



by
HUSEIN
ROFÉ

REFLECTIONS
on
SUBUD



Pak Subuh

The Javanese sage, who transmits a Force that has changed men and women all over the World. The significance of his Subud movement is being more and more widely recognised by those who take a sincere interest in the value and meaning of life.

The noted linguist and Oriental scholar who brought Subud to the West gives a frank evaluation of the impact of the Subud Force on Western minds and examines Pak Subuh's concepts in relation to several religions and philosophies.



Husein Rofé



The Author

HUSEIN ROFÉ is already well-known to Subud readers as the man who first brought Subud to the West. In his first book, *The Path of Subud*, he documents with amazing clarity his unusual odyssey from Great Britain in his search for the spiritual values of the East. As a result of his quest, Mr. Rofé met Pak Subuh, the Indonesian spiritual leader who first received the Subud contact, and he came to understand that it was his mission to bring this new way of worship to the Western World.

Since then Subud has spread rapidly throughout the world, attended by many unusual portents and events. And now Mr. Rofé, after ten years of practising the Subud spiritual training, has written a second Subud book — quite different from his first one. One certain to be important and controversial. In *Reflections on Subud* Mr. Rofé takes a close look at the Subud groups that have been mushrooming around the world and poses some important questions about Subud. He offers clear-sighted descriptions and evaluations of such techniques as testing and psychic alignment. Some of the conversations Mr. Rofé had with Pak Subuh in Indonesia are reported as Pak Subuh is viewed within the context of his own culture. The central fact that is explored in depth is Pak Subuh's religious background, that is the Islamic tradition, and the cosmic mysteries that have been revealed to him.

Mr. Rofé writes a brilliant and inspired commentary on the seven spiritual stages of man, and with this as a background proceeds to a full interpretation of Pak Subuh's sacred poem *Susila Budhi Dharma*. As a special feature of *Reflections on Subud* Mr. Rofé has included letters he has received from Pak Subuh — letters which are relevant to much that has been documented here in *Reflections on Subud*.

This book is recommended as necessary reading not only for those who have recognized the significance of Subud, but also for everyone concerned with spiritual values in this modern world absorbed in the pursuit of material comfort and power. Not hesitant to cut sharply and deeply into controversial subjects, the author guides the reader to distinguish between Spirit and outer appearances in Subud. His commentary on Pak Subuh's *Susila Budhi Dharma* is the only one available so far, and will be welcomed as a key giving access to this treasury of wisdom.

Some Press Reviews of "The Path of Subud":

"His book is competent and colorful, lively and to the point. The hardships and vicissitudes of his nomadism, his sharp Semitic wit and his ability to converse directly with the peoples of a dozen nations brought Rofé the success he yearned for and deserved"

—*Tomorrow*—

"Mr. Rofé provides a sober and sensible account of his own travels and adventures and an authoritative description of the Subud movement, its origins and aims."

—*Observer*—

"This is a book everyone interested in the human spirit and its potentialities should read."

—*Two Worlds*—

REFLECTIONS ON SUBUD

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Printed by Dai Nippon Printing Co. Ltd., Tokyo.

REFLECTIONS
ON SUBUD

By

Husein Rofé

HUMANITY PUBLISHING COMPANY

To M. K. C.,
Who Has Given So Much.

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INTRODUCTION

Subud is the name of a spiritual brotherhood, still comparatively unknown in Indonesia, its original home. Since it is presumed that over-zealous proselytism may do more harm than good, as when psychic centres are awakened without adequate safeguards and preparation, information about the new movement was until recently only disseminated through individual contacts.

Consequently, many came to the movement through apparent coincidence; yet the remarkable life-story of the author hints that a deeper purpose may have chosen them from the first. In his first book on this subject, "The Path of Subud", (Rider, London, 1959) Husein Rofé gave some details of his adventurous travels in search of Truth, and indicated how his wanderings had led him to Java in 1950. It would seem that something more significant than apparent chance caused him to go there, and to arrive at a particularly well-timed moment. When shortly afterwards he met Muhammad Subuh, founder of the Subud brotherhood, he learnt of the sage's prediction many years before that there would one day come from the West a foreigner speaking several languages, who was destined to bear the torch back to the land from which he had come. The author does in fact speak more than a dozen tongues fluently.

The import of Subud was realised by Husein Rofé when, on initiation, he experienced a catharsis affecting mind and body. He later witnessed the awakening of the souls of several colleagues, and was enabled to transmit to others what he had himself received.

When Rofé left Djogjakarta for Djakarta in late 1951, his mission had begun; he was destined also to found the first groups in Sumatra before he finally departed from Indonesia in March 1954 to attend a religious congress in Japan. Through this decision, Subud came first to Japan, and, not long afterwards, to Hong Kong, where I was to meet the author.

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At that time, I was seeking out other persons in the colony who shared my interest in examining methods of provoking within man the kind of fundamental inner change hinted at in many scriptures and other religious writings. It was thus that I met Rofé, who struck me as a remarkable person.

He described to me a movement in Indonesia, members of which were guided to perform certain spiritual exercises by an inner Teacher, and told me of how in consequence the method adapted itself to the participant, and not vice versa. When I heard of this technique for the acquisition of inner purification, I felt the appeal of a message which stressed my own conviction that permanent changes in man can come about only from within; and that such a transformation requires the quiescence and not the interference of the ego. As to the possible benefits of such training, I could only take Rofé at his word, since there was no publicity, advance proof, or general acclaim to support his contentions.

A subsequent initiation (sometimes known as an 'opening' owing to the nature of Javanese terminology) gave substance to what Rofé had been maintaining. Our encounter in the British Crown Colony, though short, was to be the foundation of a permanent friendship. I soon left for Indonesia to visit Pak Subuh there in person before my return to Europe, and, a few months later, Rofé was also on his way again, sailing for Cyprus.

Upon reaching that island, he established another Subud centre, and then travelled to London. In that city he gathered around him another nucleus, consisting this time largely of persons who had devoted the greater part of their lives to the study of the harmonious development of man. These were initiated, and were sufficiently impressed to carry out Rofé's suggestion that they would find it greatly to their advantage to invite Pak Subuh himself to Britain. The eagerly awaited visit materialized in May 1957, and from that date, the history of Subud entered on a new phase, that of rapid expansion outside Indonesia. The first mass ingress included a few hundred persons who had previously followed the spiritual guidance of J.G. Bennett, one of the six original sponsors of Pak Subuh's trip. The

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public at large was however to learn of Subud only six months later through the considerable publicity accorded by the press to the "miraculous" cure of the Hungarian actress Eva Bartók, through Subud¹. Despite the inaccurate nature of the reporting, thousands became interested, and many later applied for admission to Subud.

To the general public, Subud must appear in the light of just one more new spiritual movement going through a fashionable phase before passing once again into obscurity. To its own adherents however, its significance, in relation to their own direct experience of the purifying action of the soul, is far too great to be evaluated in terms of public acclaim. Many of these members have come to Subud with a wide knowledge of other movements with similar pretensions; and these report from personal experience that the content of Subud differs radically from other disciplines known so far in the West. They believe that it offers greater all-round potentialities to large numbers of people conscious of the need for purification, as a path to a more complete existence.

To facilitate the world-wide spread of Subud, many assistants have been recently appointed by Pak Subuh to supervise the newly-formed groups and to initiate applicants. These supervisors cannot yet be considered to be fully mature spiritual guides; the number of those truly and completely guided by God is still too small to meet the growing demands from many lands. Greater maturity and stability is noticeable in Indonesia, and this is chiefly due to more gradual and balanced growth under more competent supervisors. The speed of contemporary expansion in Western lands is not only a considerable burden for the supervisors, but also a hindrance to natural growth, particularly in view of the persistence of many individual idiosyncracies.

The initial explosive expansion in the West was enveloped in clouds of sensationalism, which are only just beginning to clear and permit a saner evaluation. It is significant that Husein Rofé, who founded the first seven Subud groups outside Java, now sounds a warning in this book about the dangers inherent

¹ "Worth Living For" by Eva Bartók (Putnam, London, 1959).

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in the present course along which Subud is developing. He urges members and enquirers to discriminate between the inner spirit at the core of the movement and the outer appearance. Statements of new members and teething troubles of infant groups are alike invalid premises from which to assess Subud: insight, experience and synthesis are lacking. Recent converts may exaggerate if impressed, while those whose expectations have remained unrealized may indulge in merciless criticism. The outsider who finds himself obliged to judge from such introductions is in a unenviable position!

Notable barriers to progress are the wish to assess the new in terms of old crystallised concepts, and constant mental activity. The West is ever anxious to know *why*, and Pak Subuh is ever assailed with questions. Rather than give direct formulae for each problem, he frequently guides the enquirers inwards to find the answers in their own depths. Yet replies may contain clues which can help in the solution of the difficulty, and thus prompt consideration at a deeper level.

A growing movement is always meeting friction in the environment; it is obliged to make concessions in order to gain a hearing, and as foreign elements are assimilated and transformed, rather than rejected and opposed, external aspects remain in a state of constant flux. The present stage of Subud expansion should be seen in its historical perspective, which means an idea of Pak Subuh's concepts and views prior to his direct contact with Western thought. The author was in the unique position of witnessing Subud development when there were no other non-Indonesians present; and he lived in Pak Subuh's own home for part of that time, when the whole question of an international movement was but a shadowy portent. His discourses with Pak Subuh on a variety of topics have yielded a wealth of information, now being made available to members, and also to the general public, for the first time.

These concepts are presented to the best of the author's understanding of them at the time. Such ideas require an interpretation in terms of Indonesian and Islamic spiritual traditions, and, especially to those unfamiliar with such views, many pronouncements must seem strange and bizarre. Naturally, relatively

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little can be presented on paper, since such conversations involved factors not normally present in such discussions as understood in the West. At all events, we are dealing with personal views of Pak Subuh or his individual revelations, and not with dogmas to which members are required to subscribe.

Subud is no philosophy, hence it is not a system of self-development which must conduce to anticipated improvements. Rather is it meant to bring about a new way of life, in which the motive for action will not be personal advantage at whatever level. We must let go of the old in order to grasp the new, and, since death is a radical process, it is hardly surprising that the transformation may in some cases involve serious crises. The book has given examples of such cases, not to scare readers away, but rather to indicate the potential dangers which may await those whose minds and bodies are not ready for a fundamental change.

Those who have been through such crises know how spiritual redemption accompanies moments of travail. When the mind is truly stilled, there remains a golden silence in which conflicts appear to dissolve, and the right course of action is spontaneously sensed. It is this inner guidance on which members learn to rely and to which they adjust their modes of living; it is the common factor of spiritual brotherhood which keeps them united in the face of all other divergences.

Behind the superficial longing for security that springs from fear, there is the deeper and more real need felt in the hearts of millions for true happiness and enjoyment of life, such as can only come from within and which cannot be attained by the satisfaction of material requirements. It is especially significant that Subud can show a path towards the attainment of such a state of Being, and that it can help towards a fuller and more complete existence those thousands who feel the need. It is for them to choose whether to avail themselves of this powerful instrument for their own regeneration.

This book is now published to meet a growing demand for further information about Subud, and is the fruit of ten years of active work in the service of the movement. No other non-Javanese member can support his contentions by so long an ex-

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perience as the present author, and the book may thus be recommended to all those sincerely interested in Subud.

Y. C. Rogge
Tokyo 1960.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

During the two years that have elapsed since I wrote "The Path of Subud", the movement founded by Pak Subuh has acquired thousands of new adherents in Western lands. To many of these, the traditional esoteric concepts of the timeless East are unfamiliar. They have taken on trust the desirability of hidden energies being released: some have been overjoyed at the outcome, while alarm and bewilderment have been characteristic reactions of others.

Those who have benefited from a contact which is now available via numerous intermediaries are anxious to know as much as possible about Muhammad Subuh, the man behind the training in which far-reaching and unaccustomed reactions spontaneously transform the individual's assessment of himself and his attitude to the environment. Within the movement many persons have to face serious crises in their lives, and these may occur when there is no competent guidance available in their district. Understanding and comfort are obtained from the knowledge that others have had to confront similar obstacles, to undergo like suffering.

We also have to consider the general public, who feel no reason to participate in such a movement, and yet who have sometimes to listen to friends and relatives rapturously extolling its benefits; these must contemplate, with such equanimity as they can muster, the spectacle of a rapid transformation, which may cause loved ones to behave in strange and perplexing fashion, to throw former standards to the winds, even to become a law unto themselves, unshakeably convinced that they are right, that all others are 'out of step'. Naturally, it is difficult to give advice to such devotees, since the counsellors are classed as outside the pale of the great blessing.

We have a duty to give the general public the opportunity to know as much about Subud as the mind can grasp (which is not

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a high percentage). How can we ignore their claims if they very naturally refuse to participate in what they are unable to understand? They are even more deserving of our sympathies when their own lives are damaged by the erratic behaviour of visionary relatives who may suddenly ignore all other claims and responsibilities.

The course which Subud has taken in the West, and the problems and anxieties revealed by readers of my last book in their many letters to me, have encouraged me to write about Subud again. This time, I feel that it is desirable to give fuller information about the ideas of Pak Subuh, as well as to let the general public know more about how his work is being received. In the course of the last ten years, I have heard him express interesting views on many subjects. These opinions are sometimes peculiarly adapted to particular enquirers, and this may lead people to assume that he expresses contradictory views according to the circumstances of time and place.

Provided it is realised to what extent the writer is obliged to give a subjective portrayal when discussing ideas so fluid, and apparently even so inconsistent, the attempt to record Pak Subuh's opinions on varied subjects is not without value. What I have written is based on what I have heard from him, (often in private discussions) and a great deal of the material was obtained while he still lived in Java and had never travelled beyond that island. Perhaps many such ideas have now been modified by increased experience of the world, and travels in some forty countries; if so, they are not devoid of historical significance. As we can only understand the thought of another in terms of our own experience, I have commented on some views according to my personal understanding.

The second part of this book is a free commentary on Pak Subuh's versified and inspired high Javanese work "*Susila Budhi Dharma*", and the original suggestion that I should attempt such a commentary came from him; he hopes that others will also make similar efforts. The work is to him an inspired Scripture, hence he believes that others who have been exposed to the same source may also have something constructive to contribute, despite differences in degrees of awareness. He accepts

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he traditional Islamic dogma that all are at liberty to offer their own exegeses of a scripture, but that none may claim finality for the opinions they express.

As to Pak Subuh's own role in the movement founded by him, we must remember that this is quite a different matter from the question of whether he is the vehicle of a Divine purpose, for here the human element is involved. The man may err in pronouncements and predictions, he may even have a disproportionate evaluation of the part he himself has to play, as has been recognized by other devoted adherents of his. We must always maintain a clear distinction between fallible man and the Divine Spirit which overshadows him and speaks through him, in inspired moments, but not at all times. Such considerations in no wise detract from the significance of the spiritual force flowing through him.

Those who embark on a mystical quest should always remember the need for Self-reliance. The Teacher may aid us with techniques for uncharted regions; but his opinions should not over-rule our own judgement in all fields because he is our Master in one speciality. Certainty is to be sought within, never externally. It is not a matter for theorizing, and can never co-exist with belief in the opinion of another, which evades the problem of finding conviction for ourselves. After ten years' experience of Subud, I can claim to have obtained certainty in a very few fields; despite the period of time that has elapsed, I continue to suspend judgment on a number of major issues; but, in terms of Pak Subuh's expositions, only God can know whether I shall still be obliged to maintain a similar attitude another ten years hence!

Claims have been made on behalf of Subud, and results have been achieved, though they are not necessarily commensurate to the claims. Is the movement always to take credit for success, and the individual to be blamed when he fails to yield the promised harvest? The advice of the Quran is that we are quite wrong to say that the good comes from God and the bad from ourselves; *we are enjoined to recognize that both originate in Allah!*

Muhammad Subuh is still comparatively unknown to the world's masses. In Great Britain, the movement is associated by

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the inexperienced public with the gossip about a film-actress, which evoked amazement, scepticism or distaste, and was rapidly forgotten. To the outside world, Subud is just one more quasi-religious movement, competing with others which are all anxious to sell themselves, and are gathering adherents with varying claims and successes.

The Subud training does not confer psychic gifts which were not present, but may enhance those that are, or uncover unsuspected potentialities. My limited clairvoyance is no greater today than it was before joining the movement; it has merely changed its quality. We do not receive new material in our lives, but acquire heightened awareness through sharper perception.

Muhammad Subuh neither confers our healing gifts on us, nor does he project such devilish whispers as we may hear within our breasts. If we so desire, the training may stimulate the release of certain blocked energies, which will then pursue their own natural course. While hundreds have now acquired the capacity to evoke such a stimulus, performing the role of human catalysts, only the experienced may be able to give adequate guidance if unaccustomed phenomena manifest. Subud is a movement yet in its infancy in the West, and will require time to mature. We have to judge the tree by its fruits, not by the rags caught in the branches and waving in the wind. The very basic premises of such a concept as lies behind the movement are strange to modern man, divorced as he so often is from his own soul; his mentality may pose a great problem to those endeavouring to keep the movement pure and impartial. Naturally, those who seek to harness Divine energies to their own limited objectives will ultimately pay the price for such sacrilegious presumptiveness. The occidental appetite for speedy results, the intellectual arrogance in some quarters, the belief that new wine can in fact be poured into old vessels, personal ambitions, and lust for power under a spiritual cloak, are factors which may equally bewilder newcomers and Orientals conditioned by respect for ancient traditions and suspicious of all self-assertiveness.

Sometimes therefore we must expect to see the pristine purity of the oriental environment rapidly adulterated when transplanted to Western soils. Undesirable developments are however

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being carefully watched by those who have had experience of similar phenomena in other movements. The frankness displayed in reporting petty jealousies, and even disintegration of groups, is a healthy sign. Undoubtedly the personal shortcomings of fallible individuals will constantly affect the collective quality of their groups, but the core of balanced and experienced individuals who remain constant should eventually see the movement through its birth-pangs in new centres.

How much can the public understand of the relationship between the core of Truth and the superficial manifestations so sensationally reported? Gossip is such that the first introduction may be news that someone thinks Pak Subuh to be a reincarnation of the Prophet Elijah, that members spend their time yelling their heads off and then swooning, or else that a notorious boozier has suddenly and completely reformed.

What is the attitude of the newcomers, and do they analyse it themselves? Do they long for new sensations to fill bored lives, treating their initiation as light-heartedly as a shower-bath, or do they make a new approach to God with greater awe than they would feel when placing themselves in the hands of a surgeon for an operation which might decide life or death?

It may be sensation which most appeals in the West today in quarters where traditional worship has been forsaken in sceptical boredom. While proselytism is slow and secret in the Orient, the movement is heralded in England by public posters in country lanes. Do the new candidates know why they are coming, or how to assess their progress? Too often unusual phenomena are taken for a sign of proficiency, and those who develop more steadily but less strikingly may feel less assured. Do they know the goal is that the inner and outer life should eventually harmonise and become united?

No route to Paradise can bypass purgatory, and we must recognize that undesirable elements are present in ourselves as much as in others. "The instincts of human frailty, of anger, revenge, impetuosity, sensuality, lack of forgiveness, above all self-conceit and lack of humility, for ever crop up during this pilgrimage of mankind towards sainthood" (Lin Yutang: *The Importance of Living*). In the East however, wilder tendencies

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are held in check more effectively, as the individual good is subjected by social pressure to that of the group, and therefore reactions tend to be less violent. Is it surprising if oriental gurus are frequently misunderstood in the West, unless both parties make an effort to comprehend quite divergent attitudes to life based on different interpretations of its meaning? As long as the abysses of incomprehension remain unspanned, there is room for books which attempt to help bridge them.

Husein Rofé,
5 Tai Hang Road,
Hong Kong.
January 1960

PART I

CHAPTER I

SUBUD GROUPS OF EAST AND WEST

The true candidate for mystical initiation is already seeking a means of Self-realization. Whatever he may understand by the term, or however he may formulate his desire, we may take it that he is dissatisfied with his present state and wishes to purify his nature; perhaps he also senses that there lie within himself greater potentialities than he has so far managed to express. Such a man is prompted by feeling, and his motives are worthy. Since an inner urge is already asserting itself, he will eventually meet someone who can enlighten him as to a method of procedure.

While the East conceals its knowledge, and those who can give await those who ask, it is a more common characteristic of the West to wish to make available to all and sundry the good fortune which one has oneself obtained. This is because there is a greater sense of urgency, of need for individual action, perhaps of that vanity which assumes that things which are essential will never be done unless we ourselves attend to them here and now. Spiritual disciplines thus become the subject of public lectures; advertising draws a mixed audience, and many come from boredom, for lack of something better to do, even through mere failure to foresee the nature of the subject under discussion. Some will attend because of frustration, hopelessness, despair: such may easily be convinced by a distinguished speaker that it is in their interest to take advantage of benefits freely offered. Failures join such a movement with more optimism than motive, hoping that, by following the path of the successful orator, they may improve their own circumstances. Their decisions are mental ones, associated with the wish for present desires to be realized; there may be little inclination to change the nature or

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aspirations. The motive is wrong, blessings may be misunderstood, not even recognized. Incautious donors risk being cursed for their pains, as those were attacked who scattered pearls before the snouts of the proverbial swine.

In order to discourage lukewarm candidates, it is now the practice in many lands to insist on a three months' candidature before the applicant is accepted for initiation. Of course the idly curious are found in all parts of the world, and I have seen many instances of those who came ostensibly for spiritual training and departed with some other interest before they had even received an initiation: one such borrowed from me a Sanskrit grammar, and was never seen again. Pak Subuh commented that this man was aware of a vacuum in his life; it did not matter whether the study of Sanskrit or the path of mysticism provided the necessary distraction. A three months' wait gives such persons ample opportunity to get caught up in new pursuits; for the others, such a short interval of waiting is not a matter for concern if they are to take up a discipline with eternal implications, and which will require years of perseverance.

There is a well-known anecdote about a man whose interest in Buddhist meditation evaporated when he became cured of tuberculosis. To many, the spiritual path is an escape, consolation for an unhappy material existence, an attempt to succeed in a new field because familiar doors are thought to be closed. While such persons undoubtedly require psychological guidance to fit them once more for the struggle for existence, yet they ought not to withdraw from fear of being wounded again. Life is evolution, which cannot proceed through retreat, even if such practice may have great value as a temporary technique of isolation, for the purpose of recharging depleted resources.

Obviously then, motive is an all-important consideration before commencing any new enterprise, and prospective candidates are recommended to indulge in a ruthless and frank analysis of their own real reasons for wanting to join Subud. Once the step has been taken, they find themselves one of a group of new members, especially in countries where the rate of application is high. Since each individual has presumably come for the purpose of correcting his or her own defects, it should be remembered

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That this is the principal matter for concern; comparison of one's own state with that of neighbours is to be discouraged. To approach God, to participate in worship, all have equal rights.

Naturally nobody enjoys meditating next to one who crawls with lice, and we may sympathize with those who are perturbed by the unkempt appearance of bohemians attracted to mysticism. All training involves tests, and these take a different form in each particular case. Membership entails responsibility, though this may not immediately be evident; meanwhile, pride of example is preferable to pride of precedence. The supervisors can do much to inculcate a sense of the dignity of membership, by tactful advice to those whose eccentric dress and disorderly habits may have had much to do with their past failures.

Javanese groups in the early days were very different from those in the West today. Members would sit in silence, and often no word would be heard for a quarter of an hour, in a room of perhaps thirty persons. Sometimes the stillness would be punctuated by snores from some quarters, but even this rarely evoked comment from Pak Subuh or anyone else. The society was based on the old traditional concepts of the East, where the individual finds his place within the group. The barriers created by egoism were much less noticeable, for separatism, revolt and wilful self-assertion are discouraged in Asia. Our members were less pre-occupied by worldly motives, less gnawed by unrealized ambitions.

The education of groups towards a harmonious and compact wholeness is an important part of the worldly activity within the Subud brotherhood. Where tensions and jealousies are strongly in evidence, there is a challenge, an opportunity for constructive work. Pak Subuh once observed to a Mediterranean visitor who felt uneasy in an English centre: "If you have to keep company with those whose nature resembles that of goats and tigers, you must take such qualities into account". His remark is an interesting parallel to the observation of Socrates, when his wife Xantippe complained of a hen which had flown through the window and made havoc of the dining-table.

Self-alignment with travelling companions of whatever ilk is thus considered a manifestation of a Divine quality; and yet few

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would welcome life in a pigsty, even if they recognize that pigs, like all else, merit salvation. Concessions, efforts at adjustment, have therefore to be made from both sides.

Ideally, the necessary minimum of organization in the movement should impose a division of labour: different members require varying treatment, and certain supervisors are more gifted to handle particular types of cases. Nevertheless, the rapid expansion of the movement in the West has so far rendered specialization impossible, owing to the shortage of qualified and experienced supervisors.

The wilful eccentric does not often choose the spiritual path in the East, since such disciplines are more commonly followed, and thus do not provide a platform for the assertion of the urge to be different. Humanity is one family, a unity in Spirit, hence we can best influence our fellows by external conformity, whatever the inner convictions. Oddities appeal to failures who, despairing of success in conventional channels, see the chance to attract the notice for which they crave through their affected behaviour. The presence of such persons may be a deterrent to those who feel strongly the importance of a practical and balanced approach to the spiritual path.

In Java, not only is there invariable segregation of the sexes, but also a division into age groups when the size of the community makes this practicable. The young feel less embarrassed, the aged less disturbed by the absence of such violent manifestations as are characteristic of youth. It is also taught that there are critical ages in the evolution of the spiritual consciousness, and these have been related to the nine aspects of the seven cosmic grades. To Pak Subuh, the normal life-cycle of man lasts 63 years, after which the "second childhood" begins; this then explains the tendency of the aged to regress to childlike behaviour.

Every eighth year marks a critical change in the inner life of sensitives, while the 32nd and 40th years are especially significant. The individual is rarely in full possession of his psychic apparatus before the age of forty, and the illumination, transformation, or death of sensitives often occurs at these critical times.

While Pak Subuh does not believe that we should strive to

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bring all our friends into this movement, he does recommend that we should encourage those who constantly associate with us, since it is also to our own advantage that they should participate, if willing. The reason is that we absorb qualities from those who are regularly in our company, owing to the fact that the training repeatedly purifies and cleanses our inner condition, which is then quite different from that of other people, although this may not be apparent externally. While an extra speck will pass unnoticed on a stained garment, it looks conspicuous on one which has just been well washed. It is for a similar reason that we acquire abnormal sensitivity to states out of harmony with our own, where such considerations never troubled us before. It may be said however that eventually we develop a protective shield which enables us to insulate ourselves from inimical vibrations.

Obviously if we are absorbing conditions in others, a change is taking place in *them*; and in fact, impressionable persons, who may know nothing of Subud, often experience odd sensations of swaying, currents, or bewilderment, when sitting quietly near us. Qualities in them are then flowing into us, and we know how to cleanse ourselves of such accretions. Nevertheless, if we are obliged to frequent regularly those who know nothing of our work, they may continue to attract undesirable emanations, and channel them unconsciously towards us at each meeting. Such a process has no lasting benefit for them, as they ignore their own true condition; and we shoulder a burden to no useful purpose. In extreme cases, our associates may quite unconsciously inflict very disagreeable sensations on us, though they would be quite incapable of understanding this. If new energies are released in them through subsequent initiation, we then cease to be inconvenienced by their company. Such ideas of the interplay of psychic forces, present in every association, whether recognized or ignored, caused the ancient Hindus to insist on having their food prepared by persons in a pure state, and to this day, Pak Subuh perpetuates that ancient tradition, whenever possible. Subud training gives us the possibility of proving the validity of these teachings through experience.

It is for similar reasons that it is considered advisable for the wife to participate in the training as well as the husband. Here

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however there is a difference, since the very fact that he is her husband means that his own progress will modify her inner state accordingly, whether she joins him, or knows nothing of Subud. Here the desirability of her participation is because she will better understand what she can consciously experience; when she is disinclined to follow the path, she may have feelings of physical discomfort which she is unable to explain, and may well attribute them to sickness. These derive from the unaccustomed forces which now flow into her via the husband. When she joins the movement, she also learns to canalize such energies in such a manner that she is no longer troubled.

It will be evident from the above that Subud practitioners are often obliged to undergo a form of vicarious suffering as a condition of being able to aid their brethren; and the pain is the more deeply felt as purity increases. Orthodox Christians may find distasteful the suggestion that the power to forgive sins can manifest on earth nowadays, since they are accustomed to associate such a phenomenon exclusively with Jesus. The Son of Man, who is however said to possess this power, is referred to in the Old Testament, and does not originate with Jesus, and is possibly a name meaning the Self-integrated Man, who has realized the mission for which the human race was created. If this potentiality is not theoretically at the disposal of all, saviours, and in fact our very presence here, can have little value. Insofar as Man can act as a vehicle for Divine qualities, by acquiring the birthright which he was created to manifest, Divine Forces may heal the sick and forgive sins through his agency. Perhaps at this time, when the labourers are so few, some are called upon to make particularly heavy sacrifices: these have their reward.

Subud is no path offering a new means of shirking the responsibilities of life, and throwing our burdens onto the shoulders of others, though many who are attracted to it nurse some such fond hopes! Rather is it a training which, while holding out a promise of an eventual fuller life, carries present obligations of service, willingness to dare and to suffer. Those who do not feel called upon to carry such a cross might do better to avoid membership (unless they seek temporary relief from acute illness), since there is no genuine way to Self-fulfilment which isolates man from his

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fellows. None will be called upon to suffer beyond capacity, and a just Providence can compensate for scales tipped too far. Man should not however expect Heaven on earth; and if he attempts to nurse a tiger back to health, he must be prepared to feel its claws, for in these days there are no Gadarene swine, nor do we have the power to rechannel satanic energies into herds of livestock.

While awaiting results, one must have that attitude of surrender which accepts with equanimity tangible results or the total absence of any evidence: this alone can be called true submission to the Divine Will, and all else is rebellion. While in the training hall, criticism should be silenced, judgement discouraged; but nobody is expected to carry that attitude outside! Unfamiliar aches and pains should be borne with patience, but if they are severe, it may be as well to obtain a medical opinion. If the doctor finds no evidence of disease, and there is a healthy appetite and normal restful sleep, we may be justified in assuming that a beneficial though painful transformation is taking place. Apparent evidence to the contrary is however quite impressive. Our members are perhaps freed from disease, but this does not mean that they no longer have sensations of sickness: colds, headaches and fevers continue to manifest, either to check exaggerated activity, or to readjust the balance.

It is the true inner voice which requires to be cultivated, and when it has been developed, that alone should be heeded in critical issues. "A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages" (Emerson: *Essays*). Until this faculty has become sufficiently acute, we may yet need to rely on people and machines to tell us what we ought to know without external aid. The mystic is an artist, his life is his art. As Bacon has said, art subjects things to the mind, while science does the reverse.

The content of early training may involve a review of early familiar material. Childhood preserves essential impulses, inner aptitudes which droop and wither as the world gradually invades our most secret recesses. In the training, forgotten instincts, long buried under accumulated experience, emerge once more. It may

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be necessary to relive previous situations for wrongly integrated material to be reclassified by the Self, acting as Auto-analyst.

Prejudices will have to be swept from the mind, and subjective evaluations, attachment to the theories of particular individuals, must be removed. How can we expect to see clearly as long as we carry around the burden of ideas borrowed from those we admire more than ourselves, defensively armed with a battery of hackneyed arguments to rebut the criticisms of rival opinions? Happiness is to be found in acceptance, not by crusading; and acceptance comes from self-knowledge, awareness of our own limitations. This leads to the cessation of struggle, to the end of that inner conflict which precludes peace. To accept himself, man must of course know what he is, and only then will he be in a position to cease chasing chimaerae. Motives must be frequently analysed. What is our wish for Self-realisation: a subtle and hypocritical variety of megalomania, or something more?

Because of the tendency to join the movement without clearly defined aims, candidates are now required to read, in advance, a statement by Muhammad Subuh, entitled "The Meaning and Objectives of Subud", which can be found in Appendix A to this volume. Yet many people confess that its perusal does not make matters much clearer, although it does define a programme.

In the West, we find within the movement a growing body of opposition to indiscriminate proselytism. While some colleagues feel that the opportunities should be made available to all and sundry (which is generally desirable in the case of spontaneous and voluntary visitors) the dangers of admission to Subud of those lacking in inner resources are now becoming increasingly apparent.

The atheist is a rare phenomenon in the Orient, where in nearly every family we find at least one representative striving for the salvation of the soul. Such people have been accustomed from childhood to a society based on ritual and conformity, and dangers are therefore negligible. It is when individuals have learnt to be a law unto themselves, to give vent to every urge (which they call their right to self-expression) that we find complications ensue during the training. Therefore it has been

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observed that, in the West, a much higher percentage of candidates temporarily "go off their heads" when subjected to this contact; but fortunately such cases are exceptional in all lands.

It would be quite wrong to state that Subud sends such people mad, but it is nevertheless true that periods of mental unbalance can come about as a result of the release of psychic energies in those who have become a vortex for powerful passions. But Pak Subuh has recognized the danger of those critical phases when the individual soul forcibly asserts itself to discard the sins accumulated by years of riotous living; he has been known to recommend the construction of padded cells for the accommodation of those thus temporarily deranged. Recently he has stressed that the mentally unbalanced should consult their doctors and produce medical certificates before being authorized to join Subud.

The movement is not to be blamed for the consequences, since newcomers are (or should be) warned of the potential dangers on the path; in fact, ideally, the candidate for initiation should be prepared to accept anything that God may send him, and even unafraid to face death if required. For those to whom eternal salvation is a weightier matter than the fleeting life of this world, these considerations are of little importance; but such persons are very rare, and can only form a minute proportion of the large numbers of applicants now flocking to Subud centres in European and American countries. The others should at least recognize that they may risk facing worldly ruin if they aspire to spiritual purification at all costs. It is hardly surprising that a major revolution within, perhaps eclipsing in importance any previous experience, should similarly provoke external confusion for a period, and this may mean serious financial loss. I do not say such things are very common; they are not. But it must be realized that they are possible, especially when there is much to be corrected.

Many people have written to ask me whether there is not some danger of demoniacal possession if we throw ourselves open, in an attitude of total Self-surrender. The candidate then has no control over that which may assail him, they say, since his attitude has to be quite passive. Such possession is in fact

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familiar in certain movements. In Subud, Pak Subuh comments that the Power operating in the supervisor authorised to transmit the contact is a superhuman Force which would be instantly neutralized, or non-operative, if inferior elements were present at the time of transmission. This much protects us against the qualities in the supervisor himself, while the force which works *through* him is considered itself capable of dispersing all other elements. These doubts usually emanate from those who lack true faith in God. Have we not been told by most spiritual figures in history, by means of various expressions, that God will hardly give us a stone when we beg Him for bread?

Nevertheless, Pak Subuh particularly warns that those who experiment at home and seek to induce these states alone, before authorized to do so, carry out such tests at their own risk, and that it is possible in such circumstances that forces of lower origin may temporarily take possession of them. Not everyone recognizes inferior forces as such: they are in fact very often responsible for the phenomena of spiritualism. They can normally easily be exorcised by a subsequent session with a supervisor, in cases where they trouble new members at home.

In his famous essay on Self-reliance, R. W. Emerson treated on this very question, as follows:

“On my saying: ‘What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?’, my friend suggested: ‘But these impulses may be from below, not from above.’ I replied: ‘They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil’s child, I will live then from the Devil.’ No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature”.

Not everyone will favour such a viewpoint, but it should at all events be clear to the candidate that he is asking for a change, awaiting a rebirth; and naturally something present now will have to die, to make room for what is new, as in the metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly. Many elements in fact must expire, but, as Sir Muhammad Iqbal has observed: “Life is a passage through a series of deaths!”

This book discusses many aspects of Subud in a frank manner, because I feel that anxiety should come before initiation rather than afterwards; and so that those already expressing

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concern in many lands can take comfort from the knowledge that their troubles are not unique. So many now express bewilderment at unfamiliar reactions, and draw false conclusions because nobody aids them to form any other opinions, and they are human enough to feel that they must find some explanation, or at least relate their own phenomena to something that has been experienced elsewhere. Their reactions are natural in lands where, as Dr. Jung, the Swiss psychologist has said, the science of the Spirit is in its infancy compared with the knowledge of the East. Krishnamurti also tells us: "Fear is the only response of thought to the unknown; thought may call it by different terms, but still it is fear" (*Commentaries on Living*, second series). I remember the time when those perturbed by strange experiences could just call a rickshaw or horse-drawn cart (the *andong* of mid-Java), and find Pak Subuh at a few minutes' notice. Nowadays however, the nearest advisor may be hundreds of miles away in some cases, and this fact is sufficient justification for discussing matters that might otherwise be concealed for fear of misunderstanding by the general public. Pak Subuh maintains, as one should remember, that the spiritual impact adapts itself to individual capacity, and that, unless instructions are ignored, there is no serious danger, however alarming superficial manifestations may appear to be; apparent threats are merely passing crises.

Those who come for treatment sometimes suffer from a combination of psychic and somatic disorders. It is more difficult to understand such cases, when patients require simultaneous attention from doctors and practitioners. To Pak Subuh however, the indisposition of a Subud initiate differs considerably from an ordinary illness, even when superficially identical as far as symptoms are concerned. I had some difficulty in understanding this view in the case of the common cold. He considers that this may occur when training is practised intensively with simultaneously indulgence in much cerebral activity. "How can you expect not to become ill" he once said, "when you fill your head with new material and simultaneously try to cleanse yourself of the brain-fag?" I insisted that it seemed odd such symptoms should occur just when colds were particularly prevalent.

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around us in times of epidemics, and he then observed: "The purification may be coincidental with infection".

Criticism is especially common among those who cannot realize that they are passing through a stage analogical to the cocoon, in order for a new condition to emerge. It is the very restriction of the cocoon which promises we shall sprout wings, but the transformation will never be correctly appraised by those who sigh for the lost glories of a cabbage leaf. While in the cocoon stage, one can merely suspend judgement: the old standards are no valid criterion for evaluation of the new potentialities on the verge of manifestation.

When new standards appear to menace prospects of conventional wordly success along former lines, we are up against the question: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" For those anxious merely to "eat, drink and be merry", Subud has no answer. To the dead, the living will always appear devoid of life.

Aspects of Subud practice.

Supervisors of the training are unfortunately often referred to in the West as 'helpers'. This is one of the many neologisms which owe their inspiration to the dubious translations of some Indonesians who arrived in the West with an inadequate knowledge of English. The term "supervisors" or "assistants" would appear more consistent with English usage, as well as more appropriate to the Indonesian equivalent in terms of the local culture.

Among practices of those supervisors, we may mention that of "testing". This is really little removed from traditional geomantic procedure. Those asked to comment on doubtful situations seek answers by such methods as raising the arm and observing whether reflex motion impels it to right or left. They might as well pin-point a passage in the Bible, or toss a coin. Subjectivity, self-delusion, wishful thinking and fertile imagination all play their part in the process. Such techniques are common among backward peoples of the Far East, who are very prone to consult omens, oracles and diviners in moments of crisis, especially when their schooling has been too rudimentary for them to feel competent to rely on their own judgement.

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I witnessed one such demonstration in mid-Java in 1951, while Pak Subuh was present in the room. A University student was soliciting information regarding the whereabouts of a mislaid diploma, and one of the senior Subud members proceeded to invoke a solution by the usual technique of asking himself a question, and then making his mind blank, forgetting about the matter, so as to enable the subconscious to tackle the problem. It was not long before he volunteered the information that another youth had stolen the certificate from the student's luggage, during his recent journey to the capital. A few days later, I learnt that the document had been forgotten in a drawer at home, and never taken on the journey at all.

