

**FCR 1976-82****1. Introduction**

The approach to material for our groups (C, E & Pewsey Groups) is very much founded on the teaching and practice of Dr Roles. We see him as the intermediary and interpreter of both Mr Ouspensky and the Shankaracharya: without his constant re-formulation of the System it would have become sterile; without his commentary on the record of audiences it would be hard to absorb Advaita.

As mentioned last term, it was in the mid-1970's that Dr Roles, as he said, finally understood what was HH's message and determined to do something about it. Therefore the period following this, 1976-82, is especially significant. For many of us, we stand more or less where Dr Roles stood in the mid 1970's, and we can perhaps shorten our own journey by studying Dr Roles's route.

It would be difficult to go through everything that Dr Roles wrote between 1976 and his death in 1982, but there is much that is of its time, and instead we can pick out threads of topics that seem important to us and look at their progression with time. Here are a few examples:

- Self remembering and what it really means
- Stillness
- The relation between the System and HH's teaching
- Development of the System teaching
- The relation between the teachings and scientific discoveries
- The purpose of Colet and its future
- Meditation
- Duality and non-duality

There is then a challenge to everyone to contribute to this, by for example choosing a topic or finding another and writing a short piece about it or a full paper. Copies of the annual contents listings of the papers and selected papers can be provided for anyone who does not have access to Dr Roles's papers. We may decide to spend a meeting or two on any shorter contributions.

This week we start with a preamble to self-remembering.

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**2. Self remembering**

There was one particular saying that first attracted Dr Roles to the Shankaracharya. When Dr Roles was in India with the Maharishi in 1961, HH came to address the Maharishi's followers and gave a number of talks. As Dr Roles wrote in his exultant report *Return to the Source*:

Well, one evening he completely electrified us. It was the last evening I sat with him, about two or three days before I left, and he suddenly said, 'The whole thing is that we never remember ourselves. All our troubles come from not remembering ourselves, only we can't talk about this at the beginning because it is never understood. You will have to reach realization before you can understand it. I will tell you a story: Ten men were sitting on the Ganges bank, as we are sitting now, and they decided to swim across to the other side. On the way over they got nervous because of the current, and the

crocodiles, so, when they came to the other side, they began to count heads. They counted up and, to their horror, found that there were only nine, and, whoever counted, the answer was always nine. They almost began to prepare for the funeral, but the tenth man was always himself (the man who was counting), and always forgotten, not counted. Only, this is difficult to understand. It is as if each of us possessed two houses. One is a tiny little house, no furnishings, bars on the windows, and in that house we live all our lives, we forget that we also possess a magnificent house, full of costly rugs and furniture, everything we could want, servants at our command. If we could only remember that we also owned this other house, we would not be content with living in the little house all the time. When we start to meditate we come out, gradually, out of the little house, and we sit for a time between the two houses; when we transcend everything that belongs to our personal life, and reach the stage of absolute silence, we are sitting between the two houses without yet realising the big spacious house. If we come out of the little house often enough, and sit for long enough, the memory of the big and spacious house will begin to come to us; we will begin to walk there; we will get a glimpse of it; we will be able to go in; once we realize what a wonderful house it is we will never want to go back to the little house. So, memory of this great big house is self-remembering, but it is not the same as realization. Self-remembering is remembering the existence of this big house; realization is when you go in and live there.' [Record 1/6/61]

Ouspensky distinguished between 'self remembering' and 'efforts at self-remembering', and the question arises nowadays of what kind of effort is necessary and worthwhile. One wrong kind of effort is to try to split the mind so that one part maintains an inward-looking self-awareness while the rest of the mind takes care of the business outside. This just reinforces the ego.

HH's advice was as follows:

Vyasa says, "I have made a critical study of the Vedas and the Shastras several times. The gist of all that, as I found, is that we should think of the Param-Atman all the time." As soon as any other thought enters the mind, we are in the grip of "Maya" or "illusion", which catches hold of us and takes us very, very far away. [Record 7/5/71]

At the start of our period of study there was another good example of the wrong approach. In a meeting in 1976 Dr Roles repeated a question someone had raised at a previous meeting:

'Does one have to think, have in mind, "I am doing this for the Param-Atman" in order to be doing it for Him?' - and as it seemed to be getting considerable support, we on the platform were quite stunned! It seemed to us all wrong . . . so we determined to appeal to everybody [with a questionnaire] to tell us just what was wrong with it and how each person was dealing with the recommendation to 'remember the Param-Atman all the time'. From the replies it seemed clear that nearly everyone felt it to be wrong for various reasons. [76/1]

### *Exercise*

How would we reply to this now? It's a private matter as to how exactly one 'remembers', but can some hints be given to those who find it difficult?

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