



1976
The Golden Blade

Eugenium

The Golden Blade

TWENTY-EIGHTH (1976) ISSUE

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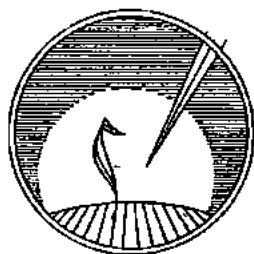
BOOK REVIEWS

Life after Death—Shakespeare and Rosicrucianism
Faraday and Electricity—Work Arising

Cover Design by Ted Roberts

Edited by **Charles Davy and Adam Bittleston**

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Anthroposophy springs from the work and teaching of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). He spoke of it as "a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe".

The aim of this Annual is to bring the outlook of Anthroposophy to bear on questions and activities which have relevance to the present time.

The title derives from a reference by Rudolf Steiner to an old Persian legend. " Djemjdid was a king who led his people from the north towards Iran, and who received from the God, whom he called Ahura Mazdao, a golden dagger, by means of which he was to fulfil his mission on earth . . . It represents a force given to man whereby he can act upon and transform external nature ".

EDITORIAL NOTES: AMERICA 1976

THE richest country in the world, with an immensely wide range of incomes. A people of noble, far-reaching, sensitive idealism—and in most of their major cities, the threat of tragic violence never far away. Many kinds of power securely in the hands of freely elected representatives of the people, exposed to a blaze of searching, critical publicity—and all too near to these representatives, and even among them, men whose paths to power and influence have been revealed as far from honourable. A generation of young people with privileges and opportunities greater than ever before anywhere—who may turn, not without reason, against the existing order with a bitterness unexampled ever before, anywhere.

Something like this picture has been given by the United States to friendly onlookers throughout the world during the years leading up to the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. There will be many within the United States itself who look anxiously during 1976 at the policies of their country, trying to assess the worthiness of these policies in the light of the courageous intentions expressed 200 years ago. The Declaration of Independence was consciously addressed to all friendly peoples of the world; and it was meant to have a significance for all men, including those who might be living under governments unresponsive to the popular will, and perhaps tyrannous and cruel in their methods. Today it is hard for us to face the fact that the use of intimidation and torture by governments is not vanishing, but maybe increasing—burdening countless individual destinies, and also the relationships of peoples to one another.

Rudolf Steiner gave many grave warnings about the condition of our civilisation, though always with a note of hope and encouragement as well. More than half a century ago, he described three factors in its decline. We have no clear conception of the universe in which we live, no cosmology; we do not know how to cultivate inner freedom, but relapse into fatalism, both in the scientific and in the religious realms; and we develop no strong altruistic impulses,

no effective brotherliness among men in general. But he went on to say that a temperamental inclination towards at least one of these positive things can be found in each great region of the world. In the East there is the inclination towards altruism, though it is frustrated very often by the social order to be found in this or that eastern country. In Europe there is the inclination towards the development of inner freedom, though the ability to express this in political institutions may be lacking. In the West there is the inclination to think in a world-embracing way, to seek for a living cosmology, though this is only a beginning.

We do find in the preamble to the Declaration of Independence a world-wide way of thinking, which seeks to unite the purposes of God for man with the practical tasks of political life. And to-day we can see the deep unease, not only in America, but in the whole western world, which can perhaps be expressed in the question: has foreign policy to be completely opportunistic, or can it, without simply falling into disastrous illusions, have before it real, lasting ideals?

At the present moment altruism is called for, on a very large scale, in the economic relationships between developed and under-developed countries. But there is widespread dissatisfaction with the methods and effectiveness of aid policies so far. Recently the United States has made proposals which have a familiar ring to students of Rudolf Steiner's writings on social problems: the formation of associations of producers and consumers for the major commodities of the world. At the moment of writing, representatives of the under-developed countries are looking at these proposals with a doubtful eye; and this can be understood. The representatives of richer countries might simply work for their own interests within such associations, and the others might prove weaker. Could not the under-developed countries develop, by unity among themselves, the sort of power that the oil-producing countries have achieved?

As long as the users of raw materials in the affluent countries are mainly great capitalist concerns, over which the ultimate consumer has little control, world associations for particular commodities cannot have the sense for which Rudolf Steiner hoped.