Divine revelation is a remarkable process, and many people ignore its simpler and subtler forms because they are accustomed to consider it as something very rare, and perhaps accompanied by angelic visitations or cataclysms! We may however classify intuition in the category of revelation: such awareness may come with absolute clarity in moments of stress and show us exactly what we have to do. Infallibility however belongs to God, and is certainly not subject to any form of human control. While clairvoyant knowledge is often remarkable and accurate, it should never be relied on in advance. We should hardly expect an inner mechanism to operate with the efficiency of an automatic traffic-light system, and did we have such a factor on which to rely at all times of crisis, we should degenerate to the state of robots! If we accept the premise that knowledge is within ourselves, and that we can be prompted by reflex motions and go forth to give oracular answers in moments of mental quiescence, then we must subscribe to the evidence of the pack of cards, the coffee-grains, the number of times we sneeze daily, and so forth. I have yet to see this 'testing' effectively demonstrated by anyone as a source of knowledge more reliable than classical divinatory procedure; in fact, it is far less detailed into the bargain!

Poets and artists know what a precious gift intuition can be, and have always recognized the importance of listening to the inner voice. Keats once wrote, in a letter: "Let us open our leaves like a flower and be passive and receptive". There is some

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evidence that Subud training aids us to sharpen our intuition but this operates most effectively when we do not try to interfere with it. If Subud is to point the way to omen-seeking, it is retrogressive. When we are in a quandary, and quite unable to reach a major decision, what is wrong with prayer? God does not need our divinatory techniques to enable Him to send an answer, and in any case, as Pak Subuh does not tire of pointing out, the Creator is not a Being at the beck and call of the creature.

A more attractive feature of Subud practice is the technique of psychic *alignment*, which I have seen practised very effectively by psychically developed Indonesians, though I have never known a Western colleague capable of demonstrating this. The demonstrator, having insulated the self from feelings of egoism, tunes in the condition of another person, near or far, familiar or unknown, and then describes accurately the emotional state and even the physical activity of the latter, with such remarks as "He is swinging his right arm", "Her character must be devoid of shame", "He is now enjoying a period of calm and success following a long spell of worries and trials". Such descriptions are not only very accurate, but they are often information unobtainable from mind-reading.

Alignment with other Subud members is easiest, because of the spiritual link formed through adherence to the Brotherhood and it is quite common for members to know of serious stress being experienced by their colleagues at considerable distance and to participate therein, even quite involuntarily.

Although I am not particularly gifted in this way, when in Malta on December 1st, 1958, I had a vivid dream that Pak Subuh had just suffered a heart attack, and I was enveloped in a feeling of inexplicable grief on awakening the following morning. I reported the dream to other local associates, since it had produced a deep impression on me, and I also expressed the view that it symbolized another colleague who must be experiencing heart trouble. The following day, I received a telegram advising me that Pak Subuh's assistant then on a visit to Singapore had just passed away following an attack of coronary thrombosis.

The enhanced sensitivity we acquire is among the man

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benefits of this training, though we do not always welcome such effects. Pak Subuh tells us that the alignment of consciousness with other persons, even to the point merely of thinking about them, many produce feelings of sickness, if they happen to be in an unhealthy condition. I have also obtained a great deal of evidence to prove that a factor within us may be quite aware of data concealed from the conscious mind, and is able to prompt us quite involuntarily to appropriate action (though since I believe this to be a higher factor, I doubt whether it is at all possible for us to control it, or contact it at will).

On two separate occasions in 1955, when I was in Hong Kong, I tuned in to Indonesian radio stations in different towns at the exact moment when they were broadcasting S.O.S. messages informing Subud members in Indonesia of the death of relatives, with whom I had also been closely associated. The first occasion was the decease of Wahab, who was referred to in my previous book, and it was the first time I had listened to a programme from Radio Palembang since I had left Indonesia a year earlier! The second time I was astonished to hear that the S.O.S came from Pak Subuh himself, and was reporting the loss of his own son. Since this news reached me exactly at midnight, Hong Kong summer time, my telegram of sympathy, sent over the 'phone in the middle of the night, reached Pak Subuh the following morning, even before some of his own relatives in Java knew of the matter. I cannot explain such phenomena, and had some such experiences before joining Subud, but they have been more frequent since, regular and striking enough to command my attention. Perhaps many others could relate similar stories.

Pak Subuh did not always recommend us to follow the results of the "testing" process, and, while his silence did not necessarily imply acquiescence, he would rarely blame a person's judgment. Nevertheless, when I was living in his home in Djogjakarta, in June 1951, he once discouraged me from following the results of my own testing.

Early in the morning, a volcano had just erupted in East Java, and I had been awakened by the shaking of the windowpanes, as in a bombing raid. Within a few hours, the wind had

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blown clouds of lava dust to our town, and we found out in pitch darkness at 11. a.m., while people in the street convinced that the resurrection day had arrived. Late ever, as the clouds cleared away, a residue of greyish-white covered the roofs of the houses, shining in the bright sun like the snow in a Swiss landscape.

A public fund was instituted to aid the homeless and distressed, and having recently heard of this 'testing' test I decided to ask myself how much I should contribute. A figure of Rph. 700 (then about £25 on the free market), suggested itself in the ensuing silence, amounted to about 10% of my savings. Trusting the inner voice, I decided to do it, but when I mentioned the matter to Pak Subuh, he told me that Rph. 300 would be quite adequate, since contributions were coming in from all parts of the country. He agreed in fact we should send a donation in the name of Subud, but this was unfortunately acknowledged in the papers as having been received from Mr. Susila Budhi Dharma. Our obscure little movement had been taken for the name of a man!

Pak Subuh went off on his bicycle to visit the restaurant being run in the main street of Djogjakarta by our members, financed by Subud capital. This usually served as his 'office' in the daytime, but he did not like to eat often, since the Chinese manager could not be relied upon to provide a pig-free diet. Mrs. Subuh must have been surprised of my story, since not many minutes passed before a servant entered the room bearing a request from her for the sum of exactly Rph. 400, the balance of the original amount. At that time, many were prepared to aid victims of natural catastrophe, but Pak Subuh's family struggled for existence with little money and provisions often had to be purchased on credit.

Case-Histories.

The following are mostly extreme cases which show typical of peculiar reactions to Subud which *can* take place. I have included them with some comments on the recoil experienced by those who minister to such persons. I have no wish to scare the public and I must point out that we are normally under an ob

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to accept sooner or later all sincere seekers, however lamentable their inner condition when they first approach us.

Case No. 1. Mr. S., Mid-Java, 1951.

This gentleman had been coming to me for English and Spanish tuition, with two friends, for some months before I ever heard of Pak Subuh, and in fact, it was through these three pupils that I came to know Ahmad Sarido, who originally brought me to Pak Subuh. Following my example, and impressed by the foreigner's regard for this one of many Javanese gurus, all three joined the movement a few months after I had been initiated.

Perhaps S. had been practising regularly for some two or three months with our group which used to meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings (considered particularly propitious times for spiritual disciplines, according to classical Javanese tradition). One night, on the occasion of the full moon, I noticed that S. was behaving in peculiar fashion, while exercising with various other persons. He was speaking aloud in a state of semi-trance, and the voice proceeding from his mouth was evidently supposed to be that of God, since the word '*Ingsoen*' was used. This word is one of the many in the Javanese language for 'I', but it is used only of the Deity, and no human being is authorized to apply it to himself. The voice began to explain to S. how he was in reality the descendant of a line of saints and sages, and, as a token of esteem commensurate to his nobility, promised to bestow on him a diamond weighing five kilograms!

It may be observed here that the quality of the spiritual impulses which are accessible to a given soul depends on the number of planes encompassed by the consciousness, and this subject will be discussed in detail when we consider Pak Subuh's views on the septuple nature of the cosmos. Let it suffice to state now that he had qualified the soul of S. as then only able to function on the lowest level of spiritual awareness, and therefore unable to contact impulses from beyond the satanic sphere. The satanic must not be taken to mean something opposed to the Divine, but is rather its coarsest manifestation; often detrimental to man, it is certainly in no way disturbing to God! Revelation

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on the satanic level can often be recognized by the tendency to pander to individual vanity; yet to recipients, it is very essentially valid.

When S. had terminated his practice, he joined those who were sitting chatting in an adjoining room. After a few moments he rose to his feet without warning, and began to address the assembly in unprecedented fashion, along the following lines:

“It is unnecessary for me to continue this training here any longer, since my own revelation is of equal value to that of Pak Subuh. He knows this himself, and as he is a good man I commend you to study diligently under him; but since I am a saint, there is no point in my pursuing the training. I know many things which you cannot, one of which, I shall demonstrate that I can fly!” (He whirled round the room, simultaneously imitating the manner and gait of Pak Subuh) “I no longer require language lessons from Mr. Rofé, as I now speak perfect Spanish as you will see.” (He then made strange noises, and asked for confirmation that he was in fact talking Spanish; the suggestion that it might be a very archaic form of the language delighted him!)

He shook hands with everyone to say good-bye, and despite his corpulence, sped away on his bicycle at such a pace that his two more athletic companions, who were concerned about him, found themselves left far behind. The following day he took a rail trip to Semarang, and apparently spent the journey regaling neighbouring Chinese passengers with details of his own holiness; but he took the precaution of speaking in English which language they could not understand anyhow!

Pak Subuh commented on this crisis as something which he had to see through if he were to progress further: discontent and fear would close up the possibilities of further development. He did in fact come back to us a week or two later and thenceforth behaved in a subdued fashion; there was no suggestion of the temporary derangement.

Case No. 2. Mr. O., Hong Kong, 1954-55.

This gentleman is happy that his case should be made public since he feels that it may serve to instruct others. He joined

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In 1954, aged about 32, and had been desirous for some time of contacting a mystical discipline. Within hours of the first session, he was transferred to a hospital in the middle of the night, complaining of acute pains from a kidney-stone. He was back in a week, and recommenced the training: yet again, he was taken to the hospital in a matter of hours, for an operation. He believes that the Subud impact had caused a displacement of the stone.

O. had a grudge against certain persons who, in his opinion, were responsible for a deterioration of his material and social circumstances. Shortly after having started Subud training, he sent these gentlemen anonymous letters of such a nature that he was arrested for blackmail, tried and sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour. While Pak Subuh maintains that the training was not responsible for such a fate, as it did not suggest an idea foreign to his nature, it is equally true that the discipline can remove a protective tendency to suppress urges which otherwise land us in difficulties.

Too often Subud members merely shrug their shoulders when colleagues go through painful crises. Whole families may be affected by the suffering of individuals, and relatives are in a worse plight because they have no understanding of the process, and there is nothing in their lives to which they can relate this. It is all very well to state smugly that punishment is an expression of the Divine Law; but most religions advocate the relief of suffering even when they recognize the individual's responsibility for his condition. I have heard Pak Subuh admit that he does *not* consider the average human being normally responsible for his actions. This viewpoint may be common among mystics, but is rejected by judges. Hence Jesus, for one, would not have us judge our fellow-men.

Case No. 3. The Naval Officer and the Evangelist, London, 1956.

An Indonesian naval officer, stationed at Weymouth while on a course in England, had been directed to me by the Subud headquarters in Java, and applied to participate in London when possible. On the occasion of his first visit, he had as companion an evangelist who had attended some four or five sessions alone.

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The soul of the Indonesian was in a similar condition to S., mentioned in case No. 1, but the evangelist knew not this. The former felt a powerful impact and began to give to ugly groans and other very unpleasant loud noises. His companion leapt up and dashed out of the room. Later he said "You cannot persuade me that there is anything Divine movement which provokes such sounds; these noises have a devilish quality." He could not have been more right, and he was so wrong; for how could he understand that it was necessary for that particular individual to exteriorize his behaviour at that time, under a Divine impact? How could we know that he might never be expected to do anything so simple. But he did not stop to ask. He identified the necessary cause of one man with the aims of the movement, and rushed away never to return, persuaded that we were in league with the powers of evil!

Interaction of thought-forms in training.

It is of interest to note how the mental condition of one man may affect those in their vicinity. Supervisors are enjoined to maintain an attitude of thought-free observation while addressing others. If they begin to reason at this time, an impulse is communicated to those present, who will accordingly vary the pattern of their practice. Similarly, new members should free their minds of thought, and when they discard their instructions, their own thought-forms may appear to the supervisors in pictures. I shall give a few examples of how I myself have been made aware that people were thinking intentions they had been asked not to do so.

New and suspicious Roman Catholic members sometimes concentrate powerfully on the symbol of the Cross, to save themselves in case the power in Subud should prove to be false. Since at such times, supervisors are in a receptive state, if the candidate is not, such thought-forms are projected into his mind. I, for one, become aware of their mental activity, as if I see a cross in front of my closed eyes, or else my own body involuntarily forms the sign of the Cross in response.

In front of a Turk being initiated in Nicosia in 1958

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a vision of a bright, shining heart, and learnt later that he had been meditating on his heart-centre at the time. Sitting with a Latvian baroness in South Sumatra in 1954, I saw a country residence, and later described it to her; she not only admitted that it was her old home (lost for ever) of which she had just been thinking, but fetched a postcard which corresponded exactly with the vision. I had a similar experience with a Lebanese in Beirut, when I was shown a part of the coast already familiar to me.

The above examples indicate to what extent the power of suggestion can be used on sensitive subjects when a rapport has been established. It would appear that supervisors without an adequate sense of responsibility could make intentional use of hypnotic suggestion while surrounded by trusting trainees in a receptive state. Pak Subuh has himself admitted that he possesses the ability to project thoughts into the mind of another person.

Just as we can often perceive the thought-forms of those opposite us, so can we sometimes sense their psychic and physical conditions and absorb these quite involuntarily, thus relieving them of a burden. As one supervisor commented on a trainee: "He does the drinking and I get the hang-over". Helping others along the path is a psychic strain, and it complicates our own evolution, though obstacles surmounted become assets. Nevertheless, we should not be too willing to pass this contact on to other people on the slightest provocation, whatever our motives.

Pak Subuh has observed that in Indonesia, members ask if they really *must* shoulder the responsibility and burden of initiating others, while in the West, they are persistently anxious to do so, and eager to learn *how soon* they may begin. It is a wise discipline to remember that none of us is ever indispensable, and that profitless vanity often wears the mask of altruism. Those who come to any movement should always remember that their first duty is to follow the advice of the Buddha: "Work out your own salvation with diligence".

CHAPTER II

THAT MAN FROM THE EAST

In any attempt to evaluate the teaching of Pak S we assess the nature of the man or the significance of his we have to examine his personality in terms of the tr: background of both Indonesian and Islamic culture ar values. It has been categorically stated by him on many c that Subud is not a teaching. His prolific and varied ex however, whether in the form of writings or lectures, a number of dogmatic assertions, and he comments re numerous topics. There are some who would readily ac Divine inspiration of every pronouncement from the lips. The more critical should however strive to know marks and theories belong to the cultures influencing h hood, for the conditioning of the impressionable, formati is scarcely to be discounted. Inspiration does not belong plane of speech; its exteriorization is limited by the present in language, and the ideas current in the mil sage who talks freely may throw light on opinions of t he adds to the experience of history, and should not be to sweep this away, even though he may introduce certa new material. We have to distinguish the original f familiar, and it is also helpful to understand how such a sees himself in relation to his epoch, for these are ma historical significance, whatever the implications of a mission in terms of eternity.

People have frequently expressed surprise and concern perhaps fortuitous resemblance between the names Su Subud. The name Subud has repeatedly been defined a visional term intended to be valid within the Indonesia pelago; it is an abbreviation of words which express familiar to the population of Java, and his followers h

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entirely recruited from among them at the time that the name was coined. He has repeatedly asked Western adherents to seek out a title more adapted to an international movement, so that the same basic ideas might be communicated in more comprehensible terminology, but so far no appropriate suggestion has been offered. It is perhaps fortunate that the movement is not to be known by some such awe-inspiring name as the Pneumatosophical Society: its objectives might be thought to have a connection with tyres or lung-diseases! For the present, Subud it is, and Subud it will probably remain.

According to Pak Subuh, degrees of soul-consciousness encountered in this world normally correspond to the subtle essences present in minerals, plants, animals and ideal Mankind; the latter are comparatively rare, whether in the world in general, or among his followers in particular. Beyond these realms of Being, there exist states of consciousness corresponding to angelic awareness, and he has qualified at least three of his present followers, all now resident in the Far East, as possessing such souls. Two or three persons in the world, not in the movement, are said to possess, or liable to acquire a still higher condition of awareness. At the top of the Cosmos are souls on the level of the Divine Creator, a grade not even attained by some major Prophets. Not only has Pak Subuh stated that he himself has such a soul, but he has added that only one such visits this world in every seven centuries.

Some persons believe that he should not make such pronouncements, irrespective of their veracity; yet, although he has not made such claims in public, they are a matter of common knowledge among Subud members of even short acquaintance. He implies at all events that no human being in this age can attain to the spiritual rank in the Divine hierarchy which he himself occupies. It is easier to dismiss such claims than to accept them, and, while not all Subud members subscribe to these assertions uncritically, many are inclined to suspend judgement on matters beyond their understanding, because they feel that they are in the presence of a higher type of Man, of one who speaks with authority and not as the scribes.

Pak Subuh has said that he was initiated in Spirit by the

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soul of the Prophet Muhammad, and adds that the latter is in his hand and not vice versa. In the East, this gesture is : of subservience. He attributes to the famous Muslim saint of Baghdad, the Shaikh *Abdulqadir al-Jailani*, a role parallel to his own, though differing in certain respects. He claims : identical power is operative in these two cases, that of the 13th century Kurdish saint, and his own; but he considers his own revelation the more complete, because it is accompanied by his own peculiar exegesis, and does not therefore have : exclusively on traditional Muslim dogmatics for its theoretical commentaries.

Although orthodox Muslims are scandalized by the idea that greater respect should be paid to any other individual than to the Prophet Muhammad, it is interesting that he is significant for them as the *dispenser of perfected religion*, thought to have evolved through various stages, including those of Judaism and Christianity. It is specified in the *Surat-ul-Baqarah*, or Chapter of the Cow, that Prophets are considered of equal importance although they had different tasks and ranks. Since Islam, thought to have come into the world with Adam, was said to have reached its perfected form with Muhammad, there could be no subsequent prophet to supersede him with *another religious dispenser*.

Abdulqadir al-Jailani was born in 1077, about 507 years after the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. He is called a *wali* (saint), nor a *rasul* (messenger) or a *nabi* (prophet). The *wali* is one believed to be close to God whose enlightenment helps the masses to understand the religion better, since he does not have to rely, like orthodox scientists, on the printed word. Such persons are considered a blessing to the world of Islam, though the fact that certain groups of Muslims accord to this particular saint precedence over the Prophet Muhammad horrifies the orthodox. The claim that he thought to involve a new message, but a superior rank in the cosmic hierarchy, which is a very different matter. It is well known that he studiously counselled against innovation and recommended his followers to cleave to the path of orthodox Islam while practising mystical disciplines.

Pak Subuh's claims about his own rank in the Kingdom of Heaven therefore mean that he comes not to deny the Law

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the Prophets, but to confirm them; if his followers decide to renounce their original faith, and set up Subud as a new religion, this will be none of his doing, since he has repeatedly affirmed that *Subud is not a religion*, and he counsels against abandoning the duties demanded by whatever faith is espoused. Nevertheless, we hear of cases where, for instance, his followers are recommended by their immediate supervisors to abandon normal worship, whether among Christians or others. These persons give such counsel on their own responsibility!

Understanding of the ranks in the Kingdom of Heaven claimed by particular individuals should be seen within the framework of Islamic history. It then becomes clear that this is quite a frequent practice. The Prophet Muhammad is said to have stated: "If Moses were now living, he could do naught but follow me". Jesus is traditionally said to have reached the fourth heaven (symbolized by the Crucifixion), just as St. Paul (according to the Bible) mentions that he was "caught up into the third heaven".

In the eighth Christian century there arose a political campaigner in religious guise. His name was Abu Muslim. He also listed the major Prophets as representatives of five successive grades of Truth, and arrogated to himself the sixth position; a successor of his who founded the Ismaili movement, claimed to hold the seventh rank. The Aga Khan is his direct descendant in the male line. The sect represented something in the nature of a secret society. Scholars of Western universities teach that members were originally attracted by missionaries who cast doubt on orthodox dogma and its inability to give adequate answers to certain questions of cosmic significance. A path to revelation was then offered, and those who joined the movement were taught that they might find within it the solution of these mysteries. The higher they progressed, the more orthodox practice was ridiculed, and at an advanced level they became power-seeking atheists.

I do not suggest that the above interpretation of their aims is necessarily a correct one; nor do I claim that the general opinion of Muslim mystics about the role of Jesus must be valid. My aim is to familiarize my readers with common views of the

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Muslim world, and also to point out how modern E scholars and Islamic orthodoxy treat such ideas.

The early religious life of Pak Subuh was naturally n by the current of Javanese Islam, which incidentally is terized by a strong tinge of mysticism, and disinclina punctilious observance of ritual. Whatever the frequ claims made by mystics as to their spiritual rank, suc evoke the greatest suspicion among the orthodox schol the last couple of centuries, two movements have sprun the Muslim East around claimants to Divinity: the Ba of Persia, and the Ahmadiyya of Pakistan. While we r discuss their history and the nobility of their aims in th it may be recorded that their leaders are considered by or to be sinful heretics; all the more so because even the Muhammad himself made it quite plain that he was n divinely-inspired man, and no God in the flesh. Apa Judaism, no religion is as antagonistic to the theory of incarnations as is Islam; and yet they have again an been claimed within the Muslim world, since the time first great saint, *Mansur al-Hallâj*, who was flayed a attesting his own Divinity. The founder of Bahaism was e by the Persian government, and his followers were hour of Iran (which incidentally has its own peculiar brand o also considered heretical in other Muslim lands by most. He naturally became a martyr, and his followers are toda principally in the West. The Ahmadiyya, a more recen ment, is destined only for Muslims, but has created dangerous schism, since its adherents have to recog founder as the logical successor to Muhammad, and thus authorized to abrogate sacred doctrines.

If Subud is no religion, yet Pak Subuh sees his mis something on a par with the genesis of world-religio assertions should not be ignored, since he is the vehic formidable Power which is producing in many lands astc results of a little-known variety. Many people try to these away in terms of hypnotism, magnetism and other qualities, and yet they no more understand them than magicians of Pharaoh comprehend the work of Moses, v

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one extra trick up his sleeve. This was the all-important credential. Pak Subuh never tires of pointing out that, since the phenomena of Subud are occasioned by the impulse at the root of all human culture and discovery, it is extremely easy to select typical cases and label them; this does not mean that Subud involves a new presentation of ancient “-isms”, but that we are enabled to contact and tap the source of all of these. None of them are unfamiliar to this concept, which englobes them all, in addition to the totality of the world’s religions, philosophies, arts and other manifestations of culture. Attempts to label the phenomena of Subud are therefore a restriction, of what is as vast as life itself, to the limited horizons of the pedant who must classify, relate and compare at all costs. It is also essential to remember that, just as the nature of wind cannot adequately be grasped by concentrating exclusively on the ripples of waves, Subud cannot be understood in terms of the phenomena exteriorized on the sensory plane by those who respond to its initial stimulus.

While therefore we should not expect to comprehend the significance of a superhuman impact, unless we can ourselves scale superhuman heights, we can, as human beings, study the psychological characteristics of Pak Subuh. That we find him inconsistent should not necessarily deter us, since philosophers have reminded us that great minds have absolutely nothing to do with consistency! The primary concern of this Javanese sage is to fulfil a Divine mission delegated to him unsought. If this means to render service to the world, to alleviate the sufferings of modern man, even this is not his own wish, but a Divine Mercy; as an obedient servant of God, he would have no choice in the matter of carrying out his own role. He sincerely believes that this is his duty towards his Creator, and that only God knows why he should have been chosen to fulfil the task. Despite the few cases of apparent failure and increased suffering, the work of Pak Subuh generally meets with astonishment and admiration from those who give it a fair trial. The mission is never to be confused however with *any* of its human vehicles, *all* of whom are subject to error.

Most of Pak Subuh’s ideas are expounded within the frame-

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work of classical Islamic mysticism, which is supposed to possess a richer esoteric literature than any other world-religion. It is all very well to say that Subud is not a teaching; but it would be ridiculous to claim that Pak Subuh is no teacher. He regularly discourses to gatherings of the faithful in order to impart unknown information on a variety of subjects, and makes use of diagrams on blackboards to convey his meaning more clearly. If then, he can maintain that Subud is no teaching, he nevertheless remains a teacher himself, and this is a clear example of the dichotomy of the message and the messenger.

Subud has been qualified as beyond the reach of human labels because it is no teaching. Pak Subuh's instruction is however coloured to such an extent that we can best grasp his meaning by having some idea not only of what Islam teaches, but of the character of the Javanese people, and the extent to which their psychology differs from that of Westerners on the one hand, and other oriental peoples on the other. One cannot adequately study the life and teaching of Jesus, while ignoring Judaism and the Semitic heritage (principally as reflected in the Old Testament which is included in the Christian Bible). Nevertheless, the sayings of Jesus are in no way invalidated if it is proved that some Rabbi made identical pronouncements a century or two earlier.

In the West, it is natural to expect a leader to possess a strong sense of responsibility. This attitude is less common in the Muslim world, where there is greater emphasis on human helplessness in the face of an all-Powerful Creator. In Indonesia, I was specifically warned that the expression "*tanggung djawab*" is no equivalent of acceptance of responsibility in the Western sense of the term. Theoretically the expression does mean to "guarantee", yet a Muslim never seriously believes that he has the right to guarantee anything whatever since the future is exclusively a Divine prerogative; the Quran in fact specifically enjoins us to add "*Inshallah*" (*Deo Volente*) to our promises. The Indonesian "guarantee" then is merely a promise to try one's best!

When I arrived in Indonesia in 1950, I frequently heard the President of the Republic promise in public speeches that Western New Guinea would be integrated into the territory of the Indonesian State before the 1st of January 1951. When the New

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Year came round, he blandly commenced to assert with equal assurance that the aim would be achieved by January 1952. I asked Javanese friends whether they did not consider such practice irresponsible or hypocritical, as deliberate misrepresentation to the people; but they were not in the least perturbed. In fact, they suggested to me that it was the President's *duty* to make such pronouncements in order to maintain public morale! Whatever the truth of the matter, now in 1960, New Guinea still remains outside the territory of the Republic, and the President has long ceased to make such rash predictions. As a Muslim, he could always maintain that the Will of God could not have been known adequately in advance either to himself or to anyone else, unless directly revealed. We are then up against the puzzling question: "Why do these people insist on repeatedly trying to forecast the future, when they believe it is beyond human knowledge?" I have often been intrigued by precisely this characteristic in Pak Subuh, who is very easily induced to discuss the probable trends of human society for many years ahead, to predict golden ages, wars or their absence, and so forth.

People seek him out for advice regarding their personal problems, which are very often matters of the gravest concern to them. Most Westerners would rather hear the straight truth, however painful, although it is even now being debated in the West to what extent doctors should be frank with hopeless invalids. Certainly Pak Subuh lulls people into a sense of false security by indicating that there is nothing to fear; they blame him when the worst comes about, since they do not understand Javanese psychology: he is merely conforming to standard Indonesian practice for such circumstances. To many of his Indonesian pupils, he is infallible. They therefore tell us that: 1) Pak Subuh should never have been consulted anyhow; 2) that it is better to be temporarily relieved of worry, even if a catastrophe is unavoidable; 3) that even if he gives wrong advice, we are bound to be benefited spiritually by following it! Possibly after a longer sojourn in the West, he will modify the manner of his counsel.

So much of the Javanese character code is traceable to the ancient Confucian ethics of Cathay, although the Indonesians

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do not willingly acknowledge their debt to the Chinese civilization which has contributed so much to the traditions of all Far Eastern cultures. To become aware of the Chinese origin of many, analogical characteristics, one need merely peruse some such work as that greatest of all classical Chinese novels, the *Hung Lau Mong*, or "Dream of the Red Chamber", (which is generally recognized as a faithful mirror of Chinese family life) and compare its ethics with what I wrote about Javanese attitudes in the "Path of Subud". The dominant and primary loyalty of Chinese society is of course that towards the family, which is a more concrete reality than abstract moral principles. Corruption is condoned in official circles since those who practise it are seeking thereby to further the interests of the family which depends on them; I have heard Pak Subuh sympathize with the corrupt practice generally prevalent among Djakarta government officials on identical grounds: salaries are low, and domestic difficulties considerable. The office manager who absconds with the company cash-box in Indonesia is not thrown into prison: he is "kicked upstairs", promoted to a position where he remains honoured, but ineffectual.

Like the Chinese, the Javanese are required by their *adat*, or code of unwritten social practice, to show respect for the dignity of the individual: one must always show consideration, never proffer a slight which might cause the other party to "lose face". There is also that Chinese talent for give-and-take, for reconciliation along the line of least resistance, free from harshness. Direct contradiction is considered a sign of bad manners. We find, as we should expect, in terms of Javanese *adat*, that Pak Subuh seldom takes a strong line: he says quite plainly, in fact, that he has no wish to embarrass people. Instead he seeks refuge in the ultimate justice of Allah, and advises aggrieved followers to do the same, rather than expend energy on evening the score for themselves. Once a London businessman asked: "Have you ever known Pak Subuh to say 'no' to anyone?" Another colleague once wrote: "P. has learnt the trick of suggesting his own desired course of action to Pak Subuh, gaining apparent assent for the enterprise, and then claiming to be acting under his orders!" Indonesian Ambassador to Britain, Mr. Sunarjo, once remarked

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to me: "When an Indonesian says 'Yes', he does not mean 'I agree', but 'I have noted your views'. It is in fact a common formula in Indonesian letters to acknowledge the receipt of any kind of correspondence with an assertion of 'contents noted'. The Ambassador's remark should also be considered in the light of the fact that he considered it worth-while to make such an observation: he was aware of the frequency of misunderstanding in conversations with Westerners.

Muhammad Subuh certainly had no desire to rush forward and acquire worldly fame. He tells us that, when many years ago, a French clairvoyante travelled especially to Java to seek him out, on account of her intuitive promptings, he refused to meet her, and sent a message to say that the time was not ripe. This anecdote of his has apparently become mixed up in the minds of Javanese followers with the circumstances of my own visit to Indonesia, already fully described by me in "The Path of Subud". In consequence, a daily newspaper from Semarang, his birthplace, reported three years ago that I had originally travelled to Indonesia on the instructions of a Parisian astrologer, who told me that I ought to visit that particular country in order to find a Master of Wisdom. Nothing could have been further from the truth!

The publicity over a Hungarian actress afforded some interesting evidence of the imaginative powers of the Press. Paris reported that Subud members practised Pranayama and other Yoga disciplines; Istanbul suggested that the actress gave birth to a black baby (a ridiculous attempt to implicate Pak Subuh who had been at the opposite end of the world until the fifth month of pregnancy); Montevideo said he was also known as Ibu the Wizard, and lived in a house called "the Messiah". These strange ideas derived from perusal of the English dailies by Latin-Americans almost ignorant of English. In one paper, they saw the headline "Messiah lives in 40-room mansion"; another daily referred to his wife as *Ibu*, the Malay for 'mother'. I mention the utter unreliability of the daily press, so as to warn those who may easily be confused by future sensational reports: when I endeavoured to persuade editors in England, France and Java to correct their errors, naturally I found no anxiety to co-operate

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in the interests of Truth, no sense of responsibility for having misled their own public. A reporter from a major London daily confided: "The story is now dead insofar as we are concerned; but we are prepared to emend our accounts if you will give us a further scoop, to let us know of some prominent persons in the movement. . ."

When Pak Subuh converses with a given individual, he pays more attention to the man's Being than to his circumstances and character. While he can sense unexploited potentialities with remarkable accuracy, we should never forget that these may not be realized: the tree may wither before it bears fruit. Orientals like to flatter, and always seek out the best in their visitors: such an attitude is found from Spain to Japan. Instead of impulsively qualifying it as insincerity, Nordics should first of all remember that this is part of the accepted code of manners among the vast majority of the world's population. Such ethics teach us to give happiness and not concern: the guest, even if a total stranger, is a sacred person, and according to some oriental traditions, we may be obliged to ruin ourselves on his behalf, with no hope of praise or compensation for our services.

Those who wish to adapt themselves to the standards of orientals, or at least to show respect for such values while in their company, should be careful never to show impatience; even the tone of voice in ordinary conversation ought to be quiet and deferential. The sole of the foot must not be pointed at people, and the American habit of sitting on tables or placing the feet on furniture evokes especial distaste. A chance caller must never be chased away with the excuse that we are too busy to receive him; if we really do have no time, then some member of the family or the entourage should be sent to sit with him and make polite conversation for a while; he will in such a case probably take his leave very shortly, but without offence. In the East, private homes have special guest parlours, generally devoid of articles of value; hence it is easy for the house to be open to all and sundry, though few will be invited into the inner recesses. In conversation, we must avoid too direct questions, or any remarks which could cause embarrassment. Oriental vagueness is the product of the wish to leave avenues of retreat always

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open to both parties, and so one must not try to pin down Asiatics too closely in their definitions.

Gifts are commonly given and expected. All foreign visitors to Pak Subuh's own home depart with token presents. Hence his attendants have sometimes expressed chagrin when some similar small souvenir has not been offered to him on the occasion of a brief sojourn in a foreign land. He is unperturbed by such gestures or their absence; but his Indonesian assistants often interpret the lack of consideration as discourtesy. In all spiritual movements, or wherever man can become enthusiastic over ideas, there must be fanatics; and many of these devoted followers who place their services recklessly and uncritically at Pak Subuh's disposal, considering themselves the privileged companions of a modern Messiah, fail to see why complete strangers do not treat him in the same manner; often they sadly conclude that such persons are caught in the quicksands of materialism.

Few people in the Far East are in favour of rapid and radical changes, and the over-zealous crusading reformer is generally classed as one who has not learnt to keep his right place in society; which means he is regarded as an antisocial element. Modification of the status quo must come about through subtle suggestion, not through command and compulsion. While the latter course may be resignedly accepted as a manifestation of the Cosmic Will, its human instruments receive no acclaim.

As an example of the indirect approach to illustrate a point, a lesson making use of parable, I shall cite a personal anecdote from a conversation with Pak Subuh in 1952. Having been following Subud practices for over a year, I commented that I had become unduly sensitive to smells, particularly of many brands of soap; these would often provoke a desire to vomit. He observed, with apparent irrelevance: "If you are ever required to live in China, you may not feel too happy about it". I know him well enough to see the tenuous connection between his remark and my own: he regarded the Chinese in general as spiritually insensitive, a community obsessed by the desire for material gain at all costs. The commodities which were disturbing me had passed through the hands of various Chinese traders, and my increased sensitivity enabled me to sense their psychic

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emanations. It was a very interesting theory, not borne out by subsequent facts. Although I have no knowledge of any medical views about such symptoms, I discovered for instance that sensitivity to odours was much greater immediately after having drunk strong coffee; and in fact, later on I found that life among the Chinese (whom the Indonesians were so disparaging about) was so enjoyable that, when I had the chance to settle almost anywhere in the world that I might wish, it was in Hong Kong that I chose to make my home, once my mission of introducing Subud to the West had been adequately fulfilled. I regret the strong prejudice of all Indonesians against the Chinese and Japanese. While they have certainly suffered at the hands of the latter in recent years, racial discrimination against Chinese in the Far East is a similar phenomenon to anti-Semitism in the West. I am proud to have devoted friends among the Japanese and Chinese; and experience has taught me that they will stand by their friends in time of need. I am sorry to state that I have less often found this to be the case with Indonesians, though I can understand that apparent unreliability is more typical of the tropics; it is in fact because the Chinese originate in colder climes that they can manifest greater industry on the equator, though, in a few generations, they lose their ability to survive in the very places their ancestors emigrated from.

It may come as a shock to some members to realize that Pak Subud does in fact retain some of the very human (but nevertheless deplorable) prejudices of his race. Many Javanese gurus mix in politics (though he does not), and have been known to head letters to pupils with slogans expressing the desire to see New Guinea integrated within the republican territory. Political coquetry is to be found in dervish orders of other lands also, and colonial governments have often been quick to exploit such situations.

Shortly after having first met Pak Subud, I discussed with him a volcano which had just erupted in New Guinea. He qualified this as a sign of Divine wrath against the Dutch, owing to their injustice in withholding their half of the island from the Indonesians. I then pointed out that this particular volcano was in East New Guinea; he countered by stating that the Australians

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(who owned that area) were behind the Dutch refusal anyhow. Yet if anyone suffered in the incident, it was probably some innocent and unfortunate Papuan native, blissfully unaware of the existence of Indonesia. I doubt whether the Australian government was profoundly afflicted thereby.

In my previous book I have pointed out some of the Javanese customs, but consideration is also to be shown in many other ways. In many Eastern lands, gifts of money are offered in envelopes, and teachers are often paid in this way, whether by schools or private individuals. The red envelope is of course a familiar feature everywhere in the celebration of the Chinese New Year. In Java, a guest feels insulted if he is handed a glass of tea, or if it is carried in the hand by the servant: custom requires that it be brought on a tray. The servant must not walk into the sitting-room upright, since that would cause his head to be above that of the guest; he therefore has to crouch and waddle in most ungainly fashion, in order to keep his head at a respectful level!

Orientalists pay greater attention to the rhythm of Becoming than to analysis of Being. Pak Subuh did not often give intellectual discourses to his own countrymen, though his lectures have become increasingly frequent in the West. I have often suspected that he accepts in spiritual matters the slogan that the end justifies the means; and he may regard the calming of an anxious and enquiring mind as more important than the real relevance of his own answer. The chief desire is once again conformity to regional custom, which demands that the enquirer be given satisfaction.

Pak Subuh estimates that it requires from three to ten years for a Subud supervisor to be adequately trained, competent to handle newcomers. Why then does not he take sufficient safeguards? Why is Subud seeking proselytes in the West at full speed, when most of their guides have not had anything like three years' experience? This is partly because Pak Subuh does not like to command and forbid; it is also because he feels that first aid is better than none at all (that even the blind led by the blind may end up somewhere better than in the ditch); he says that much valuable time would be lost while awaiting the

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training of a competent team of qualified assistants. Yet he knows that new members have questions that need answering, and he admits that someone ought to be able to furnish explanations even when he is himself unable to do so. Further, he notes that some of those who bathe in the aura of his presence totally forget the important questions which they have come to ask, and he says he feels sorry for them.

Subud personnel are recommended to pursue their normal worship in terms of the obligations to their respective affiliations. Nevertheless, true surrender to God in a public place may also provoke involuntary physical movements, which will of course alarm other members of the congregation. What then should one do? Show external conformity to please neighbours while suppressing surrender, or pray to God in all sincerity at home?

Many of Pak Subuh's forecasts have remained unfulfilled, and some of them cannot be realized any longer by any conceivable stretch of the imagination (particularly those in relation to persons who have died meanwhile!). He quite confidently predicted that I should be able to settle certain debts not later than December 1951, and was equally emphatic that I should leave for Europe by that time. When both possibilities were delayed a few years, he could only reply that God alone knew why! He had also volunteered many forecasts that could not have been evoked by the wishful thinking of the visitor or by mind-reading on his own part.

I remember when, in Java, Pak Subuh would talk as if we were in the world of the *Arabian Nights*. He claimed to have a black genie perpetually at his beck and call, who would rush to any part of the world in the twinkling of an eye to do his bidding. He spoke of trains being halted by magic, of his own uncle's power to command and dominate wild tigers at will. He mentioned that Subud would enable people to grasp, in the nick of time, otherwise fatal arrows shot at them. If thieves visited their homes, they would shout out in their sleep, and the burglars would retreat in haste. Among his own powers, Pak Subuh has admitted that he can suggest ideas into the minds of others without their knowing it, to provoke a variety of telekinesis. Many Indonesian pupils are convinced that he himself controls the

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content of their exercises through acting on their subtle bodies. In support of this statement, they mention that the nature of the training was more strenuous twenty years ago, when one participant might involuntarily cuff a neighbour guilty of a recent misdemeanour.

