

22 May 1978

LARGE MONDAY MEETING

On the platform: Lord and Lady Allan and Professor Guyatt.

Lord Allan. Dr. Roles is back home after his operation. He is making good progress, but it is slow as was to be expected. I know that some of you who have thought of him have taken your thoughts further and expressed them, either in writing or by telephone. He has said that the greatest kindness we could show him at the moment is not to write to him or try to get in touch with him.

Dr. Roles has produced a paper which is being distributed; so he is well in touch with us and I am sure will pull us up short when we go wrong. Dr. Roles introduces this paper by saying that as the Bank Holiday is upon us and we are nearly half way through the term, we should try to do a little stocktaking.

We thought we might try to pick out the points in the first three Readings, and see if anybody is unclear about them or would like further information. If so, we might be able to help.

The first paper [1978/14] began by Dr. Roles referring to his article in *The Bridge* and saying that the idea in it was sparked off by his own remark: 'I now realize that I have nothing of my own.' Then the Shankaracharya said: 'This realization is the best realization because it signifies that the individual consciousness has been transcended into the Universal level.' Dr. Roles said that this idea foreshadows subsequent descriptions of Mr. Ouspensky's about Cosmic Consciousness. Then he quotes Mr. Ouspensky:

'You know,' he began, 'expressions Macrocosm and Microcosm – large world and small world. The Universe is regarded as a large Cosmos and man a small Cosmos analogous to the larger one. This establishes the idea of the unity and similarity of the world and of individual man.'

A. That was the main point of that paper which was reinforced by another quotation from the Shankaracharya:

This realization that there is nothing of my own simply unites one in all respects with the Consciousness of the Universe. The individual Self goes on existing but it is now united with the whole Universe. Unless this realization comes, one experiences the self as opposed to the Universe.

A. Finally in that particular paper, showing how down to earth the Shankaracharya is, was the quotation saying that the concept of a far-removed external God does not work in this present sophisticated age. We don't need to talk about that type of God; it is the other aspect of Divinity we have to understand.

Those are some quotations from that first Paper. Anybody want to say anything?

Sue Cassini. Could I ask something about Vyashti which I don't really understand? Is it the individual Deity or is it the individual consciousness or are they the same thing?

A. They are not necessarily the same thing. Vyashti is the unit of the whole – the man and the Universe linked through a series of worlds. It's the cog in the wheel.

S.C. At another meeting, I didn't understand why if one called 'I' Vyashti, it was wrong – that it was false 'I'.

A. No, not at all. It's simply you as part of the biosphere. In that case, the biosphere is Samashti. It's the unit in anything; it's not by any means false at all. Perhaps somebody can explain it better. I'm glad you asked this.

Stephen Wood. There was confusion at our meeting about the Atman and Param-Atman in relation to Vyashti and Samashti. We wondered if Atman was the deity of Vyashti and Param-Atman the deity of Samashti? This seemed to help.

Lady Allan. Do you think it is mixing the conversation which was about regarding the God out there with whom one had only a temporary relationship and the ever-present immanent Param-Atman within one, with the idea of Vyashti and Samashti? It was not only connected with deity, it was connected with how one is as a living human being.

A. This may also help: 'The presiding deity of the Universe is Param-Atman and the presiding deity for the individual is Atman.' It's quite simple if you think of it in these terms.

Miss Scrutton. What I think is helpful is to remember the Ganges and the drop of Ganges water in a glass.

A. Yes; it's the drop of water and the whole.

Mrs. Koren. In the Mukabeleh on Friday, I felt this idea very strongly. The individual turners make their own revolutions, but the fact of being together makes the Mukabeleh.

Mrs. Simpson. When one speaks of consciousness, one might talk of ordinary consciousness or a moment of Pure Consciousness and that might be connected with the God within.

A. Yes, absolutely. The idea of Vyashti is simply a unit or atom in relation to Samashti which is the world composed of those atoms.

