

Gandhi and the Quantum Nature of the Unseen Power

Superposition, Sacred Waiting, and the Structures That Preserve Openness

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April 2026 — Working Draft

‘There is an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it.’

Mahatma Gandhi, from his collected writings

Abstract

When Gandhi writes of an ‘indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything,’ he is not articulating a metaphysical conclusion or a traditional religious doctrine. He is describing a specific state of perception: a moment in which reality is experienced as a field of unresolved potential rather than a fixed, singular truth. His language is carefully phenomenological — sensing a reality that he refuses to collapse into a definitive form.

This note situates Gandhi’s insight within a framework of superposition that connects across the Liminal Mind research series: the Devonian geology of Dylan Thomas, the sacred waiting of R.S. Thomas, and the RFID memory architecture of Quantum Memory. The argument is that the mystery of existence — in poetry, in theology, in physics, and in the embodied memory of communities — arises from a structural condition in which multiple possible meanings are held simultaneously, and that the most urgent question for contemporary practice is whether we can build structures that preserve this openness against entropy’s insistence on closure.

I. The Uncollapsed Field

Gandhi’s ‘indefinable mysterious Power’ is not a god to be named or a force to be identified. It is a substrate — the changeless beneath change, holding all possibilities before they crystallise into a single path of interpretation. The language is deliberately phenomenological. Gandhi does not say he knows what the Power is. He says he feels it. The feeling is the evidence. The inability to define it is not a failure of comprehension but a faithful description of what superposition is: a state that definition would destroy.

This is the experience of superposition articulated before quantum physics entered the public consciousness. In quantum mechanics, the particle exists in all possible states until the moment of observation. Before measurement: infinite possibility. After measurement: singular reality, and all other possibilities retroactively foreclosed. Gandhi’s Power is the field before measurement. It pervades everything precisely because it has not yet been forced to be any one thing. The indefinability is

structural, not incidental.

The mystery of existence — of great poetry, of the sacred, of the moment before a face is fully known — arises from this structural condition. Multiple possible meanings held simultaneously. The field open. The question not yet closed by the answer that would end it.

Gandhi's Power is not a code to be decrypted. It is the uncollapsed field of possibilities itself — the structural ground where poetry, consciousness, and the sacred begin. The place where the world remains open, unresolved, and infinitely possible.

II. Four Instances of the Same Structure

The superposition structure that Gandhi identifies in the experience of the sacred appears, under different names and in different registers, across the Liminal Mind research series. Each instance is an independent discovery of the same underlying condition.

The Aesthetic Collapse

A poem is not mysterious because it is obscure. It is mysterious because it preserves the moment before collapse, when meaning is still fluid and the reader stands before a horizon of infinite interpretive possibilities. Dylan Thomas's 'We Lying by Seaside' holds the Devonian substrate and the present-tense shore simultaneously — the red rock and the yellow sand, the 400-million-year-old compressed duration and the tide that is coming in now. The poem's power is in refusing to resolve this tension. Both exist. Neither cancels the other.

The Geological Substrate

The Devonian sandstone of the Gower Peninsula is a temporal superposition made material. The red rock is the physical presence of a 400-million-year-old moment, existing now, in the same space as the present. Deep time and the immediate coexist in the strata. The collapse into linear narrative — the insistence that the past is gone and only the present is real — is an act of observation that the rock itself resists. The strata are still there. The duration is still compressed into them. The superposition persists regardless of what the mind does with it.

The Architecture of Waiting

R.S. Thomas's theological insight that 'the meaning is in the waiting' recognises that silence preserves multiplicity while speech destroys it. The priest kneeling before the altar — begging God not yet to speak — is holding the superposition open against the pressure of resolution. Every possible revelation exists simultaneously in the silence. The moment God speaks, all but one cease to exist. The waiting is not a failure to receive. It is a disciplined maintenance of the uncollapsed field.

The Memory Field

In the Welsh valleys, an entire generation carries industrial memory in superposition — the embodied knowledge of extraction, labour, and transformation that exists as living potential, held in bodies rather than records, accessible through encounter rather than archive. The Quantum Memory project confronts this temporal emergency directly: RFID-enabled portraits that hold presence in suspension until

activated, creating what might be understood as technological anti-entropy. Each portrait exists simultaneously as document and threshold — the subject’s accumulated experience held in potential until the viewer’s approach triggers the encounter. This is memory as field rather than archive: not retrieving the past but reconstituting it in each encounter.

Poem, rock, silence, portrait. Four different materials. Four independent discoveries of the same structural condition: that the field before collapse contains more than any resolved state, and that the most important question is how to keep it open.

III. The Question That Haunts Contemporary Practice

Gandhi’s ‘Living Power’ is not a passive condition. It is a structural ground that requires active maintenance. Entropy insists on closure. Systems — institutional, archival, computational, political — tend toward the resolved state because resolved states are processable. The uncollapsed field cannot be administered, optimised, or stored in a database. It can only be held, by people and practices willing to sustain the uncertainty that resolution would relieve.

The question that haunts contemporary practice — and that the Liminal Mind trilogy addresses across three different installation contexts — is whether we can build structures that preserve this openness. Whether memory itself can be held in superposition rather than fixed in the amber of conventional documentation. Whether the embodied knowledge of communities can be kept alive as field rather than collapsed into record.

The answer that Quantum Memory proposes is architectural rather than purely technological. The RFID system is a device for producing the conditions under which the superposition can be encountered rather than merely stored. The portrait does not resolve into a fixed image. It reconstitutes in each approach. The encounter is the activation. The meaning is in the waiting — in the moment before the tag is read, when the face exists as potential, as field, as the uncollapsed presence of a life that was lived and is not yet finished being encountered.

Gandhi felt a Power he could not see. Thomas waited for a God he begged not to speak. The Devonian rock holds 400 million years in a stone you can touch. The last generation of Welsh industrial workers carries knowledge in their bodies that no record can encode. These are not separate mysteries. They are the same structural condition, encountered in different materials, pointing toward the same urgent practice: holding the field open against the world’s insistence on closure.

The task of the Liminal Mind practice is not to preserve the past. It is to build structures that keep the superposition viable — that maintain the conditions under which what has not yet been fully encountered can still be met. Memory as field. Presence as potential. The meaning in the waiting.

Note on Sources

This note is a theoretical synthesis across the Liminal Mind Research Notes series rather than an extended close reading of a single text or historical period. The Gandhi quotation is drawn from his collected writings and speeches; the specific source is the description of ‘an indefinable mysterious Power’ that appears across several of his autobiographical and philosophical texts. The quantum physics framework is used as an analytical analogy throughout, not as a claim about the

metaphysical nature of the Power Gandhi describes.

Key References

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