

### Time

In recent discussions we have more than once come upon the idea of different dimensions, different realities which the ordinary mind finds itself inadequate to comprehend. But this idea, like the enneagram itself, is not merely an intellectual fancy, some unattainable whim and therefore impractical and not worth pursuing, but is in fact one of the few ways of convincing the mind that to satisfy its longing to know the unknowable, it must somehow let go of itself entirely. The caterpillar mind must lead us in this direction, to the heart of the moment, where it finds its chrysalis of quiet—the incubation chamber from which real butterflies may be born.

We have said that time, as we know it, is an imperfect perception of a fourth dimension; that in fact every moment is eternally existing and that all movement in time is an illusion. Mr Ouspensky pointed out that relations between dimensions were analogous and that we could understand more of our imperfect perception of time, the fourth dimension, by imagining a being who lived in two dimensions, confined to a flat plane, like a pond skater for instance. Their third dimension, space for us, would be perceived only as lines; if a human hand enters the water and remains still, the pond skaters perceive only five moving lines or obstructions, for *angles* will appear as movement, it can only bump into them, unable to penetrate them in any way; nothing of ‘finger’ let alone human body with thoughts, feelings, a psychic life of its own, will be perceptible or conceivable to the pond skater. ( See *Tertium Organum* pp. 45-55.)

This is the limitation of our sense of time. It hides an analogous set of inconceivable possibilities—yet even knowing this we can remain convinced that we were born, we are living and we will die.

\*

The enneagram demonstrates the circularity of time, that birth and death are two faces of something unknown, entry from and exit to another dimension. This circularity suggests repetition; there may be more than one life, and whether we conceive of this as reincarnation, a development up or down the scale of evolution according to our deeds—karma—or a Pythagorean idea of recurrence in which the same life is repeated over and over again—and so I shall read this very paper to you in this same room, many times, over and over again— these two ideas are both true and untrue.\* We know this must be the case because our mind can conceive them. The real miracle of human consciousness is that it can deduce its own limitation and discern the direction to transcend itself. Whatever we can conceive must be given up, become a chrysalis, silent, before life in another dimension becomes available.

Nowadays we describe this abandonment of ourselves in terms of ‘giving up’, but in Ivan Osokin Mr Ouspensky calls it sacrifice:

“A man can be given only what he can use; and he can use only that for which he has sacrificed something. This is the law of human nature. So if a man wants to get help to acquire important knowledge or new powers, he must sacrifice other things important to him at the moment . . .

“Are there no other ways?” asks Osokin.

“You mean ways in which no sacrifices are necessary? No, there are no such ways, and you do not understand what you are asking. You cannot have results without causes. By your sacrifice you create causes. There are different ways, but they differ only in the form, magnitude and finality of the sacrifice.”

What are these things ‘more important to us at the moment’? One answer, encompassing almost everything would be ‘movement’. It is our conviction that movement in space and time is real that maintains our confinement in what we already know is essentially an illusory existence.

What examples can we find in our own world that demonstrate such a convincing illusion? What two dimensional phenomena do we often confuse with reality? A shadow or a reflection both seem to offer this analogy. If we look at the reflection of the waves in a basin of water dancing in the sunlight on the bathroom wall we see something beautiful and captivating but having no reality. Even if we use our power of reason to identify it as the reflection of water, it will never wet our face. This teaching insists that our own lives are equally unreal, actually a reflection of a higher reality and until we stand still, directly in the light, the reflection will never be true. But once this occurs, once the reflection becomes still and true there is the possibility of passing from the illusion into the source of its existence.

S. The System is always the same—that one must dive deep into the Self—into this great ocean of Bliss. When one reaches that level and comes out having soaked or bathed in it, then one finds that this Antahkarana which is the medium of expression for the individual, by itself regenerates everything as new; new for meeting each situation as it arises. So this gives you a creative faculty to meet any situation and provide new solutions every time there is a problem . . . If one has learnt to dive deep without any load and to go to the base – the bottom of this ocean – then there is nothing else that a man really needs; everything will be provided, everything will be ready-made for him, and he will make it ready for others.

\*The theory is that there are three dimensions of time, analogous to the three dimensions of space. It might be conceived that an infinite number of lines of time, human lives, the Pythagorean recurrence, make up the plane of eternity where all possibilities for that particular line exist simultaneously. And an infinite number of reincarnations where each line of life is developed into a different existence from the causes created in the previous life provides the vertical 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension, making a ‘cube’ or ‘solid’ of time—the whole set of three dimensions of time and three dimensions of space providing ‘all possibilities’.

\* \* \*