

Concluding Reflections

This book was inspired by the need to create a theoretical background against which personality survival, reincarnation and the various parapsychological phenomena associated with them can be understood.

Many people are working on this problem, and are approaching it from a variety of angles. My own research has led me to the conclusion that confusion about these issues is rather like the “black-body radiation” problem that broke open the paradigm of modern physics at the end of the Nineteenth Century and led to the quantum revolution. The evidence for personality survival, reincarnation, and the various phenomena we now label as parapsychological has led modern science to an impasse that can be broken through only by a radical new paradigm. In this book, I have articulated a new metaphysical cosmology that can open up entirely new domains for scientific exploration.

Our exploration has been centered around five fundamental propositions for which, in Chapter 1, I presented evidence, and that I will briefly review here.

First, I suggested that the personality must exercise causal power in its actual world. This is necessary, first of all, if we are to account for the fact that the post-mortem personality is relevant to waking life. Only if the personality can exercise causal power without working through the physical body can it have any possibility of communicating with embodied personalities in the waking world (as it does through mediums, in dreams and, perhaps, in other ways). Also, we would be at a loss to account for well-established parapsychological effects of empathy, telepathy and psychokinesis if the personality did not have causal effects in the waking world unmediated by the physical body. The fact that the personality exercises causal power is, of course, clearly exhibited in our everyday experience, where we are quite certain that our decisions make a difference. The causal power of the personality follows quite naturally from the transpersonal process metaphysics I have articulated in this book.

The second, third and fourth propositions are as follows:

- II. Transphysical worlds are part of the actual world;
- III. Personality can function separately from its body, even while the body is alive;
- IV. The personality survives the death of its physical body, and has its ongoing existence in transphysical worlds.

Establishing the plausibility of these propositions has been the main task of this book. Chapters 3 through 6 established the metaphysical foundations for this work, developed in chapters 7-10.

Along the way, we developed a new way of understanding the mind-body problem, the nature of living things, perception, memory, continuity of personality, time and space, causality, the transphysical worlds and Soul.

The fifth proposition, namely that reincarnation is part of the human life cycle was dealt with in Chapter 11. We saw there that transpersonal process metaphysics leads us to strongly suspect that reincarnation is far from a simple matter of a single strand of personality moving from lifetime to lifetime. Rather, since transpersonal process metaphysics lays bare a sense of the way in which we are all individualizations of the universe, it presents a complex picture of reincarnation in which, ultimately it is the Soul, rather than the personality, that is the reincarnating entity.

This book is a part of a much larger project. I have been persuaded, both by the evidence of my own experience, and by the wonderful analysis of the human cycle presented by both Sri Aurobindo¹ and, most notably, Jean Gebser,² that our species is currently undergoing a “mutation of consciousness.” Many of us sense that our entire planet is undergoing an immense transformation. We are in the midst of a global mass extinction of flora and fauna, the weather is very strange, the Earth is in upheaval, and many of us sense that our Western, Industrial/Capitalist, Global civilization is crumbling out from

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*, 2d ed., Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1992.

² Gebser, Jean. *The Everpresent Origin*, trans. Noel Barstad with Algis Mickunas. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1985.

under us. My next book, provisionally called *Planet in Peril*, will address this issue in detail.

In the midst of this massive death, something new is being born. Sri Aurobindo calls it “a subjective age,” and Gebser calls it the “Integral/Aspectival” mutation of consciousness.

It is not generally appreciated that a mutation of consciousness is also a re-configuration of the senses. In modern times—indeed since the dawn of what Gebser calls the Mental mutation of consciousness at the time of the Classical Greek civilization—we have tended to privilege the objectifications the physical world revealed through our five physiological senses (the foundation of modern scientific sensory empiricism—especially the senses of vision and touch). We have tended to imagine that the waking world is real, while the dream world is not. As a result, we have stopped, or at least greatly reduced, paying attention to our inner senses, our transphysical senses, and have neglected their cultivation.

There is reason to think that as we move into the new mutation, our senses will re-configure, and the objectifications of our transphysical sense organs will become much more prominent in the structuring of our appearance of the world. We may find ourselves in what seems to us to be an entirely new world—a world more different from our current world than ours is from the world experienced by a medieval villager. It is my hope that the metaphysical ideas I have articulated here can both help to bring that transition about, and also make it more manageable by giving us a language in which it can be understood.

Finally, this new mutation of consciousness will require its own mode of production. Each previous mutation has had its own unique way interacting with the environment to satisfy human needs. In the Magical mutation of consciousness, people hunted and gathered. In the Mythical mutation of consciousness people farmed and lived in villages. In the Mental mutation of consciousness people began to construct elaborate artifacts, lived in city/states, empires and nations, and came to relate to the world through industrial/ capitalism with its elaborate technologies.

I believe that the new mutation will take us beyond our current form of technology into something much more interesting and, hopefully, much less destructive—i.e., a way of relating to our environment that is informed by our empathic and telepathic interconnections with the rest of nature, a way of cultivating health that relies heavily on working directly with the higher grade occasions of our bodies, a way of communication that transcends physical distances by working through transpersonal worlds, and access to transphysical domains that open up vast and wondrous new worlds for exploration.

I envision this book as a contribution to the formation of that new civilization.