

Running Commentary Following Gertrude's Death

Part 46 of 53

Franklin Merrell-Wolff

November 19, 1981

I wish here to continue with the report on myself that was started sometime ago.

At the present time, I have had a recurrence of the stress that I have reported earlier in the region of the solar plexus. The exact sensation is very difficult to describe, but it leaves me very restless. I have a tendency to run which I do not encourage or fulfill, for there is no running away from it. But the impulse is there—an impulse to do whatever might seem to relieve the situation. This is the first time that this has manifested since Doroethy has been here, but today she and the twins are up in Bishop and will be back later today. I have been completely alone since she left.

I have been working on some material that is not so much in my field of primary interest. Thus, I have picked up the mandala symbolism of Dr. Jung, and was reading in it a study in the process of individuation. It has several alchemical references. It does not appeal to me or in any way intrigue me, but leaves me rather annoyed because of its incomprehensibility. There is a good deal of material here that belongs to the alchemists and it is difficult to understand for apparently they are dealing with psychical processes but using chemical names for it—a process which seems distinctly irrational to an individual who has a modern education. Nonetheless, it seems to have had a meaning for the alchemists themselves; they got something from it and so has Dr. Jung. Therefore, it is worthy of serious study, in my mind. But it leaves me irritated when I dig into it. It doesn't tie in with anything that I know or experience. On the contrary, when I deal with definitive material, such as numbers, I begin to feel organized, undisturbed, and calm.

Every now and then, I get a feeling of suffocation, a feeling as though I was not securing enough air; yet this is not associated with physical activity, in fact I seem to be perfectly free from this when physically active. I, therefore, tend to interpret it as having a psychical cause. Nonetheless, I do tend to increase ventilation when I get this feeling. I think it means something and I would be happy if I had someone with psychological experience to give it some interpretation.

There's another thing that is of interest. I have on my desk, easily visible from where I sit, four photographs of the four individuals who have been most important in my life during the period after my dependency upon my parents; in other words, the four most influential in my life during the adult stage. They are: Sherifa, who was my first wife and with whom I lived for thirty-nine years; her son James Briggs, who was a strong masculine support in connection with my work; and also Gertrude, who was my companion during nineteen years after the passing of Sherifa up to the 28th of May, 1978; and the fourth picture is of the one known as Tcharchant—although he had generally been known for many years by a *nom de plume*, namely, Koot Hoomi—with whose mind I have felt for many years a certain rapport, and have acted as though he was

my guru.¹ Although there was never any formal relationship of that sort, I acted as though he were my guru. I find a particular sympathy with his kind of thinking. Actually, Gertrude's picture is next to his.

Now this is what I wish to report. I looked at Gertrude's picture earlier today, and I had a sense as though there were a reaching out from it to me. Now, I'm well aware this was not something that happened physically in the photograph. Actually, our perceptions are the result of two primary cooperating principles: one is the objective feature or situation and the other is the subjective component. The total effect of the experience, a sensuous experience, is a combination of these two factors. And it may well be that no two people experience precisely the same construct or the same situation or the same event, but that it varies. Nonetheless, I looked at Gertrude's photograph and I felt as though she were reaching out to me. Now, I know perfectly well there was no difference in the objective photograph itself, but a part of me might conceivably be sensitive to a reaching out on her part which I projected, then, upon her photograph. I just wonder, is there a way of communication, of a sort, working out here? I don't know. I am just wondering whether there is something that can be done in this way.

Also, during the period of this apparent reaching out from the photograph of Gertrude, the sense of stress in the solar plexus region tended to be cured. I'm just reporting. I am not concluding in connection with this subject matter.

¹ Wolff most likely misspoke here, as photographs of his office show a picture of Shankara on his desk, a sage with whom Wolff has elsewhere stated he considered his guru. See, for example, chap. 1 of *Pathways Through to Space*.