

25 February 1980

LARGE MONDAY MEETING**COLET HOUSE**

Dr. R. I'd like to begin by giving you what would ordinarily be thought of as very sad news... The death of very great friend of ours, Ursula Walford, very suddenly on Friday. And yet it was the most marvellous sort of death that one would give anything to have. She was having a cup of tea, like Yeats she had an open book and a cup, when they found her next day, and it must have happened instantaneously because there were no signs of any struggle. She looked very peaceful. Several people spoke to her here last Monday and the Tuesday before that. People had talked with her and thought she was in very good form. But we know that she had had a high blood pressure for some long time. Seeing the milk still out in front of the house, the neighbours got the police to force an entry and they found her sitting there as I have described. So there is no reason to feel sorry about *her*; one can only be very happy. But of course she had the children and grandchildren of her two marriages and she was holding the whole family together for a long time. We'll have to try and help all we can, especially with Angela. Ian, her grandson, Ian MacNab, telephoned to you (Lady A.) because...

Lady A. Yes, because Ursula was my daughter's godmother and had been very kind to Bobby and me for many years.

Dr. R. He says that there will be an announcement in the paper tomorrow or Wednesday and that will say when the funeral is to be. It will be down at Basingstoke probably. We'll send flowers from here. (Later: Memorial Service, Sherborne. St. John's Church. Saturday. 3.00 p.m.)

This week we thought that we should have a change of subject. One can't go too long on one subject and for a long time we've been talking about the natural gaps in which the possibility of Samadhi is available to quite ordinary people. There are a lot of gaps during the day and people have found that merely having their attention drawn to these gaps has enabled them to profit a lot. It's the sort of thing that you could tell quite ordinary people without mentioning any special teaching or anything. Though man is an incompleting being, yet everything necessary for his completion is provided by nature.

