

20 June & 4 July 1977

SENIOR GROUP**TWO SMALL MONDAY MEETINGS AT COLET HOUSE****PART 1. 20 JUNE**

After a few announcements, Dr. Roles began as follows:

We have got some interesting exploration to do this afternoon on a very important subject which we always thought we knew all about, but which now I am convinced that we know very little about at all! That is something for which there is a difficult name and verbal description but which, as a feeling, is very familiar to all of us. It was called in our System '*identification and considering*'. The subject is further complicated by the fact that the Sanskrit word the Shankaracharya is using is not understood by either of the interpreters, who translate it into English as 'attachment'. It is something quite different. So, let us try to be honest with ourselves and take it that we don't understand what is important about this. We know only, roughly, what it is all about, this thing called identification.

But we don't know what, in the original explanation, is relevant and important to us now, and what can be discarded. We don't know how it differs for each person, for 'one man's meat is another man's poison'; and we don't realise that it is our chief obstacle at the present time and has to do with the hardening of the heart which takes place within any organisation, and is associated with any special technique which gives results, such as Meditation, Turning, or Movements.

I think the best starting point is this Sanskrit word H.H. uses – Kashaya, meaning the sticky aromatic juice of a tree in which insects get caught because they are so attracted to it. In some Systems in the East, this word had been used psychologically to signify the fact that the mind gets caught and stuck in things from which it can't free itself like a fly on fly-paper or caught in this sticky gum. The difference being that the fly knows it is caught, but the human being doesn't! Only when we recognise that we have done something silly and wrong unlike ourselves, or that we have felt this horrid sticky feeling of being identified and no longer one's own master, do we realise what it was that went wrong.

So let us have some examples. I may say that our interest in this has been partly aroused by the actor, Anthony Anholt, at the Guyatts' group from his point of view in its relation to acting. But we will come to that in a minute.

Now I would like Allan to read this example given me by Helen Wright, who was listening to the TV interview with Janet Baker, the singer, last night. Did any of you hear and notice this interview?

A. reads:

In an interview on TV last night, Janet Baker described the situation that could happen during a performance if she became too 'emotionally involved' with what she was singing. It is difficult to cope with because she can't perform properly anything that doesn't move her emotionally.

Dr. R. So she is caught in a jam; she can't sing properly unless she is emotionally aroused; and if she is emotionally aroused *too much*, trouble will follow.

A. goes on:

If she got too involved her voice might pack up completely and no sound would come out. It happened once in Vienna singing a Schubert song – a nightmare situation.

Asked what she could do to avoid it, she replied without any hesitation: 'To keep something of myself aside so that it could watch what was happening.'

Dr. R. repeated: 'To keep something of myself separate and aside so that it could watch what was happening.'

This, of course, is very familiar to a lot of people here. Prof. Richard Guyatt, for instance, used to tell us about how he used to 'dry up' when he had to give a lecture or make a speech. Of course, he has conquered all that now! He knows very well what this means, and he has, in fact, written for me the following account of his conversation with the TV actor Anthony Anholt, who goes to his meeting:

A. reads:

He shares Anholt's query, which boils down to something like this (it arose from the story of the arrow-maker):

'Surely there are different sorts of "concentration" when performing skilled jobs?'

Anholt told Guyatt after the meeting that: 'Sometimes while acting he was so immersed in the part he was playing, that he was totally oblivious of anything else. At other times, he was so outside that part that he could watch himself and the audience and note their reaction, and so on. He had no idea which was the better state from the acting point of view.'

Richard Guyatt goes on:

I, myself, have often experienced being so concentrated on my drawing board that it is quite a surprise to discover after several hours that I am stiff with cold. On one famous occasion some time ago, I threw my rubber out of the studio window and found myself using the lighted cigarette end in its place! (laughter) Surely the opposite to the arrow-maker's state?

Dr. R. Well, this is really good enough to show us the problem – the difficulty being that all of us are in a different position as regards this obstacle. Some are very deeply affected by it, and particularly with identification with people, which has always been called 'considering'. I, myself, have always been a martyr to that; yet other people don't seem to be to the same extent or in the same way. So, I would like the old hands – anybody who feels like it – not to give me examples of things with which they are identified or what form the identification takes with them, but just to tell us what general description or language they find in which to describe it. For the word identification is not very helpful; and certainly the word 'attachment' is not helpful at all.

(to Dr. Peter Fenwick): For instance: one psychoanalyst at our new group, Dale Beckett,

asked: 'On the sixth step of the Ladder of Self-realisation, is one required to stop being attached to oneself?'

Of course, the word 'attachment' in India was always used by the celibate – by the full-timer – to preach to the householder, who is told not to be attached to women and gold, though these are the very centre of the householder's life! So confusion is even worse in India than it is here.

