a mere potentiality (yet only from the point of view of a finite mind trying to perceive it). For itself it is a pure self-actuating motion "without shadow of turning", pure translation of spirit, infinite and eternal.

But this pure motion, Self-aware Absolute Sentient Power, by its own essentiality produces within itself (as the motion of the sea produces waves and intersections of the waves' vortices) the motion modes which constitute the forms we use as reference points for consciousness and which we call bodies.

Sentience, in the place of any given motion mode, tends to fall into identification with it. This is the process of involution of consciousness into the world of finite bodies.

A finite body is a motion-complex of the Absolute, sufficiently integrated and compacted to present an appearance to consciousness of contoured substantiality. Actually it is a modality of the infinite motion of the Absolute.

Once consciousness has fallen at any given locus into identification with the motion-complex or body in that locus, it has fallen under the law governing such a motion-complex. It is now conditioned by the motion characteristic of that complex, and reacts to other motions (which now act as stimuli) in a manner determined by its characteristic form. It can now assimilate other motions only insofar as that motion-complex can do so.

Consciousness is then bound to that motion-complex and is affected as we see it in the things around us. In the mineral world it evidences itself only in offering resistance to imposed forces. In the vegetable world it expresses itself in growth processes. In the animal world it expresses itself in instinct and desire-impelled action. In man it expresses itself in rational thought. In the fully developed human being it expresses itself in reason.

From the moment of its first fall into object identification, consciousness experiences, because the object is finited or limited, a sense of loss of power. This sense of power-loss is the negative aspect of the awareness of the original level from which consciousness fell, presented together with its actual level. In its positive aspect it is the seed of dissatisfaction, called "divine" dissatisfaction because it impels beings to strive to transcend their actual finite being-level and return to their own proper level in the Absolute.

[43 Divine Dissatisfaction]

The divine dissatisfaction is that which drives us from the lower levels of being, abstracts our consciousness from object identification, conducts the evolutionary process of our consciousness, and leads us to resec, the completion of the involution-evolution cycle of our being.

Consciousness, which is sentient power, of itself free, binds itself in the involutory process to forms of motion within and of itself. The sense of loss of power, the frustration of the will which arises in the finite objectified state, generates in its negative phase depression and melancholy. In its positive phase it generates the urge to escape the limitations of the body with which identification has taken place. This urge to escape expresses itself in the evolutionary process by the acquisition of ever more complex action capacities, by means of which consciousness seeks to control its content.

From the Absolute through the relative back to the Absolute; from the subject through the object back to the subject; from consciousness to its content and back again. This is the involutory revolutionary cycle of the Self of the Absolute, and of man.

The Supreme Self, the original sentient power of the Absolute, consciousness itself, is freed from its objects in the moment it reflexes on itself. Being free from its object, it is free from the law governing those objects. Being free from the law, all things are possible to it. Here one says, "I can do all things through Christ," through the Logos God who has completed the cycle of involution--evolution, who was crucified in matter by identification, who rose from the dead state of the object-identified, who ascended again in the reflexive act of his own consciousness to his source in the Father of all beings, where he "sits at the right hand of power".³⁷

[44 Self Rule or Other Rule]

When the Self reflects on itself only and identifies with nothing else, it is free from everything but itself. No laws of finite things bind it or constrain it to respond to their being. It is itself only, self-determined, free.

To gain the capacity to reflex on oneself at will is to release oneself from bondage to the laws which govern the things of this world. All real freedom stands in this capacity. Without resec,

³⁷ Eugene is in this paragraph paraphrasing a verse of the Nicean Creed, for a full version see endnotes.

freedom is an illusion, and action is merely re-action to stimuli from the world of things, the world of partials, the un-whole world of separativity and illusory processes.

Either one is a slave or not. Either one is able to give orders to oneself or not. Not to be able to give orders to oneself and to be able to obey them, is to be at the mercy of others. Happy and fortunate is he who, being unable to give himself orders, and to obey them, is given the orders of truth and shown how to obey them by one who is merciful. As was Jesus; and Buddha and Mahavira and the Jina and Lao Tse and Zarathustra and Socrates and others who have shown the way back to the origin of all beings.

In his relation with other beings in the time process, either a man will rule himself or be ruled by others. Self-rule or other rule. There is no alternative, no escape in this matter from the necessity of choice.

Is it better to rule oneself, or to be ruled by others? To be ruled by others *may* be good, if those who rule know how to and have the true welfare of the ruled at heart.

Jesus talked of good shepherds and bad shepherds. How many sheep have the discrimination to know which shepherds are keeping sheep for the sake of sheep, which for the sake of their wool and which for the sake of their flesh?^{viii}

There are shepherds who keep sheep for their wool, and the wool is money to buy more sheep for more wool for more money for more sheep for more wool, to infinity.