It may seem impossible to establish a clear and genuine relationship between the Western—or perhaps one should say Northern—

housewife, buying say her pound of rice, and the worker in the rice fields; but it will have to be achieved. Perhaps even more difficult are the relationships involved with commodities such as iron or aluminium or copper, which have gone through great transformations before they reach the ultimate consumer.

But young people all over the world long to go and see for themselves the conditions of life in other countries than their own—not just as tourists, but as participants, if this can in any way be achieved. And it is one of the great events of our time that so many young people are able to attempt this, quite particularly young people from the United States. And in their search we can recognise the far-reaching questions of which Rudolf Steiner spoke. Where can we find real brotherliness? Where can we find understanding for the development of inner freedom? Where can we find a living cosmology?

Many of the wanderers, from the United States and elsewhere, have felt already, before they started out, that the description of the universe given by the physical sciences is inadequate for them, and they have begun to study some occult cosmology. They may be drawn to deepen their understanding for ancient spiritual conceptions of the universe by going to the East, perhaps to India, hoping to feel the essence of these conceptions among those physically descended from the originators of them. In India they may seek, and find, something of the instinct for brotherliness and altruism which Rudolf Steiner describes.

In Europe they may seek the sense for inner freedom without which external freedom is empty. The writers of the Declaration of Independence were fully aware that as they proclaimed freedom from European authority, they were drawing upon a great European intellectual tradition, and in particular upon the English philosopher, John Locke. The modern young American does not feel sure what he may find in Britain; but the air of Europe in general does give him a certain sense of liberation. In the end, it is perhaps among the artists and poets of Europe that he can find most help on the path towards inner freedom, which depends upon a creative moral power of imagination akin to the artist's imagination. From the time and the work of Michelangelo in particular there blows a fresh wind, in which the sense of freedom can breathe—a delight in the

form and the spirit of Man which can still help us to loosen the chains of convention and superficiality.

And in the work of Shakespeare, in every sort of performance of his plays, there speaks the joy in contemplating the varieties of human being, and the deep interest in human relationships, which sustain freedom in practice; and the most effective pictures of the tragic or comic results of the loss of freedom, when the human is overwhelmed by ambition or jealousy or self-love—pictures which have such power because they lead us to actual people with all the tensions and contradictions of reality.

From past centuries such prophets of freedom go on speaking to us, but does any trumpet-call of freedom sound from the poets and artists of Europe at this moment? And can the political life of Europe, where there is the external form of democracy, inspire any deep enthusiasm among those who are young?

Rudolf Steiner knew a youth movement in Central Europe which had begun before 1914, and blazed up again after the First World War, until National Socialism took it prisoner and utterly distorted its aims. It was not in the least institutional and very little organised; it cared above all for music and forests and mountains, and for the creative power of individuals and small groups. It is of this youth movement that Rudolf Steiner speaks in the following lecture; and it had much in common with what is stirring in the world today. Two things, though, may strike us as different; the great concern now not only for undisturbed natural things, but for all climates and qualities of the earth as a whole, and the much more definite interest in every kind of meditation.

But now, as then, the great underlying reality is the tension between all that the soul brings with it from its existence before birth in the spiritual world, and all that presses in upon it from physical inheritance and the immediate human environment—family, school, university and occupation. The tension is made more desperate because the pre-earthly soul-qualities are not recognised and understood. For these, the reduction of the world to measure, number and weight is completely alien. As Chris Day says in his article in this issue, "Colour, light (especially of season, weather and sun) sound, smell, space and scale should come first". Space and scale are here thought of not just in a quantitative

sense, but as living relationships, for example between human activities and a landscape.

Before we were born we lived entirely in a world of beings and relationships, not of things. John Locke rightly saw that the "secondary qualities"—as he called them—of colour, sound, smell, and so on do not belong to *things* in the same way as dimensions, weight and position; and drew the conclusion that therefore they are less real. This conclusion is in accord with his denial of any heritage from the pre-earthly in the soul—any "inborn idea" of the Godhead for example. For colour, sound, and the experience of such qualities in general, remind us of the pre-earthly life of the soul; dimensions and weight are new to us, when we come to recognise them on earth.