(Again to Dr. Fenwick): I don't know whether in psychology today you have any equivalent; but in Mr. Ouspensky's time, he said that Western psychology had bypassed this whole mechanism. I suppose you deal more with *individual* examples, don't you? But you have not, as far as I can see, described this as a general and very important cause of many troubles.

Dr. Fenwick. It has all got side-tracked on to the Freudian idea of the subconscious without looking at the Conscious mind.

Dr. R. Yes, but even that is a clue, because Dr. Connell here and I are both convinced that identification is a disorder of the Autonomic nervous system, which operates behind the Conscious level. I mean, all its manifestations at any rate are autonomic – the dryness of the throat, the goose flesh, the tense and unnatural movements, and the stammering or unco-ordination in instinctive functions.

Colin Lucas. Can you try the idea of how much of one's mind works together in one thing?

Dr. R. I am sure this comes into it, Lucas. For instance, I think that while the first obstacle the Shankaracharya is stressing – the Vikshepa or 'dispersion of the mind' – is occasioned by the busy dominant hemisphere; but this second one where some special like or dislike penetrates into the quiet inward-looking hemisphere and arouses the autonomic by that route, feels like identification, and is accompanied by those physical manifestations we have been mentioning – Kashaya.

But if one were brought into the clear by increase of Sattva, which brings both those two sides of one's nature together, then one would be free from dispersion and free from identification, so that we gain a 'sense of proportion'.

This, I think, answers Lucas's question.

Do you agree it could be something like that?

Colin Lucas. That is what it rather feels like.

Dr. R. But the trouble is that it is virtually unknown territory for everybody. The autonomic is unknown territory to everyone who isn't a professional physiologist; the two hemispheres are unknown territory except to specialists in the subject; so no-one knows except the fully Realized man how the two sides of our nature can be brought together. Thus, for us, identification and all that leads up to it in the way of the mind's structure and functions, is unknown territory! Yet we have to make a beginning somehow.

Has anybody got any suggestions?

A. Would you say that it is not a disease of the autonomic nervous system; it's the symptoms? Doesn't it come first?

Considering is a mental thing isn't it? The symptom of it may appear in the drying up of the throat: but does it actually originate there?

Dr. R. Probably we should say 'disorder rather than disease' though they may follow. It has always been understood that it arises in the emotional part of one's nature, the autonomic; and one does not become really deeply identified until one is at least slightly aroused emotionally. (see Janet Baker) One can't get identified just in cold blood – something that doesn't come close to the heart.

So, we tend to be identified in proportion to how much we are aroused emotionally.

Dr. R. to Dame Ninette. You must have studied this in dancers?

Dame Ninette. Yes; you used the words: 'sense of proportion' which were going through my mind. In my experience the sense of proportion is essential, and unless people have a sense of proportion they cannot control their movements.

Dr. R. This is where the director of the ballet and the choreographer have to get everything into the right unity – proportion. Fair enough?

Dame Ninette. Yes, but it is up to the artist in the end.

Dr. R. And what good accounts you give in your latest book – *Step by Step* – of how some great dancers you have known well, look at and show it.

Q. Are you talking about what people nowadays sometimes describe as hang-ups?

Dr. R. We are, and much more beside! We are also talking about what people sometimes describe as 'stage-fright' and 'first-night nerves'; and all sorts of conflicts and troubles which appear quite separate as varying manifestations and uncertain origin; but which only appear separate until you realise that they are all connected fundamentally with identification or considering.

In this House, in this Work, we are really not much concerned with all this fantastic identification which goes on in the world around. I mean, we all know pretty well the hopelessly absurd attitudes and actions that people can develop through being extremely identified in one or another unlikely interest.

What we are interested in is what way it constitutes *an obstacle to us on the way to Self-realisation*; the melting of the silver, and the juice of the herb; how to get over this danger – this barrier which confronts us all at any moment and in the long run.

Q. A few weeks ago you told us that when we were attempting to think about ourselves, we should think about God instead. Is this a clue to overcoming identification?

Dr. R. Not 'think about' but keep at the back of our minds or in our hearts the long-term memory that 'God is everywhere'. This is the way suggested to us by the fully Realized man who, incidentally, is the only person I have ever met who has completely overcome identification; and this is the way he suggests that we avoid it, dodge it altogether: by putting in place of the habitual personal point of view a Universal view instead – connecting it with more and more understanding of what he means by Param-Atman. This is his remedy. That's what you are meaning, isn't it? (Yes.)

Certainly a little practice of this will do away with a lot of identification. But we never keep to it long enough.