I once asked Pak Subuh: "Have you ever failed to cure a sick patient?" He answered "No". "Why then", I continued. "do you say it all depends on God?" "To remind myself of the necessity for humility", he replied. I suppose that he considers his own intervention in the same light as that of a doctor. Despite his skill, it is ultimately a matter for God to determine whether the patient is to succumb or recover. There is however a great deal of ambiguity in the whole question of Pak Subuh's own relationship within the movement to the Divine direction and control thereof. As one correspondent wrote: "If everything depends on God, why then do we need Pak Subuh?" Here again the answer presumably lies in the relationship between the fallible man and the Divine Power which makes a special use of unique qualities in his particular vehicle.

Because of the number of remarkable results I have personally witnessed in Subud, I think it a pity that the scientific outlook of the modern world should have to make concessions to the world of traditional tropical Javanese fantasy. Oriental teachers lose face if they tell a pupil "I don't know". This tendency never to admit ignorance has particularly caused much chaos in the Indonesian political theatre. Perhaps the national attitude is one difficult for Pak Subuh to forsake, even in the West. Recently, I am told that he was asked to comment on the condition of an unborn child, and qualified its state as 'delicate'; it was later known that the foetus had died weeks before this!

I have revealed facts which many might have preferred concealed; this is because I feel that the faithful have a right to know what to expect, and that they should understand when to rely on their own judgement. This attitude of mine is in the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad, who once told a convert: "In spiritual matters, obey without question; but in your own worldly life, you may be a better judge than I of the course to be followed".

CHAPTER III

THE SEVEN HEAVENS

The basic concept of Pak Subuh's philosophy is that of the sevenfold division of the Universe. It is impossible to understand the nature of his work without taking into account this key to Life. The idea is extremely ancient, and if it is a cosmic fact, then we should expect mystics of all ages and races to make the same discovery, over and over again. It is not necessary that there should always be a human chain, that B. should be indebted to A. because A. expressed the same viewpoint in an earlier epoch.

We are surrounded by examples of the sevenfold division, chief of which is the manner in which prism and rainbow refract white light into seven colours. The seven notes of the musical scale probably originated from a recognition of this basis of cosmic harmony. One may also mention the division of the week into seven days, derived from the planets. Of course there have also been other classifications, but the idea of the seven heavens has persisted throughout mysticism, and is present in the Creation story of Genesis. Here seven 'days' are referred to, but since the sun was created on the fourth day, obviously we are not dealing with days as reckoned by human beings!

In the ancient religion of Babylon, the universe was symbolized by the primeval (or cosmic) mountain surrounded by seven concentric circles. These circles were known as the *Tubuqati* (plural form). We have no record of the process through which esoteric doctrines from Babylon may have survived and penetrated to Arabia after thousands of years. We note however that this same Semitic root appears in the Arabic text of the Quran, where it is found only twice. In one verse it is stated that the heavens were created in *Tabaqs*, in another we are told: "Ye shall truly travel from *Tabaq* to *tabaq*". Exoteric commentators merely translate the word by "grade", but such exegetes have

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never compared Islamic doctrine with the discoveries of Assyriology.

In Islamic theology there are seven heavens, and we see in the above passage from the Quran that the concept of evolution from one state of existence to another is implied. It is made clear to us that man has been successively a stone, a plant and an animal in the past; that he may expect to become an angel in the future. The concept is beautifully expressed in a Persian poem of the mystic *Celaluddin Rumi*. Many dervish sects have seven degrees; they were also an important factor of the Mithraic mysteries.

Pak Subuh has a great deal to say about the nature of these seven levels of consciousness, but he emphasizes that in spiritual science we are not talking about the physical and visible man. Hence, this is not a concept of physical evolution. He does not attempt to deny that human bodies have evolved from plant and animal forms. What he does maintain is that this has nothing to do with the soul in man, which existed before the lower kingdoms were created. This human soul had to await the preparation of a suitable physical vehicle before it could acquire the faculty of incarnation on earth as Man. Biblical commentators are puzzled by two successive accounts of Creation in the first two chapters of the book of Genesis. But they overlook the fact that chapter I states man was created, while chapter II mentions that he was formed out of the dust of the ground. Apparently there is a reference first to the creation of the human soul, and only later to the physical man. The fall of Adam apparently symbolizes the descent of the soul from the security of the Divine womb to the toil of earthly existence. His state in Paradise is in fact described by Muslim mystics as analogical to the condition of a child in the womb.

Pak Subuh is acquainted with the concept of the *Insân Kâmil*, or Complete Man, which apparently emerged in the thirteenth century in the philosophy of a grandson of Shaikh Abdulqadir al-Jailani, to whom we have already referred. Man has been created, the Quran tells us, to act as the Divine regent (the Caliph of Allah) on earth. All power over the kingdoms of the material, vegetable and animal kingdoms is vouchsafed to the

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Complete Man. The concept of the *Insân Kâmil* should not be confused with what is often termed Self-realisation or Cosmic Consciousness in the West.

To understand it, we must know that Man occupies the central position among the seven levels of consciousness. There are three subhuman kingdoms, and three superhuman grades. Human nature is dual, since the outer man belongs to the lower division of matter, while the soul pertains to that of Spirit. Thus we may view our sevenfold unity as two portions each containing three and a half elements. The object of mysticism is for man to build a bridge between the two aspects of his Self, so that the physical cognizes the Divine.

These are not new ideas, and they have not originated with Pak Subuh. They are also found outside the world of Islam, yet principally where there has been access to Muslim schools. What Pak Subuh emphasizes is that we are mistaken if we assume a soul to be human merely because we see a body to be so. Souls can degenerate or evolve. It is possible for the soul in a given man to belong to any of the four lower realms, and in exceptional cases, it may be superhuman.

Our past remains a part of ourselves. We are adults because of the presence of the child as an element of our past. Even so, in the complete human soul, the qualities of the lower kingdoms are present as integral factors of the Self. The Cross of Matter, whether that of Christianity or of the four rivers of Eden, symbolizes the fourfold content of the world, which includes man. This idea is known to Christianity, for St. Jerome said the Cross was a sign of the World. (In Eden, it is the ideal and immaterial aspect of the same fact.)

For the ideal Man, the elements of the material, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms should all be present, and integrated under the control of the Soul (higher human factor). Adam was evicted from this condition, and Jesus regained it. Hence he says: "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world".

In the vast majority of human beings alive today, largely owing to generations of sin and error, these four centres in Man are not ordered as they should be, and few are even conscious of their true birthright and intrinsic nature. In most people, one

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or more factors may be totally absent. If only one of them is present, this individual is referred to as a mineral soul, or a no. 1 man. If two qualities are manifesting, he is a vegetable soul, a no. 2 man, and so on. This indicates an alignment between the potentialities in a given soul with those essences in the corresponding kingdoms of Nature. A Self-conscious no. 2 man attains to awareness in the ideal kingdoms of mineral and plant essences, but he does not yet possess true *human* Self-consciousness. His soul will normally "go to" the plant realm or "heaven" at death, since that is where it already is. It is because he does not know his Self that he is unaware where it is now. The fact that souls pertain to different levels of consciousness is the reason for the considerable divergence between the types of experience of the various Subud members: what they can know is conditioned by the quality of their inner perceptive capacity. Thus it is that man cannot cognize Divinity beyond his own limits. Those who do attain to complete awareness in their own realm frequently ignore the very existence of other cosmic grades beyond that which is known to them. It should be remembered that these seven gradations, as described by Pak Subuh, do *not* correspond exactly with information published about the no. 2 man, etc. by other authorities; there are however many striking parallels.

Whatever grade one starts from, however handicapped, it is not so difficult for an individual to attain in a single lifetime to the Self-consciousness of the no. 4 man, just because he happens to have a human body. Nevertheless, this means the acquisition and growth of organs which may originally be totally absent or atrophied, although they should theoretically function in all human beings. We see therefore that mankind in general is far below the level of spiritual consciousness for which God created the human race. "Heaven" implies a state beyond the human. Most of us are even now spiritually "in hell", since we lack the organs needed for awareness in the true human realm (which corresponds eschatologically to the *Purgatory* of the Christians, the *Barzakh* of Islam). *It is only those who have already attained at least to the state of no. 4 men, who are capable of understanding the true significance of Subud!* Others may nevertheless benefit greatly: a doctor's patient is not required

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to understand medicine in order to obtain relief from ills. But the younger souls must be aided by those which have already attained to human consciousness.

Although there are seven cosmic levels, the average human being does not need to concern himself in this present life with more than four, while recognizing the existence of the fifth as a ceiling. He can no more form an idea of the sixth than a blade of grass can understand a man. We are only able to discuss these matters intellectually because there are seven notes to each of the seven octaves, and therefore we find the animal or angelic aspect at every grade of awareness. It is important however not to confuse note and octave. The angelic aspect of a stone is very different from the mineral aspect of an angel!

The Subud symbol of seven concentric circles with seven radiating lines attempts to express in a diagram the nature of Spirit. The spokes represent the notes of a given octave, while the circumference of a circle indicates the limits of awareness of a particular soul, which includes some other circles within itself. These are its past, the remainder its future. The circles are a substitute for spheres, a more satisfactory symbol. The soul has from time immemorial been represented by such diagrams, since the globe or circle is a symbol of completeness. The passage from one state to the next is like the breaking of an egg-shell; but it means the termination of one cycle and the commencement of a new one, birth following death, childhood succeeding age in a new realm with additional potentialities. Once again we may take the life of the butterfly as an illustration of the unfolding of the human soul through four stages.

When we attain to a higher stage, by conscious co-operation with the Divine plan for human evolution, we can usually transmit this advantage as a hereditary gift to our children, while, if our nature becomes sufficiently coarsened, we shall not be able to provide an adequate vehicle for a pure and evolved soul to incarnate in our family. Hence, says Pak Subuh, men should strive to attain some degree of Self-realization so as not to become targets for the criticism of their descendants, who are handicapped by the errors of parents and other ancestors. Well might the Psalmist sing, mindful of man's potentialities: "What

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is man that Thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him lower than the angels to crown him with glory and worship". Well might the Mosaic code sound the warning of the dangers of degeneration, that "the sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children".

The Slavonic book "Secrets of Enoch" tells us that Adam was created from seven substances, and that the clay of his body was drawn from the four regions of the earth. The Book of Revelation speaks of seven seals: horses are at the first four levels only, and they are respectively the symbols of the realms of earth, water, fire and air, coloured yellow, white, red and black. The Mayas of Yucatan had a cross with four arms painted in these four colours. They are the colours of the races of man. We are all aspects of the same Truth. Completeness involves integration of all the factors. To despise the negro is to show contempt for oneself. In his spiritual ascent Moses saw, according to Jewish legend, a temple, the four sides of which were coloured respectively yellow, white, red and black. These are the only colours mentioned, but because these had a particular mystical significance for man.

The Arabic adjectives used by Pak Subuh to describe the cosmic realms are listed below with English approximations, and these will then be treated successively in detail:—

1. Shaitâni	}	subhuman	Satanic or material
2. Nabati			Vegetable
3. Haiwâni			Animal
4. a Jasmâni			Human (physical aspect)
4. b Insâni			Humane (spiritual aspect)
5. Rûhâni	}	superhuman	Angelic
6. Rahmâni			Compassionate
7. Rabbâni			Creative

No. 1. Satanic Kingdom.

When I first met Pak Subuh, this was the only realm to which he referred by a non-Arabic name. He called it *Rewâni*, and I could not adequately connect the name with any appropriate Arabic or Persian terminology. I suspected it might be related

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to *Ravana*, a devil-king of Hinduism. Meanwhile Pak Subud has dropped the term.

In this philosophy, the Satanic is everything which belongs to the material world: not only objects which are, from a human viewpoint, lifeless, but even *thought*, which evolves through the experiences of sensory stimuli. Satanic consciousness is a one-dimensional awareness, there is no faculty of discrimination, and hence no innate possibility for change. A Satanic soul can be aided by others, but it cannot help itself.

We should not consider no. 1 men (those possessed of such souls) as inferior to ourselves, since their condition is our own past; we are their future. Their state is only pathetic in terms of what Man *ought* to be, of what they can perhaps become. The child *was* before the man *is*. Thus in a sense the child is superior to the adult, the satanic soul to the human one. Questions of relative superiority of souls have about as much meaning as discussions on the respective merits of the different ages of Man. Those who despise the souls of others confess ignorance of their own true nature.

Among the elements of antiquity, this grade corresponds to Earth. It is common to see sketched on Sino-Japanese tombstones the characters for Earth, Water, Fire and Air, in the same ascending order as that of this classification.¹ The great White Dagoba of Peking has them as base, body, spire and crown, while the fifth element tops the group as a gilded ball, symbol of Spirit.

The awareness of this grade is the illumination of *Thought*. Buddhism is a religion corresponding to this kingdom, hence the Buddha is portrayed with a boss on the forehead, the Thought centre. Buddhism seeks a liberation from earthbound existence. To Pak Subuh, groups among which instantaneous reincarnation is a recognized principle are characteristic of very young souls, unable to progress beyond this planet, and thus drawn back into this world again and again. In the West, such rapid incarnation is generally recorded in very humble families; in some countries like Tibet, it is considered the normal fate of the soul. Such races

¹ The Siamese regard these four elements as sacred, and speak of them with reverence.

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are spiritually backward, in terms of human potentialities. Pak Subuh thinks the prevailing Western admiration of Lamaism is mistaken, since it is a modern survival of a past age superseded by many representatives of modern cultures. To the mystic of this grade, spiritual development has a *way* which can be followed, and which can be communicated by the spoken word. In Islam, it is symbolized by the *Tariqat*, or "Paths" of discipline. Many who claim to have had an all-encompassing illumination have never known anything beyond the possibilities of *this* spiritual realm. Their souls remain earthbound.

In the physical body, the sex-centre corresponds to this level. Among colours, yellow. In awareness, *sensation*. The ideal aspect of the *sensory* world is the primary reality. The soul may be compared to a stone, but even here we have great differentiation: a pebble on the beach, a diamond. There may be prophetic ability when a superhuman *note* of this first octave is operative: but awareness will be limited to knowledge of the destiny of *this* world, and there is no real ability to apprehend what is beyond its atmosphere. The no. 1 man lives in fear, however brave he seems to be; since anxiety is a characteristic of the *satanic*. There is no self-confidence, as there is no true Self-differentiation.

This condition often leads to idol-worship, animism, fetishism. The Self is easily identified with external stimuli, and projected into the objects of the material environment, the forces of Nature. The faculty of choice is absent. Whatever such persons may achieve intellectually, they are spiritually sterile.

It should be noted that a more evolved soul can partake of the nature of this grade, if the satanic elements have affected the individual consciousness to the extent that the other factors have become veiled over. This is the true significance of the term materialism. It may have very grave consequences for the eternal fate of the soul which does not purify itself while it has time.

No. 2. Vegetable Kingdom.

This is the realm of maternal dualism, for the child and mother are in a state comparable to the plant rooted in the soil. This consciousness is more evolved, but still requires external

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aid, like plants fertilized by insects. Its keynote is *Fecundation*. In the Far East, it is found in the teaching of the complementary principle of *Yin* and *Yang*; in the Middle East, the dualism of *Ormuzd* and *Ahriman*. The story of the pairs in Noah's ark is also related to this sphere. Its is the spiritual impulse behind matrilineal cultures. The element is water, the colour is white.

Here there is an emotional reaction to the environment. In the former stage, man could not distinguish his Self from the surroundings. Here he seeks to *placate* the not-Self. There is two-dimensional awareness, and cult symbols are such things as horns, double axes, gods facing two ways. In Islam, we have the term *Hikmat* (Wisdom) to express the emotional illumination of this sphere. The Prophets before the Flood were earthbound; Noah builds a vessel to face the element of water, but Abraham is the prototype of this level. Water is symbolic of feeling, and the path to freedom from an earthbound existence is *via* the feelings, not *via* the thoughts. Here we find a great capacity for *devotion*, but *understanding* is still lacking.

No. 3. Animal Kingdom.

In this evolutionary stage, the concept of the family is reached, and paternity and *perpetuation* acquire significance. Hope of immortality emerges. The religion of Moses, as well as Shintoism, and certain aspects of Hinduism, represent this level of culture. In the individual, it is the illumination of the intellect which is now attained. There is awareness, but not yet Self-awareness. The no. 3 man has strong animal energies, his motor centre is his driving force. An indefatigable worker, he is a bad loser and dislikes contradiction. We now have the element of fire and the colour red. The idea of the perpetual flame is analogical to parenthood: fire is produced through the union of two flints. Religions which involve the cult of fire also emphasize the sanctity of the family, and they disapprove of monasticism. Where there is strong blood-consciousness, there must also be exclusiveness. The individual is significant as a member of the group, to which he owes his chief loyalty.

In this three-dimensional consciousness, the mountain is often exclusiveness. The individual is significant as a member of the

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Ararat, Parnassus, or Ebal and Gerizim. Twin-peaked mountains are associated in Japanese legend with the Creation, and this is the stage of sexual differentiation. Moses on Sinai is the Prophet for this realm according to Semitic tradition. The corresponding mystical stage in Islam is that of *Ma'rifat* or spiritual knowledge. Was not Moses an intellectual, 'learned in all the sciences of the Egyptians?'. Our keynote here is *cognition*. Ritual, observance and form are emphasised in religion, as symbolic of conformity to the group. The no. 3 man is a fighter and challenges the world. If he believes in peace, he will want to fight for that too. Sympathy is often confined to members of the same group. Consciousness of a unity with the whole human family is not yet present.¹

No. 4. Human Kingdom.

I have already noted that this has a dual nature, corresponding to the physical vessel and its spiritual content. The one can be present without the other, since, to receive new wine, all else must first be emptied, the Augean stables must be cleansed. Our no. 4 man is a spiritual hermaphrodite, active in the material world and passive towards his Creator. His completion and Self-realization require a mate as a mirror in which to see the Self. It is here that Self becomes important, for the attention is now turned inwards; man forsakes the worship in the temple, and communes with God in his own heart. The no. 3 man was conscious, but the no. 4 man becomes Self-conscious. His mission is to achieve the integration of the four factors in himself. His prophetic symbol is the Crucified Jesus, the central sign of the Cosmos. As man approaches the frontier which divides him from the superhuman, resurrection and eternity become major articles of faith. Self-purification is now required. Individual dignity acquires significance, and spiritual allegiance displaces that of blood. This teaching strikes at the very root of the no. 3 man's understanding, for it requires him to forsake family ties and wander on alone. There is always a strong feminine element at this level, since it is the synthesis of the negative

¹ "The origin of Shintoism does not go beyond blood relationships and geographical unity. Its religious observance is an obligation of a social nature" (Bairy: *Japans neue Religionen in der Nachkriegszeit*. Bonn 1959).

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cosmic polarity. Its colour is black, its element the air. The Cross is its natural symbol, in Christianity or elsewhere. In Islam this is *Haqiqat*, manifestation of Truth.

No. 5. The Angelic Kingdom.

This is a region beyond human comprehension. Man has no innate capacity to evolve from the fourth grade to the fifth. Individual effort cannot avail him beyond the point of human realization. We now refer to Divine beings who may voluntarily inhabit human bodies. The next world is a present fact for this grade. Its Prophet is Muhammad. Its principles are not comprehensible to the mind, but its keynote is *immortality*. A human soul may be transformed into a no. 5 one, but this is a matter for God only. Men no. 5, 6 and 7 are very rare: they are quite unique beings, differing from their fellow-men in their spiritual potentialities. Levels of the soul have nothing to do with character, which is a response to the environment. If one can sense intuitively the differences which separated Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, one can form some idea of what is meant by men no. 3, 4 and 5 respectively. A no. 5 soul is often entrusted with a racial destiny. It has access to knowledge veiled from ordinary mortals, and under certain circumstances can protect them from dangers and help them to surmount obstacles. But despite man no. 5's capacity of *intercession*, one should place trust only in God, and not in His messengers. The symbol of this grade is the flaming sword guarding the entrance to Paradise, the Sword of Islam. In that symbol there is a great mystery. No. 5 men who join Subud have very unique possibilities, and they can make very rapid progress because of a great inner vitality which enables them to throw off the effects of sin much more speedily than other types. To such souls, this world appears as a very small place, and once they are Self-conscious, they feel at home anywhere on earth: they have achieved awareness of the Unity of Mankind, and yet they are always strangers among mankind, which cannot understand them. They incarnate on this earth from choice, as what Buddhism calls *Boddhisattvas*, not from compulsion, since they have (in soul) already completed the cycle of earthly existence and progressed to higher cosmic

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realms. In Islam, this grade is called *Shariat*, or the Divine Order on earth. Its representative is a "Cosmic Male".

No. 5 souls often incarnate in aristocratic families, but they are also occasionally to be found among the offspring of humble peasants. As they incarnate of their own free-will, in acceptance of special missions offered to them, they have some possibility of choice in the matter of their families, hence they are usually found in prosperous surroundings, which give better opportunities for the accomplishment of their duties.

Since the qualities involved here are superhuman, they cannot be transmitted hereditarily to their descendants; such persons are also not normally the descendants of no. 5 parents. Perhaps the peculiar conditions which accompany such incarnations explain in some cases the reasons why great men are rarely the sons or fathers of those endowed with similar quality and fortune.

Subud offers additional facilities for the modern no. 4 man to achieve self-integration; and although the transition to the no. 5 grade is not within human power, the very guidance of Divine Grace involved in the training facilitates the conditions which bring the metamorphosis about. Hence there is a likelihood of the quantity of no. 5 souls on the planet increasing, both through the transition of present no. 4 souls, and through the incarnation in new bodies of no. 5 types, which require specially conditioned vehicles, or a certain combination of hereditary qualities in the ancestry.

No. 4 man acquired Self-awareness. No. 5 obtains Self-knowledge, by confronting the conditions of the world, cognizing the extent of his own capacity to effect modifications, and learning to know his own limits.

No. 6. Man: The Kingdom of Compassion.

True Compassion is a Divine characteristic. This Kingdom is also known as the Cosmic Womb. The angelic is comprehensible to man as a potentiality: the next step forward in cosmic evolution. Here we are already beyond the angelic, so it is hardly possible to discuss the significance of this realm, though we may say that such souls represent a peculiar blessing for the world,

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and that their characteristic is *Transcendance*. The dynamic creative impulses of the seventh level are here nurtured, and eventually exteriorized. It is such souls that can be expected to produce concrete results from the impulses emanating from such as Pak Subuh.

No. 7. Man: The Kingdom of Creation.

Any soul on this plane is said to have an awareness at the level of the Divine aspect of Creation. It must therefore understand all the mysteries of genesis, and it can also change the destinies of individuals within limits. Nevertheless, it represents cosmic male impulses which are ineffectively scattered unless they find receptive ground in another soul which can provide the necessary facilities for their incubation and formation.

In closing the section I warn the reader once more not to confuse the eternal soul with the ephemeral man, and I remind him that a knowledge of character does not give access to understanding of the soul's grade of evolution. The question of these levels is a matter of cosmic significance, and a key to cultures; but it is not a subject for theoretical speculation.

Note.

Those anxious to compare the above exposition with classical Hindu theory on the subject are referred to the *Mahanirvanatantra*. This has been translated into English by Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe), under the title "The Serpent Power" (Ganesh, Madras).

CHAPTER IV

MANKIND AND THE WORLD

Chapters IV to VI are an attempt to classify subjects discussed with Pak Subuh under various headings. As to our material environment, this is discussed at greater length in his book "Susila Budhi Dharma", commented on in part II. He has also noted the effects of climate on ethno-psychology, which we shall consider presently.

The World we live in.

Are we to affirm this world or to deny it, in our quest for completeness? The spiritual disciplines of history have been paths of conquest or renunciation. Chinese philosophy offers Confucianism for the successful man of the world, and the consolation of Taoism for the failure. Religion is the opiate of the populace or the armour of the brave, according to whether man retreats in fear or advances in humility. Nietzsche's acrobat was right to say that man is something that has to be surmounted, and to ask his audience: "What have you done to surmount him?" The question throws man back on the meaning of his existence, but later comes the realization that Divine Grace is the source of evolution. The "progress" of struggle and conflict is the bondage of deception. Resistance is a barrier to understanding, and flight is negative resistance. The elements of the environment mirror aspects of the Self. By cultivating awareness of the interaction of external stimuli and consciousness, we approach integration.

All culture has its origin in revelation, the source of invention. For an answer to be revealed, we must first formulate a question. By denying the world, we remain in ignorance of its nature. When we have little to ask, we need not expect many answers. The devotee who isolates himself from the currents

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of science and society loses the capacity of attending efficiently to his own material needs. The scientist who neglects to cultivate the intuition and relies on external sources of knowledge diminishes his chances of discovery, for the material universe is a reflection of its ideal counterpart. Reliance on books is the idolatry of the twentieth century. They enshrine the thoughts of others, who were men. We too are men. Let us tap the source and infuse additional culture rather than submit to present knowledge. Subud may help to show that the progress of science is furthered by devoting time to the culture of the Self. It may prove to materialists that Divine revelation can aid mankind in the search for a better world. No matter how far man can progress in the quest of knowledge, he will not overtake his Maker, who can always reveal another step. For a world which is concerned principally with the development of brain and brawn, Subud proposes a revised educational procedure stressing a parallel cultivation of feelings. Pak Subuh does however point out that this aspect of our all-round evolution may well be postponed until normal schooling has been completed. Subud claims that "spirituality is the best policy" even for the realization of a worldly quest. It does emphasize the Hereafter while denying the validity of the Present. Monasticism, asceticism and self-deprivation are not advocated, for they are a source of weakness, not of strength. Worldly responsibility is not to be rejected.

Pak Subuh gives many illustration of the parallel between the ideal and the physical worlds. He claims that the oriental custom of colouring the eyelids with *kohl* is an imitation of a spiritual state, while worldly crowns are copies of haloes seen by those with inner sight. The kings of this world have physical regalia; the hierarch of the Divine world is also adorned with corresponding insignia. While such psychologists as Jung have recently emphasized the importance of visual archetypes which emerge from the unconscious, it appears that human speech is also affected by similar auditory patterns from a collective ideal storehouse; a deeper knowledge of these may contribute towards new historical discoveries and the decipherment of problematic epigraphs.

Islam classifies knowledge into *wrf* and *ilm*, respectively that

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from enlightenment, and that from books and teachers, who still attach importance to the *ilm* which is no longer sought by one who has *urf* (known as an *arif*). Books are spiritual offal to Pak Subuh, for they represent an exteriorization which leaves an inner vacuum, and permits the attainment of more advanced knowledge. Scriptures also are discarded ballast, received with reverence by those below.

Access to knowledge from within is possible because of our descent from a common ancestor. To the Muslim, Adam is a prophet, because he represents the seed-potentiality of the human race. Oaks grow from acorns; they will not develop from sunflower-seeds. It also appears that a memory of the past is transmitted through the genes of the ancestors. Hence, if we go deep enough into ourselves, we may not only meet these departed souls but even have access to the knowledge they acquired while in this world. History, like the child we once were, is a part of our own past; to cognize it, we must get beyond physical limitation, and become conscious of the Higher Self.

The average mystic follows a path opposed to that of the man of the world. Islam and Subud recommend a synthesis. The former tells us to work as if everything depends on ourselves, to pray as though results are a Divine monopoly. Those who live only for this world cannot understand the significance of the inner life. Once a wealthy business-man visited Pak Subuh, though he had little interest in knowing about the movement. Afterwards he asked: "What did he say about me?" On being told that he was said to be almost entirely dominated by material influences, he remarked: "There is nothing very wonderful about such a statement. It is exactly what any man in his position would say about any person in mine!" By the Grace of God, such may pass through the eye of the needle.

The World's Races.

Environmental circumstances can modify the condition of races exposed to them over a long period. Comparative mythology shows us how people living in the midst of rich natural beauty evolve charming legends, while *ghouls* and other devils are topics of desert areas. Pak Subuh recognizes the physical endurance of

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the African negro. In his movement, he expects Asia to provide the best souls, Europe to lead in the field of knowledge, and America to supply the most wealth. He observes that literature about Subud began to become available when he first visited Europe.

In the Far East, the soldier who can merely demonstrate physical stamina is relegated to the bottom of the social scale, for the acquisition of knowledge is respected most. Military authorities discourage independent thought, and they exact conformity. The Oriental shows contempt for pugnacity, bluster and violence. Buddhism has long taught that self-mastery is superior to the subjection of cities. Mediaeval Muslims respected the bravery of the crusaders while deploring their lack of civilization.

In the West, there is a tendency to extol animal prowess, to emphasize sport and competition. The appetites are given greater opportunity to develop. Subud releases these energies and enables the individual to free himself from identification with them, hence results in the West are more critical, reactions more explosive. Should one blame the system which offers a liberation, or the civilization which has so long glorified these animal energies? Because there is little privacy in the East, there is greater tolerance and understanding, less feeling of the need to meddle in the affairs of others. The teacher is among those most respected: especially the spiritual Master, for he shows people the way to self-improvement and freedom from bondage to the animal passions. Poverty is rarely a stigma.

There is no real opposition between East and West, no question of superiority and inferiority; but there is a need for comprehension, for effort to bridge the superficial gap of Kipling's famous dogma. The soul is the highest common factor of humanity, and spiritual knowledge is the means to bring about peace, and goodwill which embraces the whole human family.

We may now review a few of the world's races individually:

THE JAPANESE: Although Pak Subuh notes that there is an admixture of the Malay strain among these people, he believes that they exceeded the limits of conduct tolerable to God, and were punished for this during the war. He has told me of atroci-

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ties committed against his own people during the occupation, how, when the possession of cigarette lighters was forbidden, a Japanese soldier would punish an owner by setting his hair alight. This type of conduct he found so inhuman that he prayed to God to teach the people of Japan the error of their ways; and, he concluded, months afterwards he read of the atomic bomb explosions. I may observe here that, having lived among the Japanese, I cannot consider such cruelty typical of so sensitive and courteous a race. Their occupying forces consisted largely of Koreans, Manchurians and other colonized races. I am personally acquainted with the former Colonel Jimbo, who saved the life of the Philippine President Rojas by risking his own execution at the hands of the *Kempeitai*. The troops of most nations lose their sense of responsibility and commit excesses when far from home, particularly in wartime and when subjecting unfamiliar peoples. Yet the emotional public will always blame an entire race for the sad fate of loved ones.

When I visited Japan in 1954, Pak Subuh was dubious of the scope for Subud in that land. He expressed surprise on arriving in Tokyo for the first time in February 1959: some 300 Japanese were eagerly awaiting him. In August-September 1959, I lectured to some 150 persons in Tokyo and Osaka, mostly Subud members. The content of their training was very satisfactory. At the present time about ten groups are active in the country.

Our Japanese colleagues often report extremely peculiar psychic experiences, which are difficult for the Western mind to understand. Perhaps one may relate a modification of the Psyche to the effects of the atom bomb. Since the matter is of concern to the whole world, I shall cite a few examples of phenomena which appear to strike at the root of our entire existence, and disturb regular patterns. I should however mention that I have selected the illustrations from foreign newspaper reports:—

- a) A Japanese doctor, called to attend patients in Hiroshima shortly after the explosion, found nothing wrong with them, and promised to return the following day. He had not walked far when he heard a shout behind him. Turning round, he was astonished to find that the house he had just left had vanished. On enquiring, he was informed

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that such a house had stood there before the bomb, but that house and occupants had perished in the blast.

- b) Similar to the above: At about the same time, an American officer noted traffic going over a bridge, which was later found to have been destroyed by the bomb. Both of these instances illustrate a brief reflection in our atmosphere of forms which have been disintegrated by sudden and violent shock.
- c) In 1959, a Japanese woman was discovered with a growth in her body which appeared to be pure cotton.
- d) Also in 1959, a Japanese doctor operating on an 11-year old boy found growing within him a four-month old foetus, in which a tooth had already formed. The last two cases were reported in the *South China Morning Post*, of Hong Kong.

THE CHINESE: Like the Japanese, this is a race against which Indonesians are particularly prejudiced. Pak Subuh qualifies the vast mass of them as possessing earthbound souls. We do in fact note how many Chinese lack any true religion, but burn dummy boats, "Hell bank notes", and other objects which cost little, so that their departed ancestors can be comfortable in a world which they imagine as a replica of this one, where they hope to eat pig all day long, according to one western cookery-book!

Pak Subuh did however recognize that in this race of some 600 million there are souls of the fifth level (of which some races cannot afford even one example). Even if the majority have primitive souls, that may still leave a couple of hundred millions in an evolved spiritual condition. The Indonesians know the Chinese principally as struggling Fukienese traders, as smugglers or coolies. As they themselves have distaste for loud noise (the radio is an exception), they shun the busy bustle of the Chinese quarters, where hard work permits a higher living standard.

Our Singapore branch consists largely of Chinese members, and Pak Subuh spoke well of their earnestness. He was apparently disturbed by the fact that the men would rarely bring their wives to join Subud, and asked them why they did not

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wish to offer them benefits similar to those they had themselves obtained.

Since Subud claims to modify the spiritual condition of departed ancestors and offer them a means of escape from *limbo*, this idea could have a very persuasive effect on the Chinese community, should they be convinced of its validity. The basis of their religion is ancestor-worship, and this would mean for them a chance to perform additional acts of piety. Arthur Maxwell, then Police Commissioner of Hong Kong, told me early in 1959: "It would be a very easy matter completely to fill the local football stadium with Chinese Subud candidates". To him, the Chinese are more law-abiding than many other races, they are a "people of genius", which they can, like anyone else, direct towards crime. It seems to me that a spiritual movement designed to bring relief to suffering humanity cannot ignore the vast Chinese masses. It must however be remembered that a special psychological approach will be necessary, as the Chinese are by nature suspicious of reforms and crusades that seek to change the established order.

Pak Subuh qualifies the Tibetans as another earth-bound race, and also puts the ancient Egyptians in this category. Instantaneous re-incarnation or mummification are illustrations of preoccupation with this world. Asked about the Tibetan capacity to sit naked in the snow without feeling inconvenienced, he stated that such insensitivity is a quality of a stone. It may be psychic but it is not spiritual.

THE MALAY RACES: It is perhaps natural that Pak Subuh should have more praise for the inner condition of his own people. He believes that true spirituality can only blossom adequately in harmonious and fertile ground, and even speculates whether the Prophet Muhammad might not have been able to exteriorize a more gentle form of Divine revelation had he not been brought up amid the harshness of the Arabian desert. To Pak Subuh, irrigation is a decisive factor. Java abounds in rivers, while the Arabian peninsula has none. The views of mystics (who dare to express independent thought) ever scandalize the orthodox. The official Muslim view is that the word of God ex-

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pressed in the Quran is valid for all time and all places, after having been revealed. Yet the spoken word must conform to the vocabulary of the audience and be aligned with local mentality if it is to be comprehensible at all. A literal interpretation of eschatological parables is misguided: to the desert-dweller, a boiling hell and a heaven of flowing rivers is a very realistic concept.

Since four colours correspond to the four factors in the spiritual constitution of man, Pak Subuh believes that a "golden-chocolate" colouring, as a synthesis of yellow, white, red and black, is desirable. This is the pigmentation of many of his own race. He claims that it was also that of the early Semites. His people have highly developed and sensitive feelings; their culture expresses subtlety, refines harshness. A simple piety and resignation are typical of the Javanese peasant.

Pak Subuh is interested in the psychic signification of names, which will be discussed later. He connects the name 'Java' with an ancient God, *Jaho-deva*, the Jehovah or *Jah* of the Old Testament. He says his country has been successively colonized from Mesopotamia, West Africa, Greece, East Africa, and India, prior to the advent of the Muslims and the Europeans. China is not mentioned. The Mesopotamian strain he equates with Syria, even claiming Syrian blood himself. But then he says that the Syria he means is not the area of the present State of that name. Does he mean geographical Greater Syria (including Palestine and the Lebanon, and perhaps the former White Syrians of Cappadocia), or is he relating the term to Assyria? I have not been able to ascertain his exact meaning on this point.

As in many Muslim lands, *Sayyids*, or descendants of the Prophet, are greatly respected in Indonesia. It is known that the title is often arrogated unjustifiably by Hadhramaut Arabs anxious to increase their prestige. Many Indonesians, even in areas where the facial type is strikingly Mongolian, claim such descent. Pak Subuh says it has been revealed to him that he is himself a descendant of the Prophet in the forty-sixth generation. The late Aga Khan belonged to the 47th. He also states that he has a *de facto* claim to the Sultanates of mid-Java, being the descendant of a former Sultan who abdicated, in favour of a younger brother, to devote himself to spiritual disciplines. Natu-

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rally the claim was officially waived for the descendants, but Pak Subuh still attaches some significance to this. It all belongs to the argument that exceptional spiritual personalities come from a line of Prophets and rulers. Are not similar claims made about the male ancestry of Jesus (despite the Virgin birth) and Muhammad?

THE SEMITIC PEOPLES: The Quran states that Abraham was no Jew, which appears very logical since the establishment of Judaism was the work of his descendant Moses! Islam, Christianity and Judaism all give this Prophet a place of eminence. To Pak Subuh, spiritual potentialities continue to nestle for many centuries in the descendants of Divine Messengers. He regards the Middle Eastern peoples as a particularly fertile field for his mission, for here descendants of Abraham and other Prophets in the direct male line are still found in greater numbers than elsewhere. He finds the desert Arab cruel and violent with uncontrolled and powerful sexual urges. Muhammad he considers an exception, and he states that the severity of punishment described in the Quran was required precisely because of the strength of the passions manifesting in the area. Among the Arabs of the Mediterranean, the tendencies have been somewhat refined by intermarriage and length of sojourn. Despite the drawbacks mentioned, owing to the spiritualizing influence of Islam, the psychic atmosphere of the Muslim lands is preferable to that in most other places. Among evolved peoples of the Near East, he also lists Armenians and Ukrainians.

THE INDIANS: Today there are more evolved women than men in India, though Gandhi and Jinnah were both no. 5 men. The Hindus are bound by local traditions and ancestral rituals, which make it difficult for new and foreign ideas to be assimilated, yet there are encouraging signs.¹ It is known that they flock to the lectures of missionaries, and that few converts are acquired. This is because they recognize a plurality of forms behind which the One can be worshipped. As the Upanishad says: "*Ekam Sât,*

¹ Several hundreds of new Subud members were recruited during Pak Subuh's visit to Bombay and Delhi, Spring 1960.

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vipra bahudha vadanti." (Existence is one, though people call it by many names). This is why the Hindus, while recognizing the validity of other forms, see no reason to abandon their own. Subud does not require them to forsake their spiritual heritage, and may thus achieve popularity among them.

THE EUROPEANS: Pak Subuh spoke less about the races with which he was less familiar, and many of the conversations which illustrate his views occurred before he visited Europe. He finds the English more relaxed, less formal than the Dutch. There are a handful of no. 5 men in Britain (who have not yet joined the movement) but only one among the Dutch race. The latter however includes a very large number of no. 4 people, hence the Netherlands could offer excellent potentialities for the spread of Subud. I am not referring to statistics, and consider it deplorable to assess spiritual movements by the quantity of their followers, since I have known groups offering very primitive teaching which attracted millions. If Subud is to transform the culture of this world, and to leave its mark on history, it will do so through leaders, not through camp-followers. I say again that Subud can be instrumental in exteriorizing dormant potentialities; it does not confer what is alien to the nature. Christians are familiar with the parables of the Sower, of the Talents, of the tares among the wheat.

While Europeans are less developed psychically than Orientals, the English are particularly intuitive, more so than most of their neighbours. When this remark was made, it is doubtful if Pak Subuh had ever conversed with a dozen Englishmen. The French are very much attached to their own national culture, and, rather than assimilate the qualities of a new environment, they promptly endeavour to transplant their own values. Casablanca became the Paris of Morocco, Saigon the Paris of Asia. Are not speeches still common from political leaders about the civilizing mission of France? The Germans are expected eventually to re-assert their *Drang nach Osten*, and roll the Russians back a few miles.