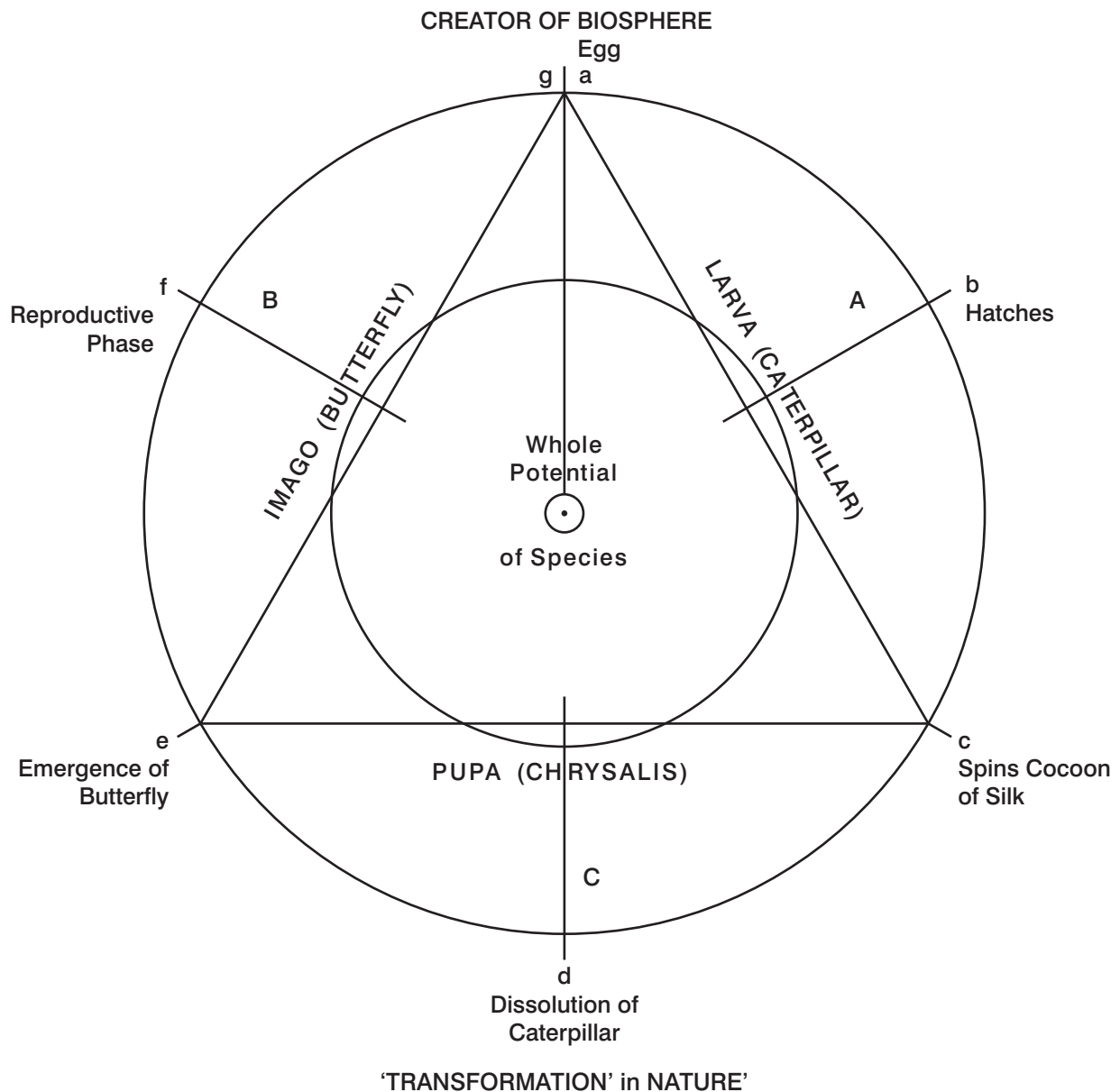
The change of subject is that we recollect, (through having found an early version of the First Psychological Lecture that Mr. Ouspensky gave in the 1930's) the theme that man is an incomplete being. He said that there are two kinds of psychology: 'one that takes man as he is, or as they suppose him to be; and the other which takes man, his present situation, as just a phase in his transformation.' He used, at that time, the metaphor that man was a seed; and in nature many seeds don't come to plants, and the same with man, but every normal seed begins with the potentiality. The reason more seeds don't become plants and bear flowers and fruit is that they are ignorant of the whole possibility. Therefore they don't want it. For men as seeds to become a plant and bear flowers and fruit, they must want it very very much, above and more lastingly than any ordinary desire. The climate has changed so much since the 1930's when we were all perfectly satisfied with ourselves and the situation. It has taken

a world war – World War II – and all the chaos of social and financial life and the threat of hydrogen bombs and Heaven knows what since then. And now we are beginning to see what the Shankaracharya has prophesied – a turning in the right direction of ordinary people’s thought. There are all these nationwide inquiries in this country about ‘Have you ever experienced something above yourself, whether you call it God or not? Something which cannot be explained in the ordinary way?’ And there have been so many replies that two University units have been set up – one at Oxford and one at Nottingham. It’s the biologists who have spearheaded this movement because many have been thinking for a long time that, though the Darwinian theory of evolution is the best account to hand on the scale of organic life on earth, it doesn’t help the individual at all, because one of the cornerstones of Darwin’s theory was that *acquired characters are not inherited and we would have to wait for chance to produce mutations* and millions of years before mankind could change.

But Mr. Ouspensky used the words ‘*transformation of man*’ and this he said could take place very quickly indeed. It was on different time-scale altogether. The transformation of Man as a seed into plant which can bear flowers and fruit, was the great secret of many of the ancient mysteries; for instance, it was used for 2000 years at Eleusis, close to Athens, where the whole theme was about the ear of corn and the development during the mysteries which followed initiation, development through death to full stature. This was adopted by those who wrote the Gospels. ‘Except an ear of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.’

