

21 September 1981

**SMALL MONDAY MEETING**

On the platform: Dr. Roles, Lady Allan and Mr. Alan Caiger-Smith (AC-S)

The dates for this term were put on the screen.

A.C-S. There will be a Large Meeting next Monday and group meetings will begin that week. Group meetings will be, on the whole, the same as last term. Movements will also start next Monday.

Dr. R. (to Edward Fairbairn) Hello, we were hoping one of you would come. Have you settled in? (He nods)

I've asked Alan Caiger-Smith to be on the platform because on Thursday he goes to Sydney, Australia, just at the moment when Myrle Swan would most like some support and is going to be there exhibiting his pottery and giving lectures for a month. That's another example of how lucky we are! So he'll be taking our love and good wishes to Myrle whose group is full to bursting at the moment and she very much needs confidence. So if he says that he has been on the platform here (laughter) it will give him extra authority!

Now this meeting is for nothing but encouragement... The warmest and most confident encouragement you could have. We want you to go on doing just what each of you finds useful to do and have been doing, only to do it with more conviction, more confidence. There are many reasons for this which I hope will come out, not the least is that my wife, who was a very unpretentious woman and never claimed to be a good meditator or anything, absolutely made it beyond a doubt at the end and was fully convinced that anybody who had been doing even the little she did, as she put it, would realize their possibilities at the end. Anyhow, we could see her, in front of our eyes, getting the liberation that we're all after. That's one thing.

Then we've just had this message in a letter posted on August 15th from the Shankaracharya's personal secretary, the very faithful Shri Narayan. And this is from one of our leading people, Nolan Howitt, of Wellington, New Zealand:

Lady A. (reading) Nolan writes:

I received a letter today from Shri Narayan. I asked him what we should call H.H. now he was no longer the Shankaracharya of the North. And Narayan replied:

We call him now Vasishtha Shankaracharya – Shankaracharya the Elder.

I said we here in Wellington still felt him as our connection with the Tradition, to which he replied:

Your people deserve congratulations for their abiding faith in him. Actually this faith alone is the secret of all progress. The Gopis, the female playmates of Lord Krishna, firmly believed that Lord Krishna never left them and continued to live and play amidst them, even when the Lord had actually gone to Mathura and was no longer in Vrindavan. After all what could be the meaning of 'Omnipresence' if this is not so? Yes, the greatness of His Holiness lies in his love and patience for all of us. What is more,

everyone who comes in contact with him irresistibly feels that he is the nearest to Him, no one else. I must say that the persistent application and study of His teachings that Dr. Roles and you have learnt at His feet is very creditable and deserves all appreciation. Providence may translate your hope into actuality one day.

I must say the most important thing for me, over the years, has been the trust in the purity of the words of yourself. (Dr. Roles) More and more, particularly recently, I have realised how marvellously you have managed to put both the fragments of the Western system and the system of the Shankaracharya into modern up-to-date language. Recently I have felt closer than ever on an inner basis. Whatever I say or give to the people here, Brigit and I are astonished to find the very same words in the next material we receive from Colet.

Dr. R. So we are encouraged, and are still in very close contact; and let's, as I say, go on doing what we've been finding useful to do only with more conviction... Peter Fenwick, I was saying that before you came in.

It was very difficult to know how to begin this term. There is so much one could say that we've had to cut the first paper in two and even so, we've only just given the group-takers something to think about between now and when your meetings start. And I want you to go quite slowly and find out which people want what. We're stalling a bit because *The Bridge No.5* is going to press. Is Bill Anderson here? (Yes) And we want everybody to have a chance of reading his editorial because I just read it in silent admiration for his putting just what we wanted said, in a much better and more professional way than I could have written it. We want to have that read and also Schaefer's amended script of his talk at the AGM here, which will appear in print for the first time. We would like you to have time to digest these things, but it won't be for another four weeks at least? (Yes) However, there is plenty to discuss of interest meanwhile.

First of all, it wouldn't matter at all if nobody did anything but meditate, read what the Shankaracharya says, and try to remember the Param-Atman – substitute the idea of the Universal for the idea of the petty and egotistical. This is what worked wonders for my wife and will work for any of us.

If there are people who want to keep their interest in our Western system going, or to get some further idea of how to think of the Param-Atman, we've chosen the subject of the Cosmoes. And we've chosen it for various reasons. One is that it belongs to the European tradition. The chain of Cosmoes have all got Greek names and at some time between the time when the cradle of civilisation in Mesopotamia happened, some went East over the Hindu Kush and revived the Indus civilisation; some went to the Ionian islands and Asia Minor, and the mainland of Greece, and then to Sicily and Alexandria. Each lot, the European and the Eastern, were wanting to say the same truth, but saying it in different ways. You've been in those parts lately, Don? (Walters) And it is a fact that, although the language is so very different, you can detect points where they still agree although much of it has diverged between East and West. But this cross-fertilisation has happened many times in history; and happened again when the idea of Cosmoes came West again as part of our system and Mr. Ouspensky was taught it at the beginning of 1916.

