

Chapter One

The Upanishadic and Puranic Systems

Virat

Virat is the outer manifestation and if we take all that as Brahman without knowing what is behind the manifestation we shall fall into the intellectual error of Pantheism, not realising that the Divine is more than this outer manifestation and cannot be known by it alone. In the vital we may fall into the error of accepting what is dark and imperfect on the same terms as that which makes for the light and divine perfection. There may be many other consequent errors also.

Visva or Virat, Hiranyagarbha or Taijasa, Prajna or Ishwara

These two sets of three names each mean the same things. Visva or Virat = the Spirit of the external universe, Hiranyagarbha or Taijasa (the Luminous) = the Spirit in the inner planes, Prajna or Ishwara = the Superconscious Spirit, Master of all things and the highest Self on which all depends. The Mental cannot be Ishwara.

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It is the external consciousness, the inner consciousness, the superconscious that are meant [*by vaiśvānara, taijasa and prājña in the Mandukya Upanishad*]. The terms waking, dream, sleep are applied because in the ordinary consciousness of man the external only is awake, the inner being is mostly subliminal and acts directly only in a state of sleep when its movements are felt like things of dream and vision; while the superconscious (supermind, overmind, etc.) is beyond even that range and is to the mind like a deep sleep.

Vaisvanara, Taijasa, Prajna, Kutastha

But why do you want to connect these things with the soul? These four names [*vaiśvānara*, *taijasa*, *prājña*, *kūṭastha*] are given to four conditions of transcendent and universal Brahman or Self,—they are merely conditions of Being and Consciousness—the Self that supports the Waking State or *sthūla* consciousness, the Self that supports the Dream State or subtle consciousness, the Self that supports the Deep Sleep State or Causal consciousness, *kāraṇa*, and the Self in the supracosmic consciousness. The individual of course participates, but these are conditions of the Self, not the Self and soul. The meaning of these expressions is fixed in the Mandukya Upanishad.

Karana, Hiranyagarbha, Virat

Three planes —

(1) Karana (2) Hiranyagarbha (3) Virat

The parallel between Vijnana or Karana Jagat of the Upanishad presided over by Prajna and equated with Sushupti, as the Hiranyagarbha world with Swapna and things subtle, does not altogether equate with my account of the Supermind. But it might be said that to the normal mind approaching or entering the Supramental plane it becomes a state of Sushupti. If the writer had put the superconscious sleep of Supermind—for so the supramental state appears to the untransformed mind when it touches or apprehends it, for it falls inevitably into such a superconscious sleep—then the difference would be cured.

The Seven Worlds

1. Bhu — Physical¹
2. Bhuvah — Vital
3. Swar — Mental

¹ The correspondent asked for the terms in Sri Aurobindo's yoga system corresponding to the planes mentioned in the ancient yoga systems of India. — Ed.

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4. Mahat — Vijnana (supramental)
 5. Jana — Ananda world
 6. Tapah — World of Chit-tapas
 7. Satya — World of Sat
- } Sachchidananda worlds

The Worlds of the Lower Hemisphere

The *bhuhvarloka* is not part of the material universe — it is the vital world that goes by that name. *Dyuloka* = mind world, *bhuhvarloka* = vital world, *bhūrloka* = material world. *Svarloka* is the highest region of the *dyuloka*, but it came to be regarded as identical with it.

Tapoloka and the Worlds of Tapas

That is the original Tapoloka in which the principle is Chit and its power of Tapas, but there are other worlds of Tapas on the other planes below. There is one in the mental, another in the vital range. It is one of these Tapas worlds from which the being you saw must have come.