Q. (a woman) Is this a function of Buddhi?

Dr. R. No; it is what *prevents Buddhi from functioning*. His Holiness speaks of Buddhi as a state of mind which is only within the range of human beings and not of any subhuman creature; and even in human beings as something very uncommon – a state where the Mind is in control of the situation and can make a choice as to what is right *on this occasion* and what is not.

Ordinarily we don't have that, because we live in a state of identification – more or less deep. So, freedom from identification gives Buddhi a chance to take its right place as the charioteer – or the chauffeur – who gets us through the day.

Lady Clwyd. I really want to know how one accounts for what I call a kind of balance? When I am teaching I sometimes experience a feeling of 'I am not there'. It is not a Conscious effort to remove my 'I'; it happens.

I should like to know how it happens, and I believe that this feeling of 'I am not there' is recognisable as an indication, perhaps, of what we are talking about?

Dr. R. Certainly, Yes: and it is a very good way to start.

Lady Clwyd. But *I've* just retired from teaching! (laughter)

Dr. R. I meant for *us* to start here and now – to look at it from the point of view of what we want to be, rather than of what we don't want to be. In other words, you value what you used to find when you were teaching – those moments when you suddenly came into the clear with the feeling 'I am not there' though they were not the result of any Conscious effort. This is the right way to approach it; and I will get Allan to read the original description of what is the opposite of inner considering with people, because when you were teaching – those moments were due to suddenly losing the inner considering and studying the interests of your pupils instead.

The original description given by Gurdjieff to Mr. Ouspensky was:

A. reads:

The opposite of inner considering and what is, in part, a means of fighting against it, is '*external considering*'. It is based on an entirely different relationship with people. It is adaptation of one's own selfish desires to an understanding of other people; to their needs and requirements. By understanding the tastes, habits, and prejudices of others, one understands oneself. And '*external considering*' requires a great power over oneself – a great control over the weaker sides of one's own nature.

Dr. R. continued:

So this was clearly put at the beginning, but never carried out even by the man who spoke those words.

I think you will find that, looking back on those moments, Lady Clwyd, of being in the clear when teaching, that you had your pupils in your sights rather than yourself.

Following a request from Gary Richardson that the above quote could be read again, Dr. R. said:

Yes certainly; but we ought first to read a preceding paragraph from that original account when it was emphasised that:

Though one can be identified with *anything*, the basic identification shared by everybody is always with their own ego.

Then G. immediately goes on to say that:

A special form of identification is identification with people, which is called 'inner considering'.

and this is the description which I will get Allan to read again at your request.

(A. reads again the above quotation.)

Dr. R. continued:

So, I suggest that we start from now at any spare moment to fasten our thoughts on 'external considering' in our relations with any other person – whether they are in this Work or not; whether they are in one's family or intimate, or among one's acquaintances or in fact just anybody with whom one has dealings – fasten the mind on the desire to consider them externally, that is, without one's own personal feelings intruding. Make allowances for *their* actions, *their* point of view, *their* prejudices etc., not expecting them to do what one can't do oneself. For if one is a machine oneself and behaves mechanically so often, one must not expect other people not to be machines.

Q. (a woman) If one managed to see that this identification is a lack of something, rather than something in itself positive?

(Here Dr. R. came in): You mean in this Work on yourself or just in general?

Q. Oneself.

Dr. R. You were saying?

Q. If one could see it as a lack of something, one would see what it really was?

Dr. R. Yes, and it would not have this power over one.

Mademoiselle. Does external considering lead to the right action and the right thoughts?

Dr. R. Yes; and that is very important, because it will prevent you from doing something wrong – taking a wrong step in future which you would regret.

It has come up with me a great deal in connection with the proposed centenary celebration which Yale University is giving next year for Mr. Ouspensky. One has been asked to take part in it, to write things for it, even to go over and give a talk, etc., etc. And I have been so identified with 'my mission' that I realised I had been unnecessarily stuffy about it! If I'd had my attention on what Yale University want to know about Mr. Ouspensky, what would lead to a better understanding by students and lecturers of Mr. Ouspensky and his writings, then my small local prejudices about these things wouldn't have counted. However, luckily the situation is still open, and though one doesn't want to get too involved, one really must be cooperative!

Q. Don't we hear this silly voice quite often?

Dr. R. Yes; but the Meditation has set up a change of attitude with us so we can see this is part of the reason why there is this lack of harmony between the two sides of our nature when there is too little Sattva. The Meditation works because it brings them into harmony, and this it can do in the first moment of initiation and often does. It is only difficult to maintain.

If we could make more of that, starting in Meditation by stopping the dispersal of the mind, and allowing the Mantra rhythm to help in the melting of the silver in this Alchemy of Happiness, then it would have a marvellous effect over the rest of our life and our activities.