The idea that there was a chain of worlds, such that each world is the atom or unit of the next bigger world and is itself the world for the atoms below, in the smaller world below, is a pattern which runs all the way through the Universe. It was taught us during World War II by Mr. Ouspensky and Madame at Mendham: that any evidence of Law in the universe was evidence of Mind. Mind must have been at work where any pattern or Law is observable, because disorder and lawlessness are always on the increase as Mind diminishes – Mind and True Knowledge. And Cosmoes is almost the best possible evidence of the presence of Mind, both within a man as they apply inside ourselves, and to the big world around. Well, that's enough now. So let's have some observations or contradictions or...

Mrs. Fleming. The Laws of Param-Atman – are they never possible to be changed?

Dr. R. I don't know about that. You must ask Him. (laughter) But He doesn't like breaking His own laws, I'm told by most informed quarters. First of all, what is Param-Atman? What do you mean by Param-Atman? Ha Ha! that's a stumper. Don't pretend you know. Don't pretend you can answer. What we were told was that the individual Atman, the Divine spark, is as zero to infinity with regard to the Consciousness – Self – of a lot of individuals taken together. In other words, there is a set of Laws within each of us for whom the responsible Being is the Atman. And another set of Laws for a big collection of people for which the responsible Being is the Param-Atman.

S. Cassini. Dr. Roles, is that why when you remember Param-Atman things seem to go totally differently?

Dr. R. I'm glad to hear that. I think that's true. Can you give me any sort of example?

S.C. I have experienced recently just something mundane like being in a hurry to get somewhere and not getting identified with that and everything seems to go so beautifully and one arrives on time with no loss of energy.

Dr. R. Yes, I know that – occasionally I have arrived on time! (laughter) Directly you remember something bigger than your own feverish self, things are different. And that's why it is so important to try to substitute for all thoughts of yourself, the memory, and later, the love for the Param-Atman. The Param-Atman is like a mental image of the great Lord of the Universe – the Intelligence, as they call it now, behind all creation. It's a small mental image that each of us carries, just as if we have a mental image of the sun, it will comprise the heat and the light and all the life-giving influence of the sun. So inside oneself there is both a physical ability to see the light of the sun and a spiritual ability to see the light of the Atman. This is the idea of 'worlds within worlds'.

But now I want you to *promise not to refer* to the books – *In Search of the Miraculous* or any of the other books on this subject of Cosmoes. When Mr. Ouspensky first heard of it, he was very headstrong at that time – a young and headstrong man – and he led the group to overrule their instructor and made two sad mistakes which we have greatly regretted over the years. So it's much better to trust – any of you who have heard anything about Cosmoes – your own memory, anything that keeps coming back which has therefore touched you emotionally. Any more?

Prof. Guyatt. Dr. Roles, what is a world?

Dr. R. I know... this is a crucial question. What, for you is suddenly merging into a different world? Ask that question. For instance when we're in the daytime state, we're in one world, a world which we share with other people to some extent. When we go to sleep at night, we go out of that world into another world, presided over by the inward looking half of the brain. And that inward world is full of dreams as well as talents and unrealized possibilities. And the more we experience during the day and meditate and so on, the greater the possibilities of that inner world. At the time, we won't know anything about it – when we're asleep. But when we wake up, we wake up with the feeling that we've experienced something different. Try that tack. And when we have been dreaming and we wake up, don't forget that the dream continues, only we are no longer aware of it – just as we are no longer aware of the stars and moon during the day. And when we wake up from our ordinary state into the next state, our ordinary state disappears from our consciousness but continues to exist. That, I think, is a way we have found to begin.

C. Bullough. Dr. Roles, it's interesting that we spend part of each day in deep sleep, each night, and we're then on the Causal level but we don't experience it because we're under Tamas. It seems as if there is an opportunity being wasted there.

Dr. R. Oh no, no, no. When you go to bed, Bullough, as you've now discovered, you should sleep. And when the fully Realized man, the Shankaracharya, puts his head on the pillow, he is asleep at once and he sleeps deeply for four hours and that's enough. We need extra – we need up to another four hours of light sleep because the light sleep is also good for us and gets rid of a lot of surplus energy. When you go to bed, go to sleep! See that he does that, will you, Mrs. Bullough. (laughter) It's not wasted at all. Only it is good to realise that the same world that you enter of which you are unaware in deep sleep is the world of full enlightenment – the Causal level – when you wake up in Cosmic Consciousness. Do you agree with that, Dr. Fenwick?