Unless we can guarantee the good faith and true intent and capability of the shepherds, we had better learn to shepherd ourselves. Self-government is the only really safe government. And self-government is to be secured only by resec.

Resec and resec only can save us from the intents and purposes of other beings.

Every man who in history has been truly called great has had reflexive self-consciousness. Resec alone has conferred or ever will confer true greatness on the great.

The truly great man is he who can break through the walls of mass-inertia which bind the world into ever-identical recurring patterns of action.

The time-play of finite things which binds the identified man and blinds him to the true light of his own ultimate self must be

seen for what it is. Then man may break its tyranny and return to his free Self.

[45 Mythos, Logos and Sense Data]

Samson³⁸, when he saw this truth with the eye of his soul, which the enemy had *not* put out at Gaza, pulled down the temple, the temple which symbolises the time-play which identification has built, and thus returned at last to himself and to his God, the Self of selves from which he will not again go forth to lose himself and find himself bound at the mill with slaves.

Mythos tells in parables to the heart what Logos presents in logic to the intellect, and the senses give partially and serially to the lower mind.

The resec man sees Mythos, Logos and sense data as the three corners of a triangle having its being in the ultimate reality of the infinite eternal sentient motion of the Absolute. To gain resec is to gain the mastery of this triangle and establish one's being in eternity, from which one will "go no more out"³⁹.

The object-identified man is subject to the law of serial-presentation in the Time-process. His action is re-action to a stimulus; and always he is in danger of reacting inadequately, from lack of sufficient data; or too late, from lack of readiness; or too grossly, from the mass-inertia of the body with which he is identified.

The resec man sees simultaneously the events which the object-identified man sees serially. The resec man stands at the causal level of being. Because he sees wholly and not partially, his response is adequate. Because he sees simultaneously whatever is applicable to a given situation, his response is immediate. Solomon might have said, "With all your getting, get reflexive self-consciousness"⁴⁰.

The ultimate reality of the Absolute is infinite eternal sentient motion. This motion, although itself pure infinite translation, produces by the mode of its self-relation, the rotatory circumscribing motions which constitute the finite things of the world, the objects of perception, the ideas of the mind, the flux of the emotions.

[46 Motion Complexes as Bodies]

³⁸ Judges ch13 - 16

³⁹ Revelation 3 v 12

⁴⁰ Proverbs 4 v 7 – Eugene is here replacing the 'get understanding' of the original with 'get reflexive self-consciousness' implying that it is the conscious continuum itself that *stands under* all and everything.

Because sentience is infinite it is extended throughout all space. Whatever motions occur in space are experienced by sentience as the content of its consciousness. Wherever a given motion complex of a rotatory nature is sufficiently integrated and intense to serve as a relatively permanent reference point, sentience interprets this motion-complex as a body or substantial thing.

Wherever the motion-constituents of a given body are such as to give rise to the experience of some degree of pleasure, there is a tendency for sentience to identify itself with that body and strive to keep it in being.

Wherever the motion-complexes of a given body are such as to give rise to pain or unpleasant emotions, sentience at that point strives to inhibit those motions. But in the place of such inhibited motions fear is experienced lest they should break free from the inhibiting forces imposed upon them. Fear is the trembling arising from the conflict of the inhibiting forces and the inhibited motion-complexes, causing pain and unpleasant emotions. The unpleasantness of this fear leads sentience to try to break identification with the zones in which it is experienced. Such zones are walled in or encapsulated and constitute the contents of the so-called sub-conscious.

[47 Heaven and Hell]

The totality of such zones of painful and unpleasant motion-complexes constitutes for the sentience trapped in it, Hell. The totality of the motion-complexes which give rise to the experience of pleasure is interpreted by the sentience identified with it as Heaven

The Heaven of the Absolute, however, is the equilibration of all the motions of infinity.

The Hermetic doctrine says, "As above, so below, as within, so without."⁴¹ With the difference that Infinity has infinite assimilation-capacity and response-ability, and the finite has only finite capacity and ability. Hence the necessity of gaining release from identification with the finite and returning to the Self in the Infinite.

⁴¹The *Hermetica* (or *Corpus Hermeticum*), were a collection of Greek and Latin treatises and dialogues written in the first or second centuries A.D. and probably containing ideas much older, it is suggested as old as ancient Egyptian. The legendary author of these works is Hermes Trismegistus 'Thrice-Greatest Hermes' (whom Eugene used to translate as 'Thrice-twisted Hermes'). Hermeticism denotes a broad tradition of thought that grew out of the writings and was expanded and developed through various other traditions, Kabbalism, and the mysticism of Eckhart and Cusa — to name just a few examples — became intertwined with the Hermetic doctrines and to some writers The Hermetic Tradition is synonymous with Alchemy.

