

response is a useful insight for the analysis of seeming oppositions which are merely unresolved phases of organic process.

Fourth, and finally, a niggling complaint about his negative aspersions about certain, I think, relatively benign human activities and preoccupations. He derides golf, for instance. One wonders how he would have regarded, had he lived, more recent doorway-to-spirituality books such as "The Inner Game of Golf". His derogation of activity-intensive sports and business games betrays a somewhat intolerant bias seated in his attachment to the non-goal-oriented passivity of meditation.

So, after all of these objections, what's left to admire? All the rest of it, I guess. The aspects that draw my objections are all functions of the obsolescence attendant on any creation in a time of such headlong cultural evolution. His joining of ancient wisdom shed of superstition with scientific rigor brought to humanistic concerns attracted me then, and holds up well upon re-reading three decades later.

## REFLECTIONS ON ROBERT DEROPP'S "THE MASTER GAME"--9/8/03

I consider "The Master Game" to be the most personally influential book I've read—not that it shaped my thinking in the ordinary way that phrase would imply. Most of the ideas were already familiar to me from having read (for example) Alan Watts, Aldous Huxley, Daisetz Suzuki, Thomas Mann, Sartre, the Bhagavad Gita, together with a passing acquaintance with classical philosophy, and augmented most noticeably by immersion in the zeitgeist of the day. I refer to the decade from 1965 to 1975. By 1980 the dominant paradigm had changed. Those things most characteristic of that time came to be viewed by the public at large as a passing fad—a juvenile aberration. I suspect that DeRopp's work has been in eclipse precisely because of this bias. Not that such a bias is entirely without merit, however. It is to the task of addressing the caveats related to the second-thoughts stemming from a three decade-plus vantage-point that I must now turn if I am to be able to recommend scrutiny of "The Master Game".

First and foremost, I must apologize for the sexist rhetoric which blights the whole of the work. The alibi can be made that this was quite in keeping with the general practice of the day, where "serious" discourse was concerned. But here we are dealing with something called the Master Game to be played through the practice of Creative Psychology. If not prescience, one could at least expect a wisdom borne of balance and non-self-involvement. Are women so unlikely to want to pursue a spiritual path? His enthusiasm for the spiritual potential of sexual experience betrays a consciousness untroubled by worries about (or desire for self-fulfillment through) potential pregnancy. To his credit, he does place the "Householder" game as the normal, default approach to life wherein, at least theoretically, sexuality is only one aspect of family life. But then, the rhetoric gives the category a sexist cast. Were he writing now, an editor would surely set him straight about his unconscious slighting of female potential.

Second, out of context, the importance of psychedelic drugs to his thesis is overstated. No doubt this was due to a publishing-business need for continuity with his previous works ("Drugs and the Mind", etc.) as well as a nod to the zeitgeist. Of course I, personally, am delighted when anyone says a kind word about cannabis, but most pot-heads I know roll their eyes when anyone expounds on their cannabis-induced spiritual experiences. The weed tends to have little patience with pretension of any kind.

Third, he places undue reliance on the largely discredited work of Sheldon who posits a correlation between physical type and mental function not borne out by observation. Not that I think that there is no connection, but that the connection is more subtle and highly varied. Therefore, I accept the analysis which holds that the differentiated functions of the structural elements of the body (bone, muscle, membranes), the energy processing elements (blood, organs, glands, etc.), and the information processing elements (nerves, brain) is important for understanding the differing agendas in our brains. For me, the types of people he postulates based on physical type shade into one another. However, the idea of organic process being analyzable into the phases of direction, action, and