Pak Subuh's general opinion of the West was that he would be better received there than in Asia. As to his own country, I

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must have heard him refer a dozen times to the saying of Jesus that "A Prophet is not without honour save in his own country". This remark has made a deep impression on him, which must relate to the way his own family and neighbours received his claims. In most Eastern countries there is no lack of spiritual disciplines and teachers, but their very shortage in the West is a reason why he would be welcomed. He has often said that few Western occultists and mystics had much to teach above the level of thought-concentration.

The Earth and its History.

Pak Subuh claims to know from clairvoyant vision that the Earth was originally elliptical, shaped in fact "like a tortoise". Many cultures have come and gone. As to cataclysms, lost continents have certainly existed. They were lost because of a periodical 90° swing of the Earth's poles. Regarding the possibility of survivors from Atlantis, "if any man had come through such an experience alive, his reason would have been lost". Psychic vision alone can reconstruct these vanished epochs of human history. They are in a sense not *our* history, since, as the entire human race was swept away time and again, a new Adam and a new Eve had to make their appearance. Giants did once people the earth, and a giant's bones are said to have been discovered in a Javanese river. Indonesia offers much evidence of an ancient megalithic culture.

As to future cataclysms, one does not wish to alarm people, but these will doubtless occur. God has committed the world's management into the hands of mankind. As long as a sufficiently evolved and Self-conscious spiritual personality inhabits the planet, we need hardly fear that our race is liable to immediate annihilation.

Earthquakes often accompany the birth or death of advanced souls. There was one at the Crucifixion. Since they are especially common on the 35th northern parallel of latitude, one wonders to what extent this claim is generally valid. Syria, according to the History of that country by Professor Hitti, has had an unusually high percentage of serious seismic disturbances throughout the centuries. So of course has Japan, though it will be

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remembered that Pak Subuh was less impressed by the spiritual potential at the north-eastern end of Asia. He says that such disturbances (as well as volcanic activity) may also be expected when the dormant energies of an advanced soul are released. This would indicate that such souls may act on the subtle influences in the Earth up to four times during their lives: at birth, initiation, self-realisation and death.

In 1957, Pak Subuh declared in a speech to a small gathering in Willesden, London, that the human race in general might strive hard for peace on earth and a harmonious existence in consonance with Divine Laws. "If" he concluded, "a small group of persons remains, endeavouring to sow chaos and confusion for selfish purposes, they will be destroyed". Presumably by Act of God!

The Planets.

The source of human knowledge is to be sought in the Sun. It is said to be rushing towards the Earth (or the Earth towards it!) at increasing velocity. Human culture will develop in a proportionate ratio. We may therefore expect a much greater advance between now and 2060 than that which we have achieved since 1860. The inhabitants of the Moon are said to be of female sex, those of Mars have horns on their heads. Pak Subuh's granddaughter is reported to have remarked at the age of four that she had lived on the Moon before coming to Earth, and that conditions here are quite different from what she had known before! A son of Pak Subuh's died mysteriously almost immediately after the solar eclipse which occurred in 1955 on his own birthday. The Force which controls the Subud training is said to emanate from beyond our solar system. Pak Subuh says he himself travelled in Spirit to the planets during his Ascension.

Animals.

Not all animals have animal souls. A no. 5 soul is occasionally found inhabiting pythons and similar large snakes. No. 4 souls may be present in cats, particularly in large black ones. It is noteworthy that these creatures seem particularly sensitive to Subud influences in their vicinity, and find their way constantly

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into rooms where these radiations are strongest, and enjoy settling there. An eagle at the London Zoo is thought to have once responded to the Subud contact.

Animals cannot normally be healed through Subud training. Unsuccessful attempts have been made, but I know of no case which proved effective. Perhaps this is because they lack the faculty of reason.

Cats, dogs and monkeys are particularly intelligent, and one day a serum from one of these animals may be successfully used to cure mental weakness in man. The idea that one is influenced by the type of food absorbed is an important aspect of Pak Subuh's teaching. It is also a Chinese belief, and the wealthy will pay enormous sums to eat a tiger's liver in order to acquire courage, or buy rare *ginseng* roots to retrieve lost virility.

Pak Subuh's explanations mystify almost as often as they enlighten. A lecturer in archaeology at the University of London once asked him why, in Buddhist tradition, the soul of Sakyamuni is said to have entered his mother's womb from her side. The answer was as follows: "If an elephant wraps its trunk round someone's body, the end of the trunk will be opposite the side". Those who feel like putting this book down at this stage on account of the strangeness of some remarks would do well to remember that the laws of the spiritual and psychic realms need not be logical or even comprehensible to the mind. We can only suspend judgement about such stories in the absence of enlightenment; it would be just as wrong to reject them without evidence as it would be to accept them merely because one respects the original narrator.

CHAPTER V

FAMILY, FAITH AND HEALTH

Religion.

Some space has already been devoted in "The Path of Subud" to Pak Subuh's views on religion in general. Here, after including some additional observations on the same subject, I append a section on Islam in particular, owing to the important conditioning effect which this faith must have exercised during the sage's childhood. The other elements which have helped to mould the metaphysical heritage of Javanese culture are animism, and both Chinese and Hindu philosophy. Nominal Muslims rarely give much thought to punctilious performance of ritual in Java, except on such critical occasions as births, marriages and deaths. The Javanese retains at heart much sympathy for Hindu ideas; and to the Hindu, worship is a matter of obligatory rites rather than personal devotions. The Javanese derives satisfaction from mysticism insofar as it confirms traditional practice through insight. The Quran (unlike Hindu scriptures) emphasizes that individual aspiration may, subject to Divine Mercy, modify the consequences of past actions, deflect fate. Muslims perform both *doa* and *salat*: personal supplication and stereotyped recitation; but the two forms of prayer are clearly distinguished.

While Pak Subuh may affect conformity, he does not always regard regular observance of formal ritual as essential to spiritual welfare. Such an attitude disturbs Muslim theologians, since Islam has had a history of a thousand years of deviations and excesses in the name of personal revelations direct from God. If he would influence his companions, the mystic is expected to conform externally: then his additional devotions may evoke the respect of the community. Disparagement of *shariat*, or orthodox practice, practically brands him an infidel, whatever his reputation in the mystical field.

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Pak Subuh recognizes the efficacy of fasting for purposes of purification, but questions the orthodox demand for us to submit our digestive system to the calendar, since mystics always claim to live by an inner law.

He sees the material difficulties through which his country is passing as the working out on the material plane of the psychic consequences of conversion from Hinduism to Islam a few centuries ago. The material evidence of spiritual transformation often appears subject to delay. Despite his respect for the ideal and original presentation of Islam, he believes contemporary practice and interpretation to have degenerated farther from their origins than is the case in any other major religion.

The argument for the rise and fall of cultures under new spiritual impacts appears to be somewhat as follows: A Prophet or other enlightened individual transmits a new force which cleanses his followers of the burden of centuries of accumulated sins. This in its turn gives their descendants greater opportunity, as they are the offspring of purified parents. In the first few generations, the new community is principally concerned with spiritual values. Since the masses in every land like to be led by those who inspire their confidence, the families of the early pious converts gradually achieve worldly eminence, though from modest origins. Their own descendants become enamoured of the luxury which their office has enabled them to enjoy. Gradually there is neglect of spiritual obligations: yet a few more generations and the family fades once more into obscurity. The Quran frequently recommends us to travel and meditate on the reversal of powerful empires, while, in the Old Testament, pious Prophets are assured that their progeny will prosper in this world.

The postures of prayer illustrate, according to Pak Subuh, the state of the child in the womb. The Quran tells us that an understanding of the process of pregnancy is a key to knowledge of the nature of the resurrection. Islamic prostration is also found among Chinese and Japanese never exposed to that faith. Again it is the position of a child in the womb, and has been artificially imitated in some burial cults.

Pak Subuh considers Christianity and Islam as complementary negative and positive poles of the same reality. He sees

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the Muslim attitude as more virile, the Christians as motherly. Hence he observes that love of children is more common among Christians. Jesus was an individual in whom masculine and feminine elements were equally balanced, says Pak Subuh, hence he is the only Prophet who did not need to marry, as he was already complete in himself without a wife.

Islam.

At the most critical moments of his life, a Muslim pronounces the *Shahadat*, or attestation of his belief that God is One, and that Muhammad is His Messenger. To Pak Subuh, such an attestation is a lie if not based on actual experience of what is stated. Yet it was formerly his custom to demand that all Muslims make this profession on initiation to Subud. "If they are unwilling to do so, they need not join us", he said. In England, he modified this practice since "Subud makes no difference between Muslims and followers of other faiths".

Islam is traditionally believed to have owed its success in Java to nine pious persons known in Javanese as the *Wali Sanga*, or Nine Saints. A considerable amount of Javanese literature, not available in any translation, is attributed to these persons, and discusses such matters as the seven cosmic levels. It was Pak Subuh himself who mentioned this matter to me, but I am not sufficiently familiar with Javanese to be able to understand such works, even were they accessible. I cannot therefore judge to what extent Pak Subuh's own commentary on many mystical subjects is influenced by this literature.

I have mentioned Shaikh Abdulqadir, the great saint of Baghdad. Professor Drewes has studied the influence of his cult in Java, and described it in his work in Dutch "*De mirakelen van Sjeich Abdoelkadir*", published by the Bataafsche Koninklijke Genootschap. It is apparent that, as in so much other literature of this kind, accounts appear locally in garbled guise, with liberal embroidery. This Saint founded the *Qadiriyya* fraternity, represented in every country of the Muslim world. Since Pak Subuh draws a parallel between his own role, and that of the Shaikh, who is said to have received an *identical* Power, it is relevant to add some details of his life for the general reader:

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Given the title of *Muhyiddin*, or “reviver of the faith” for his services to Islam, Abdulqadir was a Kurd born at Jailan on the Caspian Sea, and is thus also known as al-Jailani. He lived 91 years, almost exactly covering the twelfth Christian century. He studied the four schools of Islamic law and acquired expert knowledge of them all, while himself belonging to the most rigid, the *Hanbali* persuasion. He had a hard time in his youth, and experienced a few years of great poverty. He admitted having had a fit of insanity, and “died”, reviving when about to be buried. He had 27 sons and 22 daughters. Several of his writings are extant in Arabic.

As a young man, al-Jailani studied under another saint almost as famous as himself, Shaikh Hammad, who tested him very severely, yet remarked: “Today the glory is ours: tomorrow, it will be yours”. It is related that one hundred scholars of Baghdad visited him for the purpose of ridiculing his renown: each of them was to ask one question on his own special subject. The saint is however reputed to have himself told each man in advance what question he intended to ask, and then answered it satisfactorily. It is also believed that he had the power to deflect a man’s destiny from the waking state to the dream life, and in one famous instance, he thus saved a merchant from robbery and murder. Pak Subuh has related this incident, as if it had occurred to the saint himself, which appears to indicate that he had heard the account in one of the popular garbled Javanese versions. No adequate literature about this saint is available in English, but the interested reader familiar with the French language is referred to: M. A. Aini: *Abd-al-Kadir Guilânî* (Geuthner, Paris, 1938).

In Subud, it is important to realize the basic divergences between Christian and Muslim attitudes. I have found this nowhere better summarized than in the following passage from Sir Muhammad Iqbal: *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Ashraf, Lahore, Pakistan):—

“With Islam, the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces which cannot be reconciled. The life of the ideal consists, not in a total breach with the real which would tend to shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in

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the perpetual endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view eventually to absorb it, to convert it into itself, and to illuminate its whole being. It is the sharp opposition between the subject and the object, the mathematical without and the biological within, that impressed Christianity. Islam however faces the opposition with a view to overcome it. The essential difference in looking at a fundamental relation determines the respective attitudes of these great religions towards the problem of human life in its present surroundings. Both demand the affirmation of the spiritual self in man, with this difference only, that Islam, recognising the contact of the ideal with the real, says 'yes' to the world of matter and points the way to master it with a view to discover a basis for a realistic regulation of life".

The Significance of Names.

In the East, Buddhist monks get new names when they join the order; so do officials of the Javanese court when they are promoted; so do converts to Islam. English Lords usually adopt a new title, wives lose their surnames on marriage. The ancient Mesopotamians "believed that the name of an object shares its essential nature", and a major road of Babylon was called "*May the enemy never tread it*" (G. Contenau: *Everyday life in Babylon and Assyria*). Orientals sometimes take on new names after a period of bad luck, in an endeavour to outwit destiny.

Pak Subuh has recently started giving new first names to his Western followers. He talks through interpreters, and the names he gives are often suggested in a Dutch pronunciation, as his knowledge of European Christian names has come principally through that source. A number of people, especially women, have adopted these names as they heard them, without modifying the pronunciation to suit national usage. I know of no case where the change has been legalized.

Sex and Marriage.

Women have always had an inferior position to that of men in the East. Confucius secluded them, Mesopotamians veiled them, and Judaism taught man to thank God daily for not having

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made him a woman. Their subjection is not an Islamic innovation. In fact, in his work on Islamic sexual ethics, Prof. G. H. Bousquet of Algiers University has expressed the view that the reforms carried out by the Prophet Muhammad, *in terms of his milieu*, make him one of the greatest champions of feminism ever known. It is however important not to lose sight of the fact that Islam, like many other oriental faiths and philosophies, recognizes polygamy as legally permissible and sometimes spiritually desirable. This is not the place to enter into a comparison of the relative merits of monogamy and polygamy. The subject is a complicated one since it involves social, psychological and spiritual factors. Suffice it to record here that Pak Subuh considers that monogamic laws are wrong from a cosmic point of view, and he rejects the efficacy of celibacy as a path to complete Self-knowledge.

While plurality of wives is permitted, adultery and prostitution are considered particularly harmful, since Subud teaches that all complete sexual union involves a psychic interchange. In cases where a number of other males have had relations with a woman, her present partner is liable to absorb the psychic conditions of all of them. If such practice becomes frequent and continues for a long time, the inner nature is radically modified and degenerates. The ensuing psychic confusion is such that it becomes a very difficult matter to acquire Self-knowledge. Since these habits are among the most degenerating, Pak Subuh, in common with general Islamic opinion, is realistic enough to tolerate, without condoning, certain other of the less extreme forms of sexual relief. He considers chastity desirable for married persons as well as single ones; he deplors the opinion that the sexual urge should be considered an instrument of sensory gratification, and that the act should be performed for this purpose even between man and wife. Islam recommends early marriage, and considers it a pious act to assist those who are unable to marry for economic or similar reasons. Muslim law punishes the unmarried offender less severely than the married one for identical offences.

Pak Subuh believes that Divine revelation is often a consequence of a union between pure partners. He has much to say

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on the effects of marriage between couples at different soul levels, but this is not a subject for discussion here. The consequences are rarely dangerous to anyone, though the Biblical story of Abraham and Sarah, and especially the more esoteric apocryphal Book of Tobit, hint that certain highly spiritual women cannot be approached with impunity by average men.

Many esoteric teachings indicate that a man should be married before reaching the age of 40, irrespective of whether he subsequently becomes a widower or divorced. The production of a male heir is particularly significant for completeness. Pak Subuh may give a particular individual extremely contradictory advice on the subject of marriage at different times, sometimes recommending that a union should take place as soon as possible (with little apparent concern for the choice of partner) ; and on other occasions advising the same person to wait patiently for a true affinity to come along. Here the apparent contradiction may be related to the question of whether the society in question is a polygamous one, or whether its laws regard bigamy as a crime. In such extremely personal matters, which involve for the Westerner a life-long contract (easily dissolved in an Islamic society), and where the material existence is as much affected as the inner development, it is probably wisest to be guided exclusively by one's own deepest intuitions. Subud may list an ideal set of principles, but we live in a society of man-made laws. Some aspects of psychic development may be very individual matters, but marriage is also a social affair which involves a number of persons totally unconnected with these spiritual aims, and very often quite unable to understand them.

Woman.

A wife stands in the same relation to her husband that he occupies in respect of his Creator. This idea that the husband is that spiritual guide of the wife, her "*Lord and Master*", is a very ancient one. In a material society it is often rejected by women who resent apparent implications of inferiority; in any case, in such an environment very few husbands are qualified to fulfil their true rôle.

Pak Subuh has expressed the idea that a spiritually conscious

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woman who conceived a child from an evolved male would be so overjoyed at her good fortune that she would even gladly accept the social stigma of illegitimacy if necessary. Here again we are dealing with an idea which has very diverging implications in East and West. In some Muslim lands, women deliberately become pregnant by reputedly holy men. I am told that in Thailand, where the civilization has much in common with that of Indonesia, there is no word in the language to express the concept of illegitimacy. What is accepted in one land raise a fierce public outcry in another.

Children.

The views of Pak Subuh on the subject of birth-control correspond exactly with the official opinion of the Catholic Church, regarding what is permissible or sinful. Like the Prophet Muhammad, he is convinced that any child destined to find its way into the world will certainly do so.

The child is a means to the parents' self-realization. Pak Subuh claims that man has a duty to produce a male heir, and that re-incarnation is normally obligatory if this duty is for any reason not carried out, even in the case of saintly and evolved souls. He also teaches that the babe in the womb already has its own existence and desires, but operates through the mother; she may thus behave in unaccustomed ways during pregnancy owing to the influence of the child acting within her.

Children are sensitive to spiritual influences that adults can no longer perceive owing to increasing identification with the sensory world. Except in cases of illness, youths who have not yet attained the age of 18 should rarely be authorized to join Subud, since there may develop a tendency to ignore worldly obligations at a tender age, and before sufficient experience has been obtained.

Health.

Although the release of vital energies in Subud gives people new possibilities of resistance to disease and expulsion of unhealthy conditions, this training is no alternative to medical treatment for all cases. Decaying teeth, abscesses, venereal infections

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and broken bones are conditions which should not normally be expected to vanish without proper medical attention.

Pak Subuh relates diabetes to the second cosmic grade; eye troubles, heart disease and other circulatory complaints to the third level; tuberculosis to the fourth; throat activity to the fifth stage. This does not mean that a person dying of coronary thrombosis is necessarily a no. 3 man, although in fact he often is; but it does mean that no. 3 influences are at work within the patient.

Western medicine recognizes the importance of a calm mind and relaxation of thought in aiding the cure of a patient; it suggests no very definite procedure to bring this about adequately. It is precisely this effect of Subud which enables the operation of the inner vital forces. Hence even where the stimulus does not cure, it certainly increases the possibility of recovery. It is important to know how strong those vital forces are: the chances of recovery are greater in young persons.

One particularly strange opinion of Pak Subuh is that the cause of cancer is a subconscious desire for a union with a discarnate soul. This seems difficult to reconcile with the known facts about a disease which kills off nearly a quarter of a million yearly in America alone. The organs affected by cancer vary from race to race in frequency. More than a score of origins of this disease are already known to medicine, and among children below the age of six, it is the second chief cause of mortality.¹

It seems that Pak Subuh's opinions on the esoteric significance of disease are similar to those of Rudolf Steiner: both authorities imply that it is a factor contributing towards the development of new organs and the purification of others.

Diet.

This subject is exhaustively discussed in the work "Susila Budhi Dharma". Subud recognizes the validity of vegetarian disciplines to render it easier to cognize the feelings, but certainly not out of compassion for suffering creatures. The lower forms of life are sacrificed in the interests of the higher, and by be-

¹ The presence of cancer is reported among regular attendants of Subud training.

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coming thus associated with these higher essences, their own possibilities of evolution are increased. Eating is a sacrament, whereby man may contribute towards the uplifting of the essences in vegetables and beasts. Is it compassionate to refuse them this chance? Pak Subuh's concept of Nature is that the lower forms of life worship the higher, which are then under an obligation to raise them. It does not matter whether we refer to a domestic animal serving man, or to a no. 3 soul waiting on a no. 4 one. Respect for rank and title in the material world is a reflection of the Divine order. The Far East is an area of castes, feudalism, of knowing one's place in society and keeping it. Youth serves age, woman sacrifices herself for husband and son. In Western lands, where these forms have less significance, and few really ancient esoteric traditions are preserved in society, the corresponding ideas are more difficult to grasp. Gurdjieff also taught that a baked potato (destined to be eaten by man) was more fortunate than an uncooked one for the pigsty, since a link was created with a still higher form of life. Yet, says Pak Subuh, man should be able to return to their origins the essences of the foods he consumes, otherwise, at his death, he will be called to account for his failure to repay his debt. "Saying 'Grace'" before meals is not merely an attitude of thankfulness, but the recognition that eating is an act of worship. In Muslim lands, where belief in transmigration of the soul from animal to human bodies is rare, there is no suspicion that we may be devouring our own ancestors. In India and Buddhist countries, where such opinions are general, vegetarianism is a more logical development. Unlike Buddhists, Muslims are rarely pacifists, though kindness is enjoined and strife discouraged, except when the Faith is threatened.

Music.

Involuntary singing and chanting is extremely common in Subud practice, and in fact it is desirable, though not essential, that this should take place at initiations, as it has a helpful and calming effect on the feelings of the trainee. In Java, spiritual advice is generally sung to one of several traditional melodies, rather than spoken. Pak Subuh indicates that in other lands,

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similar phenomena to the early stages of Subud may be introduced by means of flute rhythms. He divides music into male and female melodies, the former containing long drawn-out notes, the latter characterized by frequent pauses.

Most religions include singing as an integral part of public worship, since the effect on the emotions is such as to open up the feelings and increase receptivity to inner currents. Pak Subuh says much may be learnt about the spiritual potential of races by studying their folk-music, and he has remarked that that of the Ukraine is particularly attractive. He says Subud enables one to develop the capacity of hitting higher or lower notes of the scale than had formerly been possible, and indicates that such training may be very helpful for professional singers.

While the singing of Subud practitioners appears to play a major role in the treatment of invalids, the individual operator must himself be present. A recording of the voice is altogether useless; though, Pak Subuh observes, the peddling of amulets has developed in many cultures just because people believed that the charm could prove effective on its own, without the charmer. Involuntary chanting in unaccustomed rhythms modifies the breathing, which also affects the inner calm.

Are the chants, mantras and masses, of temples and churches the empty shell of a power which once healed by musical rhythms inspired from within? Can disease be cured by sound in the same way as a knowledge of keynotes can collapse houses, shatter glasses and break bridges? Does Subud healing involve an intuitive inspiration, in harmony with the destruction of disease? I suspect this is the case, and end this section with a quotation from A. Z. Idelsohn: *Jewish Music* (New York 1948) :—

“As long as the Egyptian religion and culture were in their flower, music was developed as a tool of expression and drew its significance from its influence upon the sentiments of the gods in the higher regions, the gods in the lower regions, and not less upon the evil spirits. The musicians were the priests, male or female, who were also the sacred dancers. Music was regarded as sacred, and was credited with its own *ethos*—its Divine power. But in the course of ages, Egyptian culture outlived itself. When new ideas arose, revolutionizing the old-established ones, the

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aristocratic party clung desperately to its tradition, and forced the priest-musicians to fascinating expressions which they could no longer draw from the heart of their institution, since it now lacked vital influence”.

Education.

A true educational theory should recognize the needs of the individual child and should not force him to conform to an external pattern regardless of his inner urges. The Teacher must know the limitations, capacities and weaknesses of the pupil better than the boy knows himself. Hence it is pointless to scold, punish or imply stupidity. If the teacher cannot align his guidance with individual needs, he had better take to another calling. Impatience and anger rarely have helpful effects. To guide through fear may produce results up to a point, but carried too far, this does violence to the child's nature. Then an explosion occurs, and the possibility of further beneficial influence over him is lost. Pak Subuh has found this to be true in the education of his own children, and thus recommends tolerance in the parent, and trust in God. The father may see a shorter route to the goal than the son can see; but the son must act according to his own understanding, and he will reach the objective ultimately. Satisfaction may come through patience. Threats will cause alienation.

CHAPTER VI

THE INNER LIFE

Free-will and determinism.

Insofar as man is identified with the sensory world, social values, thoughts and appetites, he has little possibility of free-will. This can however be developed and increased, through cultivation of the Spirit, and affirmation of the Power within, irrespective of environmental obstacles. Most spiritual Masters warn us that we should not identify ourselves with passing circumstances or judge by the ephemeral appearance of the present. In the same manner as quotations are significant when considered in context, an event should be understood in relation to the complex of which it is a passing manifestation. The loosing of the shackles of fate, victory over death, have their origin in non-identification. Anxiety and worry are related to the satanic field, since the inanimate, the one-dimensional consciousness, cannot have faith in the unknown. When a certain end is considered desirable, one should initiate a corresponding course of action as an act of faith. The mind may suggest all kinds of potential dangers on the path, but Spirit is greater than the environment, and faith unlocks many doors. For those who spend their lives in the fear of what may happen, who are afraid of death, poverty or opprobrium, this is a difficult path. Faith teaches us that we can only die at the appointed time, no matter how great the apparent danger; that if we incur financial loss, we can make good again in time; and that a life that depends on conformity to social opinion may retard progress. The only true life is that which is in harmony with the deepest and highest in ourselves. "The sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows, and a newspaper directs" (Emerson: *Essays*).

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Death.

All renewal involves the death of some present factors, and Christianity teaches that we must lose life in order to gain it. Pak Subuh says man goes through 70,000 deaths in the course of his evolution. Islam tells us: "Die before you die". All these remarks indicate the need of emancipating ourselves from identification with transient factors, whether people, events, concepts or possessions. Possessiveness certainly portends sorrow; it is merely a question of time. If one can maintain a detached inner attitude, it is quite unnecessary to deny oneself an enjoyable life. For this, it is incumbent to be able to live in such a way that we can say 'good-bye' to everyone and everything at a moment's notice, whenever it may be. This is to become what the Javanese mystics seek: "*Mati ing sadjroning oerip*" (dead in the midst of life). If this state is completely realized (and complete Self-integration is a prerequisite) it is claimed that one may leave the world when one pleases, from choice rather than necessity. Such persons know the meaning of death before the end comes, and have therefore nothing to fear. Only these are the truly alive. Pak Subuh has predicted that his own death will occur at the age of 78 if his mission has been adequately fulfilled, and at 108 otherwise. He does not relish the latter prospect, since Subud may give perfect health but it does not rejuvenate an ancient body. He is now 59 years old. It is worth-while to remember this prediction, since such personalities always have followers who are quite incapable of believing that they will one day die like everybody else.

Reincarnation.

Souls come into this world to realize the nature of the *Insân Kâmil*¹ or Self-integrated human being. If they succeed, they go to higher realms, where they have plenty to do. Death means annihilation of memory as generally understood, and such persons have freed themselves from attachment to this world. It is not necessary to assume that they continue to take a benevolent interest in it, however comforting the thought may be to those they have left behind.

¹ A term coined by the mediaeval Arab philosopher al-Jili.

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Where the soul fails to achieve integration, it will require further chances, and, for this possibility, a human body is particularly valuable, (since it is precisely the medium for this integration to take place consciously), containing the four factors which require synthesis for Man to evolve and be prepared for the Beyond. Pak Subuh indicates the necessity of re-incarnation where the examination of this world has not been successfully passed. Such belief is common among religions of the first three levels. Christianity and Islam maintain silence on the point since these faiths are educating man towards the overcoming of spiritual death (which means recurrent incarnation on earth), whereby such laws no longer apply. Unless one reaches the frontier of the no. 5 man in this life, reincarnation is necessary. Man has to learn to rule the subhuman kingdoms. This was the mission of Adam, which Jesus completed when he overcame death. He was the way to the Father since there is no other way than the fourfold integration portrayed in the Crucifixion.

Pak Subuh indicates that the younger the soul, the more frequently incarnation takes place. In no. 1 souls it may be almost immediate, in no. 3 types there is perhaps an interval of 2000 years. No. 5 souls enter the world from choice, not under compulsion. Pak Subuh states that his own last incarnation on earth was seventy thousand years ago, and says that the earth's aspect was so different from that of today that it is impossible to indicate the race to which he then belonged.

Many little-understood examples of fore-knowledge are today commonly attributed in the West to re-incarnation, which is much in vogue in certain quarters. It is forgotten first of all that man contains several principles, not all of which need follow the same destiny. Preoccupation with a past incarnation is often a form of solace for present mediocrity.

Reflections of the close future are often perceived in flashes of vision just before falling asleep, when there is mental quiescence. These flashes may not be remembered. When a few days later there is a sense of familiarity in a place visited for the first time, this may be attributed to reincarnation, although it may be really a matter of unrecognized prescience.

Knowledge subconsciously absorbed may emerge in moments

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of emotional stress, and again gives rise to theories of reincarnation, because here also the original source was never consciously remembered. Telepathic contact and hereditary memory preserved in the genes are also sometimes unsuspected factors, and their operation may lead to theories connected with previous lives.

Telepathy.

Telepathic vision manifests irregularly and involuntarily in a large number of untrained subjects. Sometimes a link on the subtle planes is established some months before a meeting in the flesh takes place. In this case, it is usual for the two parties concerned to have had an identical vision. Unless particularly vivid, such phenomena are often forgotten.

The tendency to absorb the thoughts of others is a very individual matter. In those accustomed to such experiences, there is awareness that they are much more receptive to some persons than to others. Sometimes the thoughts may be picked up over thousands of miles. In Indonesia, Pak Subuh trained some of his pupils with special exercises, sending them out walking or cycling with an order to find by intuition their friends whose whereabouts were then unknown. Before I ever met Pak Subuh, I had a few experiences of this faculty, which once led me, at a moment of great emotional stress, to locate the residence of someone whose address I did not possess. I only knew that the house was in one of a hundred or so streets in a certain quarter of a town. I have also frequently felt a telepathic link with people at the time they were writing me letters, or, stranger still, when the letters had already been delivered at the front door and were lying there unknown to me. Subud practice sharpens such faculties; it does not confer them, but may appear to do so, as such gifts are dormant in many who are unaware of the fact. I could cite numerous cases from my own experience which might provide material for psychic research; but to the average individual, such phenomena have little meaning as long as they remain unfamiliar to his own experience. Their relation by another person can so easily evoke incredulity, which is then projected towards everything else he may say. Orientals usually

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keep the phenomena of their inner lives very much to themselves: they wish neither to be considered remarkable by the credulous, nor to be scorned by sceptics.

Dreams.

Since Subud initiations effect a transposition of the centre of consciousness from thought to soul, the meaning of dreams is said to be modified thereby. Those who dream for instance that they are in the company of a ruler or a president should rather take this to mean that they either have met or will meet an individual of high spiritual rank. In people strongly influenced by material forces or those who have difficulty in stilling thought, guidance frequently comes in the dream state.

Dreams of washing, or entering bathrooms, signify the sub-conscious awareness of either the need for purification, or an imminent opportunity for it. Fighting and struggles, being chased by enemies, is an indication of the new forces at work in the consciousness, which are subjugating habits that formerly dominated the nature. Graves are symbols of spiritual death, while their opening portends liberation from such a condition. Influences from the fifth level often appear in the form of a brilliant sun which shines around the dreamer. Mother and father may indicate body and soul. The ship is another symbol of the body. The explosion of a volcano represents a release of animal energies. No. 3 men who are psychic often have visions in which they cross rivers and ascend a mountain on the other side. This particular eschatological experience was familiar to Sumerians and Aztecs alike.

People seen in dreams may be the living, the dead, or beings in the spiritual world who have not necessarily lived here. They do not seem as old as when we last met them, but according to their age in the particular cosmic realm through which their souls are evolving. Hence the aged may appear as children and vice versa.

Hypnotism.

My description in the 'Path of Subud' of this training as perhaps an unknown form of auto-hypnosis appears to have

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perplexed several readers. Hypnosis means 'putting to sleep'. I stated that the operative factor was the Higher Self. Hence this remark meant no more than that the lower energies in man were being brought to a state of quiescence by the Divine controlling element which then suggested whatever was required for development.

Confusion seems to have resulted, and people have asked: "One writer says there is hypnotism in Subud, another says there is not. What is the truth?" Insofar as hypnotism means the conscious assertion of the individual will for the purpose of suggesting certain specific ideas to another person in a receptive state, there is no hypnotism in Subud, since the will should be entirely quiescent. Certainly a result is hoped for, but the technique is one of passivity towards what is beyond man, and not a projection on the subject of the wish for results.

In hypnosis, the consciousness is progressively withdrawn from sensory identification. In the early stages, certain by-products of this withdrawal may be observed. A common symptom is the twitching of the eyelids. This is also very frequently noticeable in Subud subjects. It indicates that an abstraction of the attention has commenced, and that the necessary condition of receptivity is present. During the process, the subject's will is in no way interfered with by the supervisor, and he retains full consciousness and the ability to "break the spell" at any moment. If therefore certain symptoms are common to Subud practices and to hypnotic states, it means that there is an abstraction of consciousness in both cases; it does not signify that an identical power is directing the two types of procedure. What I have called auto-hypnosis under the control of the Higher Self merely means the voluntary surrender of the lower aspects of man's being to the control of the highest in himself. This prospect should alarm nobody.

Happiness.

I have already referred to the importance of motive in coming to Subud. Success is possible in life for those who know what they want, and who persevere in their aim. When a person has no very clear idea of what he is looking for, neither can anyone else

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aid him, nor can he necessarily recognize the value of what he obtains.

Emancipation from desire does not make life dull. It produces a state of bliss which pervades all the actions of life and is ever-present. What we generally understand by happiness is one of two opposites. It is not possible to cling to one of a pair and expect to be free of its companion. Where happiness is founded on desire, its nature is transient and illusory. Bliss is a name for a state beyond the opposites, in which there is desirelessness. It is then possible to find enjoyment in the present without the danger of sorrow in the future. Detached pleasure means we can be happy with what we have, without being perturbed at its loss, for there is no identification with objects or even with memory. It is the remembrance of past conditions which causes many people to feel unhappy in the present. Dissatisfaction is a product of relativity, of comparisons.

True spiritual peace is acceptance, satisfaction, gratitude for what one has, unrelated to what others have or to what we lack; it is life with a prayer on the lips and a song in the heart. Those who prefer to pursue the search for material security will find it a mirage: hope directed towards an ephemeral objective will ever remain a bed-fellow of fear.

When people realize the true nature of the Subud ideals, they will cease identifying themselves even with such causes as the prosecution of the Subud movement. Years are required for such a modification of the understanding. Too often a mere breath of inner experience provokes an outer reaction: people crusade, and seek to organize, to crystallize and to kill the very element they are advocating. Plans and programmes do not belong to the inner meaning of Subud. How many have understood this? How many still seek to make of this Movement a screen on which to project their subjective ideals. If this is to become a successful proselytising sect, there will emerge hatred from and towards those who fail to see the need to join. Will this remove confusion or add to it? Spirit is Life, organization is death. And yet since Life emerges from the midst of death, even so may the organization of Subud provide a matrix within which some will find themselves, and then gain the strength to stand alone.

PART TWO

COMMENTARY

on

SUSILA BUDHI DHARMA

The Way of Submission to the Will of God

by

Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo

(published by the Subud Brotherhood)

INTRODUCTION

What follows might well have been published in a separate book, but it is designed for the public rather than for Subud members. I have thought it might be more helpful to issue this commentary together with a discussion of Pak Subuh's views in general. His book has been read by many people without understanding, since they lacked the background necessary to follow the argument in true perspective.

Pak Subuh began to write the work "Susila Budhi Dharma" at the end of 1952. He was still living in Djogjakarta, where I had met him, and I had in fact left that town a few weeks before, to introduce Subud to Sumatra for the first time. Perhaps it was his awareness of an impending need that inspired him to write it, as Subud was becoming available beyond Java, and would thenceforth be at the disposal of people who might not find it easy to travel the distance necessary to meet the founder in person. The first branch of Subud outside the island of Java was being created at Palembang, capital of South Sumatra, where, unlike the branches in Javanese towns, I had to seek the members and even the committee entirely among persons who had never heard of Pak Subuh. In time, other branches would be founded by colleagues in many parts of the world, with increasing rapidity, and at greater distances from Java. The spiritual contact would be identical, but would there be consistency of commentary? Pak Subuh's book was to provide a basis for such unity. Its title is the same as that of his movement, and *Subud* is an abbreviation of this name. In its original form, the book is designed for members, since it constantly suggests that they should eventually be enabled to check the arguments from their own experience.

THE ARGUMENT

It has been indicated how man's psychic nature is a compound of four factors. After discussing right and wrong approaches to the spiritual Path, and considering the reasons why so many people are handicapped by the lack of factors which should be present in every man, the book proceeds to describe in turn the progressive influences exerted on man by the essences present in inanimate objects, plants, animals and other human beings, which we may also call influences of types no. 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. For those who are disturbed by the idea that a pair of shoes or a mowing-machine may exert an influence over us, it can be helpful to consider rather that our consciousness is limited insofar as we identify ourselves with such commodities. Yet Pak Subuh claims that it is precisely because within us there is an element in harmony with such implements that we are able to understand and utilize them at all. He claims therefore that the life-essence within such 'dead' objects (and physics recognizes the presence of such an elementary form of energy) inter-acts with the corresponding centre in ourselves.

I have called this part of the book a 'commentary', but it does not attempt to follow stanza by stanza the Javanese verse of the original. Rather does it summarize the main points of the argument behind the lines, and then develop these ideas in a manner which may, I hope, render them more accessible to the general Western public. These five chapters deal therefore successively with the approach to the path and the four types of influence already mentioned. Reiteration of certain themes, for purposes of emphasis, is characteristic of the original.

PART II

CHAPTER I

FINDING THE RIGHT PATH

When man endeavours to become conscious of his true nature, he soon realizes that the first step on his path must be the subjection of those instincts which are incompatible with his ideal. In mystic schools of East and West, the disciplining of the thoughts and desires has always been considered the essential prerequisite for all spiritual development. Many different systems strive to attain this goal. To calm the thoughts, people retire to lonely seashores, to monasteries, jungles or mountain peaks. In the hermit's cell external stimuli are reduced to a minimum: and yet even so, the anchorite often fails to attain his aim, for the problem to be solved lies within him. External conditions may help or hinder, but they alone will not condition the desired result. When seeking to control his desires, man often exerts a maximum of will-power to suppress certain instincts which are an integral part of himself. Here also failure is common, for, just as thought cannot eliminate thought, neither can desire be eradicated by the affirmation of desire.

Results are doubtless obtained by such systems. Those who spend years in meditation, sitting practising one-pointed concentration, forcing the mind to hold to a single idea, acquire some evidence. Yet when such disciplines do not surpass the attempt of mind to subject mind, results are also limited to the subtlest aspects of the mind. The practice of a hard and unusual discipline will produce unusual mental phenomena. Where strong and constant desire strives to suppress all other natural appetites, there may be remarkable consequences: they belong to the field of animal desire, and even when astonishing psychic phenomena are obtained, these too do not penetrate beyond the psychic and subtle

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aspects of the realm of desires. To persons devoid of esoteric knowledge, results may be startling, even terrifying; they confound the psychic with the spiritual, and attribute sainthood to the wonder-workers. The true state of the latter may be very far removed from that of a saint: instead of permitting a normal and natural expression of their animal instincts they have repressed them deeper within themselves, buried them in the subconscious.

Such persons are thus more obsessed with their passions than those who make scant attempt to check them; and when man does violence to his nature, his organism suffers. We find therefore that many Yogis, Sufis and other mystics who follow paths of protracted ascetism eventually develop heart disease or other ailments.

Before one sets his foot on the spiritual path, he should have a clear idea of what he is seeking. He will look for guidance from individuals or books, yet if he has no clear aim, he may well embark on a course which will afford quite different results from those anticipated. It is especially important to distinguish between the spiritual and the psychic. The latter is the way of the magician, the man who desires to obtain greater power than others, power over others, for his personal advantage, irrespective of the consequences to his fellow-men in the process. Such a one has worldly aims, and little sincere concern for the eternal fate of his soul, whatever his pose in public. Since he has no serious interest in ascertaining the Divine Will and endeavouring to carry it out, methods such as those of concentrating thoughts or desires, alluded to above, should prove quite adequate.