Mr. Wenham-Prosser. Is it all right to look at in this way: the individual cell in the human body is Vyashti and the body as a whole is Samashti; the human being might be Vyashti for the biosphere and the biosphere as a whole is Samashti for a single human being; then maybe the biosphere is Vyashti for the galaxy and is just one unit in the whole galaxy?

A. Yes, you are going a little bit too far there, but we will, I am sure, come to it. Have you heard Mr. Ouspensky's Doctrine of Cosmose or teaching on Cosmose? Yes, well you are quite right, but there are steps in between the biosphere and the whole Universe.

M.A. What is the significance of how it has been put this time (which is so different from how we have heard it before – it had an emotional impact on me) is that the description which Mr. Wenham-Prosser has given is of the physical body; but in Dr. Roles' realization which you quoted at the start of the meeting, one immediately goes by a short cut to quite a different relationship where one is connected with the Samashti of Universal Consciousness, rather than limited to the physical world.

A. Reading 2 went on in the same theme – the story of the judge living in Varanasi. The Shankaracharya says:

This set of laws exists to govern the individual and (whether he knows about it or not) they will keep on governing! Whatever happens to one's own personal life is the result of one's own thoughts and deeds.

But the presiding Deity of the Universe is the Param-Atman who responds neither by sorrow nor pleasure.

Then Dr. Roles quoted some extracts from *Life After Life* which emphasised the existence of this presiding Deity.

In Reading 3 Dr. Roles began to touch on the teaching of Cosmoes which tells us that there are successive worlds all through the Universe related to each other in this Vyashti/Samashti fashion. A number of planets and their satellites within a solar system; of stars within a nebula or galaxy; and of galaxies within the observable universe; then back to the smaller microcosm again. Looking at his own body, a man sees the same succession of smaller and smaller worlds for which he himself is God. The paper ended with the simile from the Shankaracharya of the friction after marriage between husband and wife, but in the end it doesn't lead to anything because all the time each has in his heart the welfare of the other. The degree of this separation depends on our state of mind, so its fickleness need not worry us unduly. The root cause of all this is the idea which sometimes takes root and assumes form – the idea that 'I am also something'. Dr. Roles says it is worth keeping this passage in mind because it can prove to be of untold value. 'Since one recognised that fact,' he says, 'the mere repetition of the phrase "there I go thinking I am also something" has rescued one in countless situations.'

Shall we meditate together.

MEDITATION

A. (to Prof Guyatt) Is there anything you would like to add to what we have just been saying?

R.G. No, I don't think so. In the New Group we have only just got to the first paper because we have been having special papers from Dr Roles.

Perhaps just a quick remark about the phrase 'I have nothing of my own' from Martin Redfern: 'I feel this is a very big idea because it involves saying 'I' from a completely different point of view'. I think I would agree with that. It's quite a heave really. One can't do it from one's ordinary level.

Mrs. Fleming. Last week I was trying to observe the cellular world within. I didn't much fancy the idea but in fact it gave me many openings and I wondered, particularly, if the gunas could have a very marked effect on this cellular world?

A. We may not fancy it, but we're jolly lucky to have it (laughter)!

B.F. I do fancy it now! (laughter)

A. Most certainly they do! When Sattvic guna predominates, how your muscles relax; or when Tamas prevails, your body rests.

B.F. It has very great possibilities, doesn't it?

M.A. I suddenly realised what a light-hearted idea it was because in the Shankaracharya's

example of the body being a city with all the different levels I saw that the idea of having a separate existence from the cellular body was just ludicrous. It didn't mean it hadn't got a perfectly good life and role and function, but it couldn't have a separate existence. Most of my troubles come from thinking I've got a separate existence. This made me feel one could be very lighthearted.

Earlier, Professor Guyatt mentioned that we might have a change of attitude and that could be marvellous.

R.G. It's hard to put into words, but the idea that one human being is a 'one-off' is absurd – we are very mass-produced!

Mark Tyou. There seems to be a very marked difference between the idea of considering Vyashti and Samashti in the physical world from the cell up and the idea of relating Vyashti and Samashti to Atman and Param-Atman. It's a great big step. Could more be said about this?

