

20 October 1975

## FOR NEW GROUPS

Just to clear up a few points arising at your meetings last week. The most important of these is the one about the kind of Tradition to which our Study Society and also the Tradition of the Shankaracharyas' belong and the relation of the pupil to the teacher in such a Tradition.

To begin with, we must know that there are 3 Traditional Ways<sup>†</sup> based on the 3 storeys of man's structure: a) Ways based on physical actions which include all physical disciplines and are governed largely by imitation by the pupils of the teacher's physical appearance and behaviour; b) emotional (often religious) Ways based on faith and obedience and rituals of various kinds; and c) intellectual Ways which depend on instruction in some system of Knowledge.

These traditional Ways, which are well known and exist at all times, are designed for extreme kinds of people – 'one-centred people' we call them. We can easily understand, for example, that few people can live the monastic life and simply obey without question because of their faith.

But since the vast majority of people like ourselves have *something of everything* – they lead active lives, they have some religious feelings, and they want some knowledge also; the position for them would be rather hopeless, if it was not for a *Fourth Way* which few people know about. Both the Shankaracharya's Tradition and that to which all those centred on Colet House belong, are part of the Fourth Way and it is good to ask questions about that and learn all we can about it. The System of Meditation which we use originated in Raja Yoga, but was adapted during World War II to fit with the Fourth Way so it can be for everybody and can be carried on in ordinary life.

Now two types of teacher are to be met with on all these Ways: one in which the leader makes claims about his own Being and his own powers, and demands strict obedience; and the other where the leader makes no claim about his own Being and his own powers, but only about his Knowledge and experience, and his position depends on whether he can answer people's questions and lead them by example as well as precept.

To illustrate this latter attitude there is a story told in one of the Upanishads *Famous Debates in the Forest* about a wise man (Yajnavalkya, teacher of the Emperor Janaka, c. 6th century BC) who had a learned and argumentative wife, Gargi. One day she asked him: 'Yajnavalkya, do you consider you know more than anyone else?' 'No', he replied, 'I bow to all wise men who know the Self. But at the same time, if you have any real questions – not impertinent ones – I will try to answer them!' So (when he managed to get her to listen) the answers to her questions took her gradually to experience the Self by a process of exclusion – you are *not* that body, you are *not* those thoughts, that changing ego, etc., well then who are you? You are the Self that lives in the hearts of all.

---

<sup>†</sup>**N.B.** The Shankaracharya laughs a bit at G.'s description of 'The Way of the Fakir', of the Monk, and of the Yogi, saying it is a bit out of date as there are no longer any Fakirs around! He stresses that the 8-fold System of Yoga (Patanjali) is all important in India still, and the different forms of Yoga: Raja-Yoga (Consciousness), Jnana-Yoga (Knowledge), Bhakti-Yoga (Devotion), Hatha-Yoga (physical body) provide for all the four Ways. Again, a reliable account is to be found in *A New Model*.

This is exactly how we were trained by P. D. Ouspensky in this Western Tradition which we follow. A leader at any time is merely the man with most experience of Self-remembering, who is best able to answer any questions put to him. He enjoys being put to the test and learns by it; but he never asks for people's faith or blind obedience. In the Shankaracharya's Tradition (based on meditation) before anyone is appointed, he has to pass very stringent tests both of his Knowledge and of his Being from among a number of candidates. If there is no one worthy of that high office, it is left vacant. We have watched several candidates being trained, but they were ultimately unsuccessful. Consequently, a man like our Shankaracharya (or his great predecessor Guru Deva) is at once recognisable as 'Fully Realized' – no one doubts either his Knowledge or his Being. The expression 'lesser men' refers to anyone (like ourselves) who are not 'Fully Realized'.

\*

With regard to the books available for reading in the Colet House Library, these are a collection by a previous librarian (containing books left us by legacy or bought from time to time) and are variable in quality and relevance today. Each of you must select what you want to read.

The reason for the inclusion of some of Mr. Ouspensky's books, but not of others, is that several were published after his death – these include *In Search of the Miraculous* and *The Fourth Way*. He did not altogether approve of Claude Bragdon's translation of *Tertium Organum*, but never got around to doing a fresh translation; *A New Model of the Universe* was, however, translated very carefully by members of his group in the 1920's under his supervision, though he regarded it as rather out of date. He died in 1947.

The booklets on *Memory* (referred to by Mr. Hall) and *Negative Emotions* were done under my own supervision by a member of our group in Cape Town who had his own printing press (The Stourton Press) and can be recommended. The booklet *Memory* together with the chapter on 'Eternal Recurrence' give the best account of his teaching on this subject; but they are meant only for private reading, since he said that his ideas on Recurrence are not part of our System and should not be forced on people who don't believe in it!

Any further questions?

\* \* \*