At the level of the sentience in object-identified man the motion-complex serving as his body or centre of reference has certain reaction and assimilation capacities of a finite order.

If the motion-complex constituting his reference centre or body receives stimuli resulting in pleasure, the sentience identified with that motion-complex, and which he refers to as his own consciousness, tends to identify with such pleasure and the stimuli producing it.

If the motion-complex receives stimuli resulting in pain or unpleasant emotion, his consciousness tends to try to reject or inhibit such stimuli and resultants.

Thus the sentience identified with any given motion-complex as a centre of reference, whether in man or in any other being, from the particular to the universal, tends to act in similar ways in similar situations, and thus to involve itself in recurrent behaviour patterns - the Law of the Persistence of Error.

The body-identified sentience in a man, therefore, as a being of finite reaction and assimilation, tends to try to reject or inhibit stimuli productive of pain or unpleasant emotion, and to identify with and preserve in being those stimuli resulting in pleasure.

So a man has his individual Hell and Heaven within himself. Hell is constituted by motions of inhibited stimuli and their pain and unpleasant emotion resultants; Heaven by the motions of stimuli and their resultants which are experienced as pleasure.

As long as the "Hell" motions in a man are inhibited and vibrate within him, he lives with a background of fear that they might break out and invade consciousness. In fear of this possibility he strives to keep his consciousness away from them, and place it in those motion-complexes which give rise to pleasure.

[48 Man as a Finite System]

But man as a finite system has only finite energies and capacities. He tends like all finite systems to lose energy to his surroundings. When his energies drop below a certain level he has not sufficient to continue the inhibiting process which has kept his "Hell" motions in subjection. At such times they tend to break out of bondage and invade his consciousness. Here is the point of his greatest need for the power to break association with the content of consciousness. But it is also the time when he is least able to do it.

It is not a good thing to allow oneself to fall into bondage. It is a worse thing if, having fallen into it, no attempt is made in the days of one's strength to get out of it. It is the worst thing if, having fallen into bondage, and having made no attempt in the days of one's strength to get out, one finds oneself grown old and too weak to try. Then one stands in danger of taking one's private Hell with one into the next world.

Reflexive self-consciousness confers freedom from object-identification, both with the pains of private hells, and with the illusory pleasures of temporary heavens.

The real heaven, the heaven of the Absolute and the resec man, consists in the equilibration of all powers and all motions. In this heaven there is no fear that an inhibited hell will break forth again, for all things have been assimilated, and man has returned to the true Self in freedom and power.

To become reflexively self-conscious is to become freed from the tyranny of material reactivity. It is to rise above the level of conditioned reflexes, above the level of emotional blockages in repressed complexes. It is to become liberated from the mechanics of serial ideation processes. It is to become truly oneself and at one in intent and essence with the Self of all selves.

And in becoming oneself, and one in intent and essence with the Self of all selves, one does not pass into a characterless misunderstood Nirvana of non-individuated bliss. One becomes what one eternally *is*, a unique centre in and of the absolute sentient power. In the words of Jesus, "Every man goes into his own place, and his works follow him."

His cycle of experience completed, the prodigal son who drove forth from his Father's house has returned, and sits with his Father at the right hand of power.

End

49 Endnotes

ⁱ Eugene makes a few references to the parable here it is in full.

The parable of the 'Prodigal' or Lost Son *Luke 15 v11-32*

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11. And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to [his] father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth [to me]. And he divided unto them [his] living.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.
14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.
15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.
16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.
17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!
18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,
19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.
20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.
21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.
22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put [it] on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on [his] feet:
23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill [it]; and let us eat, and be merry:
24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.
25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.
26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.
27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.
28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.
29 And he answering said to [his] father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:
30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.
31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.
32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

ⁱⁱ Doctor Johnson famously refuted Bishop Berkeley's contention that all things could exist and persist in the mind of God, as a divine thought, by kicking a large stone forcefully and thus showing the resistance of material objects and their apparent resistance compared to the transitory nature and rapid response of thoughts. The obtuseness of Johnson referred to here is in that if Berkeley's contention is rightly considered thoroughly, all such experiences are ultimately observed and therefore exist only in a consciousness somewhere and hence can be considered to be as much made of mind stuff as matter.

Boswell Johnsons biographer records the incident in *The Life of Samuel Johnson*;

"After we came out of the church, we stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkeley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in the universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impossible to refute it. I never shall forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, "I refute it thus."