Before earth-life, we knew such beings as the spirit called "Michael" in the Bible; we heard how he proclaimed, with boundless love and hope, the freedom and responsibility of man. This re-echoes within us, above all between the ages of fourteen and twenty-eight; and we need to find on earth something which will confirm it. If we find nothing, some form of cynicism or despair takes hold of us; Rudolf Steiner speaks of "grey misery of soul" by the end of the twenties—it can of course happen much sooner. It may not be outwardly evident.

The varied qualities of the earth's surface reflect the manifold variety of being in the spiritual world; to be able to travel on earth can both help in the re-awakening of what we have known before birth and prepare us to be open to the greatness of heaven after death. To prevent human beings—and in particular the young—from going about on earth is to do them a great injury. But no government can forbid meditation, which can work most directly and certainly in bringing the spiritual world nearer to us.

Infinitely much depends on *how* this is done. We need to bring our cosmic being and our earthly existence into harmony. This cannot be done completely, or for ever; we have to work for it each day. But we can recognise what powers there are in the universe who can help us. The spirit-being we know as Michael does not simply remain behind in the spiritual world when we enter earthly existence; he seeks to unite with human freedom on earth in the service of all that is good, and above all in the service of Christ, who descended from the highest worlds of spirit into the humanity

of Jesus, and who now is near to man, prepared to reveal himself to the first quickening powers of spiritual vision. The very pain of the tension between heaven and earth in us is a preparation for the new vision of Christ which is coming. And he will help us to reconcile in our lives the heavenly ideals we must not forget and the actual conditions in which we are, our own limitations and the pressures of our human environment.

Looking back at all that Rudolf Steiner brought into being, we see it best as a work of healing for definite sicknesses in our civilisation. What has been done in the fifty years since his death has had everywhere to meet the tension between great ideals and what can be achieved in practice through accepting and beginning to overcome our limitations.

In a book reviewed later in this issue, "Work Arising," John Davy has gathered short descriptions by 12 writers of what has happened and what is intended in different realms of life in the determined effort to realise Rudolf Steiner's purposes in practice. Since all these undertakings have to be housed, and in the long run need buildings which express the character of the work being done in them, the writer of the chapter on architecture has a special opportunity to be comprehensive, which Mr. Rex Raab takes very effectively indeed. Many who are generally well informed of what is going on in anthroposophical work may find encouraging surprises in this article. And what he says of architecture perhaps applies more generally: "If a contribution has so far been made from the anthroposophical side since Steiner's day, it probably lies more in the concerted overcoming of difficulties and the mutual exploration of the deeper nature of the task than in any specific solution or superlative example."

Particularly where several kinds of anthroposophical work can be housed in the same neighbourhood, or even within the same plan, well related to the natural forms of landscape around them—as has been so wonderfully achieved with the second Goetheanum—something is done which has great significance for the spirit of our time. In such places the "wanderers" described here may find a confirmation on earth of what they had shared in the spirit before this life, and help towards healing the divisions within them, so that their work on earth may become effective.

A.B.

YOUTH IN AN AGE OF LIGHT

RUDOLF STEINER

*A lecture given at Breslau, 9 June, 1924**

YOU can be sure of this: anyone who is free from prejudice takes the youth movement of to-day very seriously indeed. If you look around, not among your contemporaries, but among the older people of today, it may seem to you that the youth movement is not taken seriously, but it is quite certainly taken seriously by those who attempt real spiritual development.

Several years have passed since a small group of young people entered the Anthroposophical Society: they did not want simply to participate as hearers of what the Society gives, but brought to it those thoughts and feelings which young people today regard as characteristic of their age. This small group, which met in Stuttgart a few years ago, put before the anthroposophical movement the question: "How can you give us a place in this movement?" I believe that from my side this question was really understood at that time. It is not always easy to understand the question which a genuinely seeking human being puts to his time; and young people now have a number of questions, entirely justified, which *cannot* be expressed quite clearly.

At the time when the youth movement and the anthroposophical movement first came into contact, it really seemed to me as if they were being led together by a kind of destiny, a kind of Karma. I must still look on it in this way; the youth movement and the anthroposophical movement have by an inner destiny to take each other into account. When I call up all that I have experienced through many decades in the endeavour to bring about a community among human beings who wish to seek for the spirit, and relate this to what has developed as a youth movement since about the

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turn of the century, I have to say that what was felt by a very small number forty years ago, and was then hardly noticed, because so few were concerned, is felt today within a youth movement which is becoming more and more widespread. In your words of greeting it was well expressed—how difficult it really is becoming for a young human being to live.

