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Considering the explanations given two years ago, it would be convenient now to deal with subjects referred to experience in general, the meaning in life, religious feeling and valid action.

Today we will talk of the difference between teaching a doctrine and showing a road of experience. We will avoid technicalities wherever possible. But as you know, to deal with these matters is a specialised task. This is basically a meeting of specialists. But it so happens that its members, due to the particular activities they develop in the world, always find themselves with the problem of having to translate complex studies and knowledge into a plain and simple language, useful to those who are not specialists.

There is a great difference between contemporary scientists and technicians and our scholars. The others study and produce in order that humanity may benefit, sometimes without great understanding of the theories and procedures at the root of their discoveries. Nevertheless, these are people interested in making these discoveries more widely known, so they translate their knowledge into teaching, making considerable contributions to the diffusion of culture. In fact, our scholars also translate their knowledge with greater or lesser success, but on the other hand their work is not of the objective kind as realised by technology, but rather it is oriented towards the change of attitudes and behaviours. It is destined to humanity, in a particular field: discovering techniques for the overcoming, of suffering, discovering techniques enabling a new meaning to be given to life.

It is clear that when a person comes back home after a tiring day and switches on the television, it is not necessary for that person to be particularly interested in the theory or the technicality behind that electronic marvel. That person is simply interested in his favourite programme. Otherwise only television mechanics would be able to watch. But it is necessary that there are specialists and technicians, otherwise no one could watch any programme quite simply because there would be no television.

Neither do we intend our productions to be solely at the disposal of our specialists. We also try to translate and divulge our knowledge. Of course we are aware of the need for specialists in these subjects.

It is clear that ours is not an objective "production", but a reference for the orientation and meaning of life in general. It is not like simply exhibiting a machine and then putting it on the market, as happens in industry, but the tremendous value to be found in our work is in that it gives meaning to those who design, produce and consume the objective products.

Our productive labour has reached an important stage in its development. It is now sufficient to translate its complex formulations into simple terms that may be understood and used by any human being of any condition and from anywhere in the world.

And so, in spite of this meeting being constituted mainly by specialists and that some of the subjects we deal with here may contain all the difficulties of a speciality, we earnestly admonish that the translation be simple, including everything which is immediately useful and, immediately necessary to any human being who suffers and exists. We have no right to demand that people understand us. On the contrary, we have the responsibility of making ourselves simple so that we may be understood. We must achieve great simplification. In our daily treatment, we must replace explanations by orientation.

The task of a teacher, the task of an instructor is of importance. But in times of urgency, the task of a guide is of greater importance. We are not going to speak today of what is happening in the world. We all know that we are nearing with great speed at a Universal crisis. We also know that all reference of meaning is being lost. It is a serious moment, similar to the moment previous to a shipwreck. In such a situation, teachers and instructors must become guides. The world is in darkness and needs references. It will be necessary for the torch of the guides to be lit, and if that is achieved it will be said: 'as the world was in darkness, light came to the world.'

At other times, religions were live references for human beings. Later, this important role was fulfilled by ideologies. Today religions are receding and the ideologies are disintegrating.

Religions and ideologies fulfilled important roles-even though we may only want to use the simple point of view of individual and collective psychotherapy-but today, can religion replace a psychological theory? Can whole towns go through with the therapy of a psychologist? ..No, this is not possible. And due to this great void which lives in the heart of the human being, religious experience has turned to extravagance and ideologies to nihilism. It will be necessary not to fool ourselves any longer.

When people have announced the death of their gods, at the same time they also degraded the arrogant daughters of the gods, the ideologies. Nihilism is here because it has made its home in the heart of man. What morals are left standing? And what values? And what meaning in life? We will not add confusion to confusion. On the contrary, we will awaken in the human being the basic experience which gives meaning of life. This basic experience is not a specialised teaching. The basic experience awakens renewed in our hearts because it constitutes a new meaning in life.

The difference between a teaching and a vital reference will be clarified, in case the two roles, that of an instructor and that of a guide, are not quite understood. We will perhaps resort to anecdotes to point out the differences, because that is today's topic, the topic of our conversation.

My village is in the country, situated at the foot of high mountains. The people living there depend on the

water that comes down from the mountains. For them, everything goes well when winter is winter and the summers are summers. If a winter is not cold enough, there isn't sufficient snow. If the summer isn't very hot, nor is there enough water because everything is all right when the winters are winters and the summers are summers and night and day are well defined. All their material basis depend on what happens in the mountains. This place is like a semi-desert. The irrigation system is totally artificial. The whole system is based in only one great flow, from which many thin threads of water are diverted, gradually covering all the area, converting it into a fertile oasis.