This man will devote years of his life to ruthless effort, will forfeit the greater portion of his birthright in this world, and will probably attain his desire; thousands, if not millions, who are ignorant of the laws of Spirit, may be impressed by his powers, and will fear him. A worldly kingdom will have been bought for a great price, that of harm to his own soul, which will be under the domination of the animal instincts, unless still greater damage has been done.

The truly spiritual path is a very different one. It is that of a humble man, profoundly conscious of his own inadequacy and helplessness, aware of sins and shortcomings. This is the way

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of a seeker fully convinced of his dependance on an omnipotent Creator. Sensitive to the pattern of cosmic harmony, he knows that he has his own particular ideal function to perform as a part of the great Whole. He feels the weight of his misdeeds, his subjection (partial or total) to baser instincts, and he realizes that he cannot fulfil his mission or discharge the obligations for which man was created; for he is a conscious if involuntary slave to his thoughts, habits and appetites.

This awareness of conditioning is already a great blessing, for it portends the possibility of change. It is characteristic of the intermediate one of the three following stages into which the Quran has classified the inner man:—

<i>Nafs ammārah</i>	Rebellious soul
<i>Nafs lawwāmāh</i>	Self-blaming soul
<i>Nafs mutma'innah</i>	Soul at peace

The man who is dissatisfied with himself will not seek a psychic path, or increased power, since he knows to what extent he is liable to misuse that which he already has, and realizes that added potentialities could be the source of greater sins, worsening his state rather than correcting it. He is no stiffnecked voluntary rebel against Divine ordinances; he aspires to correct faults rather than to strengthen questionable desires. He prays to God for the Grace without which he knows himself to be lost, so as to become a more efficient servant in the service of his Lord.

Many such people seek their solution within the framework of orthodox religion, in temples and churches, scriptures and saints; yet deep down in themselves something tells them that these can be no more than signposts. Every religion has taught that the Way is to be found *within*. The most noble struggle, said the Prophet Muhammad, was that against one's own appetites, and Jesus and Buddha made almost identical remarks.

Once man is convinced that the only true Way is to be found within, he may seek unaided a direct inner contact with God, and if Grace is vouchsafed and his nature is exceptionally pure, he is likely to succeed. Otherwise, his own inadequacy will occasion his failure. God is ever-present, yet man may be so identified with the consequences of sin and error that he cannot receive those indications which are always present within the Self. True

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communion with immanent Divinity may be totally impossible; in other cases there will be brilliant and occasional flashes which make way for lengthy intervals of darkness and despair. A clearly transmitted radio message may be distorted beyond recognition due to a faulty receiving apparatus or other interference. It is even so with the Voice of the silence.

This is why esoteric schools are to be found in many parts of the world; they represent a focus where the spiritually weak may come for strength and guidance. The Masters of true schools are sincere servants of God who make no claims on their own behalf (unless so commanded from Above), and who do not seek personal gain. By this criterion, the inexperienced may discriminate between true and false, as has been indicated in the Quran. Genuine Teachers piously reject any attribution to themselves of that Power and Glory which belong to God alone. They will claim no ability to aid others, beyond a capacity to indicate the path to the inner Truth; and they should emphasize that such help as they can offer is only effective through Divine Grace.

The sincere seeker after spiritual Truth may be recommended to examine the claims of such persons. They have some experience of the unknown Way ahead of him, and can act as his guides and companions to assist him in finding ultimately his own individual road, along which he will then walk without dependance on further human aid.

It has been mentioned that various obstacles and impediments make it hard for man to realize the inner Truth. The first steps of the path will therefore involve the correction of defects and the removal of barriers. Divine Grace is again an all-important factor, without the presence of which no true conscious contact can be made with the Life-force within the human breast. Only what is more than human can lead man to perfection; only the Divine Spirit can guide him to the state of everlasting peace and freedom from error. Man has a right to hope to enter such a state even in this life, but he must obtain that Divine aid which will show him how to help himself and eliminate the consequences of present sin. These originate in his past and his heredity. The Teacher's function is like that of a midwife. All birth depends

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on God, but the midwife facilitates it, and even that assistance is part of the Divine Ordinance.

To those accustomed to believe in the need to pay a great price, to sacrifice friends, family and fortune, it must seem strange to learn that there can be a way to Self-realization which does not demand ceaseless hardship, and years of self-inflicted torture. Yet, if such is the Divine Will, there can be a route to God which does not oblige man to give up enjoyment of the blessings with which his Creator has surrounded him in this world. What is impossible by human methods is a very easy matter for God. This world has not been created in idle jest, nor need man necessarily turn his back on it to find what can exist independently of it. Why are we here, if this all has no meaning and is intended to be rejected? Precisely the qualities present in the world are those needed by man for integration which may enable him to rise beyond the human. Man may be lower than the angels, but he has within him the possibility of ascending higher. This can occur when he subjects his environment, not by flight, but through mastery. His possessions do not disturb him when there is no longer a danger that they can possess him. The highest worship in this world is that of the rich man who can perform his spiritual obligations correctly without being affected by surrounding treasures. This demands constant vigilance and purification. The greatest souls have ever been conscious of the danger that they might forget their Creator in the midst of His blessings.

After the candidate has learnt to isolate the Self from perpetual identification with the thoughts, appetites and imagination, (which occurs briefly at the moment of true initiation), he may become aware of the Divine Presence. This awareness is not a mental concept, since mental activity has become quiescent, while consciousness remains.¹ It is not an emotional attitude, but something which can be felt at any moment of calm: an ever-present factor pervading the entire body and penetrating to the innermost being. Once strong awareness of this inner Power has been acquired, one may turn to it for guidance at all times.

¹ It will only be truly conscious in such souls as are already capable of *Self-consciousness*.

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Neglect may blunt awareness, but cannot eradicate the Presence. This Force, which should be known to all men, appears to many as strange, owing to their previous insensitivity. It is felt as a constant pulsation of the Life-force, in which we have our being. We are even as babes rocked in cradles. There must be something incomplete in those who claim to know God and who cannot understand what is meant by this Awareness.

Once the Power can be contacted at will and has become operative in man to the extent that it perpetually pervades his whole being, it controls him in a manner that facilitates the rapid correction of errors. In fact, it may make possible in months what required years by former techniques. This is in harmony with the increasing tempo of life on earth, since spiritual methods should always accord with the nature of the times.

Man must have some true idea of his nature, and the composition of his spiritual framework, in order to understand the character of the work to be done. Eventually he will have to learn to distinguish between the four bodies which correspond to the essences in minerals, plants, animals and men, and yet which are all a part of the complete Man. He must know how influences reach him from without, and through which centre they are contacted. Sin and error are the product of disharmony. No influences are harmful if correctly canalized. Such ability is dependent on prior knowledge of one's instruments, and they must first be cleansed and distinguished one from another. The following chapters will discuss how external influences affect these four centres in turn. When we understand the nature of the stimulus and can recognize it at its point of entry, we have the possibility of mastering it. We shall learn how the various forces impel us towards wrong actions. Only when we are truly aware of the origins of disharmony can we hope to achieve a state of integration and liberation. We shall now discuss the stimuli and the four centres briefly, before proceeding to treat of each type in detail.

The four factors in man's being are related to the ancient 'elements' of earth, water, fire and air. These material elements are however symbols of realities in the ideal world. Many teachings have described the true man as an integrated synthesis of

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the four cosmic principles, a reality which is implicit in the sign of the Cross, and also related to the process of conception, hence to the very foundation of Creation, the origin of all life. Man becomes aware on the spiritual path that he has emanated from God and that his destiny is to return to Him. When the four aspects of the Self have been truly cognized, there will be understanding of one's origins, the manner of one's own creation.

Science recognizes that physical man has gradually evolved through successive stages from lower forms of life. The soul is not material, but a distinct entity, hence its evolution has not been subjected to physical laws. Nevertheless, there is an analogical process for the individual soul, with the important difference that it may, in any given case, be at any one of the successive stages of development, quite irrespective of the fact that the physical body is that of a human being. When man is born, the soul becomes temporarily associated with other elements: the material essence, since the physical body is principally created from matter (especially the skeleton); the plant and animal essences, because man derives strength and nourishment through digesting these; and the specifically human forces originating in the parents. These qualities are contacted first in the womb; they accompany man from conception to death.

In reality these factors should be accessories to assist one in his task while on this earth, organs of apprehension to facilitate understanding of the nature of the world and its contents, and necessary relations with these. The accessories should be as servants ministering to the needs of the individual, each performing its own role, even as the physical organs also have their own peculiar functions. Each centre in man is aligned with similar forces in the outside world, and all four of them should ideally be unified and controlled by the superior eternal factor, the Divine soul. Man was intended to live in this manner. Sin and error have lost him his birthright, though he may regain it provided he can be purified of the consequences of his misdeeds and hereditary disadvantages. This is possible because he possesses a human body, and therefore, whatever the grade of the soul, all human potentialities must be present, whether developed or dormant.

Awareness of true nature is lost as consciousness becomes

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progressively fused with qualities of the lower centres. Identification results from undue absorption, heedless indulgence and neglect of the need for cleansing. When, for example, a man becomes too devoted to worldly goods, and directs all his energies towards amassing them beyond his real requirements, then his material or physical centre is unduly stimulated, unless he also practises some purification. Through interaction with inanimate forces, the material centre extends its sphere of influence and develops out of all reasonable proportion. In time, it comes to invade and atrophy the higher centre, which lacks adequate nourishment from the inner source, and eventually becomes so feeble that it has to abdicate its position of authority: the servant then sits in the seat of the master. The essential Divine quality is in eclipse and material forces sway the destiny, which becomes a pawn of the environment with which it is now identified.

Having lost the power to assert himself in the face of his surroundings, man sinks to a state which represents little more than a reaction to the blind forces around him, and his potentialities are neutralized. If the soul remains identified throughout life with the essences of the material plane, it will not discard them at death. Instead of progressing towards a nobler fate, it will remain earthbound. Many examples will follow of how forces of human and subhuman origin can atrophy higher potentialities, and control the individual consciousness. This sad state does not merely bring suffering upon ourselves, but is also the lamentable legacy which we hand on to our children, who are also subject to the limitations in ourselves. Their chances of self-awareness and evolution are dependant to a large extent on the true inner state of their parents. The deepest potentialities in man are often affected by hereditary laws, as are the physical characteristics recognized by science.

The condition of the parents at the time of intercourse will have a profound effect on children about to be conceived. Any extra-marital relations of the father during the period of pregnancy can also affect the complex of the unborn child, since there is a psychic link prior to birth, even when no further physical contact with the mother is involved. Children created of parents whose union is dictated by passion will also tend to exhibit a

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lack of self-control in their lives, and will have little resistance against undesirable temptations.

One should direct attention towards spiritual purification in youth rather than old age. Since the imperfections of the parents are reflected in the children, a process of catharsis before these are born will radically modify the quality of the posterity. Those who become most deeply aware of their hereditary handicaps are the candidates for the spiritual path, who begin to acquire a more acute perception of their true inner state. Parents should seek to act in such a way that they may be blessed rather than blamed by their descendants. By purification before having children, they will afford their offspring increased possibilities of subsequent success, and careers which will benefit both themselves and the society in which they move. Naturally those whose children behave in such a model fashion and obtain such recognition will be much happier than the parents of those suffering from defects that only Divine intervention can heal.

We see therefore that self-purification means not only emancipation from the consequences of one's own errors, but also the correction of undesirable hereditary attributes. Physical, emotional, mental or other factors may be involved, but true individuality will not manifest until the work of catharsis has taken place at all levels of being. Thereafter, thoughts, imagination and desires will not easily lead one in a direction opposed to his own best interests.

Although progress on the spiritual path should occur simultaneously on all the various planes of being, the average man has spent his lifetime concentrating almost exclusively on sensory perception. He is therefore chiefly identified with his body and with his lowest, instinctive centre. When subjected to initiation, he is unable to cognize the changes occurring on the various planes, and is principally aware of unaccustomed bodily sensations, and changes taking place on the physical plane. He will not be able to perceive subtler phenomena until the consciousness has become detached from the physical qualities, and the coarser elements have been cleansed. Once the physical body has been thus made whole, in its subtle aspects as well as in forms evident in medical examination, it will not easily be assailed by disease.

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The next stage will be a purification of the feelings, following which sudden emotional shock will no longer have power to deflect man from his purpose and he will not easily be overcome by despair when his personal feelings are outraged. Then will come the purification of the understanding which opens up the way for one to tap the vast resources of knowledge within the Self, and it will no longer be necessary to depend on external sources of information or to rely on faith. If progress continues even beyond this, to the dawn of Self-consciousness, as the fourth successive stage, then there is awareness of the true eternal nature of the Self and its relations with the forces above and below. The Divine obligations of the individual are then clear to him, and the limits of his own capacity are also realized, while he simultaneously acquires the capacity to express the highest within him, for the benefit of his fellow-men and himself.

Once the Self is known then there is clear recognition of the sources of the stimuli which tend to condition the behaviour. It is at this point that there is discrimination between those which originate respectively from above and below. Then it is no longer easy to be led astray by misconceptions and errors of judgement. The ordinary man has little understanding of the sources of the various ideas which daily "occur" to him, and rarely suspects the very possibility that they may be of alien origin. Thus he cannot easily know whether their pursuit will lead to joy or sorrow. For such persons, many decisions in life are a gamble: one hopes for the best and fears the worst. Wrong paths are often stubbornly assumed to be productive of great benefit; the error is discovered too late. Often years have been wasted, and health or money has been sacrificed pointlessly in the pursuit of vanities.

Correct inner guidance implies the acquisition of the ability to discriminate between the various types of impulses and ideas which emerge in the consciousness; mastery must be acquired over those which prompt us to paths of misery and destruction. A true spiritual course must guide towards separation between Self and not-Self: there must be understanding of what is wrong or right for a particular circumstance or individual. Progress confers healthier and loftier thoughts and ideals. Heightened

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awareness reveals intuitively the keys to symbols and mysteries. This potentiality is merely part of man's true birthright, but to seek to penetrate cosmic secrets without having developed inner discrimination leads to fantasy or lunacy. These are not subjects for theoretical speculation, but are apprehended intuitively when reason is silent. The spiritual field is not to be approached by taking thought, and it cannot be explained by words, written or spoken. Scriptures offer advice, but stress the need for striving towards certainty based on inner experience. Speculation will cause one to mistake the shadow for the reality, and beliefs will rest on no sound basis of experience. Christianity teaches that it is by *knowing* the Truth that we are made free. To know Truth, one must be Truth. It is not a subject for examination by an observer.

Divine guidance is at the innermost core of man's being. A mental approach is invalid to understand what does not belong to the sensory world. Illumination develops naturally as veils and obstacles are removed. It is not something to be sought. What does revelation mean, but the disclosing of what is already present?

Development must take place according to capacity, which varies in individuals. The growth of the inner seed merely requires irrigation with feeling. Do we try to force rose-buds to appear more rapidly? Patient and sustained effort, slow and regular growth, will give healthier results than striving for rapid progress. The very element in man which demands quick results is one of the factors which represent obstacles! By giving it increased scope for operation, we postpone what we hope to hasten. Impatience is unwillingness to surrender the individual will to the Wisdom of God, and implies lack of trust in His guidance. New barriers should not be erected while we seek to demolish the old ones.

Students often ask whether any additional activity may be helpful to supplement the training in groups and at home. In reality no modification of the existing mode of existence is counselled unless it proceeds spontaneously from within; when such changes are required they will be brought about, or indicated clearly. We do not need to assert our enthusiasm to reform

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ourselves while confiding our inner lives to God's care.¹

One should therefore follow a normal life, accepting such development as comes. In the daily life, excesses are to be avoided, and a breath of spirit in no excuse for throwing former caution to the winds. Will-power is not necessarily the best means of eradicating undesirable characteristics, for defects are rather to be eliminated by raising the consciousness to a condition beyond them, and not by concentrating on such qualities and attempting to defeat them on their own level. Man does not turn from sinner to saint in five minutes, and meanwhile we have to recognize ourselves as we are, to take a good look inside. We shall find much that is disturbing, and note the presence of those very unpleasant features that we have always fondly imagined to exist in everyone but ourselves. For the present, these qualities also have to be lived with. Intelligent study and appraisal, watching how and when and why they manifest, will do more towards their dissipation than indignant attempts to eradicate them. We must learn to accept ourselves, with candour and without horror, before we can become something more.

Worldly gifts and talents should not be rejected by the candidate on the path. Women and wealth are not inherently inimical. Rejection of the environment, flight from the world, conduce to weakness. The world must be known, the nature of the forces operating therein has to be experienced. Conquest is for the strong: the weak must turn and face the adversary, and the ostrich policies of hermits solve nothing, since they merely tacitly admit the superiority of the world to that of the man.

One is therefore to make good use (but not abuse) of such forms of creation as may be conducive to his welfare, temporal and eternal; he should mould these constructively for the better expression of his own talents. The Self can be known only through the opposition of the not-Self. Contrast provokes reaction. Where is the sculptor without clay? Can the wrestler develop his strength or even know his capacity without seeking a rival? The more varied the types of external stimuli, the richer the reactions.

¹ Some Subud colleagues emphatically disagree. I would remind them that Pak Subuh endorses al-Jailani, who says: "Be even as the corpse in the hands of the washers".

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Thus the wider the experience of the world, the greater the possibility of Self-knowledge. The environment helps man towards God, once he has a constructive attitude towards it; its renunciation weakens him, since opportunities for understanding are fewer.

The power of God can operate through the man who withdraws from the world, but he will never fully understand the relations between that Power and himself. It may act through the celibate, but here again there will be an incomplete appraisal: the positive which does not confront the negative lacks the possibility of self-understanding. Woman is a mirror in which man sees himself, and God created man so as to know Himself. Without man, God is; through man, He knows that He is. Where is light without a screen on to which to be projected? It is thus clear that throughout the universe, awareness is achieved by complementary polarities, or by extension of the Self. The child reveals the father to himself when he has exteriorized and projected aspects of his own nature into it. How many parents who blame the children fail to realize that they are raging against the very qualities they have themselves exteriorized? The Divine soul is required to incarnate in the physical man so that it can attain to Self-knowledge through contrast; to do this, it must retain Self-awareness in the midst of apparently antagonistic surroundings. Contact with the world enables the purified soul to see its own true nature as in a mirror; but for this to occur, it is necessary for the soul's relations with the world to be like those of oil and water.

The more successful the material existence, the greater the field for deployment of spiritual capacity. The more extensive, the more abundant the inner energy called forth. When a correct path is followed, there is always sufficient spiritual guidance available for any necessary material enterprise. While the world helps man towards Self-realization, his spiritual activity therein enables lower forms of life to realize more completely their own destinies, since every form can be assisted by association with those above it. By such co-operation in the evolution of humbler creatures, man fulfils an aspect of his own destiny, and through this he can evolve further himself. The world has been designed

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for the interaction of all its forms of life for mutual benefit: we are participants in a commonwealth.

By separating himself from the remainder of creation, and trying to find his path in isolation, man denies and negates the cosmic order, and deprives himself of accessories indispensable for the attainment of his aim. Here we have an illustration of how thought can lead man to follow a wrong path, under the impression that his behaviour is highly commendable. He pointlessly and voluntarily deprives himself of most of the pleasures and blessings at his disposal in this life, and by such denial defeats his objective. How many aspirants go astray through following the theories and opinions of themselves and others! One may repeat that it is the Truth which sets us free, and Truth and theory cannot co-exist.

In conclusion, it may be summarized that Self-realization involves a union of opposites for the generation of a new potentiality: the thesis must confront the antithesis through the union of Spirit and matter. This law is analogical to that of human marriage. It is in the creative self-projection of parenthood that man cognizes the principles of the cosmic Creation, for both involve a manifestation of Divine activity, and Creation is not a matter of the past, but an ever-present fact, since it is beyond the boundaries of our time.

Marriage, parenthood, social relations, the possession and utilization of worldly goods are all part of a normal life; and since worship of God should be the normal act of the normal man, Self-realization is not to be sought along abnormal routes.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPACT OF MATTER

The categories of external stimuli which exert pressure on man's inner life have already been detailed. Now we shall consider specifically some of the types of material influence, which originate from the realm of inanimate matter, and see how they modify man's being through identification. The material object appears as 'dead' to the human observer: yet, in reality, it teems with a life of its own and possesses a primitive consciousness. This is called 'satanic' because it is so elementary that the faculty of distinction is altogether absent.¹ Hence we describe the forces in nature as 'blind'. The destiny of objects can be affected from without; they are transported and shaped in various manners by mankind. Any change that has an external origin is impermanent. One man may carry a carving from Tokyo to Timbuctoo; another may later return it to Tokyo. This principle has also something to teach us about changes in man's spiritual life. We often read of the work of evangelists whose presence is said to convert and change the lives of thousands. The stimulus is external, and is received through the mind or the emotions. Unless the influence of the individual in question goes far deeper, through Act of God, it will have a transient effect; it is a question of time before the subject becomes exposed to another external influence that will return him to a former attitude, or make of him something quite different again.

Man's physical body is compounded of matter, hence the material forces are also present therein. Our five normal senses are material, as they are associated with physical organs of apprehension. Most of our experience in life reaches us *via* the agency of these organs, especially through the eyes, the ears

¹ The word *Satan* signifies in Hebrew: "an adversary". It implies the opposition of death to life.

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and the tongue. Our mental attitudes develop from such stimuli. It is only necessary to compare the cultural affinities and prejudices of particular races to notice the considerable extent to which thought-processes are conditioned by the environment. In some parts of the world, it has become almost universal to consider refrigerators and automobiles the indispensable adjuncts of a satisfactory existence; in other places, people who have never seen such articles do not miss them.

It should be evident from the foregoing that there is a relationship between material qualities and the human mind, which is constantly being affected by sensory stimuli. Such an interaction gives man the possibility of understanding the utility of matter to himself, whether it is a question of creating a pitcher or harnessing atomic power. The history of mankind is largely a record of the progressive domination of the material forces. It is self-evident that the increasing comprehension of these forces (and their intelligent use) has enhanced the value of the individual life as well as that of the social group. Suitable and well-equipped homes have enabled man to withstand the most inclement weather; vehicles transport him faster than any animal could do; and tractors permit one person to harvest nourishment adequate for the need of many families.

The very evidence of the extent to which it has been necessary for man throughout history to equip himself with implements to serve his needs shows us that renunciation of the world is rebellion against the Divine Law. Man should not turn his back on the manifold resources of his surroundings. Rejection not only checks his own potentialities: it may also place a burden on the society into which he has been born. Such a condition is seen in lands where an appreciable percentage of the population may refuse (on religious grounds) to perform any sort of work, while the public are taught that it is meritorious to care for such mendicants.

Those who wish to give full expression to the highest that is in them should rather strive to study and understand the nature of the physical world and profit by intelligent use of its resources. Persons fully conscious of the brotherhood of humanity will not neglect their social duties: for these to be per-

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formed in a manner conducive to communal peace and prosperity, there must be effort to create and produce. We must not deprive others of the fruits of their labours in order to be ourselves preserved from the consequences of misapplied energies.

Doctrines of renunciation have developed from consciousness of the snares and perils inherent in possessions. These may attract man to an extent that all other values are subordinated, and he comes to believe that his happiness is directly related to the quantity of his treasures. Eventually this may in fact be the case, when the inner nature has become completely identified with these objects: then the moods of the individual will follow the phases of the stock market, and he may throw away his life the day that a serious depression occurs.

It is equally misguided to fear possessions to the extent that salvation is claimed to depend on forsaking all worldly goods. One should not seek the spiritual from dread of the material. While man cannot serve two masters, he cannot fear two masters either! Even God should not be feared: rather should man trust in His Mercy. How much less should he fear such objects as he can mould and fashion at will! To live in a state of pusillanimous terror implies absence of faith in Divine Mercy and Justice. This anxiety is also an effect of material domination.

It is of course most important not to allow oneself to be enslaved by one's own servants, and there must always be a sense of proportion when engaged in material activities. We see how many people identify themselves with different material values because they have lost this sense of proportion: their homes, furniture, books, works of art, are loved to such an extent that they become greatly agitated if these are damaged or lost. In some cases, sickness results. Extreme identification leads to suicide.

We must therefore realize how greatly possessions can sway the life, to the extent of totally controlling the destiny. Hence the need for constant purification and affirmation of Spirit. Those who do not neglect their worship are less likely to become the slaves of the environment. Possessions are then assessed in terms of the owner and not vice versa.

In a society where men scoff at the claims of the Spirit, people

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are respected or feared on account of their wealth, even when well-known for their absence of humane feelings. Others, ever ready to succour the needy, may be despised, despite their exemplary lives, because their generosity has left them in modest circumstances. Where individual worth is assessed in terms of a bank balance, the poor cannot easily associate with the affluent. When they do so, it is because the latter seek to take advantage of the plight of the former in order to enrich themselves yet more. There is no basis of mutual love and respect. In such a society, since the rich are always favoured, the poor may easily become filled with attitudes of resentment. Such disequilibrium in time produces a reaction from which the more prosperous suffer in their turn. Societies based on material principles carry in their bosom the germs of their own destruction; but where there is an enlightened attitude, man does not seek insatiably to advance his own position at the expense of his fellow-men.

It is *comparatively* simple to shake off the shackles of material dominion because the forces involved are those furthest below the human condition. First, the awakened soul will begin to recognize the extent to which it is subject to these factors; in time their power will wane. Then there will develop a greater understanding of the mode of their attraction, so that the means to repel this will be realized. As one becomes less likely to fall a victim to blind forces, free-will increases, and one is shielded from many apparently predestined events.

The general qualities inherent in all objects have been described, and we now proceed to consider particular types of influence:—

The qualities which reside in a firearm may incite one man to kill another. Arrested later, he may be unable to account for his action. Does the attitude of hostility reside in the feelings of the possessor or in the nature of the instrument? Surely there is an interaction of the two factors. And when an individual or nation is well-armed, there is a reaction of distrust from those not so equipped. Such mutual attitudes destroy the possibility of fraternal relations that should exist among all human beings. Yet once the soul is emancipated from the lower influences, there is no fear of weapons in the hands of others.

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Those who are conscious of their own frailty in the face of material aggression should strive to associate with others who have a stronger inner nature. They thus have a good chance of strengthening their own, since the Divine is in every breast. Such persons may help them to become more discriminating, better qualified to distinguish between helpful and harmful influences. It is not enough to assent intellectually to the logic of what is stated: man can only master his environment when he is fully conscious of the interaction between his own essence and the forces surrounding him. Knowledge and experience alone can give the capacity to distinguish, and to canalize all energies in suitable directions. Yet even when this has been achieved, after perhaps a long time, it must not be forgotten that the energies we are discussing are only the lowest of several fields of activity within man, and that he is required to cognize them all as a preliminary to Self-consciousness. Although the first stage represents an achievement, compared with the state of most of our fellow-men, perseverance is essential, and we must not become self-satisfied when the first obstacle has been surmounted.

Another aspect of material conditioning is to be noticed in clothing: feelings of vanity easily develop in those elegantly dressed, and they learn to disdain neighbours unfortunate enough to have merely a cloth to hide their nakedness. As in the case of the firearms alluded to above, it is clear here also that this conviction develops as the result of acquiring possessions, the clothes. Yet how easily do people conclude that their own importance has been enhanced, and strut about with a proud bearing.

Such attitudes are pathetic, for the unreflecting dandy may come to believe that he has a real superiority over those less well-dressed. He evaluates entirely in terms of exterior evidence, and develops an arrogant mode of address, and eventually comes to consider this a natural and normal relationship between rich and poor. A society of people under such influences gradually causes such notions to be generally accepted. We see thus how wealth, clothes, weapons and other implements falsify the judgement.

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Country-dwellers similarly acquire a restricted mental horizon through identification with the tools they daily handle to till the ground. Such implements have no use in a busy city, and the farmer unduly affected by their use may become ultimately disinclined to settle in a town, or even to converse with strangers from other parts of the country. Attachment to a particular home may become so great that there is no desire to become acquainted with any other places. Travel is held to be unprofitable, if not dangerous. Even difficult times are met with resignation. Such people accept the conditioning of their inanimate immediate surroundings, rather than seek a more fertile and profitable soil elsewhere.

When there is some degree of spiritual consciousness in the farmer, he will no longer resign himself to conditions which have clearly become unprofitable, but will seek fresh opportunities further afield, endeavouring to advance his material and spiritual condition wherever his particular talents can best be utilized. He will not expect his family to submit to a hard lot, and will encourage his children to go out into the world to seek a better fate than he has himself known.

Resignation is usually a reflection of the static qualities inherent in matter, and as such it is by no means a virtue. One should not argue that an all-knowing fate wills conditions to be what they are, and that fate will itself intervene to change them if it is really desirable. Man has been endowed with a measure of free-will to enable him to seek out new avenues of advancement. He must merely learn to make a sagacious use of this precious faculty so as not to harvest failure in the pursuit of success. Great spiritual figures have always achieved the apparently impossible, while those swayed by matter have tamely acquiesced in a hostile environment. They lack sufficient faith in themselves and in God to strive for a better lot. This explains why we see that many persons who are subjected to an unaccustomed spiritual impact for a few years improve their material circumstances. They have acquired new faith in their own ability to strike out in new directions: their former horizons have receded. Capacity is still what it was before; it is the faith which enables them to exploit it. Not many people fully realize the

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diversity of their own talents and potentialities. Once they understand how many avenues of success are at their disposal, it will be a simple matter to select the most congenial, and they will not tell us any longer that an unkind fate requires them to reside in a locality which offers no scope for their innate skills.

When we consider the businessman living in a bustling town, we notice how he is subjected to a much heavier strain than the farmer. He deals in commodities which are in a state of perpetual flux, unlike the countryman's tools, ever at hand. Traders buy and sell, articles come and go, mobility is a characteristic of the objects concerned. Through identification, the individual's feelings are conditioned in an analogous manner: he becomes subject to frequent changes of humour which alternate with the ebb and flow of the goods, the rhythm of supply and demand. Prolonged strain may produce illness, especially as it is in the nature of a business life to force oneself to work beyond capacity when there is a chance of added profit; signs of fatigue are unheeded, for an adequate consolation is filling the cash-box!

We have noted the relationship between the properties of matter and the nature of thought. It is evident that the mind becomes restless when the attention is directed towards matter which is in a state of constant flux. A tendency to worry, with its debilitating effects on the constitution, can develop from concentration on business commodities. Hence, doctors counsel periods of relaxation for the well-being of the physical body; we do not need to probe into the more subtle qualities of man to note the need for moments of mental vacuum. Where worry is too great, the very possibility of relaxation is denied, and a good night's rest is rare. The use of drugs may offer temporary relief through dulling the sensitivity to one's own thoughts, but such treatment is always applied at the expense of other organs.

Since there is a relationship between states of anxiety and identification with matter, it appears quite logical that the health should be toned up, and all-round efficiency increase, when the spiritual nature can adequately assert itself. Where is the darkness when the light appears? Those businessmen who give regular attention to their spiritual obligations find their capacity unimpaired, while they reap the advantage of protection from the

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consequences of strain and worry. Yet how many grudge the few precious minutes weekly! Time dedicated to self-purification may mean a few cancelled appointments; but the added freshness and vigour gained therefrom can lead to greater productivity, wiser judgement, faster management. Hence, even on the most material basis, the outcome is not loss, but gain. When the Spirit can express itself, and the brain is not in exclusive control of the destiny, there is even greater business success.

Despite the great rewards, even in terms of business productivity, it is by no means an easy matter to convince the average merchant of the need for calm and tranquillity. Even when theoretically in agreement, he will grudge the time. Identification with the material forces, which demand constant attention, is often so great that the mind will find every possible justification for resisting the advice to set aside time for non-activity. People tell us what a pity it is that they have no leisure, and in fact, they are greatly in doubt as to whether the time sacrificed will afford adequate compensation for the loss which they fear they will sustain. The Gospels tell us of a man who wanted first to bury his father. His argument was: "My father is old and helpless, and I have a responsibility towards him. When he has gone, I shall have the time to spare for spiritual training". This excuse is always a trap, and such people fail to see that they are caught up in a web of obligations. Before one has been discharged, another has arisen. If there is no time now, there will certainly be none later.

When we seek to test the claims of the spiritual path, even from so modest a motive as to sleep better at night, we must not renounce our objective without a fair trial; that means a willingness to attend practices twice weekly for a minimum of three months, and to retain an open and unbiassed mind in the meantime. It is clear that, when dealing with a field which begins where logic ends, we should not expect to find rational explanations for new experiences; so we should not give up too early because so much seems meaningless. If you wish to learn Chinese, you will have to begin by staring at apparently meaningless hieroglyphs. On the path of the Spirit too, there is an alphabet to be learnt, before we can read. How fortunate are those patient

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by nature! They get results, for the simple reason that they are in no hurry, and so they give themselves a chance. The business man's condition is different, and he does not even recognize the oddness of his own attitude, when he denies time for the Self because of the insistent and imperative call of the world.

When a lifetime has been devoted entirely to the understanding of temporal goods, the world is gained at the price of the soul. At the very moment of death, there is no understanding of Self, of whence and whither: rather is there a very real concern for the fate of the property after death. Souls identified with material values rarely slip away peacefully as if shedding a garment. Comas are more common. When the eternal is torn away from the material to which it has been so tightly glued, what is its fate? A condition of gloom and nescience, rather than one of light and unfoldment.

While we are in this world, we should try to develop a true sense of cosmic values, by realizing the relative importance of the various aspects of Creation, and treating them accordingly. This appears elementary, yet so many people demonstrate daily that they have not understood the superiority of a man to an animal, of the beast over the stone. Have we integrated true standards when we are willing to see other men die for the sake of precious stones? Is there a proper yardstick where father and son are permanently alienated because of monetary considerations? Do not many people give a greater welcome to a strange dog than to an unknown man who greets them?

When we live by false standards, attaching greater importance to objects than to man, we may pray and worship every day, yet our inner state is one of darkness. How can there be meaning to the expression "Unity of God", as long as we are not even able to feel the unity of the human race? Dare you look for God while spurning His Spirit in the coolie of the Yellow River or the labourer of Harlem? It must also be recognized in those close at hand, whose opinions and bank balances are at variance with our own! The superficial is the Divine veil. When our relations with God are mere abstract notions, we shall never understand our own significance: the dignity of the part is to be found in its relationship with the whole. Those so conditioned

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by their trading that their sense of human values has been reversed are indeed blessed by God when suffering, failure, and bankruptcy, lead them to seek beyond matter for more permanent security.

Lack of success in business enterprise is one means of realizing individual limitations. An understanding of what can be achieved and of what is beyond our capacity discourages us from chasing chimaerae. Similarly to know what amount of work can be tackled without impairing health will lead to adjustment. Ultimately, evidence is forthcoming that the material need of those who do not neglect their spiritual and temporal obligations is always taken care of. Anxiety will decrease as added experience justifies confidence. Once there is real trust in provision from above, people will not strain their entire being to the limits in order to secure an ever-growing hoard of surplus wealth. The demand for future guarantees and security is a typical preoccupation of a materialistic viewpoint. When there is no confidence in the Power within, the assurance of a future provision will necessarily be sought in tangible and visible wealth. It has been well said that the spiritual path is sheer peril all the way; and there is a Muslim belief that the more evolved the soul, the less provision it is permitted to accumulate. At the highest, there is literally no thought for the morrow: but for most of us, it is a severe enough test if we can never see more than a month ahead. How many people are so influenced by the need for security that they spend entire lives in the service of some organization that apparently guarantees them against all want at any time! These are prisoners of their own materialism.

The Way of the Spirit is perilous because there is no tangible evidence of Divine providence in advance, except by inference. To know the nature of the path, we must first set our feet on it. We can either keep walking over the same familiar ground of materialism, going round and round in a circle, or we can advance, when each step challenges the unknown. Faith is developed the latter way: repeated and reiterated proof of Divine provision, in times of hopelessness and incapacity, is the best teacher. True faith has never been a matter of belief founded on ignorance! Philosophical values must be based on what we have

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gone through ourselves; they are of little use as the abstractions we echo from words of other men.

We should therefore learn to swim by being thrown into the water, as we then garner an understanding which will enable us to do and to dare without having always to bolster ourselves with material supports. Letters cannot be sent when there is no address for them. Even so, cosmic help comes in answer to a demand: to be rescued, we must first be in danger, though this is no excuse for tempting God. Each of us must however see for himself through experience that the very operation of the laws of supply and demand is subject to a higher spiritual law, which comes into play with a change of heart. Those who do not understand these matters always fear that idealists will starve, while total ignorance of the nature of Spirit easily leads to denial of the immortality of the soul. When there is no consciousness of Spirit, with what will we contrast matter? Of course we have to direct all our hopes towards the world when we cannot see that there is anything else. Negation of God, denial of immortality, are products of the mind. Such ideas can develop where man is identified with his thoughts and the latter are conditioned entirely by material influences. Therefore we note how easy it is for the merchant to incline towards agnosticism, if not to become an outright atheist.

Man is in this world for the purpose of achieving Self consciousness as an immortal soul temporarily wedded to mortal qualities. This opportunity ceases to exist with the destruction of the body, and change can then be conditioned only from without. A lifetime dedicated to concentration on transient values can prove harmful to eternal individual interests, hence it has been said that it is very hard for the rich to reach God. The source of the difficulty is of course identification of the Self with its accumulations: there is no obstacle for those who can watch the ebb and flow of wealth with undisturbed equanimity and inner detachment.

When wealth is valued above all else, it will naturally form the basis of all judgements. Those encountered are assessed in terms of their bank balances, and the rich man does not accept advice on his spiritual needs from a poor but competent adviser:

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the latter has already merited his contempt by his very poverty, so he says in his heart: "What has such a man to teach me?" He prefers association with those at least as rich as himself, since he does not then fear that social relations may diminish his prestige and capital. Naturally his comrades will have a similar outlook, and will incline him towards a stronger conviction that his sense of values is a wise one. Should he ever awaken for a moment, and idly consider the claims of Spirit, these colleagues will quickly persuade him that those devoted to such disciplines are cranks living in a world divorced from reality. When Spirit is dead, what is real but the unreal, the ephemeral, the world of the senses and the satisfaction of the lower emotions?

Not only the rich may be conditioned by such attitudes; in fact, it is very often easier for them to free themselves, as they have time for study and reflection. The poor are much less fortunate when they believe only in material values, and their very poverty inclines so many of them to do this. They often truly believe that the acquisition of wealth will solve all their difficulties in life, and proceed to devote themselves to such an end, regardless of true consequences, which are veiled from them. Such a viewpoint leads people to accept employment in quite uncongenial places when financial remuneration is considered adequate, and they tell us that it has been made worth their while. It is this outlook that enables them to withstand countless humiliations imposed by superiors, and to grovel deferentially in the hope of acquiring yet more lucre. It is not difficult for skilful employers to persuade such persons to identify their entire lives with the interests of industrial companies, and their destinies come to represent little more than a reflection of the booms and depressions of high finance. Their own true interests have been bought up and sacrificed for the advantage of the business and its shareholders. It has been a willing bargain based on ignorance. Had the workers taken thought for spiritual obligations, they would have been protected from such a fate, or at least would have remained in such posts when it was to their essential advantage to do so, and found better jobs elsewhere when conditions became inimical to their true interests.

Self-identification with a particular concern is a source of fear

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as well as a form of slavery; for the company may one day decide to reduce staff by hundreds or thousands, and those suddenly discharged will find themselves totally unprepared for new and unforeseen exigencies.

We must therefore study our instincts and impulses in order to know ourselves, to retain the freedom to cede or to check. The origins of stimuli need to be traced, and discretion must be developed to assess them aright. Many people may be helped by vigilant attention to the arising of feelings and sensations, with subsequent analysis.

