

8 June 1964

READING 5

We had better now sum up what we have discovered about the three triads which are Conscious in origin, and the part they play in Self-realization.

Shall we try to make a table showing these three triads and the three mechanical triads which limit them?

O-C-N	Passive component. 'Return to the Source'. Preparation of pure emotion (Sattva).
Opposite: O-N-C	'Misplaced internal activity' (? specify)— often rewarding, as in scientific discovery, but leading away from Self-realization.
N-O-C	'Momentary experience of Real I'. The Shock of Awakening. Flash of Understanding. Widening of Attention. Release of creative energy.
Opposite: N-C-O	Falling asleep; loss of Understanding, narrowing of Attention. Intervention of the machine in the form of identification, destructive imagination, 'False I', negative emotions.
C-O-N	Creative activity. All external work for the School.
Opposite: C-N-O	External activity unrelated to purpose, ? specify.

Take each one in turn and try to make clear its essence by examples. These suggestions are very tentative; this is an exercise for all to do for themselves.

With regard to the triad N-C-O (which we have to avoid by constant vigilance), isn't it strange that our search through the literature of the last hundred years of Western Psychology has only produced a single specific reference to this process (except of course to its advanced manifestations in insanity). It was quoted at the Annual General Meeting, but here it is again:

Through the over-valued idea, (he wrote), there arises very obviously in certain scientists and inventors a narrowing of the field of mental vision which results frequently in a positively grotesque neglect of everyday life, Absent-mindedness is a proverbial characteristic of learned men. Perhaps one ought to say: 'over-concentration of the attention' *which leaves the individual blind and deaf to all else. It is a kind of auto-hypnosis, a strained staring at a single point*.

(from Kretschmer's *The Psychology of Men of Genius*)

It is evident that the process of 'identification' is a distortion of one of the normal functions of the machine – the function of habit-formation by repetition. It is the intervention of this mechanical process at a moment of possibility that brings about its evil effects; for whenever we become emotional we automatically become identified. The emotion (instead of lighting up the screen), links with some carbon in the machine, like a lighted match which touches something inflammable. If the emotion is strong or the machine is fully charged with active energy, then there is an explosion; usually the energy just smoulders away for hours or days.

Now one universal antidote to identification with the inflammatory situation is *Laughter*. It is in this way that (according to the System) 'laughter helps Self-remembering'. It is quite appropriate that the whole of Part 1 of Koestler's book *The Act of Creation* is about the psychology of laughter. It is on right lines and gives many good examples. But the System explanation of laughter is simpler. The machine is constructed on the general plan that each 'mind' or 'centre' is divided into a positive and a negative side. If a situation strikes both sides equally there is a release of tension in the reflex act of laughter. In Instinctive Centre it may be the Rabelaisian belly-laugh; in Intellectual Centre it has the characteristics of 'wit'. One example often given illustrates our point:

Chamfort tells a story of a Marquis at the Court of Louis XIV who on entering his wife's boudoir and finding her in the arms of a Bishop, walked calmly to the window and went through the motions of blessing the people in the street. 'What are you doing?' cried the anguished wife. 'Monsieur is performing my functions,' replied the Marquis, 'so I am performing his.'

So that a chain reaction of identification and negative emotion in a situation exploited by many tragic dramatists was extinguished at source by the Marquis' witty detachment!

Instances abound from day to day. In this morning's paper is the remark of the policeman to the L-driver who crashed into the Royal Car yesterday: 'You've chosen a right pair to go and clout!' The British police have a just reputation for the humorous resolution of tense situations. And so very often has the Press, e.g:

Summoning youths and girls fighting with police in Beirut tonight as they tried to get on board an airliner taking the Beatles on a Far East tour, firemen sprayed foam to drive them off. The *Telegraph* caption is 'Beatle Spraying'.

The expression 'good humour' is derived probably from the doctrine of the Four Humours; and we have learned that as much as the Meditation is saturated with good humour, so it will naturally bring about the ability to laugh away identification and suffering; but if it instead becomes saturated with the bad humour of worry and frustration, it will be prevented from doing its good work.

But humour is also a very good prelude to creative thought. C.H. Hinton (the well-known writer on the Fourth Dimension at the end of the last century) began his *Picture of Our Universe* thus:

It is said that once in a certain region of Ireland there took place a curious contest. For in Kilkenny there were two cats so alike in size, vigour, determination and prowess, that, fighting, they so clawed, scratched, bit and finally devoured each other that nothing was left of either save the tail.

(*Scientific Romances*, Vol.1. p. 161, Geo. Allen & Unwin, 1st pub. 1888)

Though such an episode could only take place in Ireland, we can still see this story as a good opening to the laws of action and reaction in the Universe and the mutual extinction of Rajas and Tamas or Carbon and Oxygen; and from this story Hinton skilfully derives the laws of the electromagnetic and the molecular worlds.

Can we think of ways of bringing in laughter as an antidote to identification both individual and collective? It is a very good preliminary for finding the right triad for a given situation.

*

NOTICE FROM THE LIBRARIAN AT COLET HOUSE:

Will people please be sure to sign the Register in the Library when they borrow a book, and write their name legibly. Recently *Fruits of Silence* (a new book) and a copy of *Memory* have been taken without being signed for. The following books have been taken, and are apparently lost to the Library:

Tertium Organum, two copies

The Secret of the Golden Flower

Phantastes, by George MacDonald

Twenty-three Tales, by Tolstoy

Will people please go carefully through their bookshelves to see if they have any of these, and if so return them.

* * *