Although at other times there has always been a kind of youth movement, it was different from what it is today. If one talks to older people about the youth movement, they often say, "Oh well, young people always felt different from the elderly, always wanted something different. That wears off, balances itself out. The youth movement of today need not be regarded differently from the opposition brought by the younger generation against older generations at all times in the past."

From many sides I have heard this answer to the burning question of the youth movement of today. Nevertheless this answer is entirely wrong; and herein lies an immense difficulty. Always in the past there was something among younger people, however radical they appeared, which could be called a certain recognition for the institutions and methods of life founded by older people. The young could regard it as an ideal to grow into the things passed down from older times, step by step. It is no longer so today. It is not just a question of involvement in academic life, but of the fact that the young human being, if he intends to go on living, has to grow into the institutions brought about by the older people, and here the young feel themselves strangers; they are met by what they have to regard as a kind of death. They see the whole way in which older people behave within these institutions as something masked. The young feel their own inner human character as alive, and around they see nothing but masked faces. This is something that can bring the young to despair—that they do not find human beings among older people, but for the most part only masks. It is really so that men come to meet one like imprints, forms stamped in wax, representing classes, callings, or even ideals—but they do not meet one as full, living human beings.

Though it may sound rather abstract, it is a very real fact in human feeling that we are standing at a turning-point of time, as mankind has not stood through all history or indeed through

most of pre-history. I do not like speaking about times of transition; there is always a transition from what went before to what is coming; all that matters is the specific change that is going on. But it is a fact that mankind stands today at a turning-point as never before, in historic or in prehistoric times. Significant things are going on in the depths of the human soul, not so much in consciousness as in the depths—and these are really processes of the spiritual world, not limited to the physical world.

We hear it said that at the turning-point from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, the so-called Dark Age came to an end, and a new Age of Light has begun. Anyone who can look into the spiritual world knows quite certainly that this is so. The fact that not much light has yet appeared does not disprove it; men are accustomed to the old darkness, and—just as a ball which has been thrown goes on rolling—this too rolls on, through inertia. Our civilisation today goes rolling on through inertia, and when we look at the effects of this in the world around us, we feel it all has something in common. To describe these dead things in a living way is not easy, but for everything nowadays—one might say—documentary proof is required. Nothing is held to be justified in the eyes of our modern civilisation unless documentary evidence for it can be produced. For every scientific fact, for every assertion, and even for every human being, there must be documentary evidence. Before he can enter any profession or calling, he must have a certificate. In scientific life everything has to be proved. Anything not proved does not count, cannot even be understood.

I could say a lot about this certification, this having to be proved. It appears sometimes in grotesque forms. I will tell you of a little event connected with this. When I was young, though not very young, I edited a periodical, and was involved in a law-suit over a small matter. There was not much in it: I went myself, and won my case in the first court. The plaintiff was not satisfied, so he appealed. I went again, and the opposing counsel said to me: "We do not need you at all, only your solicitor, where is he?" I said I had not brought one, I thought it was my own affair. That was no good. I had to use my ingenuity to get the case adjourned; and I was told that next time my presence would be useless; I had to send a solicitor. For in an appeal case it was not the custom for someone to represent himself.

I went away very much amused. And I forgot the whole thing until the day before the case was to continue. I went into the town and thought: I cannot let myself be told again tomorrow that I am unnecessary. As I went along the street I saw a solicitor's brass plate and went in. I did not know him, or anything about him. He said: "Who recommended me to you?" I said: "Nobody". I had thought somebody else would not do it any better, and took the first I saw. He said: "Write out on a piece of paper what I should say tomorrow." I wrote it for him and stayed away, according to custom. A few days later he wrote that I had won the case.

I could tell you a hundred things like this out of my own life. It is everywhere regarded as irrelevant to have an actual human being present; the important thing is that accepted procedures should be followed. Young people feel this. They do not want documentary proof for everything, but something different. Instead of proofs, they would put experience. Older people do not understand this word, "experience." It is not in their dictionaries and can appear quite horrible to them; to speak of spiritual experience is horrible for many people. This is what we find at the transition from a dark age to an age of light; it signifies a radical turning-point.