Lady Allan. Is this really related to the emphasis which the Shankaracharya puts on 'giving up'; because very often one gets energy from the Movements or the Turning, or whatever; but then one seems to embark on some very personal action.

Dr. R. Yes, it is then that one is in danger. It is at one's better moments as after the Turning or the Movements, or Meditating, that one is in danger from identification – losing oneSelf again.

The Shankaracharya is advising 'giving up'. There is never a moment when you can't give up; and what we have to give up is 'I' – one's feeling of 'I' – identification. So I think he is directly referring to what we have been talking about when he speaks of 'giving up'.

Q. It is a question of the identification of the body to which the mind does not consent. One gets depressed and that has an effect on the body, or one gets excited.

Dr. R. Yes, beautifully expressed in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and often asked ever since. But now, we must realise that *people are very different* in this respect. In a state of identification some people feel all the bad effects in their body – the body manifests them. Other people don't notice the body at all when identified; they seem to be disembodied, and they feel the bad effects in their mental operations – the use they make of their mind, sense of judgment, and so on.

Others again, feel it all in relation to their feelings; it is there that they register the bad effects of identification, through their emotional side. People are very different, and though we quite often see one aspect of identification, we don't see all the others.

Extreme cases like 'drying up', or stumbling over one's feet when one comes into a room full of people are very bad – just extreme examples of identification. But merely because we may no longer be subject to those, it doesn't mean that we aren't identified.

(to Michael MacOwan): Michael, have you come to any conclusions in relation to what Anholt was interested in, namely: the effect of identifying as an actor?

Mr. MacOwan's answer not audible on the tape.

Dr. R. Is it always the same, because sometimes if you forget yourself and play the role spontaneously, the results are good; but at other times not.

Mr. MacOwan. (much shortened) It really comes to the same thing, that if you forget 'yourself' in playing the role, this really leads on to the second stage which you mentioned, where one is aware both of the role and of oneself as an instrument playing it, but with one's attention on the role and the people in the audience.

Dr. R. Of course, the whole difficulty is that oneSelf is really the Atman, and this doesn't enter into what one must forget; for what one must forget is something which is parading as oneSelf and that is why it is very hard to deal with and to express.

The Shankaracharya has laughingly said: 'that it is easier to kill a real snake with one's stick, and very hard to kill a rubber snake which really isn't there, which isn't *real* – what he calls false 'I'. 'False 'I', he said, 'is just an artefact – not a real thing!'

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Then, about *painting*: I want to ask people who try to paint, and even the professionals who *can* paint, whether they tend to get identified with what they are doing and, if so, then is the painting good or bad?

Mr. Hersey. Certainly I agree that we mustn't get identified.

Dr. R. But isn't a constant effort required to keep painting and not get identified, however one describes it to oneself?

Cézanne, for instance, in his description of his later watercolours during a conversation with a friend says that 'he has to draw all sides of what he is seeing on to his paper, and if he lets himself intrude into this, it is ruined, and he throws it away.' Something like that.

So, this *identification affects all sides of human performance*, and the most valuable sides of human performance at that. So, as a Study Society, surely we ought to understand a bit more about it; and indeed, I would be very grateful, Dr. Fenwick, should you ever get time, if you'd jot down a few suggestions as to how this could be brought into the ordinary field of professional psychology – could be brought back into the teaching on the subject (especially of course with psychotherapy practice) because it would be about the most important contribution which could be made today.

Miss Irvine. I remember saying to Mr. Ouspensky that I was being identified and aware of being identified, and asking how I could stop it? He said that I could not stop until I knew all about it – all the reasons for it.

Dr. R. Yes; this short quotation comes from the report of a meeting with Mr. Ouspensky in 1938, where somebody asked:

I find it difficult to differentiate between identification and concentration.

(Dr. R. I suppose they meant something like our 'arrow-maker'.)

Mr. Ouspensky replied: '*You can control "concentration", but identification you cannot control.*'

Dr. R. And this is a very good dividing line, and is the final answer to Anholt's question about the two kinds of experience he has when acting. In one case he is so immersed that he has no power of control; but in the other case where he is taking in the audience as well, he can control the situation to some extent.

Q. (A metal-worker). My question really is about the two states of identification, particularly when working on a craft; I find that if I work from the head, I can put myself, the ego, out of the way; then if I drop it, I get the kind of attention of the arrow-maker. But if I can hold

it in the heart, then the thing will warm up and the attention seems wider and to embrace more. And I ask: are these different stages in the same process?

Dr. R. I believe they are, but not necessarily that one has to *follow* the other sequentially. They seem to me to go together, and some have more control over one side and some on the other.