Dr. F. Yes, very definitely!

Dr. R. Next time come closer – you're too far away! How does that appeal to you, Maurice (Pickering)? As an idea to go on; you can have notice of the question!

M.E.P. The interrelation of different levels of consciousness and the gunas is a very complicated question. And the more we analyse it and go into it, probably the less useful it becomes.

Dr. R. Exactly. It becomes very complicated when we think about it. But if you suddenly feel it, you feel how important a moment of Sattva can be in relation to the world you're living in... And much more than that, of course.

Lady A. I was thinking, Dr. Roles... you asked Professor Guyatt what it feels like when you come into another world. There are moments when you come into a state where you know that whatever promise you make, you will be able to keep absolutely. And one also knows the state of slipping out of that into another world where you would be unable to keep your promise.

Dr. R. Very good, yes, I know. And you feel yourself slipping into this other world and trying to get back sometimes? (Yes) But you mustn't slip too far. (No)

A.C-S. When you speak of a world like that, it seemed to me you were speaking rather figuratively of a world. But if I look at the stars and then think back over a petty conversation, then I feel those are absolutely different worlds – not figurative at all.

Dr. R. No, because you're looking at it with the left (external-looking) hemisphere and this is how it looks at it. But to the inner world it's not figurative at all – to the right half looking within. Not figurative at all!

A.C-S. I see there is a real difference; but zero to infinity I don't understand.

Dr. R. No. None of us understand it! You're quite right. You have to think of it, I believe, in terms of time first, not space. But don't let's jump too far – (he might say something to Myrle!) (laughter)

A. Brunson. Dr. Roles, is the thing we don't understand – is it the unity of the Param-Atman? Because sometimes if you try to remember the Param-Atman, it's very difficult. Sometimes if I'm quiet, it is as though some infinitesimal part of the Param-Atman remembers me. And it seems amazing. But is that because one can't conceive really of the unity?

Dr. R. It's different for everybody, remember, and you have to try and put into words that you yourself can understand what it feels like. What you are saying is quite possible. And what remembering the Param-Atman really means is seeing the same thing in everything – you're right – and that's what *you* mean when you say (to Lady A) you slip into somewhere where you keep your promises (Yes) and slip out again (Yes).

H. Wright. I wonder how you can apply the inner experience of Cosmoes with the idea that a Cosmos is born, lives and dies?

Dr. R. Then it *does* become figurative because nothing dies, only the body dies. So the idea of being born and dying only applies to the body – the coarse physical body. That's the only thing that dies or is born. (in any Cosmos?) So what does it mean if you're talking about the subtle body or the Causal body? What do those things mean? (Yes, that's my question) They have a meaning but it's not the same meaning as applies to physical body. So you have to try and find, dear Helen, what the meaning is.

H.W. I know, but I hoped you would give a clue! (laughter)

Dr. R. You must not believe anything I say.

Lady A. Is it the Mevlevi idea of the chick pea being boiled in the pot because it is becoming food for man, etc?

Dr. R. Something to do with it... but we don't have to be boiled alive like a chick pea or a lobster.

W. Anderson. I just wanted to ask whether we should learn to think in terms of each Cosmos having an Atman?

Dr. R. I think that's a bit advanced because we don't yet understand a Cosmos and we don't

understand the Atman! It all depends – if you know what you mean, you're welcome to have a shot. But you won't get it across to us to understand exactly what you mean that way, but you will with your poetry.

W.A. I hope so. Can I go on from that a bit?

Dr. R. Leave it at the moment, Bill. (All right) Too difficult for me. (laughter)

But while we're on the subject of being broiled alive, can I refer to your editorial in which you did another useful thing for me. It reminded me of Giordano Bruno who was burnt alive by the Inquisition in 1600. I always thought it was because he was advocating the Copernican system within the Roman Catholic Church. But I looked him up and it wasn't so at all. The Copernican system was only proscribed, forbidden, by the Inquisition sixteen years later. (Yes) What he was burnt at the stake for was talking exactly the way Hoyle and Schaefer are talking today. (Yes) And we're going to talk. In other words, he was advocating worlds within worlds; and he got the idea, I'm sure, from the Greeks.

W.A. But by then a very respectable Cardinal, Nicholas Cusalus who wasn't burnt at all when he backed Copernicus because he was a Cardinal! (laughter)

Dr. R. And Copernicus dedicated his great work *De Revolutionibus* on his deathbed in 1543 to the then Pope, Pius 3 (Yes) and the Pope accepted the dedication. (Yes) It was Martin Luther who started the ramp about Copernicus being all wrong – us the Protestants! However, that's just by the way. But we had better be careful, you see, because Hoyle and Schaefer and even we might be, not burnt alive, but we might be attacked, (Yes) if we talk out loud about worlds within worlds – but attacked by the other side, not by the Church but by the scientific establishment. (Yes) So let's be careful! Funny how things go full circle.