It is quite natural that this transition should present itself in two streams, so to speak. The anthroposophical movement and the youth movement have by destiny a certain connection. The anthroposophical movement unites people of every class, occupation and age, who felt at the turning-point from the 19th to the 20th century that man has to place himself into the whole cosmos in a quite different way. For him it is no longer simply a question of something being confirmed by evidence or proved—he must be able to experience it. Hence it appeared to me quite in accordance with Karma that the two movements were led together. And so a kind of youth movement developed within the anthroposophical movement. And finally, when the anthroposophical movement was re-founded at Christmas at the Goetheanum, this soon led to the institution of a youth section, which was to take care of the concerns that arise in the feelings of young people in a most sincere and genuine way.

An immensely encouraging beginning was made by our anthroposophical youth movement in the first months of this year. There are reasons for a certain stagnation at present; they lie in the dif-

ficulties of the youth movement. These difficulties arise because it is so hard to give something form out of the existing chaos, in particular the present spiritual chaos. To give something form is much more difficult than ever before. The strangest things happen to one today. Those who know me will know that I am not at all inclined to boast. But when I heard Rector Bartsch speak yesterday in such a warm and friendly way, saying that when I come to the anthroposophical society here I am welcomed like a father, I had to say, yes, there is something in it. So I am addressed as a father—and fathers are old; they can no longer be quite young. In Dornach, when we began the youth section, I suggested that the young people should speak out clearly and frankly. A number of young people spoke well and honestly. Then I spoke. Afterwards, when it was all over, somebody who knows me well said, after he had listened to everything: "All the same, you are the youngest among the young people". This can happen today; in one place one is addressed as an old father, in another as the youngest among the young. Ideas no longer have to be quite fixed. But if you climb up and down the steps of the ladder, sometimes as the little old father, sometimes as the youngest of all, you have a good opportunity to catch a glimpse of what is living in people's feelings.

I said that the youth section was stagnating. This will pass. It has happened, because it is, to begin with, extremely difficult for a young mind to *think* its way into something which it *feels* quite clearly. Our civilisation, in losing the spirit, has lost the human being! If I now speak more from the background of existence, I see that young people who have come down recently from the spiritual world into physical existence have come with demands on life quite different from the demands brought by those who came down earlier. Why is this so? You do not need to believe me. But for me this is knowledge, not merely belief. Before one comes down to physical earthly existence one passes through much in the spiritual world which is fuller of meaning and mightier as an experience than anything passed through on earth. Earthly life should not be undervalued. Without earthly life, freedom could never be developed. But the life between death and re-birth is on a grander scale. The souls who came down are the souls which are in you, my dear friends. These souls were able to behold an immensely significant spiritual movement taking its course behind

physical existence in regions above the earth—the movement which I call within our anthroposophical society the Michael movement.

This is so. Whether the materialistic man of today is prepared to believe it or not, it is so! The leading power for our present time, who could be named in a different way, but whom I call the Michael power, is trying to achieve, within the spiritual leadership of the earth and of mankind, a transformation of all soul-life upon the earth. Men who became so very clever during the 19th century have no inkling of the fact that the attitude of soul which developed during the 19th century as the most enlightened attitude has been given up by the spiritual world. An end to it has been ordained, and a Michael community of beings, who never walk upon earth, but lead humanity, seeks to bring about among men a new attitude of soul. The death of the old civilisation has come.

When the Threefold Commonwealth movement, which failed through the death of the old civilisation, was going on, I often said: "We have today no threefold membering in public life according to the spirit, according to law and so on, and according to economic life—but we have a threefold membering in terms of phrases, conventions and routines. Instead of spiritual life, there are phrases; and routine dominates economic life, instead of goodwill towards men, love for men, which should be ruling there.

This condition of soul, in which people are stuck fast, should be replaced by another, which arises from man himself and is experienced in man himself. That is the endeavour of spiritual beings who have taken over the leadership of our age and can be recognised in the signs of the times. The souls which have descended to the earth in your bodies saw this Michael movement and came down under this impression. And here they grew up in the midst of a humanity which really excludes man, which makes man into a mask. The youth movement is thus a wonderful memory of experience before birth, of most significant impressions gathered during this pre-earthly life. And if someone has these indefinite unconscious memories of pre-earthly life, of the endeavour to achieve a transformation of man's mood of soul—he will find nothing of it here on earth. That is what is going on today in the feelings of young people.