But I should talk to the man just in front of you – the sculptor, Sean Crampton, about this point, for I have often had interesting discussions with him on this topic; and he would know the answer from the technical side.

Lady Allan. In the work of the first Shankara, on which Mr. Amis is working at the moment, there is a verse which says: ‘That a man is calm and quiet whether praised or blamed, and unselfish.’

Dr. R. And there is a whole chapter in the *Bhagavad Gita* about such hall-marks of full Realization, Amis, which you have probably come across; and which seems to have been the source from which the first Sri Shankara took it.

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Dr. R. then concludes:

So now, let us drop all our identifications for the moment and for our last few minutes be One: Meditation, meditator, and Object of Meditation (namely the Param-Atman) all One.

MEDITATION for five minutes.

Afterwards:

The thought came to me after this Meditation that most ordinary religion, or what is called ‘religion’ is ‘inner considering with God’. You create a God in your own image, and you spend much of your time in wondering what this God is thinking about what you are doing, and even asking: ‘Please God, can’t I do this rather shady thing just this once, and get away with it?’

Whereas, real Religion is ‘*externally considering God*’. In other words, you ask yourself what would please the Atman or the Param-Atman – what would be in keeping with His plan and His nature?

Incidentally, Sarah Stuart at a new meeting last week suddenly asked in the midst of a fervent discussion, saying: ‘Couldn’t one just be grateful?’ And this produced quite an effect on me when I read the account of the meeting. For we are told by the Shankaracharya that this is what pleases God more than anything – just for the individual to be grateful.

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PART 2. 4 JULY 1977

After the announcements Dr. Roles began as follows:

First of all I want some feedback, please.

About this newer approach that we are trying to make to a permanent subject of ‘identification’ and ‘considering’ which always, throughout all the ages, are the main snags so difficult to see and understand. This new approach is that we practise what is called ‘external considering’ whenever we have any dealings with anybody else – any other person. That is,

to get rid of the external barrier that one is really looking at and feeling for oneself and not looking at and feeling for the other person with whom one is having dealings.

So, the practice of 'external consideration' – whatever the situation or person you are dealing with, whether in this Work or anywhere else, is a great way of getting rid of the eternal ego with which we are infected and which is commenting all the time, and preventing that real relationship between people which is natural to human beings.

(In the course of a general resumé of last week's meetings, the following observations came from the meeting at Golders Green):

Life as a Drama or 'Play'

Discussion about how ego interferes with transmission to audience. Mr. Roddy Skeaping said: 'You are sitting on stage playing violin and your mind is involved with some personal problem, and there is no connection – a kind of short circuit... Dedicating the moment to the Param-Atman seems to absolve one from personal connections.

Mrs. Rabin. I left earlier than usual this morning, foregoing my usual second cup of coffee. Outside I met a lady who said: 'You've come in answer to a prayer – will you take my child to school?' There was a feeling of having been directed, even though it was a very trivial incident.

Mrs. Marsh. She was so busy and preoccupied that she didn't notice that the man who was helping her wanted to talk to her. Suddenly she saw his face, and what a kind and good man he was, and realised with horror, that she was completely cut off from him and that he hadn't existed for her. They had their talk, and all went well and everything got done.

So, has anything come up at your meetings showing that this was a valid way in 1977 of tackling this ego? Be brave; somebody start off, then others will follow!

Zippa Moore. As far as I can see, everyone liked this very much. There were sighs of relief, and it was felt to be very positive.

Dr. R. And easily understood, and easy to get your point across? (Yes.)

Did anybody have trouble in slipping back into the old groove, and trying to define 'identification' and 'considering' – getting off on to side-tracks about it?

Zippa Moore. Yes, there was quite a lot of that.

Dr. R. Yes. What did you find was the main snag about that, I'd like to know?

Zippa Moore. The difference between 'concentration' and 'identification'.

Dr. R. But then, of course, you remembered Mr. Ouspensky's answer 'that concentration you can control, but identification you can't possibly control.' It is the opposite of controlling; being controlled by something. That is the answer to all those questions.

But the other snag is that, as you heard at your meetings, there is almost nothing that somebody can't get identified with. And if you were to set out to make a list of all the things that you or anybody else can be identified with, you would find that they are changing all the time: that one week one is easily caught by one thing; next week one isn't caught by that; one is caught by something else.

It's the extremely unpleasant sticky state of extreme forms of identification that starts us

off longing to find earlier and earlier ways of freeing oneself. It is not a nice thing. All relations with people are spoiled by it – husband and wife, parents and children, relations in business and industry – everything. It is identification and considering that spoil it all.