S. Harbord. Can I ask you, Dr. Roles, a rather naive question? During this past two weeks I had the experience of being woken up at night by a telephone and I had a distinct and total impression that I came, not into my body – I was already in my body – but I came up from my body; and at that precise moment I had the total realization which has stayed with me that I am not my body.

(After Lady Allan repeated this much, she said that there was more)

Dr. R. That's enough, that's very good, Simon. *You* must digest these experiences and sift them and find out which are valid and which are not. You see, we must be careful not to start up a lot of hares everywhere. On the other hand, I've had the same thing happen to me and I'm still sifting what is real from what isn't.

S.H. Might we sift together? (laughter)

Dr. R. Without words, yes.

Lady A. What about the question? We haven't had the 'naive question' yet!

Dr. R. Well, what about the question? So long as we don't answer it. (laughter)

S.H. Well, the question perhaps shouldn't be asked as it was going to be but... (laughter) I feel very much there is a link between the Causal state and our understanding of Cosmoses.

Dr. R. Absolutely; I agree with you there and we've got to find it but we haven't found it yet. It's a matter of research and not for answering questions or laying down the law.

K. Dunjohn. Dr. Roles, I was reminded, when you mentioned the concept of zero to infinity, of the time when that idea was first introduced many years ago and I seem to remember being told that one should understand the prayer. 'Lord, help me to remember my own nothingness.' I never really understood that and I wondered if you could help?

Dr. R. Yes, that was the prayer that the princes of Siam learnt and had to remember when they became King. 'Help me to remember my own nothingness and Thy infinite greatness so that all the questions of my life may be answered, and my mind continually instructed on the path to Heaven.'

Lady A. Was it another way of praying. 'Thy Will be done'?

Dr. R. Yes. But H.H. says that the most valuable sort of prayer is immediately to turn your mind away from your own nothingness to the glory of the Being you're addressing. Our habit, very often, is to start churning about our own nothingness and how we cannot do anything because of original sin! All that would be very negative, Kenneth; so one of the things we here have to do at once is to try to remember the Param-Atman and the glories of the universe which make all our small thoughts about ourselves infinitesimal – just zero.

Mrs. Simpson. We have evidence of the God within more or less; but God the Creator would only be understood when we come to be more like Him or more realized.

Dr. R. I don't think we have experienced more than a pennyworth of the God within – the Atman. Seeing my wife die, I saw her changing into the Atman. I realized that I was learning far more from her than she ever learned from me. So we haven't really experienced anything much yet. We all will, don't worry!

P. Palmer. Dr. Roles, could you say that remembering Param-Atman could be seen as listening inwardly?

Dr. R. Mmm yes. I very much agree. And you know we've had this wonderful talk by the Archimandrite about what Mount Athos meant – that it was a collection of listeners – Hesychasts they were called. Isakula, 'listen within.' And that's what Mt. Athos is for – for learning to listen inwardly.

P.P. And not to come to conclusions of one's own.

Dr. R. Yes; it's very difficult to leave it to God. We always take over and start saying things, maybe in the name of God, maybe not, but get in the way, instead of going on listening. Thank you; that's very helpful.

There are a lot of people here who are going to make contributions in this. It's a matter for all of us to contribute to.

G. Burdett. Would an example of a different world be when the difference between the inner and the outer melts away?

Dr. R. You see – you enter the third state of consciousness then, and that gives you the feeling

of a different world which makes your ordinary world seem like a dream. Then there's a world beyond that – the Causal – when your emotion is roused and purified so that you have an emotional realization of Truth – worlds 'up there' somewhere. But you're right. It starts with this unity in oneself. And this is why the Advaita system – non-dualism – is going to be the way through which we can see Cosmoses, and everything else. And this was one of the reasons why Mr. Ouspensky made those serious mistakes when he first heard the idea of Cosmoses. Because it wasn't realised – there wasn't any language in which to express 'what everybody knows, but nobody knows' that we are two people in the same skin. Would you agree?

G.B. Yes. I feel it more... one feels that life is a kind of series of pictures. It's like a passing show really.

Dr. R. When the two come together? (Yes) Well in detail it will be different for everybody. But I want you to realise that there is nothing wrong with us. The only thing that's wrong which has to be changed is the picture we have of ourselves. Get rid of that picture and the two halves will unite. And that's all that Self-realization (or Liberation) requires. Don't expect to jump into it all at once. Now shall we meditate for the last five minutes?

#### MEDITATION

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