Those very sensitive to the variety and frequency of the environmental stimuli often settle in lonely places in order to find refuge from such pressure. True asylum is however only encountered when man succeeds in isolating himself from his own thoughts, which follow him otherwise even to the most desolate of deserts and caves. Cultivation of the ability to sense conditions, without simultaneously thinking about them, is a better path to enable one to receive Divine guidance and to become freed of worldly domination. While the brain must be used when really required, it should not be allowed to pursue every new and strange theory, drawing fantastic conclusions, and evolving illusory cosmogonies. However essential for temporal needs, the mind is not a valid instrument for assessing eternal realities, though many people forget this. Those who habitually enjoy conversations about spiritual and mystical themes usually rely chiefly on memory of their reactions to books they have read; the views they so stoutly defend are rarely borne out by proofs from their own experience.

It is when man can truly free himself from the dictatorship of his thoughts, conditioned as they are by the temporal and geographical environment, that he is able to contact within himself ideas of permanent and eternal significance. Indications may then be obtained, which, if utilized according to the individual talent, may lead him to some new discovery of benefit to the society in which he lives. He has this advantage over his fellowmen of equal education, because they have not yet learnt to acquire inner isolation from the religious, political, historical and geographical complexes of their particular civilization. The en-

lightened mind which has been disciplined by training will be all the more efficient when required for daily activity, as an obedient servant, helping its master to achieve a satisfactory and contented existence. Such discipline of the mind will also permit intuition to operate in a regular and trustworthy fashion: calamities, complications and accidents may thus be deflected. Such are some of the benefits of the spiritual life, but few will seek it on account of worldly pressure. Protracted misery or the persuasion of friends will however influence many people, and some will obtain lasting benefit from a path entered in doubt and hesitation.

Few people realize the unreliability of their own thoughts to indicate satisfactory courses for life. This is because of the extent to which the mind is filled with animal passions, and other desires erroneously identified with the Self. Conditioned thoughts thus lead man to follow courses of apparent happiness, but as long as he has no other criterion on which to base his quest, and because his nature is usually restless and active, he cannot realize in advance the illusory nature of his ambitions. Restlessness and desire for constant activity are in proportion to the prominence of the animal energies, to the stimulus of the motor centre. Where there is a powerful vortex of such energies, there is insistence on movement, and this demand to be busy, unless harnessed to higher impulses, often proves quite unprofitable and detrimental to deeper interests.

The ways of the Spirit are unfamiliar and incomprehensible to the mind, and so the thoughts often resist spiritual training. Identified with an illusory path to happiness, the adulterated consciousness does not easily welcome that which appears to menace the accomplishment of its cherished aims. Thus, it is only when one can become as innocent as a little child, which has complete trust in the wisdom of its father, that a real contact with the source of all needs can be established. False objectives fade away, and everything truly required for the spiritual and material welfare is vouchsafed as it becomes expedient. Those who are entering this training should keep such considerations in mind at times when there is a tendency to yield to a train of negative thought.

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Only when the nature is pervaded by that unconditioned Unity which is the prerogative of Divinity will man pass beyond the conflicts and vacillations inherent in duality; and only such a state can confer true bliss and lasting peace, through emancipation from unsatisfied desires. Once attained, this condition is never lost, since it is beyond the oppositions of pleasure and pain, joy and suffering. Those caught in the web of duality will never comprehend that freedom which marks the incarnation of Divine qualities.

The most common source of desire is a sense of lack and inadequacy, but the absence of desire does not portend dullness and inactivity. Creative and dynamic activity is a Divine characteristic, and that which is most static is most material: inanimate life. We see therefore that the spiritual path does not entail non-action, but that the source of action is rather to be sought in Divine illumination than as a response to lower thoughts and desires. Under such circumstances, man behaves in a manner that is both more detached and more effective. The positive results of enterprise give satisfaction, and results are positive because they are produced by a Divine impulse. When there is freedom from action, content remains, for there is a sense of real relaxation, and this is not disturbed by an uneasy feeling that one is wasting precious time. That restless attitude, so common in the West, prevents so many people from enjoying such leisure as is left to them!

Identification with external conditions gives rise to apprehension and restlessness. Outbreaks of war cause fear; public celebrations require emotional demonstrations, to be aligned with the calendar. Tears and laughter must be appropriately in evidence at funerals and marriages. It is of course important that man's emotional state should be adjustable to the environmental conditions, as this permits them to be understood; but the deeper nature must not be identified with these feelings, or else, in extreme cases, manic-depressive psychoses are the result. Recognizing that impermanence, flux and change are characteristic of this world, we must fortify our inner being in such a way that we shall not always be obliged to dance to the piper's tune.

We can confidently forecast a change will take place in

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environmental conditions, but rarely know exactly when. While fearing that which never happens, we are often caught off our guard in times of sudden and grave crisis. Those who base their lives on external factors will be obliged to adapt themselves constantly to changing circumstances. When however activity springs from internal necessity rather than slavery to stimuli outside ourselves, we are not so often compelled to follow courses which cause suffering.

True security derives from dependence on, and identification with, the permanent and eternal; this it is that gives us the opportunity to pursue our aims, irrespective of the vagaries of chance, and we thereby come to acquire deeper understanding of our destiny and the purpose of our existence. This brings consciousness of the measure of our freewill. These possibilities are at the disposal, in moments of need, of the man who has striven to free his nature from bondage to matter, and has devoted time and trouble to the cultivation of the intuition, has learnt to seek within. He will not fritter away his life in irrelevancies of thought, action and speech. In the struggle for existence, his capacities will exceed those of his colleagues who have had a similar mental education but have neglected the parallel development of feeling. Intuitive wisdom will also be at the disposal of those who were mentally backward when at school: since it is not a quality of the mind, these need not feel that they have slender chances of developing it. In the case of persons of inferior intelligence, spiritual disciplines are particularly valuable, for man requires some standard by which to judge and to choose.

It is the mentally and spiritually ignorant who most frequently run into danger and misery and have the least ability to extricate themselves from such hampering conditions. Many die young because of the lack of guidance which could save them from paths of disaster. If we identify our own interests with those of others, whether groups or individuals, we may be persuaded to mistake a path of destruction for one of glory. A military career is especially based on external conditioning, and we observe how soldiers cease to consider whether demands made by human superiors are compatible with obligations to God: in fact the

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strength of an army is based on discouragement of such speculations!

Souls are attracted on the death of the body to realms analogous to the qualities with which they were identified towards the end of life: if these qualities were material, the ensuing state is that known as hell, though the sad condition involved is rarely realized, since the very identification of the Self with lower forces causes forgetfulness of previous superior states. When there is identification with blind and dead forces, these appear to the soul as animate and friendly; what is most detrimental to ultimate human interests is assumed to be beneficial. Spiritualists are also sometimes the victims of such inferior forces, and likewise believe themselves to be protected by blessed entities. When we rely on the guidance of forces more primitive than the qualities present in plants, we cannot fail to be led in detrimental directions.

Cosmic essences belong to various levels of evolution, and they seek to progress towards a more extensive condition. Where there is true balance, each of these essences instinctively worships those above it and feels compassion towards lower forms. Evolution comes about by assistance from beyond, and therefore the lower forms serve the higher, hoping eventually to merit their intercession. The history of both magic and religion shows us many examples of how men have sought to partake of the grace of higher beings, or to assimilate the qualities of lower ones, through some form of sympathetic identification.

For the present, we are still concerned with the material essences only, and we contact these through the mind rather than the stomach. To the extent that they have served us during our lives, we have a cosmic responsibility as souls to guide them towards a higher state. If we end our existence here in slavery to these forces, we are of course no longer able to fulfil the Divine Trust towards them, so it is quite just that our souls in such cases should sink into the regions of these very qualities. As Christianity teaches, our eternal treasure is to be sought where our heart is. Punishment in such cases is the result of individual negligence, the failure of a mission. If any memory of a more exalted status prevails (which rarely happens), intense grief is felt at its loss. But traces of human consciousness seldom survive

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death in such souls; such rarely realize the pathetic nature of their degeneration to a realm of perdition. Instead their state seems to them just as normal as does life on earth to an ordinary man. Henceforth consciousness is restricted to a one-dimensional condition, so the faculties of choice, discrimination and understanding are lost. Although hell is a realm of suffering from a conscious human viewpoint, such souls even know sensations of pleasure and fortune in this state.

As long as the words *soul* and *eternity* have meaning for man, he will not wish to meet such a fate, and therefore he ought not to neglect spiritual obligations. Such an end can be averted when Divine Guidance is available; but we must not turn a deaf ear to it, and allow the mind to persuade us that worldly considerations are of paramount importance. Time must be found for spiritual purification. There is no end to this, since we are daily exposed to currents of inferior origin, and constant vigilance is needed so that they should not surreptitiously gain the upper hand. Procrastination is dangerous since it easily becomes a habit, and the end may come before the task has been completed. Therefore, no matter how weary we may feel, and no matter how great the trials and temptations to which we are exposed, we must discipline the mind in such a way that it does not interfere with the regularity of training (which is a form of prayer). By constant affirmation, such obstructive tendencies disappear as proofs are received, and the material influences will no longer be able to deflect man from the destiny for which he was created.

CHAPTER III
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VEGETABLE
NOURISHMENT

We have discussed in some detail the manner in which the material essences condition man chiefly through their affinity with his thought, and an allusion has been made to the fact that vegetable factors are related rather to the feelings, and principally assimilated as daily nourishment. These have a more complicated nature than the material qualities, as they represent a higher form of consciousness: their condition is very different, since rudimentary discrimination and the perpetuation of the species are present, while they develop through various stages in the life of the plant, from seed to flower or fruit.

The analogy between feelings and the element *water* has already been pointed out. We know that the greater part of the plant consists of water, and that, while its existence is grounded in the soil, it also requires to be frequently irrigated in order to survive. There is a mystical parallel between the duality of the unborn child and its mother, and the vegetation rooted in Mother Earth.¹ The existence is a dependent one, and mobility is very restricted. Reproduction is often possible only through the cooperation of higher, animal forms of life, which afford us an illustration of the essences of one kingdom instinctively aiding lower forms to evolve.

Since the mineral, vegetable and animal realms reflect aspects present in the fourfold psychic complex of man, we may gain valuable information about our own being by studying the qualities present in these kingdoms of Nature. Our physical energies are also derived from vegetable and animal foods, these help to build the body even before birth. Our daily work, our meals

¹ See H. Bachofen: *Das Mutterrecht*.

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and our sex relations are sacraments, since they represent points of contact with the four factors outside ourselves. We have seen how misuse of material tools can lead to illness, and other forms of sickness develop from inharmonious diet, when our relations with the vegetable kingdom are unbalanced.

Once man has learnt to separate feeling from thought and to perceive sensations clearly, he becomes aware of the interaction between his feelings and the qualities of the plants on which he feeds. Even without such development, we all know, through taste, the qualities such as sweetness and bitterness, which are present in food. As perceived externally, a vegetable or a fruit is a form containing a certain combination of vegetable and mineral essences. The varieties of taste permit the harmonious interaction of these qualities, which occurs during eating and digestion. Our digestive apparatus has in fact been given to us for this purpose. It enables us to assimilate these qualities and canalize them appropriately. By eating, one co-operates, consciously or otherwise, with the evolution of the plant kingdom, and thus affords the fruit and vegetable essences a unique opportunity of development. They even experience rudimentary sensations of well-being in such circumstances.

Man is not always able to fulfil this mission adequately, since, just as in the case of the material realm already described, he may fall under the domination of those very essences which he ought to be able to elevate. Perhaps the most concrete example is seen among alcoholics. If their state is not the result of conditioning through essences in the plant, what then is it? Such preparations as hashish, opium, *kif* and marijuana afford further illustrations. Plants have been used at different times in history for the purpose of inducing certain psychic states; it is well to remember however that these cannot lead man to what is higher than the stimulant. Certain plants may confer new awareness in the realms of material or vegetable essences. This only represents a condition of upliftment in the case of a no. 1 man, whose soul is identified with the forces of matter. Such practices awaken the two lower centres in man. The action is generally harmful since there should be control over lower centres before they are stimulated. Drug addicts are in a similar state (of identification

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with vegetable forces) to such conditions as we discussed in the last chapter about those affected by materialism. In both cases, accessories intended to help us reach the highest, may, if wrongly integrated, represent obstacles on our path. For the vegetable essences in man to serve him aright, they must be harmonized with those in the environment. To reach *his* heaven, man must help them to reach *theirs*. Otherwise he will be questioned after death about his failure to return the essences to their origins.

Spiritual laws are not easily comprehensible to the mind. We have mentioned how the man who lives correctly in relation to the material forces will not suffer want, since the affirmation of the Self within will attract what is required from without. Similarly, when there is a correct relationship with the vegetable essences, these are attracted in a like manner, and one is unlikely to suffer starvation, whatever the mode of living pursued.

By entering into the nature of cereals and other plants, we can find out the sort of conditioning that will be produced in those who feed on them regularly. However strange the idea of "entering into the nature of a plant" may sound to some, the expression is often used by painters and poets, who tell us that, to portray a plant, they have first, in some sense, to become that plant, in order to understand it. They have those developed feelings which we shall need to acquire if they are atrophied in us; such persons have been so conditioned by their profession that they are more sensitive to psychic emanations than are those whose daily work is based on mental concentration.¹

It is not an easy matter to recognize the particular stimulus of any given plant, owing to the variety of our diet. We can more easily note the effect on a given race of staple articles which have been customary food for centuries. In general, the cereals rice, wheat, maize and millet are eaten by the yellow, white, red and black races. The rice-plant is short-lived and requires much water, while its stalk is slender and frail. Races which derive their nourishment largely from rice tend to show well-developed feelings, but to lack perseverance. Their easy discouragement is

¹ Man should learn to feel what foods he needs in order to maintain the correct chemical balance in the body. See D. C. Jarvis: *Folk-Medicine*.

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analogical to the withering of the plant in the absence of water; and (since feeling represents water in man's psychic nature), such people like to be praised and are very sensitive to slights. There is scope for interesting ethno-psychological research here, in the study of the character of the rice-eating races, and many others, but it is not a subject which requires a digression in this work. When we compare the wheat plant, we see that it thrusts up a taller, firmer and sturdier stalk, and is able to survive ruder climates and less clement conditions.

As we acquire more understanding of the relationship between character and diet, we realize to what extent our instincts are affected by the surrounding earth and its fruits. Then arises the question whether the inner nature can be modified by varying the diet, or in fact by periods of total abstinence from nourishment.

Certainly, since food interacts with feeling, attention to diet may modify our degree of sensitivity. Fasting reduces the vegetable and animal stimuli for a time. Such practice often produce a more acute intuition, clearer inner vision, but should not be undertaken to excess. Man is a compound being, and his qualities must be developed harmoniously, not one at the expense of another; we must remember that the physical vehicle can suffer from protracted fasting, and that damage to one part is felt by the whole, so that we are later obliged to correct the results of our errors. True fasting should itself be undertaken in response to inner indications, and at such times no hardship is felt. We have already discussed why it is not desirable to exert the will unduly to silence the appetites. Ideally, it may be repeated, we should strengthen ourselves so as to be able to absorb any nourishment (even poison) with impunity, rather than seek to avoid many types of food because we fear the consequences. To much preoccupation with diet may lead to hypochondria!

The flora of most lands is richly varied, and so extreme dietary conditioning is rare among most civilized peoples. Even apparently similar plants may have very different qualities. We see that both dates and coconuts grow on palm stems, with a dominating and sturdy trunk in common. Nevertheless the fruit is of a very

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different type, although the former can be harvested where little else will grow. Perennial plants develop a similar fruitfulness in man, and this manifests as a tendency to give advice and assistance to his fellows. A more cheerful disposition is evident among people who feed principally on vegetables and fruits exposed to much sunlight, and those who have to inhabit less hospitable regions feel the beneficial effects of "bottled sunshine". Root vegetables which develop chiefly in the dark predispose their consumers to a materialistic outlook.

The feelings must be cultivated for man to assess correctly the nature of the forces which surround him and build his body; he thus realizes the consequences of the stimuli to which he exposes himself, and is in a better position to analyse his own attitudes. Origins of decisions are recognized, and we learn to distinguish, for example, between resignation which derives from enlightenment and that which is merely a reflection of the customary diet. Once we are in a position to understand better the sources of our viewpoints, we shall no longer take pride in attitudes conditioned by our last meal. Rather will we gain added awareness of the number of handicaps which prevent us from expressing the highest potentialities in ourselves. We shall seek to overcome that easy acquiescence in unfavourable circumstances that always threatens exploitation and eventual servitude.

The humble villager has calmer feelings than the townsman, as he is accustomed to a much simpler diet. A variety of food-stuffs tends to evoke greater confusion in the consciousness, since many essences of conflicting qualities are simultaneously present. Thus the country people find it easier to devote themselves to spiritual culture: their inner life does not represent a battleground of clashing emotions. While city-dwellers are less inclined to take up such disciplines, and are less receptive to them when they do begin, they stand to profit more thereby, as they have more complicated work to perform.

All religious experience belongs to the domain of feeling, and when the inner state is a whirl of confusion, the very foundations for such experience are absent, and new organs have to grow before there can be perception. It is for this reason, not

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because of greater "suggestibility" that the country people obtain more rapid results. Once the path is at their disposal, their instinctive understanding is more rapid.

As far as normal social existence is concerned, a very large number of people achieve success and renown in their enterprises without ever having given time or thought to spiritual considerations. This is evidence of capacity to order material affairs, and it has been shown how such ability merely requires an educated mind in harmony with the material universe. Intelligence can be developed quite independently of spiritual qualities, and in fact, those who think most deeply are often among the least spiritual, in the sense that their organs of intuitive apprehension have usually remained stunted from disuse.

Intuitive guidance is not essential for success in worldly matters, though it is then usually subconsciously present if not deliberately cultivated. We have emphasized that spiritual training only reveals what is in us already, and if the hereditary qualities are good, they may often assert themselves under harmonious circumstances, without any particular intent on the part of their possessor. Nevertheless, we then have no possibility of calling on our intuition if in need of its aid, and must allow it to manifest in its own time. When it does so, it heightens such intellectual talents as are present, and therefore one should not maintain that it is not required by those who already have capable brains. It is of particular value in times of environmental reverses, and can direct activity in such a way that the life is not at the mercy of the surroundings. Rather than be obliged to follow the tendencies of the epoch, swept along by the stream, we may acquire the power to step aside, and then ourselves give new direction to the trend of the time.

Each of us has his own particular gifts and aptitudes, and we must discover these, the earlier the better, so as to be able to follow our own true path rather than imitate the ideals of others or be persuaded to pursue careers which have nothing in common with our basic instincts. Vocational guidance can be obtained by spiritual discipline, and in cases where a wrong path is being followed, the new impulse may provoke a serious deflection of the destiny, since it becomes clearly realized that

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there is no inner response to the employment, while new and fascinating aptitudes are discovered within for the first time. If these are recognized and acted upon while one is still young, it will not be necessary to spend a lifetime in bondage to an irksome occupation merely in order to acquire a guarantee of subsequent security. The selection of a profession exclusively on the basis of the amount of income it will yield, without consideration of its suitability to the individual case, is unlikely to yield much future happiness. If the true inner aptitudes are recognized in time, it will be possible to find employment where they can be expressed, and the very pleasure that will be taken in work, on account of this harmony, will contribute towards a satisfactory income and success. Prompting to work should come from within: we need not busy ourselves merely so as to be occupied. Less work will produce more impressive results, when undertaken under the guidance of inspiration. There is then more leisure time, and this can be used for further spiritual culture, and therefore, to those who argue that there is insufficient time, we reply that the time required for development becomes of itself available once the path is trodden.

Those who do not understand the nature of such an existence, when (eventually) all action is the response to inner prompting, qualify its exponents as lazy, unless they have an opportunity to see how much is achieved in a short time when the work is undertaken. There is little understanding in the West today of the creative value of relaxation: people have a fear of inactivity, a constant urge to be "up and doing", which causes energies to be unprofitably expended merely for the sake of not appearing idle, whether to others or to one's own conscience. It is not generally realized that the conservation of energy, coupled with the ability to relax truly and direct the attention inwards, is a source of greater and more profitable achievement: force is not then scattered on irrelevancies in such a way as to be inadequate when required for more serious activities. Work has to be adjusted to inner capacity, not vice versa. When this is done, it does not have adverse effects on health.

We must therefore learn to be satisfied with such success as is commensurate with our inner capacity. This is only possible

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when we are aware of the extent of that capacity; as, in order not to strive frantically beyond the limits of possibility, we must have some idea of what we can, and what we cannot, achieve. Once the feelings are well under control, and no longer merely reflect the vegetable essences which nourish us, or other environmental influences, we shall not be jealous of the different achievements of others, but shall be able to adapt our own mode of livelihood to our peculiar needs and capacities. Our work will then be performed without endangering our health or happiness.

It has been mentioned that the material realm (seen from within) has a richness and variety of experience analogous to the life of man on earth. This is even more true of the vegetable sphere, where feeling is present. Plants can know pleasure and pain, and we shall ourselves perceive this when we understand the nature of these essences, and can discriminate between the centres within ourselves.

CHAPTER IV

THE BEAST WITHIN US

We have noted how material forces are related to thought-processes, and how vegetable essences are in harmony with our feelings. The animal instincts affect our being more deeply and powerfully, since they provide that motor energy which stimulates us to action. The direction which that action takes may be detrimental to essential interests of the individual, whether spiritual or material; for this reason, many groups recommend a vegetarian diet to seekers. This has many advantages, but weakens the urge to all action, including the drive to accomplish praiseworthy aims; what is important is the mastery of energies, not a wilful weakening of disturbing elements in ourselves. It has also been noted how eating is a sacrament, as a result of which there is an association between the essences of eater and eaten, with beneficial consequences for the fate of the sacrificed soul. We should not deny such a blessing to the animal energies because we fear that they will come to dominate our being.

Persons who do not understand the deeper significance behind the ancient counsels about vegetarian diets have endeavoured to rationalize such principles according to their tender feelings, and have evolved the idea that it is cruel and sinful for man to eat meat. Originally, such concepts were not developed from a sense of pity for animals as such, but were connected with theories of metempsychosis, and the fear of breakfasting off the carcass of a venerable ancestor. We see how the mind is an invalid instrument for the comprehension of spiritual principles, unless suffused with enlightenment: if the soul is subject to transmigration, it is a quasi-eternal factor, and will not be affected by the devouring of the body (or if it is, then, as we have said, the soul of an animal, believed to have degenerated from

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a human state, can only stand to gain by nourishing the descendants of its former human condition!)

Human souls are not always present in human bodies, and it is precisely because an animal soul is more often present that people have taught how the soul may later return to earth to take up residence in an animal body. True human souls are relatively rare in this world, despite the number of men that people the earth: the eternal factor in most of us is unable to function except in the material, vegetable, or perhaps animal, realms of Spirit. In exceptional cases, souls which have already completed the cycle of human evolution, and passed beyond it, take human bodies: these are angels or gods in human form. Unlike younger souls, they incarnate on earth of their own free-will, to perform a Divine mission, and not because such a fate is indispensable to their own interests.

When the soul in an individual is an animal one (the case of a no. 3 man), or when a more advanced soul has become identified with the animal factors within man, the individual in question may prefer the society of animals to that of his fellow human-beings. Racial prejudice often colours his outlook, and this is because the consciousness of union with the family is essentially related to the animal level. It must here be emphasized that, when speaking of these levels, we are not comparing human beings to the animals around us, but are relating certain qualities in man's nature to the corresponding *essences* present in the other forms of life mentioned.

The family is a unit based on procreation and perpetuation, and as man is *ideally* the channel for the quickening of the spiritual energies in woman, most societies are patrilineal. It is a blessing to be survived by male progeny, since we cannot expect to subsist as complete beings in another realm unless we have left behind a part of ourselves in this one. It has also been indicated that our descendants, who evolve their own eternal condition, can also modify our fate when we no longer live in this world with the chance to purify ourselves by conscious striving.

Where there is strong identification with the family, the protective instincts assert themselves, as they also do in animals if their young are menaced. Such identification leads us to seek

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the furtherance of our own family's social standing, to ensure our children a better chance of survival and the opportunity to acquire wives of more noble descent. The ultimate result of emphasis on one human unit must be conflict with other units striving towards similar privileges. As society evolves, our family loyalties extend their horizons; they encompass, in lesser degree, the race to which we belong, since here also we are conscious of descent from a common ancestor. Such an attitude must carry the germs of racial exclusiveness and war, for it promotes a society based on blood relations. This is the consequence of an immature and underdeveloped instinct: it has failed to evolve to the point where all human beings are recognized in practice as the descendants of a single common ancestor.

Failure has been the consequence of external differences, the practices, customs and taboos of one group which are alien to others that have evolved in other circumstances and different environments. We feel a bond of comprehension and confidence when among members of our own race; the stranger walking in our midst has unfamiliar habits, unknown origins. He fails to respect our taboos, and thus implies a threat to the traditions which have conditioned our own society. We do not understand, and therefore we fear; what we fear, we hate; what we hate, we try to suppress. The eventual consequence to human society of the development of groups based on the family is of course the familiar spectacle of power blocs: kingdoms ceaselessly committed to strengthening themselves because of the fear of their rivals who are doing the same. As long as man cannot see beyond family loyalties, as long as he cannot recognize in himself (and surmount) the promptings of the animal energies from which he derives his strength, we need not nurse the illusion that there will one day be peace on earth, for such a society has war at its roots, and war is the law of the animal world.

Self-sacrifice in the interest of the group is no monopoly of mankind: monkeys and elephants will risk their own lives to protect members of their tribe, but will fiercely repel intruders. Self-integration alone can show the way to liberation from the bondage of man to similar instincts, for he must learn to give greater weight to the ties of Spirit than to those of blood. Peace

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in the world can only come through the efforts of individuals to master themselves. Until such integration has taken place, the familiar slogan of the animal instincts will continue to sound: "Right or wrong, my country". Compared with the materialism of the first level, such an attitude is very evolved, since it implies the willingness to sacrifice the instinct of acquisitiveness for the interest of the group; but man must leave behind the loyalties of nationalism if he is to manifest that for which he was created.

When the animal soul dominates a given individual, it will forcibly condition him in such a way that he cannot realize loftier ideals in practice, for Self-integration as a complete human being is still merely a hope in the future. Meanwhile, a *conscious* animal soul realizes affinity with the animal kingdom, and must die as such before metamorphosis to a higher state can occur. Certain human cultures indicate this feeling of unity with the animal world: it is a well-known phenomenon of totemism that certain tribes will insist to anthropologists that they actually *are* buffaloes (or other animals), and that they will be gathered up to the buffaloes when they die. They relate that their departed ancestors visit them in the form of buffaloes! Such a fate is preferable to those of souls drawn to a realm of death, or to that of the plant essences, but it is not the end for which man was created. If he can purify himself from identification with such forces, his subsequent destiny will belong to a much vaster and nobler realm.

It has been mentioned that human souls (or those higher still) may still be more or less controlled by the animal instincts, owing to imperfect integration. We are often astonished to learn how noble individuals yield to the baser passions in moments of temptation. Variations in diet will not solve our problem; as long as we do not face the cause within ourselves, we merely supplant the instinct of the beast by that of the tree! We still have to develop true human instincts, and knowledge of the Self: this is to be done by observing and classifying the phenomena of the not-Self. As we gain in skill, it will be easier for us to understand the sources of our motives, the origins of our desires.

Most desires belong to the animal realm, since the evolved

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human being is emancipated from personal preference, and strives to follow the Divine will; he is not identified with the desires which arise within, but canalizes them and neutralizes their power. We see therefore that strong desires and powerful wills are not necessarily the correct motive forces to direct our spiritual strivings: animal energies will not subject animal desire! Instead, they will strengthen the very impulses which require to be tamed. When this has become clear, we have truly understood that Self-realization is dependent on Divine Grace and Compassion more than on individual effort.

It is the nature of the animal energies to assert themselves forcibly, and those identified with such instincts tend to impel themselves heedlessly along the most detrimental paths, with little, if any, consciousness of what they are doing. We can only stand aside and contemplate such sad spectacles, in full knowledge of the catastrophic consequences which are bound to manifest unless Divine Mercy deflects them in time by some blow which stuns with sufficient strength to bring the riderless steed to a sudden halt, and forces a reappraisal.

Animal energies sweep those in their power along paths which are in the interests of these energies; there is no consciousness of damage which may be caused to the human qualities involved. As in the case of identification with matter, we see how a measure of worldly satisfaction is obtained at a high price; but now the motive is power and not money! How many public figures in the grip of their own passions are swept headlong to destruction and an ignominious death after having achieved a measure of worldly renown! Identification is such that there is no innate power at the disposal of such people to avert their own doom, even when they sense its imminency. The very origin of such misfortune is rarely suspected, and they frequently attribute their reversal to an unkind fate, or, at best, to their errors of judgement. The assuaging of insistent desire has become the paramount purpose of their existence.

Procreation is normally an apparently accidental consequence of yielding to animal desires. Few people even suspect that such an act can take place when there is dis-identification from such appetites. It is certain that children conceived under the dictates

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of desire will themselves find it very hard to control their own subsequent passions; and we may learn therefore that mastery of the animal instincts may give us the chance to bring nobler souls into the world as our children. Such a blessing will only be possible if we marry our spiritual affinities; we should not be guided exclusively by physical attraction, emotional, or intellectual considerations in making such a choice, any more than we ought to choose our partners for political or economic ends. Once we are no longer subject to the beast in ourselves, sexual relations with our partners will take on a new meaning, transcending the physical act. It is clear therefore that those who wish to contribute towards the peace and harmony of centuries to come should pay great attention to the manner in which they produce their own offspring; they will be truly responsible for qualities which manifest several generations hence, in the children upon whom their sins will be visited. To those who may be agitated by such a thought, and ask how it is possible for God to allow children to be born with such handicaps, we reply that the vehicle for the unborn child to inhabit is a body conditioned by the parents, an exteriorization of elements present in themselves. The type of soul which will be attracted to a given family depends on qualities present there; the grade of the wine is in relation to the nature of the bottles. Is God unjust because brambles cannot yield peaches? The qualities in the children are largely the consequence of those of the ancestors, and not a matter which involves Divine responsibility. It is up to us to cleanse ourselves, to achieve freedom from the dominion of this world, so that we may be blessed by both ancestors and descendants, who will profit from our endeavour.

A diet including a liberal quantity of animal sustenance stimulates us to more enterprise than is typical of vegetarians, especially those whose ancestors have also avoided meat. We note that an animal diet may come from fish, flesh or fowl; the nature of the stimulus will vary in each case, since these creatures exist respectively in the water, on the land and in the air. The environment of fish may further be static, lakes and ponds, or mobile, such as rivers and seas; it may be salt or fresh water, and again, we find that some fish are fertilized in the sea and spawn in

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ivers. These struggle with great courage and persistence in the face of heavy odds, swimming against the current and leaping over obstacles. Similar qualities, patience and a willingness to seek new environments, or to found a suitable home for the children, are reflected in those who commonly eat such food. It is also a characteristic of many fish to dart suddenly from place to place, and similar restlessness and bustle are found in races where fish is a principle article of the diet.¹

Since fishes live in water, the element related to the feelings, such a diet tends to accentuate a tendency for the emotions to change rapidly. While activity and industry are characteristic, perseverance is not, since it is natural to the fishes to be constantly on the move. Of course, those which inhabit rivers are more enterprising than the denizens of ponds. When the destiny is subject to frequent removals, adaptability increases and there is greater confidence to face the unknown. Such a diet increases the willingness to travel far afield in search of new and more congenial situations; but although these qualities are often useful to man, they should not control him to the extent that they deny the possibility of self-assertion in uncongenial environment. He must learn to distinguish between instincts identified with the diet, and the deeper essential requirements of his own destiny. If he is too much swayed by such stimuli, he loses the capacity to recognize his own best interests, and may easily engage in a succession of frenzied and unprofitable undertakings.

The essences present in poultry are different in many respects. Although hens are attached for a short time to their offspring, (unlike most fishes which merely produce them regardless of the future) they too lay eggs. The position is intermediate between that of fish and mammals, where there is a closer sense of relationship, as the young are suckled by the mother.

The hen is naturally gregarious; after having spent the day scratching for food, she desires to roost in company, and, although she prefers a particular perch, memory is not always good enough for it to be located. Little discrimination is shown by either sex in the choice of mating partners, and unions with

¹ Many of the most frequently eaten fishes are gregarious, swimming in schools. These do not venture afield themselves.

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children or parents are not uncommon, while ties do not last long. Somewhat analogical impulses may develop in those whose diet is largely composed of chicken. Such people are particularly irked by solitude, lack continuity in the affections, and direct their attention to the interests of the moment. They easily forget those who have meant much to them in the past.

The more complicated the diet, the more difficult it is for the individual to distinguish between all the various forces operative within him. Naturally, when many varieties of animal food are involved, and where canned products facilitate the simultaneous absorption of essences from different parts of the globe, it becomes much harder to understand one's inner nature. We have however seen that a vegetarian diet, while resulting in calmer feelings, tends to deprive man of the necessary stimulus to activities which may be advantageous. Those predominantly carnivorous, on the other hand, suffer from uncontrollable desires, while their animal instincts are to the fore, and this state makes the task of achieving Self-awareness a harder one. There is a strong desire for results: they are anxious to make determined, even violent efforts to attain the objective; they seek above all to be up and doing, to fight and win, to obtain quick results and surpass their colleagues. Until these instincts are controlled, this very attitude will prove a brake to progress, since the forces asserting themselves are those which need to be quiescent for the emergence of true human qualities under harmonious conditions. If the animal instincts pervade the consciousness to a great degree, judgement is impaired, since it becomes conditioned by this very identification; hence, we easily reject what we most need. Nowadays, it is common to assume that spirituality is a prerogative of the East. The soul within man does not recognize differences of West and East, but the variety of the diet, and the greater amount of animal food absorbed owing to more advantageous circumstances, produces more disturbed feelings in the Occidental, and renders his task harder. We may relate the need for a greater intake of calories to the severity of the climate, which demands a fiercer struggle for existence, and so we see that there is an inter-action between the climatic and dietetic factors in conditioning in-

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dividuals and races. Economic depression influences the quality of the feelings, as the poor cannot afford to eat meat every day.

While it is essential to realize the number of obstacles on the path, and to recognize that the rich and varied diet of the city dweller is ever creating new inner disturbances to be surmounted, we must never lose sight of the fact that salvation is of God; that, when the Divine is operative within us, the potentiality of victory is also present, however discouraging the results may appear over the years. It is quite normal for people to feel troubled by months of apparently marking time, and to wonder whether this does not in fact mean that their condition is retrograde; at all events, the very habit of years of practice inclines us to persevere, if only from the fear of facing the possibility that we have wasted many valuable years.

Surrender to animal instincts is largely the consequence of our own indifference: there are times when we wonder whether it is worth the struggle of continuing to deny to our desires the indulgences of yore, and in moments of despair, we yield to temptation and persuade ourselves that no serious harm is being done. While this progressive surrender to the animal instincts constantly whittles away the chances of manifesting the highest within us, something at least has been achieved if we can realize what it is which prevents us from occupying higher stations. To recognize sin as such, and to endeavour to cleanse ourselves and to merit the eventual descent of such Grace from Above as can alone make us whole, is a state far more promising than the bestial condition of those who live for the satisfaction of their passions and believe their conduct to be quite justifiable. Those who die while identified with such qualities will of course continue their existence as souls demoted to the realm of the beasts; this state is however vastly preferable to the much lower sphere of inert matter, for existence in a cloud of passion is certainly better than total darkness.

In many parts of Asia, the flesh of the goat is regularly eaten by those who can afford it. This animal is to us a symbol of lust and foolishness, and a man conditioned by such qualities will tend to ephemeral promiscuous relations, being constantly troubled at the thought of having to sleep alone. The transient

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satisfaction ensuing from such liaisons is obtained at the expense of greater joys, which those who remain in such a state will never know. They are conditioned by forces which cause them to feel the need for the release of physical energies, and the very sensation of physical well-being which they obtain appears to them as sufficient proof that their behaviour is both healthy and correct. It often requires a lifetime of indulgence for them to recognize something of the harm that has been done, and this leaves little possibility of repairing the damage; hence, Prophets remind us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth.

The relationship between animal instincts and gregariousness has already been noted; flocks of sheep and goats require the constant attentions of the shepherd and his dog, since they so easily stray, and once they have done so, they have little ability to find their way back again. Those who are conditioned by such energies will always be followers and imitators, never leaders or initiators, since they have no self-reliance, and instinctively sense the need of discipline. Having appointed others in authority over themselves, however, they soon resent their control, owing to their own very inability to keep to prescribed paths. Where such qualities control intellectuals, they devote years of their lives to mental meandering in fields of unreality, and labour to achieve what can interest none but themselves.

The flesh of the pig is prohibited by Islam and Judaism, and was, until fairly recently, disapproved of in Japan. The pig is attracted to dirt, and its habits denote unashamed enjoyment of physical comforts. Its nature is so generally decried that in most parts of the world, it is a serious insult to compare a man to a pig. We recognize the animal qualities in our fellow-men precisely when we give such names as "swine" and "old goat". Many are however flattered to be compared to bulls, symbols of stability, and, incidentally chosen by the English as expressive of their own national character!

Because identical energies operate differently in man and animals, the affinity of the pig with dirt shows itself in human beings as the love of material possessions, and these qualities incline man to devote his life to matters which may later cause degeneration to a condition far below the state of a hog.

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Beef is one of the least pernicious types of animal food. It is prohibited to orthodox Hindus precisely because of their respect for the cow, which provides so much else of benefit to mankind. The bull, apart from being a symbol of strength and stability, also stands for conservation of energy, patience and perseverance. It mates at specific seasons, and not indiscriminately in response to uncontrollable urges, as do so many other animals. Hence, such a diet will have more beneficial consequences than that of such animals as have just been listed; but it is not fitting that evolved man should worship any aspect of the animal kingdom, nor ought he to be identified with such qualities, however praiseworthy they may be in their own realm; he belongs to a nobler form of creation, and ought therefore to acquire liberation from all animal conditioning, whether detrimental or otherwise.

These examples may suffice to illustrate the manner in which various forms of animal life may stimulate similar energies in man, and the interested reader who wishes to seek out for himself further examples has only to consider the habit and mode of life of the animal concerned, and transpose such qualities in terms of human relationships. This has already been attempted in many cultures, especially in relation to the signs of the zodiac, which indicates that the question of animal tendencies operating in man may be a much deeper subject than the mere question of essences absorbed in food; for several individuals of a given family will not necessarily behave in the same manner even when they have been subjected to identical diet over a long period.

CHAPTER V

HOW OTHER HUMAN BEINGS AFFECT US

Unlike the other cosmic levels, that of man is dual, since the physical envelope pertains to the realm of this world, while the Divine content has eternal qualities. It is not possible for this content to be received, unless the vessel has first been emptied of its worldly qualities; this can normally only occur through marriage. When we discuss the spiritual condition of the true man therefore, there is a question whether we mean the vessel capable of containing a certain new content, or that content itself, which is in fact the higher human aspect. (I use the word human to imply the qualities of the complete man, since those dominated by lower instincts are not really human, insofar as their essence is concerned). The concept of the incarnation of the Divine Presence has been referred to by such names as Baptism with Fire, or the coming of the Holy Spirit. Many people contact such a Sacred Force as a transcendent quality, but only the Complete Man can know it as immanent.

This higher aspect of Man is not physical, and it does not therefore contact other influences via sensory stimuli; but the physical vehicle, which is different from that of animals, and represents (as perceived by spiritual sight) a network for the interaction of the four factors of the cross of matter, can be affected by the qualities of other human beings, as well as by the three inferior types of essences which we have discussed.