Miss Scrutton. At our meeting we had good examples – two of them – of how inner considering spoiled what would otherwise be good.

Dr. R. Yes, so it is felt by people other than me. It has always been the bane of my life!

But we don't find that it is equally potent in the same way or to the same degree in everybody. I mean, Jimmy Connors, for instance, doesn't consider in the way I would do on the Centre Court at Wimbledon! He becomes all the more brash, aggressive and belligerent towards everybody; some are more aggressive as the result of being identified and some are more slavish.

But if you are trying – have a definite aim to be free of all that, and be externally considering other people, and externally considering your own Divine Self, who is looking on at everything the whole time – all one's innermost thoughts, you are setting your sights on something positive, and any deviation from that you can much more quickly tackle.

(to Alan Caiger-Smith): What do you think about this, Alan? Do you think that this way of coming at it is going to be a staple diet in future; or do you think that something else is needed?

A.C.S. I think this could be a staple diet; but what I have found particularly nice about this approach is that it directs things into a positive channel; and one no longer has to be *afraid* of being identified. That was a great handicap before.

Dr. R. Yes.

Then A.C.S. went on: But what has been clear to me is that, being less identified means going out more towards a person or a situation.

Dr. R. And, of course, in Work in a School, it doesn't mean that we have to give way to another person's weaknesses; I mean, that one has to stand firm quite often; but it doesn't imply dislike or superiority, or anything like that.

(to Dr. Fenwick): Have you thought about a place which could be prepared for this idea in psychology and psychotherapeutic practice to take the place of that old bogey, the sub-conscious mind?

Dr. Fenwick. I think the idea of autonomic arousal which leads us into identification is very important; and also, what are the chemical changes in the mind which follow.

Dr. R. Don't we need to know more about this autonomic nervous system? The layman needs to know more about it, because the whole idea of the Gunas – the Three Forces – comes from that. Put shortly there are two opposing organisations of extreme complexity: one is the sympathetic, and the other the parasympathetic; and this latter which is against the sympathetic – is again divided into two – the brake, the negative aspect, which is imposed on it by the cranial division – by the brain, with its depressor areas and all that; and equally opposed is that which arises in the lower storey – the sacral division, which gets you too excited. I think if we really understood more of the chemistry of the three divisions of the

autonomic nervous system and its effect on our psychology, we would get much nearer to understanding His Holiness' description of the Three Gunas.

(to Dr. Fenwick): Would you agree? (He nods vigorously) I think that is a matter for the demonstrators of physiology to put their minds to.

Q. What do you think the mechanism is which makes the mind spin when you become identified?

Dr. R. That is a very good question which needs exploration doesn't it? Nowadays the answer is based on those reverberating circuits (e.g. the limbic) but one answer which has been given (and not only by Mr. Ouspensky, but by well-known physiologists like Nobel prizewinner Alexis Carrel) is that the autonomic nervous system works at a much higher frequency – a 'different space time' – which really means that a lot of things are happening all over the organism all at once; whereas the slow brain is trying to analyse and define each event separately. And when this slow brain, which is not meant to do it, tries to keep up with all the conflicting feelings – all the rapid electrochemical reactions of the autonomic – then it goes into a spin!

You see this, of course, in *crowd psychology*, where all these (pent-up) feelings all come out, and the individual minds are completely lost in it, totally losing their ability to think rationally about the situation and discriminate.

(Question put to the meeting): Would you say that this idea of parts of the mind working at a much higher frequency (and I wish I could find a better way of putting it) is at the root of the discordance there is between mind, feeling and action?

(No immediate answer, so Dr. R. continues):