The anthroposophical movement springs from the revelation of the Michael movement; and has the purpose of bringing the

intentions of the Michael movement into the midst of human life. The anthroposophical movement seeks to look up from the earth to the Michael movement. Young people bring with them a memory of pre-earthly existence. So the youth movement and the anthroposophical movement are brought together by destiny. And everything that has happened through the interplay between these two movements appeared to me to come about in a quite inward way, not through earthly circumstances, but through spiritual circumstances, inasmuch as these are connected with man. Thus I regard this youth movement as something which can awaken unlimited hopes for the future of all that can be felt rightly as anthroposophical.

Of course we encounter things which are bound to arise from the fact that the anthroposophical movement and the youth movement are both at their beginnings. We have seen the Free Anthroposophical Society founded side by side with the Anthroposophical Society in Germany. This Free Anthroposophical Society had—again inevitably—a governing committee that was chosen or elected. I think this committee had seven members—somebody says there were nine—very well, nine; there were nine, but one after the other was politely discharged from office, until three were left. All very comprehensible. The Free Anthroposophical Society had the essential intention of understanding the experience of youth. Now a discussion on this subject developed. One after another the committee members had their capacity to experience youth in the right way disputed. Three remained, and of course they discussed with one another whether all of them had the experience of youth. Something quite remarkable arose, pointing to a link of destiny between the youth movement and the anthroposophical movement. It seems ridiculous, but is very serious. For when one investigates the great questions of destiny, one finds very significant things, and the greatness of destiny is often indicated in symptoms. When we had founded the Anthroposophical Society, we also had committee members who quarrelled terribly, and it was evident to me that eventually very few would remain, after they had politely dismissed the others. But to prevent it from ending there, the left side of a person would start quarrelling with the right side over which side really had the experience of youth. That sounds like irony, but is not. For it indicates that what can be called the experience of youth

today lies deep within the soul, and the significant thing is that this experience cannot necessarily be expressed in clear words. In the age of cleverness so many clear words have been spoken! What matters is that we should reach experiences. And then this inability to find clear forms of expression should be recognised as unavoidable. The right to continue in a state of vagueness is in fact claimed. But something else is needed: a refusal to separate from one another because an impression of unclarity is given, and a willingness to come together and talk.

Above all I would like to express to you, my young friends who are sitting here to-day, the wish that all of you, whatever you may feel and think, may hold together with an iron will, truly hold together. This is what we need most of all, if we want to achieve something in approaching the great questions of to-day. We cannot always be asking whether someone else has a rather different opinion from one's own. It is really a question of finding one another, even in the greatest differences of feeling. This will perhaps be the finest achievement, that those who are young understand how to keep together in spite of differences in feeling. It is a fact that what young people miss most of all to-day is the finding of other human beings. Wherever they go, they find, not human beings, for the human beings have died, but masks, everywhere masks! This has had a natural consequence: a search by human beings for one another. And that is very moving; for all the various "scout" movements, the *Wandervogel* movements and so on, are all a search for the human being. Young people want to join with others; they are looking in others for the human being. This is quite comprehensible. Because the human being was no longer there spiritually, each one said to himself: "But I feel, all the same, that the human being must be there." And they looked for the human being, looked for him in community. But we should not forget that this has something immensely tragic about it.

Many young people have experienced this tragedy. They joined together and believed they were finding the human being. But nothing of what they were seeking came to fill their community; and they became even lonelier than before. These two phases of the youth movement are evident: the phase of community, the phase of great loneliness. How many young people there are today who

go in loneliness through the world, conscious that nowhere have they been understood.

Now the truth is that one cannot find the human being in another person unless one knows how to look for him in a spiritual way—for man is in fact a spiritual being, and if one approached a man only externally, he cannot be found, even if he is there. It is indeed lamentable today, how people pass each other by. Certainly, earlier times can be rightly criticised. Much was barbaric then. But there was something: a man could find the human being in another man. He cannot do this now. Grown men all pass each other by. No one knows the other. He cannot even live with the other, because no one listens to the other. Everyone shouts in the other's ear his own opinion, and says: "That is my opinion, that is my point of view". You have merely points of view, nothing more. For what is asserted from one point of view or another makes no difference. These things murmur among young people, perceived by the heart, not by the mind.