Such factors fuse with similar elements in our own nature as a result of spiritual initiation on the one hand, or sexual relations on the other. We have already noted how the qualities which affect us produce an increasingly powerful effect at successive levels, but that, since these effects involve progressively

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deeper aspects of our being, they are less easily perceived from external evidence. In the same way that we possess our lower centres as part of our equipment for life on earth, we require the correctly-used fourth centre for our own complete Self-integration: this normally means that the sexual union, under ideal conditions, can be of predominant significance as a means to fulfilment. From the male point of view, the co-operation of woman can have a greater effect on ascent or degeneration than any other single factor in the world; to the female, man may bring about consciousness of higher realms than can be known without such help (provided such a man is spiritually evolved).

It may be stated that every consummation of the sex act between man and woman is a marriage from the cosmic point of view; and such marriage implies that, whatever else may or may not occur, there will be an exchange of psychic essences as a product of the union. This means that the woman receives a modification of her inner condition through the influence of the man, and also that, if there are several men involved, she will become conditioned by a confusion of conflicting stimuli. We saw in the last chapter how a varied diet makes it hard for us to achieve Self-awareness; but plurality of husbands or lovers is a much greater source of degeneration for a woman. Every man who goes to such a woman will absorb, in addition to her own psychic qualities, those of all the men she has known before. In reality, after the first union, little of the original content of the parents continues to pervade the soul of the woman, since the new essence in the husband now fills her being. For this reason, women abandon the surname of their father at marriage, and take that of the husband. The consequence of heedless promiscuity with degenerate partners is therefore far graver for women than for men, since the fine hereditary qualities may much more rapidly be extinguished. This is one of the reasons why chastity has always been considered more important in the case of women, and why nearly all cultures give a place of honour to virgins. In the modern world, where little spiritual knowledge is publicly known or accepted, the very basis for an ideal marriage is frequently ignored. Since such union normally produces children, an in-

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auspicious choice subsequently handicaps these, and their misfortune is then perpetuated (with interest) in succeeding generations. It is hardly surprising that, in communities where traditional inspired teaching is at a discount, and where there is little perception of inner states, the society is frustrated, while the increase of juvenile delinquency becomes a matter of concern to the public. The remedy for such situations is to be sought within, and when a sufficient number of individuals sincerely seek to purify their own nature, there is already hope for a more ordered society.

It has been explained that the soul in a human being is normally of one of four grades, and that the true human soul is relatively rare. Hence we find that men and women with souls of different grades meet and marry. Although there are some important exceptions, the children normally partake of the same spiritual essence as the father. Ideally, marriages should take place between partners of approximately similar essence, though it is generally true that the higher the essence of the partner, the more fortunate we are. Since, as many religions teach, the married couple become "as one soul", the sexual union involves a fusion of spiritual qualities as well as an interchange of psychic ones.

We have mentioned that different plants and animals produce effects according to their essential qualities, and we may note that, when human beings affect each other, the basic character is also involved. This character, in accordance with an ancient tradition common to astrology and mediaeval medicine (as to the works of Aristotle) is classified in the work *Susila Budhi Dharma* in terms of the four elements: earth, water, fire and air. These are of course related to the classical bilious, phlegmatic, sanguine and choleric humours. The medicine of the Middle Ages was based on the theory that sickness involved their disequilibrium, and that cure depended on restoring the balance. Spiritual discipline accepts the same principle but recognizes that the problem to be solved is not purely a physical one, hence the true physician must be found within. As a great deal of literature exists on the subject of character classified according to the four elements, the reader anxious to familiarize himself

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with the views of Muhammad Subuh on this matter is recommended to consult the original.

Returning to the question of the interplay of forces between male and female, we may note that it is a comparatively easy matter for them to become aware of the qualities present in each other, since, at the time of union, these two souls can establish a contact without the participation of the lower centres. This temporary emancipation from subhuman qualities, at a moment of fusion with human ones, is the reason why love has always been exalted by poets. When such a state is attained, a condition of 'unearthly bliss' is experienced, but this is unknown to those who seek partners merely to assuage their own physical desires. The beauty or sordidness of the sexual act depends on our approach to it, but in order to experience its highest aspect, we must be able to perform it while insulated from our own animal desires. It is not easy to understand how such a union can come about, but this is one of the potentialities at the disposal of the man who has learnt to subject the three lower centres, and whose marital relations, like all his other actions, can be the result of a Command from Above, instead of an urge from below.

It is to be understood that, while postulating sex relations as a sacrament and form of worship when performed under ideal circumstances, we are recommending a life of chastity, not of promiscuity. By chastity however, we mean ideally a married existence (the partner having been selected for spiritual reasons), in which union occurs exclusively in obedience to a law that is only known when we can free ourselves from passion. We are therefore discussing matters which are quite unfamiliar to the masses of humanity, and have been experienced by very few persons: but nevertheless this distant ideal is of significance to those whom training has fitted for it. It implies the superiority of the married state over that of celibacy, when such a union is a chaste one, and not an excuse for satisfaction of the appetites with the blessing of the clergy. What has been expounded is not a doctrine to be experimented with, in the hope of testing its validity, since this would automatically involve a wrong approach and therefore result in harm. For ideal results, and to

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offer the children the best possible opportunities, the chastity of both partners is particularly recommendable during periods of pregnancy, and it is most inadvisable that the husband should have connections with another woman at this time.

We have already seen the harm that can result from over-indulgence in certain kinds of food. When we come to the question of the forces in woman and their effect on man, the position is more complicated since we require to be able to sense their essence before being committed to marriage. It is common in modern Western society for men to marry women who are no longer virgins, and it is therefore important to have some idea of the state of their inner being, which cannot be known except through the development of appropriate psychic organs. Such matters are of especial concern in lands where bigamy is illegal and divorce is hard; the requisite organs are to be developed through increasing ability to isolate the Self from thought, imagination and desire, at the time when such perception and guidance are required.

Those who are still unmarried when they approach a spiritual discipline are in many respects more fortunate, since they have time to cleanse themselves and to develop great skill in choosing satisfactory mates. In order to do this, they will of course need to exercise restraint and patience. The excuse that they need the company of other women while awaiting marriage shows lack of understanding of the problem, since this very indulgence will retard and prejudice the chances of meeting their true affinities. It is a sad aspect of modern civilization that schoolmasters teach their classes in some countries that occasional relations with chance partners are actually beneficial, provided no disease is contracted. For those who feel too weak to dispense with all forms of surrender to their sexual urges, Muhammad Subuh considers infrequent masturbation a permissible, though certainly not a recommendable, form of relief, since it is less harmful from a spiritual point of view; and to those who assert that they must have union with a woman in the absence of marriage, he replies that they should at least find a regular mistress, and treat her as a wife in all but name, rather than visit prostitutes. Such counsels form no part of his views on ideal existence, but

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represent concessions to those who lack adequate control, with a view to ensuring minimum harm, according to the prevailing conditioning of the persons in question. If such advice is followed, there are better chances of acquiring in the future the ability to eradicate the consequences of misdemeanour.

A constant preoccupation with sexual satisfaction at the expense of more noble interests is the sad fate of those youths whose parents have indulged in promiscuity. This is particularly the case where the father has been accustomed to passing liaisons with a number of women before marriage: even when a pure partner is chosen to bear the children, the prospective father is already an unwitting focus for assertive animal forces which have encroached on his original state. With no suspicion of his condition or the consequences, he communicates it to his wife, and, in addition to an inner degeneration which develops in her, a babe is born to bear the burden of its father's sins. It is hardly surprising that this child will himself be even more attracted than his father to the pleasures of the flesh, when he attains his majority, and the damage is liable to increase with each succeeding generation. We see therefore how hard it is for the average individual to acquire true Self-knowledge, on account of his hereditary inadequacy; and the most that many can hope for is to be able themselves to produce children with somewhat better chances, so that these may again improve the family strain. When their turn comes to marry, they are less likely to do so on account of physical considerations irrespective of the inner qualities desirable in a wife.

It is important to remember that, through another human being, we contact not only human forces; in fact, when such a person has become merely a framework for the operation of bestial or satanic elements, it is these that we assimilate; thus it is that many young persons are easily led astray by attractive temptresses, who have become vehicles through which the lower powers may ensnare those with a higher content. The harm to the human being in question is tremendous, and he rarely even suspects the nature of the qualities to which he is exposing himself. It is clear then that the danger to men on the spiritual path lies not in women as such but in the essences which may be

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present in particular women. The same risk from the point of a bride involves qualities which may be present in her husband, against which she should not be defenceless.

Celibacy is no solution to this problem, since integration normally requires the interchange of psychic forces between man and woman; such practice may be compared to vegetarianism or a life of voluntary renunciation of worldly goods. Such techniques all recognize the danger to the individual of the forces present in the various kingdoms; and yet, to close the avenues to all of these in turn will certainly not lead to their mastery, which is the true purpose of human existence. It is therefore necessary to maintain a contact with the Divine essence within, since that alone can cleanse us of the taint to which we expose ourselves when we approach the various factors in the world. We reach this essence when we are able to effect an insulation of the Self from identification with the thoughts, desires and emotions; it is therefore most valuable to have such an opportunity, since there is no doubt that we shall expose ourselves to undesirable elements, and that we shall suffer the consequences, unless we know how to carry out the necessary purification. Once we have achieved this, we shall find that all the previous hindrances have now become our faithful colleagues or servants, and we shall henceforth co-operate with them to mutual advantage. This will not only permit a blessed existence for ourselves, but will assure our children yet unborn a fortunate destiny also. Those who are able to encounter the necessary techniques to achieve such results, without having to abandon their normal home and occupation, are particularly favoured, compared with the hardships to which most aspirants were called upon to face in traditional disciplines of bygone ages.

True solitude is to be found within, and man does not need to depend on particular localities in order to know that which he carries about with him wherever he goes. Further, many traditional scriptures which refer to revelations received in the wilderness, on mountain-peaks or by river-banks, are allegorical and enshrine teachings which it was not desirable to make public in former days. Many spiritual guides have taught in parables, when they have been obliged to speak in front of mixed audiences; the

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nature of their messages is often such that they are not meant to be reasoned about, but rather be treated as objects of quiet meditation so that true comprehension may flash through from the intuition. Many are led astray because they believe firmly in the literal sense of such tales.

The story of the Syrian captain, who was angered by Elisha's advice to bathe in the Jordan, illustrates the common tendency to place faith in the weird and wonderful, and to distrust the apparently familiar and commonplace. Unusual ends are expected to be attained by following unusual paths, and the very novelty of the unknown attracts many people to the oddest of disciplines, encouraging them to yet greater effort. Books about spiritual techniques, and the attitude with which we approach them, are examples of influences reaching us from other men through the written or spoken word. We shall never obtain from a book more than a reflection of our own past experience, since what we read must be related to what we already know. It should also be clear from the foregoing arguments that the mind is often an unreliable instrument, particularly when it has not been trained to critical analysis. Unconsciously we tend to accept what is in harmony with our own feelings, and reject that which repels us. Books may claim to take us to the Truth, and yet only if the Truth is already present can we assess such writings appropriately. Further, we not only evaluate what we read, or hear from others, in a subjective manner: we also cunningly justify the call of the baser instincts by mistaking impulse for intuition. If our criterion is to be the intuition, we must be able to identify it, and this again calls for training in inner discrimination.

It is common for people to attach great significance to books as a source of guidance in spiritual matters: the older these are, the more they are revered, owing to the weight of centuries of consensus as to their value. Yet their very age is a barrier to understanding, since they were composed when men thought and lived in a very different manner from our present existence. Hence so many people who devote daily moments to devout perusal of ancient scriptures eventually convince themselves, by constant thought and emotional projection, that the events related took place in a manner quite inconsonant with the historical

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facts. Since this danger of misunderstanding is already present when dealing with historical situations, how much greater is the risk run by those who uncritically attribute reality to myth or legend! Unconscious self-identification with the heroes or heroines, in books which are themselves the products of other minds, can only lead us to realms of fantasy, while under the lamentable impression that we are following paths of glory, and we charge at windmills of our own making, in the manner of *Don Quijote*.

The symbol is ever mistaken by the masses for its corresponding reality, and this tendency is at the root of all idol-worship and trust in talismans. Hence the creations of men's hands eventually acquire the reverence of other human beings who bow down to them and solicit their intercessions; charms are carried around by those who unwittingly place greater faith in pieces of wood or stone carvings than they do in the Divine soul within themselves which is indestructible. Some Prophets, foreseeing the danger, have forbidden the representation of "graven images", the cult of saints; but the simple and the ignorant, who cannot comprehend abstractions, find emotional solace in the sense of security afforded by household gods and lucky charms. They little suspect the far greater source of security which lies dormant in their own breasts.

All experience is interpreted in terms of our own subjectivity, and if artists are identified with the lower nature, this condition will certainly be reflected in their art. The more we can emancipate ourselves from attachment to such forces, from emotional attitudes to what we portray with pen or brush, the greater the value of our creation, and the artist who aspires to greater heights would do well to give attention to his inner condition: a change in the level of Being cannot fail to produce a corresponding modification of Self-expression! The spiritual discipline which can bring this about does not take us away from ourselves, but rather removes from us those veils which obstruct the true light and prevent portrayal of the best we have to offer. Once we can effectively isolate the Self from the thoughts and other disturbing factors, our art becomes the medium for the expression of Divine inspiration, and when this state has been truly achieved,

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such activity becomes a form of prayer, and produces a profound effect on sensitive persons who contemplate it, since it reflects a state of inner reconciliation, and harmony with the universal pattern.

It is claimed that the Subud training can help almost any human being towards attainment of the desired inner condition; but although the Divine activity, which manifests especially in moments of Self-isolation from accessory forces, is entirely adequate to cater for individual requirements, these vary greatly on account of hereditary conditions. Different persons will therefore report varying sensations, and speed of development will not be identical. The controlling factor is, however, All-Wise, and the dosage prescribed by the Physician within is according to need and capacity. Antidotes frequently produce symptoms of new pains, and such sensations arise during this training; they are however normally of short duration, rarely recurring regularly for much more than a month, and not often manifesting for more than a few hours. They should be welcomed as evidence of a corrective and curative process; their nature is seldom such as to disturb slumber or diminish appetite for food, and doctors are at a loss to identify their cause. Such signs of inner catharsis are actually a guarantee of future good-health, the combustion of harmful vestiges of hereditary disharmony. It is not normally necessary or practical to attempt to "do something about" these manifestations, unless they are particularly painful. Similarly, we do not need to assist the evidence of inner activity by additional techniques which the mind may suggest; such an approach indicates misunderstanding of the very nature of the problem. It has been repeatedly stated that progress is according to capacity to receive, and it will certainly be much slower where the body is diseased, or in cases where the hereditary qualities are especially unfavourable.

As the training continues, and the organs of apprehension become progressively purified, it is noticed that the quality of sensory perception is also modified and develops new potentialities; as these arise, the restricted capacity of former perceptions is recognized. Increased understanding can be obtained from attention to sensory stimuli at the moment of contact with our

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corresponding organs. This is an example of how our subordinate qualities may assist us in acquiring Self-awareness; thus it is that the very factors which formerly proved detrimental now act as faithful servants, and their co-operation facilitates the task in hand. The training will provide evidence of how we are at some moments expressing our true natures, while, at others, the inferior inner qualities are operative. The latter case is much the more frequent in the early stages, since these are more prominent in the consciousness of most persons, until adequate purification has been carried out. Nevertheless, we are normally so unacquainted with the character and number of the forces within us that what we manifest is often regarded as quite alien, and may provoke doubts in beginners as to the Divine origin of the training. When the practice is terminated however, we note that we nearly always resume our normal feelings and attitudes in a matter of minutes.

Progressive disidentification enables us to stand aside and see the lower instincts speaking within us as distinct from ourselves. Once we begin to acquire this feeling of duality, to see the speaker as sometimes distinct from the hearer, we gain some control over the forces which formerly dominated us, since we have become conscious of their existence, and recognize their impact. Such knowledge is essential if we are to canalize these forces effectively. There is a tendency in modern psychiatry to discuss whether we should express or suppress impulses, and the partisans of the different schools of thought advocate their views with fervour and conviction. True liberation and peace is however to be found in the canalization of our instincts, rather than in seeking to eradicate them or in yielding to their demands: the paths of hedonists and sybarites, monks and ascetics, will not lead to ultimate satisfaction, because these persons fail to see the need for true canalization, and their approach to aspects of the Self is therefore an incorrect one.

The reconciliation between the Self and its accessories, true Self-integration, will enable us to work and perform our worldly duties in harmony with our inner nature. This aptitude will, in its turn, cause the results of our activities to be blessed and give satisfaction to others, which means that our undertakings will

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produce success. Our lives will then represent true and ideal Self-expression, in the full meaning of the word, and we shall manifest the highest potentialities in ourselves as facets of the Divine Spirit. Our existence on earth will no longer violate cosmic laws, since we shall find incomparable bliss through living in harmony with them, and we shall no longer be subject to forces which lead astray. If Divine Grace enables us to reach such a state, our presence on the earth will ennoble it, and when the time comes for us to go, we shall know an even fuller existence, and a peace which passes all human understanding.

THE END

APPENDIX A

LETTERS OF PAK SUBUH AND EXTRACTS THEREFROM

(All Translations by the Present Author)

I. The Meaning and Objectives of Subud

The following document is intended for perusal by all persons desirous of joining the Subud movement, and they are in fact required to read it carefully before initiation, so as to assure themselves as to the purpose of the training, and its relation to their own aspirations:—

The Meaning of Subud:

SUBUD is an abbreviated form of the words *SUSILA*, *BUDHI* and *DHARMA*.

SUSILA means true human morality, aligned with the Divine Will.

BUDHI signifies awareness of the essential qualities of Man.

DHARMA is the attitude of submission, faith and sincerity, directed to Almighty God.

These words symbolize the state of Complete Man, whose consciousness is pure and tranquil, and who is capable of contacting the all-powerful Life-Stream.

Objectives of Subud:

Subud training is divorced from any influences originating in desire or thought, and practitioners are truly quickened by the Power of Almighty God. Its objectives are consequently to be sought in its origin: *GOD*.

It should be stipulated further than Subud is neither a form of religion nor a teaching, but a spiritual catharsis effected by Divine Power and tending towards evidence of the reality of

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Spirit, independent of any stimuli deriving from desire or thought.

In consequence, evidence is available during the Subud training that the individual consciousness is truly recognized to have been freed from the influence of thought and desire, which means that the consciousness is in fact isolated at such times from the participation of thought and desire.

Since thought and desire are primary human accessories for worldly needs during man's life on earth, being utilized to increase and expand individual knowledge, why then should the consciousness be insulated from them? The reason is that their presence in the consciousness (at the time of spiritual awareness) adulterates it, and hampers perception of the contact from the great Life-Stream, which nevertheless does in reality both envelop consciousness from without and constitute its core within.

The isolation of thought and desire from the consciousness is therefore a prerequisite for the quickening of the latter, which enables one to feel the presence of the currents from the Life-Forces. These constantly affect and stimulate the consciousness. Eventually one acquires the ability to discriminate between good and evil essences, i.e. to distinguish those of human origin from such as belong to the subordinate material, vegetable or animal realms.

In actual fact, practitioners are truly guided by the Power of Almighty God during the times of Subud training: it is this Power which enables them to acquire discrimination in spiritual matters. The ultimate result is true self-realization, which is a very different matter from the mere claim to have attained to such a state.

We may compare the process of discrimination to the methods of chemistry, which make it possible for us to extract iron, tin and many other elements (including gold and silver) from within the earth. The analogy is only relatively valid however, since chemistry is a human science, the prosecution of which depends on the participation of thought and desire, while spiritual discrimination is a Divine activity, originating in boundless Power by far eclipsing mere human skill or capacity.

We must not be led to doubt the validity of our worship of

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Almighty God because of anything which may take place, for to Him belong all knowledge and wisdom. God can create from a void, and is also able to make whole what is incorrigible by mere human reckoning.

II. Extracts from "Counsels for Supervisors"

Subud is a form of spiritual training in which the individual soul and consciousness are insulated from the stimuli of passions, desires and thoughts, and are thus automatically guided towards fulness of existence.

Since the nature of the training which is vouchsafed and experienced arises and manifests independently of passions, desires and thoughts, it is evident that it is not provoked by worldly influence, but originates from a Source that is Self-sufficient: a Current which is truly sacred and exalted.

This sacred and exalted Current is normally referred to as the great Life-Force, which encompasses the entire universe, whether visible or imperceptible to the physical senses.

It is consequently certain that the Life-Force which activates the consciousness and individual soul during the training is sacred and exalted, and truly guides the consciousness and soul towards holiness and excellence.

Such guidance clearly requires no assistance from human desire or thoughts, on account of its exalted and sacred nature; consequently, any participation of such human energies may only confuse the atmosphere, and can in no way improve it.

Hence, in Subud training, practitioners do not require the aid of their fellow human beings, but are merely asked to accept and surrender to what is received and required by them. Supervisors therefore merely participate in the worship of their new colleagues, and are themselves required at such times to perform their own devotions to Almighty God, and not merely to contemplate and consider the state of the others.

Subud organization involves regulations for the mutual relations of human beings, and is the product of thought and desire. Such regulations exist for the welfare of the members, and to permit efficient administration, so that there is a brotherly

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harmony among those striving for a common goal. The necessary organization is carried out under the direction of the chairmen of local committees; it has no relation to the spiritual training itself, since such imperfections as require attention are committed to the care of Almighty God, and we are only asked to accept, with feelings of surrender, patience, trust and sincerity. New members are to be reminded of the attitudes to be adopted, and warned not to indulge in concentration when asked to maintain a state of passivity; they should pay no attention to the devotions of their comrades, and ought not to check unfamiliar manifestations or be in a state of nervous anxiety.

III. From Letters to the Author

a) Djogjakarta, November 12, 1951 (To Djakarta).

I am glad that you have been able to contact Mr. S., and that he has obtained results, even though these are not yet very positive. It is no easy matter to know the real inner state, and I have often observed that, to obtain knowledge of this kind, the true "I" must have been acquired (Self-integration). The basis for a correct understanding of what is before us must then be the completeness of our own inner state.

Let us take a hypothetical case of a Mr. A, who is still enveloped by the satanic forces. Although he is a human being, and naturally both thinks and feels in the human manner, nevertheless the satanic content, which envelops his being and pervades his body, continues to condition him in such a manner that he can neither think nor feel beyond the frontiers or such forces. The observation of his condition remains inaccurate, unless the observer is self-integrated, or a human being filled with a human content. This is not however a matter for thinking about, since, no matter how much we may dwell on it, our thoughts are still influenced by a content which is not yet entirely human.

How then are we to acquire the faculty of discrimination between right and wrong, since our judgement is vitiated by our inner state? We are required, for such reasons, to practise with constancy, since at such times, through the insulation of the consciousness from the thoughts and imagination, we contact a

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condition which is beyond the expectation of these accessory organs. As we become familiar with this contact, all the organs are gradually quickened, from the coarsest to the most subtle.

This process will certainly involve the healing of diseased organs, since the health of the entire body is required. It is health which leads to the quickening of the organs, and, as such quickening takes place, the imperfect or inferior content of the various bodily organs will be cognized. These organs require a content in harmony with their quality: the human being must be filled with human forces.

This is why the state of the soul cannot be modified by thought, concentration or meditation; this can only be brought about by the quickening and purification of all the organs belonging to man. The procedure is none other than what you have already practised.

Hence the impossibility of accelerating the catharsis, which may be the wish of thought or imagination. Progress depends on the well-being of the body, which cannot be attained when there is constant interference of the mind and imagination which are anxious for rapid results. Growth must proceed spontaneously, in accordance with the nature of that which has to grow, and such development will then naturally be along the desired lines.

b) Djogjakarta. January 12, 1952 (to Djakarta).

Only God knows why (your) circumstances have followed such a course. It is no easy matter to predict the process of development, and I have therefore often emphasized that one should not take the future for granted, no matter how clearly it seems to be indicated. The delay in meeting the required conditions may be related to obstacles which arise in order to prevent you from encountering inimical circumstances, and I have often recounted anecdotes of this kind. One should neither become depressed in times of suffering nor overjoyed when very lucky. We should utilize our trials to develop greater patience, and to fortify ourselves for the difficulties of the future.

If one aspires to a condition beyond the ordinary fate of man, certainly the path thereto will not be an ordinary one, and unusual experiences must be expected. You are now facing a test

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of the firmness and constancy of your aspirations, and should strengthen your heart, directing it to Almighty God, so that you may not flinch in confronting whatever is required for the good of your soul. I am not seeking to minimise the difficulties through which you have to pass; but such experiences are normal for souls which aspire to the highest.

Your progress is certainly continuing, although development varies with individual cases. Your lack of evidence of recent progress is due to the burdens you have had to shoulder, contacting and training new members. Your own spiritual development is thus being constantly affected by the initiation and progress of the persons you are training. Certainly, as I have often indicated, your own growth is consequently somewhat retarded.

It is different when you (or anyone else) attain to full integration, for in such conditions, those being trained no longer disturb their trainers. One is then able to perceive the true state of those trainees, to know the sphere in which their experience is obtained, and the extent of their potentialities.

Your present role is certainly a hard one, since you are in the position of someone who has to trade with a limited capital, and who finds it necessary to hand over various sums to other people to enable them to trade also. These people are consequently helped forward, while the fund available for you to pursue your own business is yet further diminished.

It would therefore be better for you to advise prospective members to come to Djogjakarta, but you must carry on with such responsibilities as you have already undertaken. Certainly, they also affect the question of your leaving Indonesia: if you decide to introduce some people to the spiritual path, you can hardly abandon them just when they have become enthusiastic. The mind can do this, but there is a spiritual link now established between you and these persons. We see therefore that the sense of brotherhood is merely a spiritual one: if those who approach us have no other common ground with us, the association will be maintained merely because they seek their own advantage.

c) Djogjakarta February 13, 1952 (to Djakarta).

At the moment of writing this letter, I am ill. I have a pain

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in my foot which makes it painful for me to walk or stand. Although my condition has now somewhat improved, I have to walk slowly. This is an infirmity of age, and I have to experience such pains also, though I shall soon be fit again.

You often inform me that my predictions have been inexact. Really such remarks are misplaced, since, although your exterior is just the same as it was before, your *inner*, or spiritual condition is now quite different.

In the case of ordinary persons, it is much easier to predict their fortune, since their conditions are in all things dependent on the currents of the period. The soul, which should be the compass, as a centre for all directions, is not yet present within them.

You have yourself attested the accuracy of my predictions about other persons, while they are always incorrect in your own case. You will now see the reasons for this divergence, if you reflect. You certainly cannot explain why your departure from Indonesia is constantly being impeded: only the soul can know this. Since the soul knows the future, it asserts itself in a manner which will protect it from subsequent danger. We see therefore that this is no longer an ordinary case, but a matter of the unexpected: the soul has been awakened and is operating in accordance with its essential nature.

d) Djogjakarta, January 9, 1953, (to Palembang).

With reference to the person whose training resembles Subud, and who claims to be a pupil of Sukinohartono, this is correct. Sukinohartono was formerly a pupil of Prawirodisastra, who lived in Djogjakarta, now deceased. He in turn was a pupil of Wignosupartono, still living in Djogjakarta.

The latter obtained this contact from me in 1932, when I was still resident in Semarang, just after I had received the revelation from the Almighty. Wignosupartono then, was the first person whom I ever trained or instructed. He has many pupils in Djogjakarta, many of whom attend our Subud meetings regularly, such as Djojodipura (Pak Subuh's son-in-law), Sudarto, etc.

To return to Sukinohartono, Prawirodisastra mentioned before his death that this pupil of his had not long been studying, and that his inner state was not very advanced. His commentaries

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on the Seven Heavens and such matters could have been obtained either from the stories of the Nine Sages, or from a book I myself wrote in 1934, called *Djatimakna*, or "True Facts". All commentaries required for spiritual matters are to be found in that book.

Naturally you have never seen it, because it existed only in manuscript, being copied by those who required it. In fact, it has now been mislaid, and I do not know who has the original.

Sukinohartono...eventually established his own movement with the name of *Sumarah* (Surrender). Its methods remain those I use in Subud. They cannot deny that they have not yet obtained a system of their own, that it to say, they have not themselves been vouchsafed a Divine revelation. . . .

You certainly remember D. and B. I hear that D. now has many pupils, and he may shortly make a name for himself in his circle, and secede from Subud. B.'s case has not yet gone that far, but he is now said to be writing books entitled: "The Keys to Heaven".

Such is life in this world: people are always trying to push themselves in front of God, just as they try to do with their fellow human beings. Such behaviour is truly unseemly. Yet, it is not at all improbable that there will be others in the future who act in a similar manner, and you should not grieve too deeply over this.

Meanwhile, I counsel you always to continue worshipping God with complete sincerity. You are in very difficult circumstances but they are necessary.

With reference to the case you mention, you may accept him for training without insisting on a formal request to join Subud. Such freedom is a concession for persons wishing to worship God, whose minds are still clouded and suspicious owing to the absence of proof.

e) Djogjakarta, April 16, 1953 (to Palembang).

Together with the second instalment of my manuscript, I must send you some explanation to meet your surprise at the manner of its composition. Certainly, if that book had been written while you were still in Djogjakarta, the question of its trans-

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lation would have been greatly facilitated. It is really strange that, during that period, I had no inclination whatever to write anything on spiritual matters. You say you are astonished, but I should mention that I myself am also *amazed*.

This shows that we should not rush matters, but act patiently, and await the hour. This does not mean that we should just sit still and indifferent, but that we must act in an orderly and cautious manner.

As to the second fascicule of my book, which I am herewith enclosing, with an Indonesian commentary, I hope you will be easily able to translate it into English. When the original is commented on in such a way, one can easily think it over, or at least think about it. But, from the esoteric point of view, this is still a state comparable to a cork bobbing up and down on the waves; for the Indonesian translation gives little if any possibility for the consciousness to be affected by the Life current.

To take your own case, although you are quite unfamiliar with Old Javanese (Kawi), you should feel affected by reading the original, and be in a position to divine its true meaning. Nevertheless, as the book is destined to be read by a number of people in other countries where readers are accustomed to make critical use of their minds, it would be a good thing to undertake a free and scientific translation, as you suggest.

I still have some reservations about this matter however, since, in typing the Indonesian commentary, I am obliged to make use of desire in a normal way; I make typographical errors, and rapidly feel exhausted. This is however of little importance since the work requires a maximum of concentration on my part.

f) Djogjakarta, July 1, 1954 (to Tokyo).

(Referring to an invitation received from London for Pak Subuh to participate in an international spiritual enterprise)

I agree with the procedure of awakening many people by means of advice, but cannot say whether they will in fact obtain the results for which they hope. In the letter, it was mentioned that many "Spiritual Masters" were co-operating, but it appears to me that the majority of these are still making use of thought

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concentration methods. The consequences of such an approach can only be what they have always been: each person affirms his own particular viewpoint, and the outcome is a divergence of opinion.

In short, most of them are still in the stage of groping, of effort. Perhaps therefore, they may pay attention to my enclosed reply.

g) Djogjakarta, July 10, 1954 (to Tokyo).

With regard to the powers of the Japanese lady about whom you are enquiring, these are a product of thought concentration. By such techniques also, it becomes possible to activate the bodies of other persons, and to analyze the nature and extent of their feelings; but the apparatus for this procedure is the feeling of the person carrying out the analysis, who is still unable to check the validity of his or her own feelings. Such a person will appear to himself or herself as in control, and there will be a conviction that there is no power greater than, or encompassing, the Self, which will rather be felt as centrifugal, and entering into everything.

Such a state resembles the methods of occultism, spiritualism, magic, etc., and you need not ponder over the matter; it is more important for you to purify your own condition so that you will be able to know the truth about such questions. One method of obtaining such guidance is to isolate the forces of thought at such times, to which procedure you are already accustomed.

In connection with the above, I recommend you not to increase the number of members too rapidly. Such matters are not subjects for discussion, and can only be known through a condition of purity that you have not yet attained.

h) Djogjakarta, July 19, 1954 (to Tokyo).

I shall explain further about the state of the woman who professes to be a Prophet, and about whom you have enquired:

There are in reality many forms of training in the world which resemble Subud, and possibly, in India, the techniques are assisted by the music of pipes or other instruments.

The difference involved is that, in Subud, the awakening occurs as a result of a Power that operates when thoughts and

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ideas are absent, through self-surrender to Divine Omnipotence, and in the company of a person who has already been able to yield up his consciousness to the Divine Omnipotence also. In other techniques however, the stimulus derives from inner (psychic) power, and does not much differ from methods of meditation and concentration.

This is no longer a strange matter for you, for you can check the truth and error of such questions through your practice. Just test it yourself: if you obtain a sensation of strong feelings within the chest region, it is an indication that the power originates from within the individual. This involves qualities present within physical man, and is not a revelation from the Almighty. The latter comes about through an all-encompassing condition which also englobes man. In other words, the state of the individual recipient is also encompassed by the operative power, and does not stand aside as a separate element provoking the contact in another.

It is not surprising that persons who use techniques deriving from their own inner force should then claim power and prophethood, to the extent that they separate themselves from society, and feel that they are quite unique.

You must realise that the satanic forces (those of matter) encompass our earth, which is also physical in form; and they stretch beyond it up to a determined limit. The origin of the plant forces is to be found beyond our earth. Similarly for the animal and other superior forces.

Plants found in this world merely represent a vessel to contain the plant-essences, which are required for a complete existence on earth. One may similarly say that physical man exists on earth merely to provide a vehicle to be inhabited by the human soul. The latter exerts itself to find at all costs a means of returning to its original home in the ideal Human sphere, or realm of the Complete Man.

The human soul inhabiting a human body lives in this world like a rider, in a carriage represented by the material forces. These have power over the physical body, and as we grow in this body, our path is complicated by all the various forces which affect our flesh so that it grows as it does. Our possibilities of

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liberation are sealed off, unless we are fortunate enough to find a path which is not a way of thought, imagination or desire. We can then become conscious of the greater Life-Force for the first time, and know that that boundless, all-encompassing life is also within ourselves.

i) Djogjakarta, July 28, 1954 (to Tokyo).

It is not my intention that you should suspend local training, nor that you should reject anyone who is genuinely desirous of following the practice or joining Subud.

I remind you however of the need for expanding gradually, and, for the moment, a membership of ten to fifteen persons will be adequate, so as to leave you plenty of opportunity for attending to your own spiritual needs. Further, you have only come to Japan on a temporary visit, a bridge for subsequent travel to such places as America, Europe and the Islamic countries.

Do not let my advice trouble you, for it is my wish that you should not meet any hampering circumstances during the prosecution of your spiritual responsibilities.

You have yourself admitted that many persons approach you in an insincere manner, i.e. not having that open nature which would enable them to become truly useful members of Subud subsequently.

We may conclude that your chances of carrying out your spiritual duties locally (with hopes of success) are not very great. You will rather obtain a better reception later in Europe, America and the Islamic lands. I am always hoping that the course of the development we are awaiting will be satisfactory.

j) Djakarta, April 17, 1955 (to Hong Kong).

I approve of the method of treating sick children which you have described. We also have to proceed in a similar manner in Djakarta and Djogjakarta, when healing sick children. It is of course quite natural that the child should feel frightened, if alone with a stranger. Authorizing the presence of a member of the family both serves to quieten the child and gives an opportunity for them to know that we are not employing undesirable methods of treatment.

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Regarding the progress and backslidings of your group, this is common everywhere. Such things even occur in Djakarta in my own presence. Many people come along two or three times, and are then never seen again. This should be no cause for concern: it is typical of human nature. You should not however permit yourself to be affected by such happenings, thereby losing hope, but rather maintain a constant attitude of true patience.

As to the question of your constant lack of satisfaction with your own development, this is a normal condition for one who is required to show the true manner of worshipping God to many other persons; realizing that such experience is natural to your position, you should not feel too badly about it. Certainly, there are limits to the suffering which we have to undergo, but only God knows the limits in such matters.

For myself therefore, for other members and for you, it is necessary to be able to pass the test; for this is in fact a test for those who work "for God".

k) Djakarta, May 14, 1955 (to Hong Kong).

The tests and trials of those who show to others the way to liberation from the grip of passion (and hence to salvation) are not such as to be easily surmounted by ordinary persons, and this is no path for those who desire possessions for personal advantage. To follow such a course while hoping for such material benefit will lead to constant misery, and the pure aim of worshipping God will degenerate on this account.

I had stated that the most advisable path for you to have followed on leaving Indonesia would have been via Bangkok, India, Pakistan and Egypt to Europe and America. Further, I have frequently observed that the nature of most people in your part of the world is to seek to obtain a maximum of personal profit from others, rather than to aid them in facing their own difficulties. I also mentioned that it would have been better not to have gone to Tokyo, unless provided with adequate travelling expenses and full guarantees for residence there. It appears however that you forced the issue by partially meeting the cost from your own pocket, since you were feeling somewhat restless at the prospect of having to wait still longer in Indonesia.

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I did not recommend your trip to Tokyo, but approved it, with hopes and prayers that your journey and activities there might be accompanied by Divine Blessing and Protection.

The circumstances you are encountering are probably necessary so that your training may progress in a manner divorced from such desires as the wish to acquire rapidly name and fame, to receive respect and love from those whom you approach and who approach you.

I have stated that desired conditions are realized when a state of readiness has been attained: this means that the individual consciousness is so purified that it is but little troubled by the sickness of miscellaneous desires and numerous thoughts. Is not your own condition still such that you rarely feel truly calm? This is because of the restless nature of the thoughts.

I constantly advise you therefore to calm your feelings and abandon your thoughts, so that the consciousness may be in a state as broad as an ocean. When such a state is attained, it becomes easy to contact the consciousness of other persons and intermingle with it. Then there is a tendency for all such persons as you come into touch with to be attracted towards you, and they will automatically have affectionate feelings for you.

l) Djakarta, October 30, 1955 (to Cyprus).

With reference to the query in your letter of the 24th inst., I should mention that most forms of spiritual discipline commence with desire, or involve the affirmation of the will. People hope, by exerting their wills, to calm the feelings and all the instincts which have long been rooted within them. Such forms of training involve the forceful suppression of all desires, so that they may be eliminated from the feelings in the sexual region. Many who follow such paths give up all relations with women.

Once this preliminary stage has been passed, they try to calm the feelings in the heart region (thoughts), so that all impressions may vanish from the heart. Finally, and only then, they direct their attention to tranquilising the understanding, which is centred in the brain. All such processes can be followed, and for those who succeed, there may be strange phenomena in consequence.

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Inexperienced persons consider this as sufficient proof of spiritual development, and yet the results are merely the projection of desires, thoughts, feelings and imagination long suppressed within. All that which is obtained belongs therefore to worldly or material conditions.

Even from such evidence however, people will become proud, and believe themselves to have become perfect, since they have acquired understanding of the nature of desire in such persons as are still dominated by passions.

They therefore often claim perfection of the inner life when, in reality, they have done no more than complete the first phase, and are quite unable to pierce the barrier to the next stage. There are seven such stages: the material, vegetable, animal, physical human, angelic, compassionate and creative. The spiritual aspect of the human stage (Insâni) is the perfection of the physical (Jasmâni).

The barriers can only be negotiated by the aid of a force beyond human power, which incarnates independently of any expectations of our thought or wishes. In Islam, we refer to such events as *Mu'jizât* (Miracles).

Hence the difference between Subud training and other exercises. We do not require any prior conditions whatsoever, except a surrender to Divine Omnipotence, and the presence of some member who has previously received this training. . . . As a result of the pressure of the Life-Force, everything that has been buried within for generations, centred in the region of the sexual organs, the heart or the brain, escapes and eventually returns to its source, enabling us to work in a way that profits us both for this world and the next. Our training is therefore of a very different nature from those which utilize will and desire.

You often feel exhausted, because, while you do not require much use of the mind, you are obliged to associate with a person who still enjoys meditating on things which ought not to be thought about.

m) Djakarta, November 29, 1955 (to Nicosia, Cyprus).