ⁱⁱⁱ Existential means 'involved with, connecting with existence' (H.C.Wyld *Universal Dictionary of the English Language* p389) but the word also has evocative links to the existential philosophers. The first philosophers now considered existentialist although prior to the actual movement Nietzsche and Kierkegaard were highly thought of by Eugene. Both wrote on the need for people to create their own fundamental values, to generate their own point of reference in life to measure themselves against. Both considered that human nature and human identity vary depending on what values and beliefs humans hold. Objective truths (for example mathematical truths) are important, but detached or observational forms of thought

can never really contain human experience. Human beings can create their own values and formulate the very terms under which they measure their lives.

Kierkegaard's 'knight of faith' and Nietzsche's 'superman' (ubermensch) are examples of those who define the nature of their own existence and that human nature and identity are necessarily constituted by the free decisions and choices that people make.

^{iv} This quote seems to draw from Vivekananda writing on the 'Yogas'. I say seems as I have found nothing closer. It is closely relevant so I have included the whole passage to give the context (my underline).

'A huge locomotive rushes on down the tracks, and a small worm that has been creeping upon one of the rails saves its life by crawling out of the path of the locomotive. Yet this little worm, so insignificant that it can be crushed in a moment, is a living something, while the locomotive, so huge, so immense, is only an engine, a machine. You see, the one has life and the other is only dead matter, and all its power and strength and speed are only those of a dead machine, a mechanical contrivance. The poor little worm which moves upon the rail and which the least touch of the engine would surely deprive of its life is a majestic being compared to that huge locomotive. It is a small part of the Infinite and therefore it is greater than the powerful engine. Why should that be so? How do we know the living from the dead? The machine mechanically performs all the movements its maker made it to perform; its movements are not those of life. How can we make the distinction between the living and the dead, then? In the living there is freedom, there is intelligence; in the dead all is bound and no freedom is possible, because there is no intelligence. This freedom that distinguishes us from mere machines is what we are all striving for. To be more free is the goal of all our efforts; for only in perfect freedom can there be perfection. This effort to attain freedom underlies all forms of worship, whether we know it or not.'

Vivekananda The Yogas and Other works. Ed Swami Nikhilananda (New York 1953) p728

^v The only source I can find for this quote is from Paul Carus' *Gospel of Buddha* (1894 p 20). This was a book compiled from Buddhist scriptures but designed by Carus as a teaching aid (my underline).

'Blessed is he who has understood the Dharma. Blessed is he who does no harm to his fellow-beings. Blessed is he who overcomes wrong and is free from passion. To the highest bliss has he attained who has conquered all selfishness and vanity. He has become the Buddha, the Perfect One.'

^{vi} The 'medicinal eye' is from Shakespeare's Ulysses giving his rousing 'Degree' speech, a favourite of both Eugene and David Mahlowe;

The heavens themselves, the planets and this centre
Observe degree, priority and place,
Insistence, course, proportion, season, form,
Office and custom, in all line of order;
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol
In noble eminence enthroned and sphered
Amidst the other; whose medicinal eye
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,
And posts, like the commandment of a king,
Sans cheque to good and bad: but when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues and what portents! what mutiny!
What raging of the sea! shaking of earth!
Commotion in the winds! frights, changes, horrors,
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixure!

^{vii} The Charge of the Light Brigade.

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Some one had blundered:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of Hell
 Rode the six hundred.
Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while
 All the world wondered:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke;
 Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not,
 Not the six hundred.
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.
When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
 All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred!

^{viii} This feels like a very apt reference to Gurdjieff's parable of the *Magician and his flock*;

There is an Eastern tale that speaks about a very rich magician who had a great many sheep.

But at the same time this magician was very mean. He did not want to hire shepherds, nor did he want to erect a fence about the pasture where the sheep were grazing. The sheep consequently often wandered into the forest, fell into ravines and so on, and above all, they

ran away, for they knew that the magician wanted their flesh and their skins, and this they did not like.

At last the magician found a remedy.

He hypnotized his sheep and suggested to them, first of all, that they were immortal and that no harm was being done to them when they were skinned; that on the contrary, it would be very good for them and even pleasant; secondly he suggested that the magician was a good master who loved his flock so much that he was ready to do anything in the world for them; and in the third place, he suggested that if anything at all were going to happen to them, it was not going to happen just then, at any rate not that day, and therefore they had no need to think about it.

Further, the magician suggested to his sheep that they were not sheep at all; to some of them he suggested that they were lions, to some that they were eagles, to some that they were men, to others that they were magicians.

After this all his cares and worries about the sheep came to an end. They never ran away again, but quietly awaited the time when the magician would require their flesh and skins. This tale is a very good illustration of man's position.