But there was another simile that Mr. Ouspensky was fond of using later about the time of the foundation of this Society. When he bought this house and set up the Society, the keynote was ‘*The Psychological Transformation of Man*’. In that case he used a simile which fits so nicely with the Symbol (on screen) that I want to show it to you today. It’s the transformation from a caterpillar into a butterfly. A lot of the questions and remarks made or asked at our Groups are the sort of questions that *caterpillars ask about caterpillars* – which we are not very interested in! (Laughter) The whole point is that caterpillars could become butterflies with special help under special conditions and this is what this Society was created for. Physical metaphors can teach one about subtle possibilities for which there is no other language.

We all start with the egg – point (a) here – all good caterpillars (or any other larval form in nature of which there are many kinds) start from the egg. During this phase the larva (caterpillar) is developing within the egg and at roughly point (b) the caterpillar hatches out. All it does then is to eat voraciously, storing up all material necessary until it spins its cocoon at (c). And of course this is what caterpillars were mostly valued for by mankind – e.g. the silkworm (the caterpillar of the moth family Bombyx) that was used to spin this lovely stuff silk. So the larva forms the cocoon at (c) – or pupa – and during the first part of that existence the caterpillar becomes completely dissolved, say at point (d). There is no form there at all within the pupa. It is just a mass of chemicals and you’d think that it was dead – but it isn’t! And between (d) and (e) the butterfly is manufactured, is produced. At (e) the ‘*Imago*’ or butterfly hatches out and dances about in the sun for a little and then (about point (f)) it mates and has a short love life and lays the eggs. So this life cycle goes on egg after egg!



And the question is. *'In that life cycle, who is making the effort?'* The caterpillar, the larva, doesn't make any efforts except to eat like hell! (laughter) You can't make an effort if you are completely dissolved! (laughter) And even butterflies, I haven't seen making very big efforts! (laughter) All a butterfly has to remember to do is to lay her eggs – by the way it's customary among butterflies for the female to lay the eggs, however liberated! (laughter) – to lay the eggs in the right place, on the right bush where the right food is available; or if you're a wasp, you'll lay your eggs inside a spider (a tarantula say, or something like that), so that you paralyse it and your larvae have plenty of food to eat and you can happily go off and leave them.

So the question of efforts is answered. As before, we are calling A the physical level, C would be the subtle level; and B would be the Causal level. Then here is the mysterious circle – 'Fourth Room' – that people are asking about as to whether it's a 'place'? But you can see from this diagram that it's the *potential of the whole species* (because all this timing varies according to the species.) So this Antahkarana is a certain potential within the plan of the

Biosphere. And in man, the Antahkarana or Fourth Room is not only the source of energy for the continued existence of life during all these stages, but it is a *seedbed in which all the potential of the human species* which has ever been realized is planted in every embryo. Of course any individual only realizes a very very tiny fraction of that total potential. If you think about it on the caterpillar level and then think about it on the human level, it answers a lot of questions.

I mention this idea to you because we have recently been told by the Shankaracharya that it is not enough just to learn or hear about something, some idea. There are three stages, which he described to Maurice Pickering here. One is *learning* about it, studying it. The second stage is *reflecting* on it for a long time until it gets into your deeper centres, especially the emotional centre; and the third stage, *contemplation*, brings illumination from the source within you. Mr. Ouspensky said in the 1930's that man is a seed or embryo and that nature has brought him to certain stage where everything necessary for his completion is available, but he has to go further by his own efforts and with help. To do that he has to want it very much indeed. People (40 years ago) did not seem to want it. He said at that time, 'Nobody wants it.' But today many more people *are* wanting it – to know where these experiences of theirs which can't be explained materialistically, come from and how they come.

I was saying that there are three things we have to do with a novel idea: learn about it, study it; we then have to be silent and reflect on it for some time. And then the third stage will happen without any effort at all quite suddenly and we call that '*contemplation*' where the idea will bring with it all kinds of clarifications of that idea and neighbouring ideas. This is where the good questions and answers come from. So I would like you to try to hold this metaphor in mind, relating the caterpillar to mankind, and see what questions and answers come. But as a lot of you have heard this before, perhaps there are some questions now? We're seeing everywhere in the world caterpillars – men in the larval stage – behaving often very badly indeed, doing things which real men wouldn't do. For in organic life it's nearly always the larvae (like those of the clothes moth!) or parasites which cause the illness and the damage.

