

DISILLUSIONMENT — Part 2

What is the illusion? Mr Ouspensky worked out for himself that the reality of human existence lies in higher dimensions and no amount of ordinary thinking or feeling could reveal their presence. Time, space, movement, all these essentials of human existence, he realised, were subjective representations of a higher reality that cannot be expressed or understood by our ordinary faculties. He saw this inexpressibility as the sign of truth, of reality; for that which *can* be expressed cannot be real. (see *Tertium Organum* Ch. 10/11).

It is difficult to accept we cannot know the truth with our ordinary minds. In a sense we are like an illiterate Eskimo being shown by an explorer, who does not speak our language, a black and white photograph of an elephant. We are soon unshakeably convinced that an elephant is something small, grey, motionless and made of paper. Only one of these perceptions is correct.

This inexpressibility of truth, of reality, is one basis for the advice that in the search for enlightenment there is 'nowhere to go, nothing to be done'; all 'going' and 'doing' are part of the illusion. Mr Ouspensky realised that only the depth of the moment 'now' offers a new inexpressible dimension, a direction at right angles to the line of time.

Our sense of time is made up of constantly passing points of the present moment. Passing time is an incomplete sense of a higher dimension, and our senses present it also as movement in space so that we have the illusion of existing on the rolling crest of a wave, constantly annihilating the past behind it and surging always onward into an unknown future. It is primarily the small sense of 'I' which creates this illusion—by identifying with the movement presented by the senses— and to find what lies behind the façade it is necessary to pause all this illusory movement and come to rest in the eternal point of the 'now'.

This point of now may be likened to Ariadne's thread which can lead us out of the labyrinth. It is in the point of now that the existential point of 'I' is also to be found. It is only here, in the moment, that the essential unity of 'I' is discovered. When the thread is grasped it is discovered that at the other end lies reality, the Absolute, Param-Atman, who we really are. Here is the unity, the non-duality which steers us out of the labyrinth, revealing at last that our unquestioned perception of the labyrinth itself is merely, so to speak, a trick of the light.

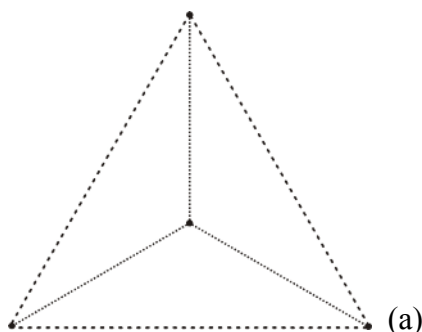
But the words that describe this are not the reality; like the photo of the elephant they can be a barrier to understanding. To clear away this confusion the system uses the enneagram to unite all that we can know and which cannot be expressed, so much that is too emotional for words, and as Dr Roles insisted, "*True Knowledge, whether in Western form or in the form of the wisdom of the East. . . both are united for us in this symbol – universal symbol – from which everything that we have taught here in this House since Mr Ouspensky died has been derived.*" (78/38)

*

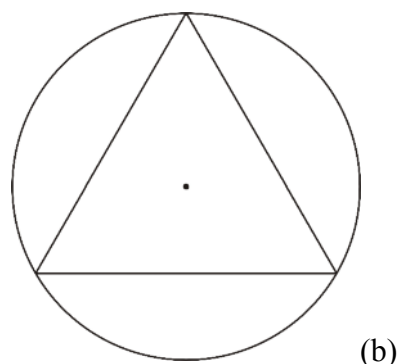
The enneagram can be constructed in a number of different ways. Here we start with the System idea (uncannily mirrored in modern cosmology) that creation of the universe starts with a point – and indeed as a whole it still is a point, a unity. It then divides itself in stages and becomes more complex adding forces and dimensions. The creation in this view is 'top-down', starting with unity and becoming more complex. We begin with this inexpressible point of now:

•

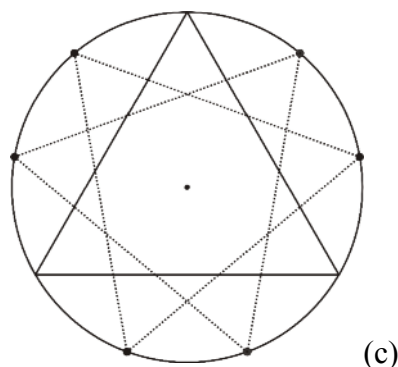
The point is apparently nothing, it seems at least to possess no permanent reality, but it is also the centre of everything. When the point appears as 'the world' it divides itself into three essential aspects of itself, the essential Trinity that exists within everything. Three must come first. Two, or duality, would only result in both cancelling each other out. (a)



Through these three points we describe a circle, 'the world.' So far we have the Absolute reality still untrammelled by space or time, qualified only by the Law of Three. (b)



Now duality begins. The three separate points, we can call them forces or Gunas, divide into two. Now there are six points plus the original three. Three forces can combine in six different ways, each separate combination making up one of the six new points, plus one incomprehensible combination in which each force occupies each space simultaneously. Here we have the Law of Seven or Octaves. The six inner notes of the scale plus the fundamental note at either end. (c)



This is the basis of the enneagram, the blueprint for the creation, with a total of nine (Greek *ennea*) points round a circle. The Law of Three, determining the nature of any single phenomenon, together with the Law of Seven, determining all movement of phenomena through time and space. By developing this simple diagram it is said we can answer 'all questions' and also preserve the essential knowledge, 'without words', with which we may come to know the truth about ourselves.

* * *