A. I don't believe it is such a big step. We have just read that Param-Atman is the presiding deity of Samashti and it is said that Atman is the presiding deity of Vyashti. As far as we are concerned, Atman is our presiding deity in these terms.

M.A. Surely the point of all these examples is that there is no difference? What are we, physically, but the cells of our body? Atman and Param-Atman have the same intimate relationship.

Mr. Buscombe. Do you think that idea is an aspect of the Causal level – thinking of Atman and Param-Atman is one aspect of the Causal level?

A. Perhaps.

Miss Scrutton. That's why I find the Ganges illustration so helpful. It is so easy to see that there is no difference.

Sue Cassini. I understand the example of the Ganges water very well, but not the need for merging Vyashti into Samashti, because when you understand that Vyashti is the same, as in that example, I don't see where the merging comes.

A. It is the merging of your individual self into the greater Self so that your personal ego no longer counts.

S.C. But Vyashti has nothing to do with egoism, has it?

A. No, it hasn't.

R.G. Aren't we talking about two distinct levels of consciousness which are really chalk and cheese? There is one level where you are aware of yourself and your surroundings and what you are doing and perhaps the emotion generated by that, and another level of consciousness in which you are everything and everything is you. This has a different taste – this is something distinct.

Mrs. Fleming. Isn't it right that if everything is given up and we accept this idea, then everything belongs to us – when you merge, it's like that.

Mrs. Koren. It seems to come back very much to what Dr Roles said in the first paper – that it

was necessary to feel this emotionally and tonight we seem to be trying to understand it intellectually.

Mr. Hodge. The best way to realise this is either through Meditation or the Mukabeleh.

A. I was giving the Meditation to a number of people this weekend and I was struck by the simplicity and sincerity of the things that people put on their forms in answer to the question 'What do you really want from life?' We sometimes lose this simplicity and purity by getting a bit complicated. Here are two examples. The first answer says: 'Not material things particularly. I don't feel they are as important as feeling right and being at peace, both with myself and with the rest of the world'. And the second was: 'I want a happy family life and a home full of joy and laughter and love'. What marvellous things to want! I think she has come into the right company to find them. We all want those things and it is easy for all of us to have them if we really go for them, instead of for the tinsel behind whose glitter hides jealousy and strife and hatred. We know in our inner selves that the tinsel is worthless and we know in our hearts that we want a home full of joy and laughter and love and to feel right and to be at peace. Why do we deny our hearts and turn away from our inner selves? It is just because we say, '*I* also am something' and '*I* have something of my own'.

Some months ago I suggested that realization came from experience and knowledge. There were various examples including such simple ones as 'I realize now what something means', when an experience has verified our knowledge – giving, as it were, a new dimension. Self-realization, it seems to me, can be looked at in exactly the same way. In the past, most of us have had at least one experience, usually in childhood, when we felt ourselves as part of the complete unity of all things. We didn't know then that this is really so, because we have been brought up and taught to think entirely differently. Now, the work that we do in this Society is to change that and to prepare us to look for and to use any more of these experiences which through Grace we may get. We are beginning to know that that '*I*' which we all recognize as being with us all the time is our 'Real I'. That '*I*' of which we are aware when at any stage of our lives we look back and say, 'Here am I, 25, 35, 50 years old and I don't feel any different than I did when I was in my teens'. Now, *that* is our 'Real I'. All the ups and downs of life – the passions, the triumphs, the failures, the boredom – have swept over us leaving that 'Real I' quite untouched, as the depth of the ocean is untouched by a hurricane or a zephyr.