Lady A. Do you mean we cling to being caterpillars?

Dr. R. Most of us, you see, don't know anything about mankind being only a larva. Most people need to have their attention brought to it. But even we, enlightened caterpillars, (laughter) are always trying to envisage what it would be like to be a butterfly, and we know nothing whatever about it, for caterpillars cannot really imagine what it's like to be a butterfly!

R.G. Dr. Roles, could you say more about this lack of effort? It sounds as if it is automatic!

Dr. R. It is! Everything is laid on by nature, and all we have to do is not to interfere with the processes of nature by setting up the *stillness* which would allow the processes of nature to operate. For that one needs a School where the subtle level of the individual gets disciplined by getting over the idea of separate ego which is the one thing which stands in the way of man's completion.

Mr. Eadie. Is this related to dissolving into chemicals as in the case of the chrysalis?

Dr. R. Not strictly speaking, because this is on the subtle level. It's the *dissolving of the hard part of our psychology*. Not the dissolving of Peter Eadie's body or any part of it, but dissolving of Peter Eadie's psychology.

Mr. E. The ego?

Dr. R. And all that it generates – like exclusively selfish outlook, negative imagination, or just wandering thought – layer on layer of turning thoughts, desires and negative emotions. For completion must come through emotional centre working at its highest speed in the pure state and working so in tune with the centre of energy that it is on the same time scale. It's something in our psychology which has to disappear. There is something in each of us that we have to get rid of, through life after life.

Q. Could we call it a kind of alchemy?

Dr. R. Well that was the name given to it by Mr. Ouspensky. In the Psychological Lectures, he says: 'So now we come to chemistry or rather alchemy'. And it's what the real alchemist was talking about – the creation of precious metal – of gold – from base metal.

Mr. P. Smith. Dr. Roles, could you say more about the differences between the reflective stage and the contemplative stage?

Dr. R. You are now talking about our *reception* of an idea. We keep going from one idea to another, much too quickly and getting much too superficial and divergent points of view. You think about the idea, you discuss it in groups, you *study* it, you become familiar with it. You then have in your own time to *reflect* upon it until it enters all the different parts of one's being. Then in the silence you get all kinds of illumination of this idea. Just as a poet who has written poetry in a certain form for a long long time gets spontaneous flow of poetry in that form. Look at Shakespeare, for instance.

Mr. Harbord. Dr. Roles, would you say that the fire that transforms the base metal into gold is the love of the Param-Atman?

Dr. R. Yes. There are two aspects of this love. There is the love of the individual (Jiva Atman) for Param-Atman and the love of the Param-Atman for the individual. In the union of these two lies completion.

Mr. A. Kedros (rpt) The difference between the butterfly and the caterpillar and the human being seems to be that human beings think they have to choose all the time. They have to choose their food, choose where they live, that they *can* choose. Is this what creates the hardness?

Dr. R. It's not only that. The power of choice is a *human* characteristic. Man was created by nature to be a self-creative being and a caterpillar was not. But there is another aspect of it – that these stages are going on *simultaneously* in a man; whereas they have to follow a certain time sequence on the physical level. In other words, after a certain time of experience, although we behave like caterpillars quite a lot of the time and think like caterpillars, we also obey the laws of a School and we modify our conduct and we behave as a silent observer, as in a chrysalis. We also sometimes have glimpses of the butterfly state where a whole new world is open. A world that the caterpillar can never imagine.

I'd like Lady Allan to read something from the Shankaracharya which I'm sure you've heard before. All that we have been speaking of comes from *stillness* – to allow the processes of nature and the Param-Atman to work.

Lady A. (reading)

S. *Stillness* at the physical level during a night's sleep provides enough energy to employ in eight or nine hours of activity for any individual. This is how the human race keeps going without much trouble. At least people with common sense appreciate this and provide themselves with physical rest, and keep in good health and normal activity.