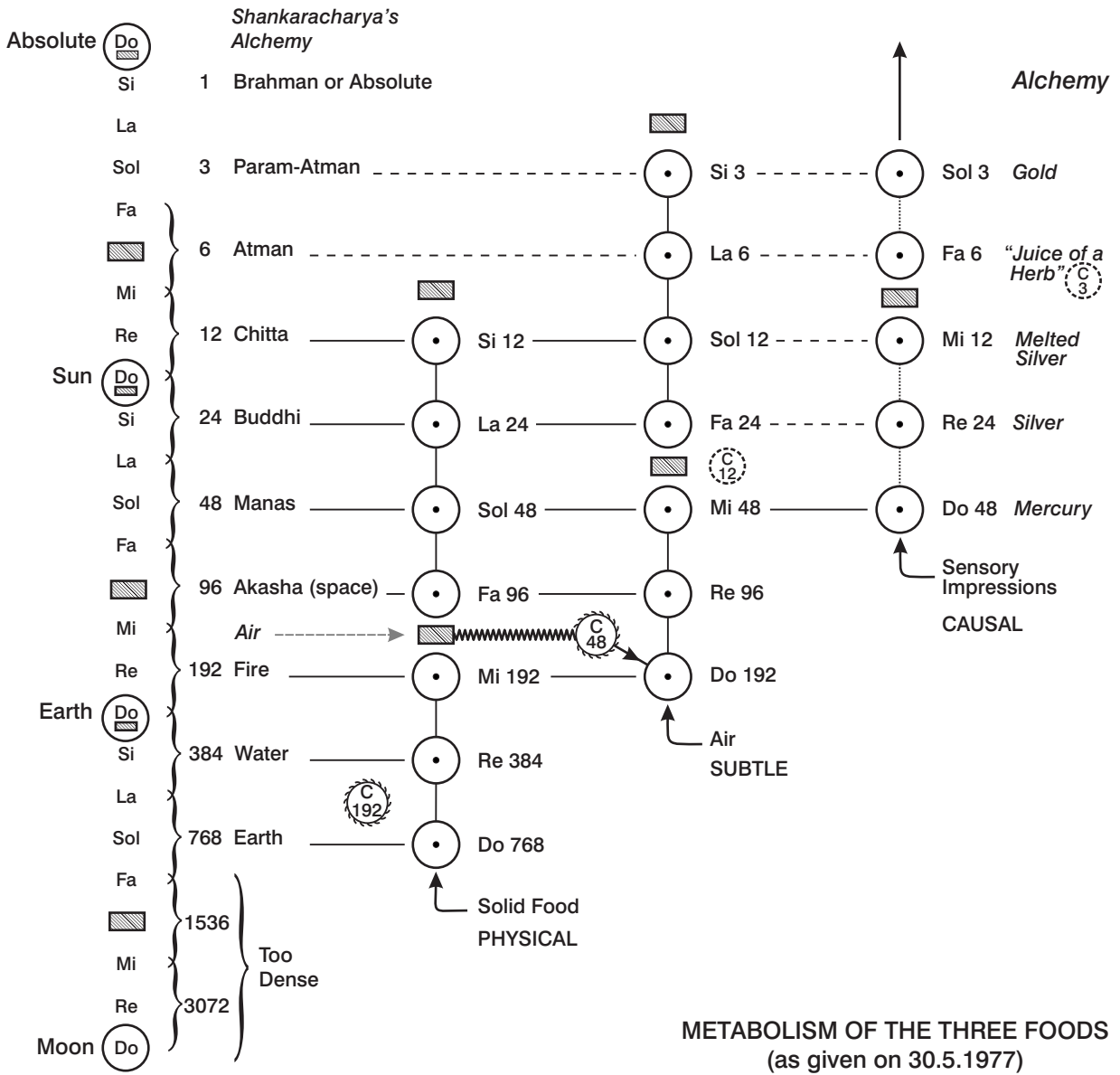
I mean, Mr. Ouspensky used to advise us to try experiments with this: to try to follow with your mind your steps as you run downstairs, but have a soft mattress at the bottom! Because all our movements – voluntary and involuntary – work at far too high a speed for the intellect to keep pace with. But when emotional centre is working at its full capacity – when the sympathetic is really working at its full power, that is 30,000 times faster still. This isn't ordinarily realised, I believe in academic circles which are still far too much occupied with the study of handicapped rats!

Well, all that brings us to what I think is the most practical way of observing the whole field of identification and its opposite, waking-up, which is used all the time by His Holiness – namely his doctrine of the Three Gunas which, in the heat of battle, I have often found far easier to use than anything which requires thought.

I would just like to return, for a moment, to show you how our diagram helps us to understand the way the Shankaracharya is speaking about the Gunas. (with diagram of 3 Octaves on screen)

On every level there are Three Forces – the brackets. First with Emotion (level 12); then with Mind (the discriminative mind, understanding and the feeling of 'I' on level 24) there are again Three Gunas overlapping.

Then at level 48, the 'computer mind' which is receiving scores of impressions all the time, sorting them out, coding and decoding them; and in the impressions themselves coming from the outside world as well as from within – 48 – there are again the Three



Gunās. And in what has often been called the ‘sub-conscious mind’ – 96 – there are again the Three Gunās. All the way down to the bottom of the Table the Three Forces are there, everywhere. It is important to remember that they are always present in everything at every level – in the outside world and in the inner world – but that they vary greatly in relative concentration.

Mostly, we have very little emotional energy; usually, it is governed mainly by Rajas; or, if it is very negative, full of depression and fear, it is governed by Tamas. Very seldom, except only in very striking moments of awakening do we see our nature working under the influence of Sattva when it is full of new potential.

