“In modern times, as physical Science enlarged its discoveries and released the secret material forces of Nature into an action governed by human knowledge for human use, occultism receded and was finally set aside on the ground that the physical alone is real and Mind and Life are only departmental activities of Matter. On this basis, believing material Energy to be the key of all things, Science has attempted to move towards a control of mind and life processes by a knowledge of the material instrumentation and process of our normal and abnormal mind and life functionings and activities; the spiritual is ignored as only one form of mentality. It may be observed in passing that if this endeavour succeeded, it might not be without danger for the existence of the human race, even as now are certain other scientific discoveries misused or clumsily used by a humanity mentally and morally unready for the handling of powers so great and perilous; for it would be an artificial control applied without any knowledge of the secret forces which underlie and sustain our existence. Occultism in the West could be thus easily pushed aside because it never reached its majority, never acquired ripeness and a philosophic or sound systematic foundation. It indulged too freely in the romance of the supernatural or made the mistake of concentrating its major effort on the discovery of formulas and effective modes for using supernormal powers. It deviated into magic white and black or into a romantic or thaumaturgic paraphernalia of occult mysticism and the exaggeration of what was after all a limited and scanty knowledge. These tendencies and this insecurity of mental foundation made it difficult to defend
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and easy to discredit, a target facile and vulnerable. In Egypt and the East this line of knowledge arrived at a greater and more comprehensive endeavour: this ampler maturity can be seen still intact in the remarkable system of the Tantras; it was not only a many-sided science of the supernormal but supplied the basis of all the occult elements of religion and even developed a great and powerful system of spiritual discipline and self-realisation. For the highest occultism is that which discovers the secret movements and dynamic supernormal possibilities of Mind and Life and Spirit and uses them in their native force or by an applied process for the greater effectivity of our mental, vital and spiritual being.

“Occultism is associated in popular idea with magic and magical formulas and a supposed mechanism of the supernatural. But this is only one side, nor is it altogether a superstition as is vainly imagined by those who have not looked deeply or at all at this covert side of secret Nature-Force or experimented with its possibilities. Formulas and their application, a mechanisation of latent forces, can be astonishingly effective in the occult use of mind-power and life-power just as it is in physical Science, but this is only a subordinate method and a limited direction. For mind and life forces are plastic, subtle and variable in their action and have not the material rigidity; they need a subtle and plastic intuition in the knowledge of them, in the interpretation of their action and process and in their application,— even in the interpretation and action of their established formulas. An overstress on mechanisation and rigid formulation is likely to result in sterilisation or a formalised limitation of knowledge and, on the pragmatic side, to much error, ignorant convention, misuse and failure. Now that we are outgrowing the superstition of the sole truth of Matter, a swing backward towards the old occultism and to new
formulations, as well as to a scientific investigation of the still hidden secrets and powers of Mind and a close study of psychic and abnormal or supernormal psychological phenomena, is possible and, in parts, already visible. But if it is to fulfil itself, the true foundation, the true aim and direction, the necessary restrictions and precautions of this line of inquiry have to be rediscovered; its most important aim must be the discovery of the hidden truths and powers of the mind-force and the life-power and the greater forces of the concealed spirit. Occult science is, essentially, the science of the subliminal, the subliminal in ourselves and the subliminal in world-nature, and of all that is in connection with the subliminal, including the subconscient and the superconscient, and the use of it as part of self-knowledge and world-knowledge and for the right dynamisation of that knowledge.”

The Life Divine, SABCL, Vol. 19, pp. 875–77

Sweet Mother, what is white magic?

What we call “white magic” is a beneficial magic and “black magic” is a harmful magic. But in fact these are mere words, they have no meaning.

Magic?... It is a knowledge that has been reduced to purely material formulas. They are some kind of words or numbers or combinations of words and numbers, which, if they are simply pronounced or written, even by someone who has no inner power, must act. In occultism, this is what corresponds to chemical formulas in science. You see, in science you have chemical formulas for combining certain elements and producing others from them; even if you do not have any mental or vital or even physical power, if you just follow to the letter the formula you have, you obtain the required result—it is enough simply to have a memory. Well, the same thing has been tried in occultism, making combinations of sounds, letters, numbers, words, which,
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by their inherent qualities, have the power to obtain a certain result. In this way, any fool, if he learns this and does exactly what he is told, obtains — or believes he will obtain — the result he wants. While... let us take the mantra, for instance, which is a form of occultism; unless the mantra is given by a guru and the guru transmits his occult or spiritual power to you with the mantra, you may repeat your mantra thousands of times, it will have no effect.

That is to say, in true occultism, one must have the quality, the ability, the inner gift in order to use it, and that is the safeguard. True occultism cannot be practised by any fool. And this is no longer magic — neither white magic nor black nor golden — it is not magic at all, it is a spiritual power which must be acquired by long discipline; and finally, it is given to you only by a divine grace.

This means that as soon as one draws near the Truth, one is safe from all charlatanism, all pretension and falsehood. Of this I have had numerous and extremely conclusive proofs. And so someone who has the true occult power possesses at the same time, by the strength of this inner truth, the power to undo any magic, white or black or whatever colour it may be, simply by applying a drop of that truth, one might say. There is nothing that can resist that power. And this is very well known to those who practise magic, for they always take very great care, in all countries but especially in India, never to try out any of their formulas against yogis and saints, because they know that these formulas which they send out with their little mechanical, very superficial power, will go and strike, like a ball on a wall, the true power that protects one who leads a spiritual life, and quite naturally their formula will rebound and fall back on them.