Stillness at the subtle level, by cessation of conflicting desires, brings another dimension to the idea of stillness. In this dimension efficiency [attention] arises, and this works through all activities – ordinary physical work or artistic work.

Thus stillness at this level between fulfilment of one desire and initiation of another, will be rewarded with efficiency.

The *third or causal level of stillness*, which is profound stillness or spiritual immobility, is in the realm of the Absolute. Since the causal realm cannot be described, one learns about it from its effects. One can see it in the activities and dispositions of such men who provide themselves with Spiritual stillness. There are three prominent features:

Firstly, they show love and affection toward everything they encounter. All activities will be initiated with love, and then held and nourished with love till they come to their fulfilment. All relationships with individuals or activities, direct or indirect, will be lighted and guided only by love and affection.

Secondly, their ideas, intentions or motives will be pure and simple. Purity and simplicity widen the horizon, and they think and work for the whole of humanity and only through the Laws of the Absolute. The divisions of groups, races or nations disappear and only natural Laws are employed. Their thoughts naturally encompass the whole of the human family, and its intrinsic goodness.

Thirdly, the physical movements of such people are only geared to the natural rhythm, and the result is simplicity and economy of movement. They never rush into any situation; are never agitated; and they perform all actions in an efficient, sublime, and refined way. Whatever they do will emerge from stillness which they experience in this great total immobility. This would establish an ideal or a standard for the common man to aspire to, if he somehow awakes to the need to improve his lot.

Dr. R. You must understand that the *stillness referred to doesn't mean non-action*. It's the stillness on the subtle level, whether you are doing something or not. That's why these gaps are to be looked for during an active day. His description gives the picture, you see, of what a butterfly would really be like. It wouldn't be like a big caterpillar, or a brighter or faster caterpillar! It's something quite quite different.

Mr. Wood. (rpt.) The main thing seems to be this letting go. My desire to wake up is sometimes a hindrance because it makes me bad tempered when I don't succeed...

Dr. R. All this is part of the caterpillar finding a way for himself – if you see what I mean. It's not a thing we can discuss much in public or in general. Each of us has to find his or her own way of proceeding along analogous steps in our psychology. It may be different in detail for

other people. If I forget that I want to wake up, I'm lost. It doesn't make me angry, like you! I don't see why you need to be angry if you don't succeed. I should just wake up and go on remembering to wake up as often as possible.

Mr. W. It seems to be the wrong 'me' that wants to do it. Whereas the picture of the realized man...

Lady A. I didn't really finish the first part which was that 'it is doing things for Param-Atman that seems to help the letting go.'

Dr. R. This I think is true for everybody – that we have to be thinking, feeling and doing things for some ideal which is higher than ourselves. I think, Sean, if the title of your lecture that 'Artists are only Human' means that you can't be a true artist and remain a caterpillar, I agree with you. Artists are artists, a great artist has to be human.

Mrs. Brunson. Could I ask a question about the cocoon? The idea of the School being a cocoon is a lovely idea, especially if it's silk cocoon! But a cocoon is very static; and is part of the School this chemical dissolving side or is it just static?

Dr. R. What most Schools forget is the idea that they are meant to produce butterflies. A School cannot remain static, for then it will only go downhill and whatever the ideas that its butterfly-founder may have given it in the beginning, will all be dissipated by the followers who degenerate and lessen the truth and the effect of the idea.

Sr. Miguel. Dr. Roles, I was just thinking of how the titles of the three main works by St. John of the Cross so beautifully fit this Symbol: with the first stage – *Ascent of Mount Carmel* – and all the work on oneself; and the second stage – *The Dark Night of the Soul* – the chrysalis or pupa; and the third stage – *The Song of Songs*.

Dr. R. Yes, beautiful. And you'll find many Realized men say the same thing in their own way. That's what his Holiness said – you study the writings and example of fully Realized men in order to know what the rest, what the peace, stillness and joy on the Causal level is like.