As we get acquainted with that 'Real I', we know that it must have preceded this birth and will continue after this coming death. The closer we come to this '*I*', the more differently do we observe our life and the wider life that throbs through us. The more regularly we observe from this '*I*', the more permanently we live in it, the easier it is to accept as true the remembrances of those earlier experiences. If those experiences come again, with our new knowledge we would realise that they are indeed true and that we are one with each other and with the Creator of all. Then we would obtain Self-realization. It seems that our major job together is to hammer away at this knowledge until we really know it beyond any doubt whatever. Then by our actions or probably by the restraint of them, we hold ourselves ready for the experience which, through Grace, will come to add a new dimension to that knowledge. Here we learn; outside we practise, turning away from the tinsel and going for

the joy and the laughter and the love, humbly praying for that experience which will transfer our knowledge from our head to our heart, thereby completing the realization for us.

Mrs. Fleming. Would this connection be made through the Essence which is born again, because in childhood, one didn't feel separate and this experience is still there? Is it a manifestation of the True Self?

A. Call it what you will, it is that 'Real I' that we do know, and we mustn't be afraid and shy away from it.

Mrs. H Caiger-Smith. The idea that we feel in opposition to the Universe seems very strange now, after what you have been saying. It just doesn't fit.

M.A. The Shankaracharya was suggesting that most of the time we think of me and that universe there – here I am and there are the other people.

A. That's it. We are all one – we must accept it. It can't be anything else, as you say.

M.A. Until someone irritates you! (laughter) Then they are definitely something quite different! (more laughter)

A. Does everyone get the feeling of that 'I'? If we can live inside it, it can change things a lot.

M.A. One can almost go beyond it with the idea that Dr. Roles has been putting that 'I have nothing of my own'. This feeling of merging does away with the personal thing whether it is an 'I' one knows or not – it just seems to go. In true unity there isn't even that.

A. That's what will come when we experience it.

Mrs. E. Mayer. The word 'deity' is a stumbling block for me because it seems to introduce duality.

A. As used by the Shankaracharya you mean – the deity of the Samashti and so on?

E.M. If it is just used figuratively, I can accept it.

A. Ultimately there is complete Unity – One and One only. Then we go to the division into the Trinity and on down. There is only one Supreme Absolute which contains all.

Mrs. Cardew. Hammering away at the knowledge is in fact continually and continually observing.

A. It's so simple this knowledge – that we really are one and united. We are separated by these clouds or sheaths as we are always being told by H.H.

Mrs. Z. Moore. Isn't one of our difficulties that we want this joy and happiness on our own terms? We paint pictures about ourselves and other people.

A. Joy and laughter and love are universal, aren't they?

Z.M. But we actually impede them by painting pictures of how we want things to happen.

A. Instead of accepting – yes. We are saying 'I also am something' and spoiling the whole thing.

Mr. Hussein. (repeated) In Reading 1 the Shankaracharya is referring to the idea of a God out there who came to one's aid when needed and he said this was not tenable now. Mr. Hussein is suggesting that this is perfectly valid but just not in vogue. Was it the Shankaracharya's intention to say that that was a valid aspect but just not in vogue in this modern age?

A. You heard the paper, did you? (Yes) He precedes that by saying that these are two aspects of the Param-Atman and we pray and unite ourselves with that God, but after that we go back into our daily life. You are there and God is somewhere else; you are apart from that God. That's an aspect we don't want to consider; rather we want to say that we need to understand the idea of a Self or Param-Atman which is immanent, always present, together with us, guiding, helping, and at each moment, in every walk of life. We need to present this picture of the Deity to ourselves and to our friends wherever we are. Let's not bother about the God that we may pray to who is out there, but let's concentrate on being with, and living with, this ever-present, immanent Divinity.

One has to realise that there are two aspects of the single Param-Atman. One is the God out there which the Shankaracharya says in modern society doesn't stand up to scientific examination; and the other is this in-dwelling, immanent God. Two aspects of the one God.

Mr. Geoffroy. Surely the second aspect is much nearer to what we are thinking – modern thinking?

Mr. Dunjohn. The Maharishi was lecturing to ordinands in the Vatican and there was some argument about his approach to non-duality and the worship of the Divinity, the audience tending to take the view that God was exterior. After a vote of thanks had been given to him, he replied: 'I thank you for your kind words and I hope that in your books you may find God.' (laughter)

A. Our task is to find God everywhere!

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