The yogi or saint doesn’t need to do anything, he doesn’t even have to want to protect himself: it is something automatic. He is in a state of consciousness and inner power which automatically protects him from everything that is inferior. Naturally, he can also use his power deliberately to protect others.
This rebounding of the bad formation from his atmosphere automatically protects him, but if this bad formation is made against someone he is protecting or simply someone who asks for his help, then he can, by a movement of his own atmosphere, his own aura, surround the person who is exposed to the evil magic spells, and the rebounding process acts in the same way and causes the bad formation to fall back quite naturally on the one who made it. But in this case the conscious will of the yogi or saint or sage is needed. He has to be informed about what has happened and he must decide to intervene.

That is the difference between true knowledge and magic.

Anything else?... Is that all?

Mother, can physical science by its progress open to occultism?

It does not call it “occultism”, that’s all. It is only a question of words.... They are making sensational discoveries which people with occult knowledge already knew thousands of years ago! They have made a long circuit and come to the same thing.

With the most recent discoveries in medicine, in the applied sciences, for instance, they are contacting in this way, with a wonder-struck interest, things which were known to certain sages a very, very long time ago. And then they present all this before you as new marvels — but indeed they are rather old, their marvels!

They will end up by practising occultism without knowing that they are doing so! For, in fact, as soon as one draws close, however slightly, to the truth of things and when one is sincere in one's search, not satisfied by mere appearances, when one really wants to find something and goes deep, penetrates behind appearances, then one begins to advance towards the truth of things; and as one comes closer to it, well, one finds again the same knowledge that others who began by going within have brought back from their inner discoveries.
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Only the method and the path are different but the thing discovered will be the same, because there are not two things to be found, there is only one. It will necessarily be the same. It all depends on the path one follows; some go fast, others slowly, some go straight, others, as I said, go a long way round — and what labour! How they have laboured!... Besides, it is very respectable.

(Silence)

Now they are finding out that they can replace anaesthetics by hypnotism with infinitely better results. Well, hypnotism is a form — a form modernised in its expression — of occultism; a very limited, very small form of a very tiny power compared with occult power, but still it is a form of occultism which has been put in modern terms to make the thing modern. And I don’t know if you have heard about these things, but they are very interesting from a certain point of view: for instance, this process of hypnotism has been tried on someone who had to have a skin-graft on a wound. I don’t remember all the details now, but the arm had to remain attached to the leg for a fortnight.... If the person were immobilised by plaster and bandages and all sorts of things, at the end of the fortnight he wouldn’t be able to move — everything would become stiff and he would need weeks of treatment to recover the free use of his arm. In this case, nothing was tied up, nothing was physically immobilised — no plaster, no bandages, nothing — the person was just hypnotised and told to keep his arm in that position. He kept it for a fortnight, without any effort, any difficulty, without any intervention from his will: it was the will of the hypnotiser which intervened. It was perfectly successful, the arm remained in the required position, and when the fortnight was over and the hypnotism removed, and the person was told, “Now you may move”, he began to move! Well, that’s a step forward.

They are soon going to meet — it will be nothing more than
a question of words — then, if they are not too rigid, they can agree on the value given to the words!

_Sweet Mother, they say hypnotism has a bad after-effect on the hypnotised person?

No, no! If somebody practises hypnotism to impose his will on another, it can obviously do much harm to the other person, but we are speaking of a hypnotism which is practised in a humanitarian way, it might be said, and for precise reasons.

All the bad effects can be avoided if the one who does it has no bad intentions.

If you use chemical formulas in an ignorant way, you can cause an explosion (laughter), and that is very dangerous! Well, if you use occult formulas ignorantly — or egoistically, which is even worse than ignorantly — you can also have harmful results. But that doesn’t mean that occultism is bad or hypnotism is bad or chemistry is bad. You are not going to ban chemistry because there are people who cause explosions! (Laughter)

_To learn occultism one must have special qualities, whereas for learning science...

But for everything one must have special qualities!

_Scientific knowledge is accessible to all.

Listen, if you are not an artist, you may work for years with paint-brushes, colours, canvases, and spend much money and much effort, and yet produce horrible things. If you are not a musician, you may labour hard for hours at playing the piano and you will never do anything worthwhile. Special qualities are always needed.... Why, even for an athlete — if you are not born an athlete, you may try as hard as you like, you will only succeed in doing something quite mediocre and ordinary. It will
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be better than someone who does not try at all, but that does not mean that you are automatically going to succeed. Besides, if we go a step further, everyone has countless possibilities within him of which he is unaware and which develop only if he does what is to be done in the way it should be done.... But there are two types of progress, not only one; there is the progress that consists in perfecting more and more the capacities, possibilities, faculties and qualities you have — this is what is normally obtained by education; but if you go in for a little more thorough development by approaching a deeper truth, you can add, to the qualities you already have, other new ones which seem to be asleep in your being.

You can multiply your possibilities, enlarge and increase them; you can suddenly bring up something you did not think you had. I have already explained this to you several times. When one discovers one’s psychic being within, at the same time there develop and manifest, quite unexpectedly, things one could not do at all before and which one didn’t think were in one’s nature. Of this too I have had numerous examples. I have given you this one, but I am repeating it to you once more to make myself understood.

I used to know a young girl who was born in a very ordinary environment, who had not received much education and wrote rather clumsy French, who had not developed her imagination and had absolutely no literary sense: that seemed to be among the possibilities she did not have. Well, when she had the inner experience of contact with her psychic being, and as long as the contact was living and very present, she wrote admirable things. When she fell back from that state into an ordinary one, she could not even put two sentences together correctly! And I saw examples of both kinds of her writing.

There is a genius within everyone of us — we don’t know it. We must find the way to make it come out — but it is there sleeping, it asks for nothing better than to manifest; we must open the door to it.