At that point, I want to tell you about the Realized man to whom we owe everything and have owed everything since we first met him in 1961. He has appointed a successor. He will continue to be Shankaracharya but he wants to be relieved of a lot of the routine jobs. The changeover is going to happen next Thursday, the 28th. We knew ahead about this and so we wrote to him to congratulate him on being able to have some peace a long last. He has dealt so generously with us all this time.

Lady A. Did you want to say anything about Guru Deva?

Dr. R. All right. The previous Shankaracharya, Guru Deva, the Maharishi's teacher and the predecessor of our Shankaracharya, was dragged out from his seclusion and made to be Shankaracharya after the seat in the northern division of India had been vacant for 160 years because nobody of the right calibre could be found. So Guru Deva, in his will, took precautions to ensure succession. He mentioned four people in his will, the first being the Shankaracharya we know. The second didn't qualify because he never took the vows of the Sannyasin. And now this incumbent, successor, is the third on the list; and there is still a fourth.

Lady A. But we understand from Jaiswal that in spite of how it reads here the Shankaracharya remains the senior.

Dr. R. Yes, we've had a stroke of luck, haven't we, because Jaiswal, one of our translators was telephoned by the Shankaracharya on Thursday or Friday and asked to come out and be present at this ceremony. He is going to watch it all and describe everything to put us in the picture. And he is also going to find out what would be appropriate for us as a body of grateful people to do and carry it out for us. It will be in Benares – Varanasi – next Thursday.

This was before what you've heard, from this reply to our first letter dated the 1st of February.

Lady A. (reading)

I have since read your letter to His Holiness and he desires me to convey to you that whether he remains in office or no, the spiritual relationship once formed, would be there for all time to come. He will continue, wherever he may be, to physically or ethereally do his best for all those with whom he had the opportunity to come in contact with spiritually till they achieve their final goal.

The new Shankaracharya – his successor – is scheduled to take over on the 28th of February 1980. His Holiness hopes that being the manifestation of the same Param-Atman that will make little difference as far as those who look for guidance are concerned. But as far as you, and your Society, are concerned they have had enough and should not stand in need of any further assistance. They shall be very safe in the ship they have boarded, steered by you.

Dr. R. This was from our other translator, Sri Narayan, who is his faithful secretary and manager and the rest of his letter was about his own wish to help.

Lady A. And then he ends:

Kindly be assured once again that you are most welcome to use me, my time, and labour, any way you like and when you like. It's a privilege for me which I am sure you will not deny me.

Dr. R. So we should be very happy, because far from having *less* time to communicate with us on the subtle level, he will have *more* time and more peace. I think we should be careful about mentioning to all and sundry who mightn't understand the bare statement of a possible retirement of the Shankaracharya. It isn't really like that at all. It's just really for you here in this room and for the people in other countries who read the account of this meeting. In other words, for the people in the School. I mention it now because I want you to have him in mind with love and gratitude from now until after Thursday at any rate. And now we will meditate for five minutes and be very grateful in our hearts.

MEDITATION

We must remember one thing that is so often forgotten – the necessity for *humility*. If we claim here to have all the answers, we risk the continuation of the School in its intended direction. Our attitude, as H.H. has said, should be as expressed in the first verse of the earliest Upanishad – the Isha Vasya Upanishad:

Whatever lives is full of the Lord. Claim nothing. Enjoy, do not covet His property.

And the whole of the Bhagavad-Gita is an expression of the same thing. Progress or transformation can come only from giving up this 'separate ego' outlook. H.H. tells us: 'Giving up' can be done all the time. Just dedicate your body, your mind and your emotion – your 'heart' – to the Param-Atman and make no claims that any of His property is your own. So giving up being only a caterpillar is a continuous process.

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I forgot to say that we are asked especially to thank all those people who came during the holidays to look after the house and many people turned up. We are very grateful to them, for that is a very practical way of serving a higher purpose than one's own, as we hope they found.

