

THE MASTER GAME

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Seek, above all, for a game worth playing. Such is the advice of the oracle to modern man. Having found the game, play it with intensity – play as if you, life and sanity depended on it (they do depend on it). Follow the example of the French Existentialists and flourish a banner bearing the word “engagement”. Though nothing means anything and all roads are marked “no exit”, yet move as if your movements had some purpose. If life does not seem to offer a game worth playing, then invent one. For it must be clear, even to the most clouded intelligence, that any game is better than no game.

But although it is safe to play the Master Game, this has not served to make it popular. It still remains the most demanding and difficult of games and in our society, there are few who play. Contemporary man, hypnotized by the glitter of his own gadgets, has little contact with his inner world, concerns himself with the outer, not inner space. But the Master Game is played entirely in the inner world, a vast and complex territory about which men know very little. The aim of the game is true awakening, full development of the powers latent in man. The game can be played only by people whose observations of themselves and others have led them to a certain conclusion, namely, that man’s ordinary state of consciousness, his so-called waking state, is not the highest level of consciousness of which he is capable. In fact, this state is so far from real awakening that it could appropriately be called a form of somnambulism, a condition of “waking sleep”.

Once a person has reached this conclusion, he is no longer able to sleep comfortable. A new appetite develops within him, the hunger for real awakening, for full consciousness. He realises that he sees, hears, and knows only a tiny fraction of what he could see, hear and know, that he lives in the poorest, shabbiest of the rooms in his inner dwelling, and that he could enter other rooms, beautiful and filled with treasures, the windows of which look out at eternity and infinity.

The solitary player lives today in a culture that is more or less totally opposed to the aims he has set himself, that does not recognise the existence of the Master Game, and regards players of this game as queer or slightly mad. The player thus confronts great opposition from the culture in which he lives and must strive with forces which tend to bring his game to a halt before it has even started. Only by finding a teacher and becoming part of the group of pupils that that teacher has collected about him, can the player find encouragement and support. Otherwise he simply forgets his aim, or wanders off down some side road and loses himself.

Here it is sufficient to say that the Master Game can never be made easy to play. It demands all that a man has, all his feelings, all his thoughts, his entire resources, physical and spiritual. If he tries to play it in a half-hearted way or tries to get results by unlawful means, he runs the risk of destroying his own potential. For this reason it is better not to embark on the game at all, than to play it half-heartedly.