If it does that, then it at once understands that there is above the Three Gunās a Consciousness which observes – looks on – but is not involved. From 6 upwards, the Observer, the Divine Self, is looking on at the dance of the Gunās and not being involved.

This is what the Buddhi, 24 – the Mind (with a capital M) – should also be observing; it should be looking on and selecting from what the Manas brings in – impressions – and selecting what is in harmony with our aim and with the Will of the Divine Observer looking on.

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So, if we can realise that on every level the Three Forces are in operation, but with different percentage concentration – sometimes Rajas is in the ascendancy sometimes Tamas; but that if we managed to store up a lot of Sattva – found a way, every day, to store up Sattva – all these triads could work differently all the way down, and our whole life and progress and attitude would be different.

So, we begin from here, somewhere in this region (24 – 48 – 96) and try to practise, just simply, observing how one's psychological car is running. Is it running cold, is it running hot; and longing just to get it to run appropriately to the given situation.

Do you think that any of us here can hitch our wagon to this Teaching of the Shankaracharya as a help?

Peter Eadie. As far as I am concerned, the Shankaracharya's Teaching seems to be that identification is both governed and felt as the mood which goes on underneath, or the Gunas; and if you have more Sattva, then you have less identification. But if the other Gunas seem to predominate, then there seems to be greater identification.

Dr. R. Yes; the trouble is that 96 is below the threshold of our Consciousness – it all happens inside very rapidly; often showing itself, as you say, by changes of mood. For example: one wakes up in the morning in a depressed mood, or one wakes up feeling on top of the world with a new day before one – all this has been done at that level (96) during the night; in the dream world you have nightmares or refreshing dreams, or whatever, and, therefore, one has to build something very strong here, a deep-seated attitude which is going to remain firm whatever this subconscious part of one has been up to – very firm and detached. So we are talking about the same thing.

Peter Eadie. This is what Meditation does, doesn't it?

Dr. R. Let us now pick one or two examples of H.H.'s use of the Three Gunas in contexts like this:

A. reads: Dr. Roles asked:

Can we bring back the subject of Buddhi? – what is in the realm of Buddhi, about which H.H. spoke so much in Lucknow (that was the previous year). This has given rise to much interest amongst us in the West, because it is an unknown idea.

We would like to hear what more he has to say about it. Is it true that the domain of the Buddhi is not bound by time and space?

Dr. R. He answered that Buddhi is a department of Mind, or an aspect of Mind, which gives rise to thoughts and ideas.

A. reads on:

It is subject to the Three Gunas – Tamas, Rajas and Sattva. It is influenced by time and space. The surroundings usually determine in which direction Buddhi is going to produce thoughts and ideas.

If people are subject to good influences, Buddhi will give rise to good and better thoughts. If they are in the company of Rajas influences, they will have the same type of thoughts.

Dr. R. That is very active, rapidly moving, whirling thoughts.

S. continues:

And if surrounded by Tamas, certainly they will go that way.

This is the condition of the common man whose Buddhi is not stilled.

On a higher level where Buddhi is stilled, then the outside influences have no effect. He could walk in anywhere, and still remain unaffected by the influences of time and space.

Regarding the change in Buddhi, one could easily experience many shifts in one single day. As, for example, the gear of a motor car is changed many times according to the level and traffic on the road.

(Dr. R. The gradient and traffic on the road.)

Buddhi, likewise, changes to good or bad according to the company.

This law, of course, doesn't apply to one whose Buddhi is pure and still. He will not be subject to any influence anywhere.

R. This is brought about by more and more pure Sattva stored in the Buddhi, so that it will still and purify it?

S. Although it is true to say that Sattva helps to stabilise and purify the Buddhi, it is not fully true. Buddhi cannot be Sattvic all the time, because Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the influences which can submerge Buddhi, and Buddhi thus becomes Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. It would be difficult to differentiate at the moment the duty of our living, which is that we have to rise above it. Sattva may predominate at one time and Rajas or Tamas at other times.

For example: In good company, or in the company of a Realised man, the Buddhi would take Sattvic influences. In active life, one has to use Rajas, for there cannot be any activity without Rajas; and, when going to bed, one has to go in Tamas. In fact, none of these at their proper place is bad; so one does not have to feel guilty about the presence of any of the three at a given moment. One should use them at their proper place and time.

A driver drives his car slowly in traffic, and goes fast when out of traffic by changing his gear according to needs. He is not really concerned about the gear, but about his destination. This is the attitude we should have, using Sattva, Rajas or Tamas as the need may be and not getting involved (Dr. R. Identified with it). One has to rise above them even rise above Sattva.

(Record, 13 October 1965)

Dr. R. Well, does that give a picture which is consonant with this diagram from our System?

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