With regard to the spread of Subud, it is sufficient to go about this slowly, accepting one or two new members every two months,

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and holding meetings twice weekly. Your inner state is now very different from formerly, and your consciousness has begun to deepen. Hence, when in front of any other person, or when merely thinking about someone far or near, the consciousness will be affected, and this may often produce disturbing and unpleasant sensations.

You should therefore abandon the former custom of treating sick persons, who continue to follow the training when cured, because you will otherwise be profoundly affected by unpleasant sensations. It is better therefore to select new adherents from among healthy persons who are likely to be of real future use to the movement.

n) Djakarta, January 31, 1956 (to Nicosia, Cyprus).

I have often indicated how the participants in the training are affected by currents which affect the whole of their being, and also involve the quickening of many organs imperceptible to the physical eye. In the process, every organ which is unhealthy, or operates incorrectly owing to the presence of passions and thoughts, is automatically cured, and brought into a condition in accordance with the essence of the person.

As you know, most people consider a state of health to be a condition which is still dependent on thought and desire; and a consciousness which is merely healthy in this sense of the word is of use only for worldly ends. We however require the health of the entire being, and the perfection of the human soul; and it is clear that the state of health possessed by yourself or other persons, on commencing this training, was very far from the condition required for this purpose. Certainly the manner of acquiring spiritual or psychic health will be very different from the method of keeping physically fit.

I have very often said that it is extremely difficult for man to receive Divine gifts, hence the need for constant patience, trust and sincerity in our attitude.

If you were truly ill at this time, would you be able to go off to sleep rapidly, and easily still the thought process? Sick persons, especially those suffering from psychic complaints, not only sleep badly but experience much difficulty in getting to sleep. **Further,**

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they cannot free themselves from the worries which constantly assail them. If you have provisionally lost your appetite, this will have no harmful effects, since we all go through such phases on the spiritual path. But if you feel your state is such that you wish to consult a doctor, I leave the matter to your own judgement, since this cannot in any case disturb the growth of the human soul.

As to your query whether I could come to London in June or July 1956, there would be no difficulty, provided there is a number of interested persons, prepared to cater for my arrival with a couple of assistants, or at least one. I should like to leave one such person behind me in London for a while, according to local requirements.

o) Djakarta, February 25, 1957 (to London).

I was interested to learn that you had met Mr. Sunarjo, the Indonesian Ambassador in London. It is not surprising that my name is unknown to him, and it seems that it is being deliberately concealed by God. Things may be different when I have travelled abroad.

I inform you that I shall be departing with my party between May 15 and 20, 1957, as I mentioned in a recent letter.

p) London, February 24, 1958 (to Beirut, Lebanon).

During my stay in Switzerland I had no relations whatever with Queen Soraya, and the information published in the Press is entirely false.

q) U.S.A., May 21, 1958 (to Nicosia, Cyprus).

With reference to the publishers' desire, I do not consider it appropriate that I should write a preface to your book. This does not mean that I am dissatisfied with your writing or disapprove of it; on the contrary, I hope that several Subud members will relate the results of their training and worship of Almighty God. Each of them has entire freedom to express his own opinions on his experiences and progress.

You have often heard me state that I am only able to write when there is an inner command; hence I find it very hard to

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accede to the publishers' request. I understand their wish, but my own activity in following the Divine Command is merely to establish Subud worship because of God, whatever may be His Purpose for me in the future.

It is also incorrect to ask me to write an *introduction* to Subud, since Subud is not a teaching, but a form of receiving, i.e. *a proof*. Proof is a Gift or Revelation, and not the result of study.

Your own introduction to the book should therefore be ample, and there should be no concern for the consequences, since interest in Subud is now becoming general.

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The following article was contributed by the Frisian painter Auke Sonnega. It has been included in this book as a historical document, since its author rightly claims that he found himself in a quite unique position as the sole foreign witness of how Subud began to be transformed from a small Javanese esoteric group to a world-wide movement. His claim is based on the fact that he met me in Indonesia within six weeks of my arrival in the country, and six months before I encountered Pak Subuh. He knew of my spiritual search, and received regular reports on my experiences after admission to the Subud fraternity. For nearly a year, he listened with frank scepticism; due largely, he admitted, to the Theosophical background of his own childhood on the one hand, and some prejudice against Indonesian movements on the other. Since all are entitled to speak of their experiences in Subud (which he only ventured to approach months later, from sheer despair), in their own terms, and according to their own understanding and enlightenment, I have felt that I ought to interfere as little as possible with the document mailed to me. It is thus presented to the reader with the minimum unavoidable distortion: that of my translation into English from the Dutch original. (H.R.)

A FACET OF THE COSMIC PATTERN

(describing an encounter on the island of Bali)

by Auke Sonnega

Hidden in a softly sloping valley of southern Bali lies the famous temple complex of Tirtha Empul, resembling a sparkling jewel placed in a luxuriant setting of glinting ricefields, hillocks, terraces and rippling coconut palms. This fabulous island of Bali, home of Gods, demons and royal dancers, lies within the Indo-

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nesian archipelago, to the east of the greater isle of Java. Yet Bali is not like the other islands of the group, for the landscape is of almost exaggerated freshness and greenery, while the ricefields show striking contrasts of yellow and green (especially when the grain ripens, or seedlings are planted) ; the combined effect of the fantastic shapes of these fields, and the irregular surfaces of the soil, is a most attractive baroque pattern, frequently of exuberant aspect. Thanks to the richness of the soil and its good irrigation, the luxuriance of the palm-tops is notably in evidence, even exaggerated; it overshadows the villages and the lanes, giving to the island a peculiar charm of its own. The picture is completed by the well-proportioned shapes of the Balinese: the muscular figure of the male, who, clad only in a loin-cloth works in the fields, striking classical attitudes under the scorching rays of the tropical sun; or the Balinese woman, often so graceful, walking with typical balanced movements. These people have known how to choose colours so suited to the surrounding trees and undergrowth: brave direct colours in which they deck out their gods and dancers, and which have earned them world-wide renown.

Near the hamlet of Tampaksiring is the valley with the temple complex of Tirtha Empul (which means 'Sacred Stream') : the original temple with its many tall richly-decorated doorways, beside the men's and women's baths. A little apart, the former princes' baths, which now serve merely as a swimming-pool for tourists. In the centre of the group of buildings is an enormous banyan tree, its roots tangling over the ground, its leaves forming a tremendous canopy stretched above the whole.

A steep stone path leads up the hill from the temple courtyard, and comes out straight in front of the *passangrahan* (guest-house) perched above. This is a simple structure where one could formerly find both accommodation and good Indonesian food. Tourists frequently visited the spot and sat out on the two large terraces before the inn, overlooking the valley, admiring the view with the temple buildings below. Now the hotel is no more: it was broken up in 1956 to make way for a palace for guests of State, at the command of the President.

After the war, I used regularly to spend four or five months a year in this inn, in order to be able to paint there and sketch

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the many attractive models. The temples there form a centre of Balinese religious life, a place of pilgrimage; and many times a year, one can participate there in major ceremonies, spiritual disciplines and religious processions. On such occasions, the bustle of the pilgrims round the temple below, and the processions of colour in the background offer a vivid picture. The air vibrates then with the clash of cymbals; and the *gamelan* orchestras, their instruments carried hither on long poles, play that characteristic, frenzied and bewitching Balinese music.

The Balinese religion is of Hindu origin, its ritual is both worship and exorcism. A mysterious air of consecration appears to have been conferred on the spot by the ceremonies, the regular celebrations of bizarre rites. Yet at times one feels rather a sense of oppression, of an alien element dominating this ancient place round the countless altars. As soon as the temple was empty and abandoned, especially at dusk, the figures on the temple-gates appeared to come to life, and one could easily imagine the presence of spirits in the vicinity. The impression may well have been true, owing to the magic influence of the complicated rites (which few could control) that took place here for centuries in former times.

Naturally there were countless priests in the vicinity, though they appeared only when needed to officiate at ceremonies, priests of both Shiva and Buddha. The daily care of the temple was however left in the hands of the so-called *pemangku* (overseer). I was a good friend of the pemangku of Tirtha Empul, who used to wander round below, dressed in white, with a headkerchief of the same colour. When I had finished my day's work and taken my afternoon tea, I often used to go down and have a chat with him, asking about the meaning of many ceremonies, and especially interested in the incantation techniques of his faith. Perhaps my interest went too deep, for, whatever the cause, I began to be troubled at one moment by oppressive and recurrent hallucinations. I was awakened nightly at 1 a.m., and visited literally by hordes of demons of strange aspect, which came at me through the walls of the room, and sprang upon me as if to crush me to death. This was no dream: I saw clearly their figures, about three feet high, mostly resembling animal forms, with

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horrible heads, all of an uniform grey hue. There was no resemblance at all to the mediaeval portrayal of Satan as a human figure with cloven hoofs. They were entirely animal, and sprang around on their rear legs; on top of their grinning heads, they had a sort of growth resembling antlers, sometimes rather attractive. I knew that I was up against elementals, and that I had in some manner evoked them. Although I suspected that they were connected with the temple below, I could not be sure. The play was enacted again and again before my eyes on successive nights, and began to upset my nerves, which only aggravated the situation. I sent for advice to the priest of the neighbouring village, and my friend the pemangku came in consequence with offerings of flowers and incense to perform a ceremony of exorcism on my behalf, to get rid of these grey devils which ruined my beauty sleep. To my astonishment however, the smells of incense and flower offerings filling my bedroom appeared to provoke a greater activity, the hordes of grey elementals continued to advance, my sleep diminished, and the persistent nocturnal visitations became an obsession. I began to dread the sight of the ceremonial hocus-pocus, the smell of the Balinese blossoms, and I finally decided that, since I could not ward off these devils, my salvation lay in getting out of Bali and returning to Java. I concluded that, as an oversensitive painter, working in this environment, I had somehow provisionally lost my resistance against these lower powers, and that my resulting plight was not without its dangers. Intuitively I sent out an inner call for spiritual helpers, to the *devas*, to God; I prayed for deliverance from this loss of equilibrium, I was scared of my own state! The pasanggrahan was empty and deserted, and I had been for weeks already the sole guest. This lonesomeness did not help to improve my condition. Every day the place was full of tourists but none of them felt inclined to pass the night in the old shack. I write of the year 1950. . . Before I go further, I must go back a few years to give the reader some idea of my environmental background, particularly with regard to spiritual questions.

I had been born in the North of Holland in 1910, the son of Frisian parents, who, originally Protestants, had between 1915 and 1920 become interested in Theosophy, and later joined the

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Theosophical Society of Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater. In the early twenties, my spiritual eyes opened in this harmoniously developing milieu, for in those days the movement was a hive of activity and growth: the advent of the World-Teacher was preached and eagerly awaited, new Orders were being established on all sides. They all claimed that they had a special role to play assisting this Teacher to carry out his mission, and aiding the realization of the Divine plan! Most adherents wished to belong to all of these societies simultaneously, and their impulsive devotion was laid at many altars. In Holland, we had especially the annual Star-Camp of Ommen, where assembled the members of the Order of the Star, thousands of people who collected around the young, slim and delicate Indian, Jiddu Krishnamurti; he was expected to blossom out into the awaited World-Teacher, or at least to be used as a Christ-vehicle for the new Divine Dispensation to mankind. In the Society, the soul about to incarnate was known as the Master Maitreya. I had connections with the majority of these movements, and participated every year in the Star-Camp at Ommen.

Around 1929–30 however, the uncontrolled imaginations of the over-zealous were in for a bitter disappointment. The voice of the World-Teacher spoke through Krishnamurti but did not at all tell these people what they were hoping to hear: rather came the stern reality of Truth! I remember Krishnaji, as we used to call him, once shouting out to the gathering: “Do you really think that you could cram this World-Teacher, this Master, into your limited and narrow blueprints?” He spoke as he felt, and it did not appear that he intended to serve as the instrument of those who had made their plans for him well in advance. In the 1929 Star-Camp, he told thousands that he would rather have one listener who understood him than thousands who seemed unable or unwilling to receive the essence of his message; he wanted no disciples, was dissolving the Order of the Star, and required no co-operation from other movements such as the Free Catholic Church or the Theosophical Society. Thousands were plunged into doubt, into despair. How could such a one be the World-Teacher? He talked of quite other things than the sweet, prepared and palatable theosophical “Truths” with which they

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had so long been nourished. He puzzled them, made them *think* for themselves! Unperturbed, Krishnamurti continued to expound his viewpoint, decisively rejecting all the preconceptions, systems and altars which they had built up on his behalf. He spoke with force and beauty, saying things which these people had never previously heard, showing quite a different conception of life from what they had been accustomed to. What he said was so basic and appropriate, so beautifully expressed, and withal so intensely vital to us all; and yet few could receive these words in their fresh, healthy and quite new perspective. He threw right out all the complicated terminology of the Theosophical Society, and spoke in ordinary every-day words, simply, yet with clarity and meaning. Such was Krishnamurti: and off he went to deliver his message round the capitals of the world. All the hurry and bustle of the "spiritual" hocus-pocus had suddenly been thrown out of our gatherings. Some preferred to keep to their cherished rituals, and relinquished Krishnamurti, while others worked for years to try and effect a synthesis.

I could see clearly that precisely this was impossible, for any compromise would be hypocrisy, a lie. Krishnamurti had set me on my spiritual feet, and the shock eventually had a sobering effect. Rejecting compromise as vain, I abandoned the Movement, and decided never thenceforth to join another. The important thing was to develop self-reliance, to walk forward on our own legs, and to leave all these spiritual crutches behind. It was with such an attitude that I left Holland for Indonesia in 1935.

Now I began to turn my attention to 'living', to the future, after years of concentration on "spiritual" interests. Painting was dearest to my heart, and I had the chance of finding employment as a commercial artist, in that happy, sunny world of pre-war colonial Java. Yet, following the spiritual disillusionment of 1930 was to come a parallel material disappointment when all this comfort was swept away with the World War in 1940. I found myself sitting in an internment camp, shorn of all my worldly goods.

During this period I continued to read many books on spiritual themes, and my interest was still much alive when I found myself in Bali in 1950. I return now to the circumstances in which

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I found myself at the Tampaksiring guest-house at that time, when, just as I was getting ready to depart, a visitor came to stay there. He acted very shyly, either gave no greeting, or only a very cursory one, and sat for hours on the veranda, holding a cup of tea, and staring silently at the landscape. This seemed to me almost a personal affront, since my long isolated residence here had caused me to consider the inn as practically my own property! This man was walking about my 'home' and staring through me as if I were nothing but air! He was not a type commonly noticed in Indonesia: his complexion was pale, his figure thin, and his clothes were ill-fitting. I did not give up trying to communicate with this odd visitor, and sat next to him on the veranda, making with some difficulty a number of observations which were answered very distantly. I had a strong impression that this guest had come to Bali for some special purpose, and must admit that I felt very curious to know more. We eventually managed to hold a formal conversation, from which it became clear that the newcomer did not welcome "indiscreet" questions. Yet I felt that there would be a more opportune moment for conversation either at dinner, or when we found ourselves alone in the lonely sitting-room afterwards. It seemed to me that this man could hardly maintain much longer this self-sufficient reserve which rejected all attempts to break through.

The conversation did in fact proceed somewhat more spontaneously at dinner-time. I got the impression that my companion was a person who knew exactly what he wanted. My own aggressive attitude and his very positive and self-possessed manner became more comprehensible to me later on. Others who met him commented on similar first impressions. A few hours later, after dinner, I came to recognize his almost inexhaustible intellect, and to note his apt, summary conclusions.

This visitor to the *passanggrahan* was Husein Rofé. He informed me that he had recently arrived straight from Morocco, and that he was, among other things, engaged in writing for Islamic journals. His account was somewhat laconic, for he did not seem to know precisely himself why he happened to be in Bali; apparently, before taking up a new position as a teacher for the Indonesian government, he wanted to make a short tour

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of interesting spots. Thus he had been advised to look at Tampaksiring. Although through my experience of spiritual matters, I had begun to sense a pattern in the apparently haphazard and unrelated experiences of life, I had no idea that just this man who had now arrived here would later enlarge my perceptions to an extent that I should not then have believed possible.

As to his impressions of Bali, they were not too favourable in relation to the spiritual life, and he gave his opinion that the island and the spiritual vortex around it were deeply saturated in the black arts, and that a long stay in the area could be detrimental to the finer feelings of spiritual sensitives. This observation astonished me greatly, all the more so as I should never have expected it: everyone who came here either dismissed Bali, from a materialistic impermeability, or else fell totally under the spell of the powerful new impressions offered here. Rofé was suggesting an entirely new outlook! His visit (to the best of my knowledge, the first and the last that he ever made) took place in August 1950.

After dinner, we continued an animated discussion in the large sitting-room until well after midnight. Husein gradually thawed as my spiritual interests were progressively revealed: he made little attempt to conceal what he himself really thought. I wanted to know more about his objections to the so-called inimical influences in the local atmosphere, and our conversation turned to Theosophy, Anthroposophy, the fourth dimension and others beyond it. . .

Once I began to acquire confidence in him after a few hours of excited listening to his extremely interesting views, and frequently strange ideas, I told him of my weird nocturnal visitations, and my difficulties in obtaining satisfactory rest at night. These elementals had not shown up by 1 a.m., when I was still sitting chatting to him. He explained emphatically what I had begun to suspect: that as a result of my too deep and sustained interest in Balinese rites, a chink had opened in my astral armour or spiritual body, that I was provisionally unprotected against such influences, which precisely in this charged Balinese atmosphere could have most unpleasant consequences.

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Husein remained in the *pasanggrahan* about ten days. After I had described my nightly troubles to him, he stated that, as long as he remained in the building, there would be no more manifestations, and that I should be able to go and sleep peacefully; there was no need for further worry. I did in fact sleep like a top that night, and the hallucinations, elementals, devils, astral beings, thought-forms, or whatever one may call them, had vanished as though by magic, and never came back into my life again! I remember how Husein remarked just about this time how situations may arise in our lives which leave us no longer our own masters, so that we are obliged to seek the help of others. He said it was both foolish and dangerous to try to deal with such difficulties all by oneself, which was the moral I could draw from the experience. In my isolated search for independence, I had gone too far. I then got a strong impression that Husein had not suddenly come all this way to Indonesia for nothing: it even seemed that he had been sent in answer to my prayer to the spiritual helpers, the *devas*; to extricate me from the pit which I had allowed myself to fall into. These thoughts affected me greatly, and I could not silence such ideas, although it hardly seemed that I was worth such a lot of trouble on the part of the Higher Spheres!

The next morning, I found Husein standing on his head in the sitting-room. Yoga exercises were an essential feature of his daily routine, but as I did not know this at the time, I stared in surprise. The early morning was fresh, the silvery dew in the valley was pierced by shafts of sunlight. On the verandas by the side of the gorge, it was still quite chilly. I stared down for a long time at the picturesque landscape in the early light of dawn. Then the sun gradually warmed up the room where Husein was busy doing his exercises, and the servant came to call me for the sweet, hot, black coffee awaiting me there. The poor chap had had quite a fright on entering the room, at seeing Husein all tied up in knots doing his exercises on the carpet.

This was the beginning of a permanent friendship between Husein and myself: we would sit and chat together, or go wandering through the lovely surroundings. Gradually, I came to know more about Husein's life, and his plans for the future. He was

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sympathetic towards the demand for independence of the peoples enslaved by colonialism, and so he was anxious to get to know the Indonesians, and their authentic way of life. He had thought best, therefore, to accept a post as teacher in the central Javanese capital of the sultanate of Djogjakarta. After ten days of stimulating conversations, and new outlooks on spiritual problems, I had to say goodbye to him, and remain in that *pasanggrahan* alone. But soon afterwards I too packed up, and left for the capital.

In Djakarta, I received news from Husein regularly, and he soon began to ask me whether I had ever paid any attention to the spiritual currents among the inhabitants of mid-Java. Certain remarks he had heard had greatly intrigued him, and he had also been told some unusual tales. He wrote that he wanted to investigate these reports himself. I did not have a high opinion of these movements, and thought little of Husein's enthusiasms for the Indonesian spiritual schools. Although I too had heard of the existence of ancient mystical disciplines in central Java, it seemed that these were quite unsuited to contemporary needs, and the use of the old Javanese symbolism was meaningless to Westerners.

After a few months, Husein came to Djakarta again, and we had a further discussion in my home. This time he had plenty to relate, and stated that he had established direct contact with the most significant and satisfactory spiritual movement in the province. With his typical persuasive powers, he began to narrate, saying 'listen', but since it appeared to him that I was not giving my full attention, he repeated: "Listen Auke, this is very remarkable!" So I sat down to listen, and...to watch. Husein started to do something (while sitting on my sofa) such as I had never previously seen. Closing his eyes, he rocked to and fro, shook his shoulders, and began to produce sounds which seemed like a mixture of Islamic chants and melodies of the synagogue! Husein was quite unruffled by my lack of enthusiasm, my refusal to accept this as a rationally significant performance. He asked me what effect this had on me, and I replied: "You have been acting quite crazily, making a frightful din". I could make nothing of this performance! How was I to give an opinion of it?

"Well", said Husein, "this is a sample of the exercises of the new movement I have met in Djogjakarta. It is fantastic: the

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sick are healed, the healthy become yet fitter, artists become inspired, and the intuition is sharpened by these peculiar practices!"

I was up in arms, and replied: "Husein, either you are crazy, or else well on the way towards it". "No", he went on, as if my words had made absolutely no impression on him, "you will discover for yourself how wonderful this is. I learnt it from one of the great men I met in Djogja, and you will soon see for yourself, as you'll be coming with me when I go back there!"

"Absolutely nuts!", I said. Nevertheless, I knew that Husein was far from mad, and when he had left me to return to his hotel, I could not stop thinking about this odd performance, though I kept telling myself I had witnessed something very crazy!

A few days later, I visited Husein in his hotel, and when he enquired after my health, I let him know that it was far from good, little realizing that I was thus encouraging him to recommence his practices. A headache and exhaustion influenced me to co-operate, and I relaxed while he again intoned *mantras* and rocked his head from side to side. Although requested to maintain an attitude of surrender, I surrendered nothing, and experienced nothing, but patiently waited for him to finish, and then affirmed that it had been apparently of no avail.

I saw how Husein was filled with the proselytizing zeal of the new convert, and he spared nobody from arguments on human problems, spiritual solutions, healing, and the extraordinary movement he had found in Djogja, which centred around the person of 'Pak Mohammed Subuh. Husein has a peculiar manner when he meets people, taking a sympathetic interest in their difficulties and problems; he always has a solicitous and original solution at hand. When I first met him in Bali, I took him for a man of 35, though he was only 28. His spiritual maturity was at that early age already clearly apparent from his entire behaviour and attitude to life.

Despite my great interests in spiritual movements, I determinedly opposed this phenomenon of the arising of the brand-new Subud revelation in the person of Husein. I was of course aware that the very fact that I could feel thus disturbed was related to elements in my own personality. At all events, I enjoyed

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discussions with Husein, and our exchange of views continued by correspondence, interspersed with occasional conversations when he came up to Djakarta. It was quite impossible to talk to him at all without the subject of Subud coming into the picture. He demonstrated the "*latihan*" with such enthusiasm, by that time so intensely convinced of the great destiny which lay ahead of Subud that he would lose no opportunity of pleading its cause. The first time he asked me to go to Djogja, I refused, and it took a few months before I felt like considering the idea seriously. I was not only critical, but even quite antagonistic to all expressions of this movement. But I had learned to study many such groups, and I finally permitted the small growing nucleus of Subud members, mostly Indonesians, who happened to be in Djakarta, to use my home for their meetings. I myself was still very reserved, and more concerned with seeing that they were looked after by the servants. Husein was in entire control of the meetings; through a period of preparation, he had received a considerable degree of spiritual authority from Pak Subuh, and had, in my opinion, rapidly assimilated the whole mechanics of Subud because of a strong affinity for it in his own nature.

I must honestly say that, for me, the digestion of the Subud fare was no easy matter, since what I was enabled to observe of such meetings was not always attractive, but this was a personal and subjective reaction. For example, I felt especially disturbed by the way the Indonesians stolidly smoked through such evenings. Nevertheless, I admit that it was somewhat childish of me to let myself be affected by the typical Western prejudice that the use of tobacco at spiritual gatherings is a shocking habit; but it took me time to get over such things. Husein and I had become close friends, and when he left Djogja, he came to stay for a while in my home. Every day we had discussions about Subud and everything connected with it.

I remember how, one Saturday morning in November 1951, I returned home from one of my jobs as a commercial artist, in a most depressed and disappointed condition. I was really "down in the dumps" at this moment, and Husein was staying in my house, so it was difficult to hide from him that something was wrong. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to conceal it, since I

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was aware that he would certainly reiterate his suggestion that I undergo the Subud training, and I was anxious to avoid that, since I felt little inclination for it, and was quite convinced that it would have no effect on me whatever!

After our lunch in a nearby restaurant, I suddenly felt so unwell that I could no longer pretend; and when Husein offered his help and told me just to go and lie down and relax quietly on my bed, leaving the rest to him, I was too tired to argue, and resigned myself, with the view that, if it would do no good, it was also unlikely to harm me!

Husein sat cross-legged on the ground, and began intoning a type of melody which I had now become accustomed to; but this time it did not last long, and after a few seconds, I began to lose consciousness of what was going on around me. After twenty minutes I awoke, and then found out that my body had meanwhile been performing involuntary motions. I was in fact now lying facing the opposite direction, and the blankets were in disorder. Husein was still sitting on the same spot. I shall try to describe to the best of my ability what I had been through.

Shortly after a change in my state of awareness (I shall not say sleep or trance, for I remained fully aware), I traversed three spheres of consciousness all entirely different from each other. The first was the vaguest, and I remember nothing of that now. The second was a blue ocean of waves, and that was the clearest. I was floating, apparently quite naked, across a panorama of small houses, of which there were myriads perhaps 15,000 ft. below me. But I noticed no fixed landmark; there were no mountain-tops, no clouds, nothing but a blue mass of waves of some unfamiliar substance. They must have been about 10 ft. long, one above the other, spaced out at intervals of some twenty inches. I was floating all alone up there, and all the towns and landscapes of the world were passing by below. I had no fear of the height, because of a vague sense of a link between myself and a superior intelligence, guiding me from above, and in contact with the base of my spine. In fact there appeared to be a pipe about ten inches long fixed to my back, in the manner of planes being refuelled in the air! But this may have been a stream of light. What was most real for me was the sense of an

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extension of consciousness. I was aware of the entire panorama below me, and all that was below was also simultaneously within. All my problems were laid out clearly before me, with their solutions even more clear! The vision was so bright and significant. I had an unbelievable sense of exaltation, of bliss pure and intense; there was awareness of the blessed majesty of a consciousness, within which all material forms were reduced to nothing, like glass, transparent and simple to deal with. I saw the houses far below me, and everything that went on in them, the people, their worries, the furniture, the passions. And *all* this was simultaneously around, above, below, before and behind me.

The principal light was of a fluorescent blue, shining from nowhere, and yet from everywhere, strangely, with great depth and intensity. It belonged to quite another dimension, came from nowhere and went nowhere, shimmering like a blue jewel. My most important discovery was that of my own omnipresence, for I could understand and examine all, even the entire creation.

Then I slipped into a third dimension, and while the feeling of omnipresence remained, I now felt as if my consciousness penetrated into everything like X-rays. I noted strange relationships, lines and points, in which I participated while yet I saw them from without. I found myself in little spheres like peas, and then outside them, and noticed thousands, like a huge transformer. All moved so slowly that I could suspect it was stationary, and yet I knew that life and motion were present, as if in some kind of geometric power station.

When I awoke, twenty minutes had gone by. I experienced some resistance in returning to a normal condition, and discovered later on that I had changed my physical position during the process. But Husein had remained sitting on the same spot, on the ground.

This experience produced such an impression on me that, *only now after several years*, can I realize how it radically altered my entire existence. It was going to deflect the entire course of my life. The sense of bliss remained present, shining from within, and exalting all things. Many problems which had been worrying me just solved themselves. There remained a link with that higher consciousness, and for the first three days,

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flashes continued to come through. Then the sensation vanished, and all seemed to be once again as before; for nearly three weeks, the undertone of bliss remained, then all went dark again as previously. Yet it was not quite the same, since memory persisted. And there was more than memory: there had been a radical transformation in the subconscious and in the superconscious. Had this been a glimpse of eternity?

Yet I acted as if nothing had taken place, in order to continue to give the necessary attention to my daily affairs. External circumstances seemed to proceed as before, but I had no yardstick to measure the inner changes. With the passage of time, I began to recognize more clearly the tremendous implications of what I had undergone. A few stones in the wall of my prison began to crumble, and shafts of light began to penetrate, which had far-reaching consequences for my future. I felt as if reborn through this "exercise" which Husein had communicated to me; it was like a refreshing bath, and exhaustion had vanished like snow thawing in the sunlight.

I did not conceal the experience from my new Subud colleagues, who all congratulated me and were anxious to know just what I had undergone. They shared in my joy, and I did my best to try to let them share in what had taken place. Both Husein and Pak Subuh were to tell me that this inner change would bring about significant changes in my professional life, through a heightened emotional awareness which would affect the quality and subject of my painting. After eight years, I am in a position to testify that this did in fact come about. Especially from 1954–56, I was aware of considerable progress in the domination of abstract motifs, and their concrete portrayal. My technique and understanding of the fourth dimension improved. I thus discovered that my aesthetic emotions had always been stimulated by a subtle perceptive faculty, which it had never occurred to me previously to qualify as clairvoyance. And yet I prefer to avoid such mystical terms as too often they serve to refer to illusions, as smoke without fire. What I discovered had little in common with the clairvoyance of which I had heard in my youth. I prefer to speak therefore of clear perception, and I now see this in its true perspective, having managed to free myself from the

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preconceptions on the subject instilled into my mind in the theosophical environment of my youth.

I saw "astral" forms present at the Balinese *gamelan* orchestra performances, and noted how these subtle beings "nourished" players and dancers, by inspiring them and guiding their motions to the level of art and culture. These *devis* were feminine forms, sensual but comely, and always had the same detached expressions as the dancers themselves. They were luminous almost in the manner of neon signs, but more vital, vibrating, richly-coloured. I have seen such auras around human beings. We are told that this is "etheric" light; but then how do we know it is not "astral", or what is the relationship between the two? All these writings are very difficult to sort out. These are no earthly colours, and the etheric spectrum is broader than the physical counterpart. One is reminded of those colours found in ancient Eastern dresses, interwoven with gold threads, which possess a glow hard to describe.

My perceptions of this sort increased during those years. I remember how, about one week after the first experience, I awoke in the middle of the night from a sound sleep, and must have sat upright in bed. At that moment, a sort of electric discharge took place in my head. There was a sound of a tremendous explosion. I heard a clear crackling, and was aware of very high voltage and a pale blue light. In that incommunicable brief second, I saw stars, balls and fountains of light emanating from my head. They were all dancing in and out of each other. All this was crystal-clear to me, and it was no dream, for it was far more vivid than any dream could be. All of a sudden, I was levitated to a height of perhaps three feet above my bed, and then fell down on my back again. Almost at once I fell back into the same deep sleep, and the next morning I remembered all the details of the experience. It was difficult to decide the precise significance of all these phenomena. Nevertheless, there seemed no doubt that this experience was directly related to the spiritual exercise. So much in Subud was incomprehensible, and though that worried me at the time, today I see it as a healthy sign that mystery should remain inexplicable.

A few months later, I was ready to travel with Husein to

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Djogjakarta to participate in the training at the home of Pak Subuh, and this came about in February 1952. I remember how I caught a chill on the way, and arrived in Djogja with 'flu'. Nevertheless, I did not under any circumstances wish to miss this meeting, and went to Pak Subuh's home with a European jacket over my tropical clothes, sitting in a *betjak*, or bicycle rickshaw, with Husein.

We were received in a very simply furnished room, and Pak Subuh entered some time later. Husein gave him a brief account of my spiritual experiences, and also mentioned that I had an attack of influenza and should be glad of his assistance. We chatted for half an hour; there was no mention of a spiritual exercise on that occasion. Pak Subuh observed that I should soon be fit again, and he just sat calmly smoking a fragrant Dutch cigar. I was impressed by the absolutely calm manner of his entry, his peaceful gestures, his balanced and self-possessed mode of conversing. The cigar was smoked in the same calm way. We drank a cup of sweet Javanese tea, served by Pak Subuh's daughter, and then it was time to withdraw. Pak Subuh laughingly said that my objections would soon vanish, and gave me his hand in farewell. The influenza and fever had in fact vanished. I felt quite fit again, and drove through the cold evening air without the thick coat in which I had arrived. We remained in Djogja for about five days, and participated in two meetings with the senior Subud members. Some were present who had been continuing the training under Pak Subuh's personal supervision since 1937. There was one elderly man, who had been given up in that year by the doctors, as an incurable tuberculosis sufferer, and he was still alive in 1952! and without t.b.! People said that, if Pak Subuh walked through a hospital ward, all patients not suffering from broken bones and similar complaints would be able to return home the next day! This was probably a mere legend, but as such was quite typical of the pious fictions which were current locally about the Javanese sages.

As far as I was concerned, none of my subsequent exercises, with Pak Subuh or with Husein, could compare with that powerful manifestation during my initiation. For me this was a stumbling-block, since I was inclined to make comparisons.

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Although I was to have inspirational moments of heightened consciousness, there was nothing on a level with the first revelation. The evolution taking place was one in the background of normal consciousness, and hence its effects were not immediately perceptible on the surface.

Husein and I returned to Djakarta, where we had weekly reunions with the local members of the group which he was consolidating there. They were nearly all Indonesians, and the two of us felt at home in their midst. Our respective affinities for the Indonesian psyche helped us both a great deal to absorb the message behind Subud. Husein could speak, read and write Indonesian fluently after a few months' application, while I had been struggling with it since 1935. At *that* time however, neither of us could speak it like our mother tongues.

My artistic training enabled me to design and present a printed pamphlet for the Subud movement early in 1952. I chose a simple rose-coloured folder on which to display the text written in English by Husein. A few hundred copies were made, and Husein gave or posted them to interested persons. Husein announced in these pamphlets that Subud would shortly spread beyond Indonesia. When one listened to him talking about such matters, one just had to believe him! Nevertheless, the process took a few years longer than Pak Subuh had predicted, and than Husein had in consequence expected. For those like myself, such predictions awakened doubt and impatience as to their validity, but for Husein it was an incentive to publicize Subud with increased zeal. At the end of 1952, he left Djogjakarta for Palembang in South Sumatra, where he was later to establish a Subud branch, and where he subsequently accepted a teaching post for STANVAC at nearby Sungei Gerong. Although it did not take him long to establish the first Sumatran branch, I could no longer visit him on account of the distance, and we kept in touch only by mail.

I left for Europe in early 1953, and when I returned to Indonesia in October of the same year, I visited Husein at Medan, in North Sumatra, where he had once again gathered around him a number of adherents enthusiastic about Subud: people of the most varied racial origins: Indians, Indonesians, Chinese, Euro-

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peans. The members of the group got on well together, and Husein had a gift for making them feel at ease and at home. Wherever he went, he rapidly awakened great interest in his ideas, and quickly acquired a constantly extending circle of friends, who often included prominent persons that were obliged to recognize his unusual talents. Once the Medan group was able to stand on its own legs, Husein returned to Palembang. In 1954, he left for Japan by a Japanese boat to participate in a religious congress, having obtained a re-entry permit prior to his departure. When however, he was returning to Indonesia, he learnt before the ship touched Hong Kong that the visa had been withdrawn, and he was forced to disembark in Hong Kong.

In late 1954, the first letters from Hong Kong began to reach me, on notepaper which indicated where the seven existing Subud groups were. He had soon elicited an interest in the question of Subud among his new acquaintances in the British colony, where there gathered around him a new nucleus. Thenceforth, Subud was to develop in a manner which I could no longer witness directly. I remained in a charming home in the Sumatran mountains for a while, and later returned to Bali. But the correspondence with Husein continued, and I learnt that he had suddenly sailed for Cyprus in late 1955 at the invitation of an occultist and philosopher who had become much interested in the new ideas expressed by Husein in newspaper articles and personal letters. Husein remained in Cyprus in the troubled time of the "emergency", during which the regularity of our correspondence suffered. For a long time, there was no news; then I heard rumours that Husein was in England.

In a letter to me dated "Hong Kong, February 18, 1955", Husein wrote as follows:—

"Progress depends on perpetual dissatisfaction with oneself. Therefore, what I was doing and writing a year ago has little meaning for me today, and I know that I shall in five years' time consider my present views as rather childish. Now it is because all this comes through me practically automatically that I never pay much attention to it, as the stream keeps on flowing. What is important is *what has yet to be born*. The past will take care of itself. That is why I hate retyping and thinking over or revising

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old work. *I like to be going ever onward.* Form is, to me, only a temporary house of Spirit. That's why I can't be much bothered with art, personally, as I am interested in drinking the tea, but not in forming a collection of teacups!"

Husein and I could be in agreement over a work of art; but on the subject of Art, which he appeared so to deprecate, I considered him quite incompetent to judge. Art was my holy of holies. The manner in which he approached it may have been good for my sense of perspective, yet I found it none too pleasing. Later he wrote:—

"You see a lack in me, but there is a lack in everything. Something can appear as a lack when it is another man's past. To see a parent not interested in marbles may appear as a lack to the child, but the parent feels he has more important things to get on with. I consider this world merely as a temporary resting-place in *a much bigger pattern*, so all the forms of this world which so fascinate you have little meaning for me".

Without wishing to ignore the bigger pattern, insofar as our intuition can grasp it, I feel that Art (with a capital A!) is something never to be denied, on whatever level of consciousness. All forms of this world have their correspondences and causes on higher planes. Material forms are expressions of beauty; the forms can eventually be dispensed with, but Beauty cannot. As my training taught me through experience, the form of Art is in the higher dimensions nobler, greater and vaster. Beauty is an aspect of Divine Love. The universal relationships which form the basis of this beauty play a very important part in the cosmic pattern; without them, this world would be like a concentration camp, unimaginable chaos; perhaps it could not even subsist!

I should have been glad to remain as long as possible, indefinitely, in Indonesia, owing to my fondness for the land and its peoples; but the subject of the sovereignty of West New Guinea was causing increasing tension and difficulties for Dutch subjects. In December 1957, things had reached such a pass that many of them either decided to leave definitively, or were expelled. I myself considered it a good time to travel abroad provisionally, and shortly afterwards arrived in Malaya, where I held exhibitions of my Balinese paintings in Singapore and Kuala

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Lumpur. The combination of Husein's travels and my own left me without news of him for a long time.

The chance sight in Singapore of a book on Subud by J. G. Bennett acquainted me for the first time with the fact that Pak Subuh's visit to Europe, predicted to me in 1951, had already taken place. His spiritual brotherhood now possessed centres in Europe and the United States.

The tough obstinacy, zeal and devotion of Husein Rofé had finally not been in vain. I know the almost religious dedication with which he had given himself up wholeheartedly to his task; I had participated in some of the most difficult moments of his life, and observed how he never gave up, but carried on without an instant of doubt. Now the objective for which he had worked so hard has been realized, and his considerable personal sacrifices have borne fruit. This came about because he never allowed himself to be intimidated or deflected from the pursuit of what he considered right.

The strange visitor from Tangier had not entered my life in vain in a Balinese inn. It was at times difficult to understand and follow him. His inner struggles and material problems sometimes seemed without end, to the point of appearing monotonous. Yet I wish I could remember every detail of this interesting and fascinating being; here I have merely recorded the salient facts preserved in my memory. For Husein, the past is worthless and quite devoid of meaning, but for us, it can be of great consequence to know as much as possible about that futile facet in the "cosmic pattern", the history of Subud.

Zeist, Holland
December 10, 1959.

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