

1 December 1980

BASED ON LARGE MONDAY MEETING

Recently our groups have shown great interest in trying to recapture and continue Mr. Ouspensky's researches into the six Triads to be seen in the activities of mankind about which he used to say, 'When once you see it a whole new world will open for you'. In fact it seems to appeal so much to people today that their questions lead them on to it soon after they join us. But even after forty years we're only beginning to understand it!

His starting point was, you remember, that though there is no doubt at all about the physical differences between materials – wood, minerals, metals – which determine their use for special purposes, yet we don't appreciate that *human actions* are just as different, and that to achieve any desired result we have to pick the combination of the three Forces which can give it. No amount of physical labour alone will produce an invention – and no amount of inventiveness will create a work of Real Art.

My strong desire to keep Mr. Ouspensky's memory green among those who come to this house of his, and especially at Christmas time, was unexpectedly rewarded one night last week with the vivid memory of a conversation I had with him more than forty years ago which came all in one piece and which I hastened to write down next morning just as it was. It is most encouraging to find that the records are all there (like the total playback of one's life that is said to accompany physical death) though just how to store what you want and play it back when you want it, remains a mystery.

After five minutes of stillness, I shall ask Lady Allan to help me convey the feeling of the story to you.

(Pause)

Dr. R. One of the things that Mr. Ouspensky and I had in common, in spite of the difference in stature, nationality and background, was that my American mother and his Russian grandmother started at a very early age to tell us Bible stories, so that before we could read or write, or even talk properly, we knew many of them by heart. So very often when we happened to be alone together the conversation would go to one of those, and its real meaning. On this particular evening, there had been a meeting at Warwick Gardens, before we got this house; as usual half-a-dozen came back to the kitchen at the country house and the conversation was very light and general for a time. Then about midnight those people who had jobs to do next day would go to bed, and after that it was necessary to keep awake because very interesting things – magic – might happen at any time. This particular evening he began about 3 a.m. by saying:

O. There was religious question at meeting. I could not answer then because some people would not understand.

R. About Good Samaritan – 'who is my neighbour?'

O. Yes, tell the story.

R. (quoting from memory) And behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Him, saying: 'Master, what shall I do to inherit Eternal life?'

O. Christ knew it was a trick question – lawyer didn't care much about Eternal life! So Christ puts it back to him.

R. Yes, He said: 'What is written in the Law? How readest thou?' And he answering said: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.' And He said: 'Thou has answered right. This *do* and thou shalt live.'

O. Question came at meeting tonight. 'Who is my neighbour?'

R. Yes of course, that is just what the lawyer asked 'in order to justify himself'. So Christ tells the story of the Good Samaritan.

O. Tell it now.

(Lady A. reads from St. Luke Chapter 10):

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way. and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.

(Mr. O. Pseudo-religion again!)

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came over and looked, and passed by on the other side.

(Mr. O. 'Church Politics' come in. Levites were religious clique; and again, orthodox Jews had bitter quarrel with Samaritans at that time, because they were supposed to have desecrated the Temple, and also because they did not preach resurrection or the coming of a Messiah. So now comes the sting:)

But a certain *Samaritan*, as he journeyed, came where he was, and when *he* saw him, he had compassion on him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an Inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two denarii (two 'pence'), and gave them to the host and said to him. 'Care for him, and when I come again I will repay thee.'

(So Christ says to the lawyer:) 'Which now of these three thinkest thou, was neighbour to him that fell among thieves?'

And he said. 'He that showed mercy on him.' And Jesus said to him, 'Go, and do thou likewise.'

Conversation continues:

R. (After a drink) One thinks of Rembrandt's pen drawings and etchings of this story.

O. Yes, very realistic, simple and emotional. Yet the story has many meanings on different levels. First, this is what, in ordinary life, we all ought to do without expecting reward. This is practical religion in life. Then in School: special relations with each other: much more important than rituals and regulations. We have to learn what that expression means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice'. Remember also that Samaritan became neighbour to man in trouble by helping him. More experienced people in School become neighbour to others by helping – showing mercy, understanding.

(Another pause while we recharged our glasses:)

Mr. O. starts again: Who is my neighbour? Next meaning is one's teacher; for you, I am your teacher; I pulled you out of the ditch.

R. Indeed you did! You have to keep pulling!

(A long silence with a subtle change of atmosphere which became more quiet and more emotional.)

O. But there are higher meanings still, and you will meet greater man than me, but first there must be inner experience of 'Real I'. It is 'Real I', (we're now calling it the Atman) which is the 'man who fell among thieves' – for all humanity the microcosm, Man, individual Man, Self-remembering is remembering this as often as possible, particularly at important moments, and later all the time. Then Macrocosm comes to help and guide him at crossroads. Universal helps individual. Each of us *is* Real 'I', Permanent 'I'; no other 'I's' are anything more than transient. Here one minute, gone the next. That is why we repeat Lord's Prayer, 'Paternoster qui es in Caelis' – 'Our Father which art in the Heavens, Thy will be done on earth'. Never forget Gospels have ordinary meaning, but Psychological and Cosmic meanings too.

(R. That's all I now remember of the talk before I fell asleep.)

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Dr. R. So he doesn't mention anything about triads or activities, although his meetings at that time were very much about that. But it's very clear in the story that several, if not all, activities are shown – people who beat up the man and left him dead, that's one kind of action, mechanical neglect and indifference another; showing 'mercy' yet another.

Can we over Christmas, think of him in spare moments, and think of what Christmas means. I've put what it means for me in the paper (Reading 5) but it can mean different things for each of us. And it has a very real meaning just in the ordinary way of crackers and parties for our children. And, besides, people (even rather tepid Christians) are actually quite good-tempered over Christmas!

A very happy Christmas to you and your families, no matter what happens in the world around.

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