The people of this place are obsessed with the mountain. When they get up they always look toward the mountain. It is their point of reference. For them, the mountain is always there unmoving.

This mountain is well known, far and wide as the Roof of the West, which can only be compared with the Roof of the World, the Himalayas. High mountains produce strong ambivalence in people and have great power to attract and reject.

To such a great extent did people look in that direction, that one fine day I went to see what was there within the mountain. There I was, seated peacefully inside a stone house up there on the mountain, when I saw a curious character slowly coming towards me on his mule. He was slowly coming up and, as is the way of people living in that area, he approached me in a round-about way. He made several turns around the house and finally he greeted me. He asked whether I had perhaps seen the tracks of a puma. I replied that I hadn't seen anything of the kind. He continued going around and then as he was leaving, invited me to his house, where I have been on other occasions.

This remarkable character is known as the 'Old Man of Mountain'. He is a guide of the heights. He is, as they say, a "Baqueano"- a baqueano is not only a guide of the heights but also a person who does something well. One is a baqueano if one is able to build up something properly, and if one can do anything properly. This character is a baqueano because he is a good guide. He is the best of guides, he is the best of baequanos.

The old man of the mountain left. As night fell I began to go down, down and down. Finally I arrived at his house, at his house of stones, and was met by the most extraordinary assembly of topographers anyone could possibly imagine to find at such a height. Inside the house- that is, inside the room - inside something similar to a room, sitting down in the shape of a a circle was the old man and some others who were following his instructions, instructions he was making with a stick which he used for scratching the earth. There was the old man in the light of some kerosene lamps, sitting on the ground with his friends and drawing strange hieroglyphics on the ground. He was drawing and eating "charqui"- charqui is a sort of meat from the huanaco- the huanaco is a sort of llama or alpaca- the alpaca is like a yak, the yak of Tibet. The hunaco is a very useful animal for the guides of the mountain. They make charqui out of its meat which is very salty and very hard. It is a very precious, dehydrated, which can be kept for a very long time. The fact is that in this meeting of topographers everyone was eating charqui and drawing something with their sticks, something which couldn't be quite understood. The old man would suddenly draw some lines, someone else would put some on the middle of the lines, a third person would put a piece of paper from an old magazine and in turn the old man would destroy everything with his stick and reorganise everything in his way.

And there they were in the house, eating charqui, putting on and taking off stones, of course, these lines represented the tracks of the mountain. The stones which some placed with self-assurance, the old man moved away. The papers which represented may be areas of snow or ice, the old man would move to one side, and in this way he would set up a picture of the present situation according to his knowledge of the place. And so they continued, exchanging information all these men working with the space, with a dynamic space, which is in movement. A space where the valleys, the slopes, the river and the gorges are in continuous change.

It was without doubt a dynamic space where they worked, and all of them were guides of the heights. They did not talk much, among other reasons because they continued eating. Once this particular meeting came to an end they left one by one, and it was then that they enquired of this old man whether it wasn't adequate to have a map in order to know where each this was. He replied that the mountain climbers often went with their maps, some even went with books of maps, having all the place coded, and in order to know the exact situation of the mountain. But the old man who is a wise and a poet, explained that the mountain is never still, that the mountain is alive; today it is one way and tomorrow it is another, and someone who is not a baqueano cannot depend on a map. So, he frequently found himself having to rescue the mountain climbers, these people who followed the maps. He would manage to get to the place, get them out of difficulty and bring them back to safety. This old man of the mountain has saved many lives, he has guided many people and he has rescued many people. So great is his fame in that area, that some, lost in the night, lost in blizzards, at the point of freezing have believed to see in the darkness the torch of the old man of the mountain. And some, hallucinating as it were, having followed the torch of the old man have reached safety. However, this is really impossible because the old man would have been in his hut at this time eating charqui.

From this we can see that those who point out a road do not exactly do it with explanations but rather with live experience. There is a great difference between that meeting of topographers, specialists exchanging information and the activities each one carried out guiding and conducting people to safe places.

You are the guides, you are the snow and the water that comes down from the high mountains. What could the earth, the thirsty earth be without the water that comes down from the high peaks? You are the winter and the summer, you are the day and the night. You are the contrast but also the complement. You are the intelligence, the explanation but also the experience.

It will be good to understand how one person can integrate the intelligence, integrate the explanation with the experience. This is the topic with which we will deal tomorrow.