You can be sure it must be right to feel a connection of destiny between the youth movement and the anthroposophical movement. Young people did not come to Anthroposophy just because they wanted to try out this as well, after they had tried out many other things—they came to it from destiny. And this gives me the certainty that we shall be able to work together. We shall find our way to one another, and, however things turn out, they must above all develop in such a way that those human qualities in the widest sense which live among young people are taken into account. Otherwise, if real spirit does not spring forth from youth, something utterly different will come about. For youthful life is certainly there, and one will be able to feel it; but this condition of youth, if it is not filled with spirit, ceases early in the twenties. We cannot preserve youth physiologically. We have to grow old, but we must be able to carry something from youth into old age. We must understand the condition of youth in such a way that we can rightly grow old with it. Unless spirit touches the soul, the deepest soul, the years between twenty and thirty cannot be lived through without coming into grey misery of soul. And this is my greatest anxiety. How can we work together in such a way that our young people will be able to cross the abyss between the twenties and the thirties

without losing their vital spirit, without falling into grey misery of soul? I have known human beings who in their mid-twenties fell into this grey misery of soul. For, to speak fundamentally, that which lives in the depths of young souls after the end of the Kali Yuga is a cry for the spirit.

After rain

Everything is wrapped in rain
dripping in rain roaring in rain
pouring down dykes into drains
spilling off paths into ponds
gurgled demented through grilles
gouging out runnels down hills
field-end made floundering in ankle mud
sucked thickly at boot
sagged swollen sunk
fluid and fed by hoof
into a stirred bog by stile
into an all-wallow of wetness
a wilderness of drench over
all pervading all penetrating
to skin to bark to bone to root
off roof off road all tree-drip damp
all and all water.

without warning the sun
like a new stage set
like a scene shift
fresh floats with flowers
flash on grass gleamed jewel in gutter
diamond glint on birch branch
liquid light drop hung from eave
and colour

splendid green again
tulip emerging scarlet from grey
primrose glow gold from white
and the glory of roses
restored.

Charles Austin

SOUL, SPIRIT AND PLACE

How the Environment Speaks to Man

CHRIS DAY

This article is based on a lecture given by the author to post-graduate planners at the Polytechnic of Central London, where he had previously taught in the Perception and Communications Studies Department of the School of Architecture and is now a visiting lecturer. He spent a year at Emerson College, Forest Row, and now lives in Wales, developing a smallholding and working on environmental design.

Everyday experience confirms that there is more to places than their physical substance. Places can affect our moods very deeply—moving us to joy or bitter sadness and to a whole range in between. In speaking to our soul, the place—it seems—has a soul. Yet in many places there is no human life, only inanimate substance; we sense that a spiritual force is speaking through the material place to our soul.

But first, what is a place? A place is more than a space; it is somewhere that invites one to stop, not merely pass through. It is a space to *be* in. Leopold Kohr illustrates this distinction by comparing cities of squares (of all shapes), which invite pedestrians and social activities, and cities of streets, where stopping and meeting become secondary to the efficiency of traffic flow. (*The Convivial City*, Gryphon Press, 1974).

If we are to live fully in a place, it must speak to us through all our senses in harmony; otherwise it is partly one place, partly another—a no-place. We identify (by naming) places because of their social or landmark significance (e.g. a cross-roads or a rock outcrop). In the past, their spiritual significance was recognised. In the townscape, a physical place succeeds only if it is a social place (either being the foundation of the other). District names that grow up or are imposed help to coalesce a social pattern. Somewhere not worthy of a name is doomed to be a no-place. (This conclusion derives from environmental analysis projects by students at the Polytechnic of Central London).

Places grew up and continue to grow, in area or in richness, around activities. A harmonious relationship between the activities (e.g. working, shopping, home life, etc.) and the qualities of a place is vital. This is not to imply that such activities should necessarily be separated. Experience shows that separation (by zoning) over large areas (on a walking scale) leads invariably to sterility.

A place that has grown up naturally expresses the meeting of human activities and topographic form (e.g. a riverside). Larger regions also express regional climate, culture, geography and geology; we see this as vernacular architecture and settlement pattern.

Traditional towns

In our traditional towns, where growth was organic, there is typically a great diversity of forms, yet a harmony of spirit. It is arguable whether a restriction to traditional forms, sometimes imposed by planning authorities, has any meaning, as most contemporary building is so utterly different in spirit from that of the past. This concern with the outer phenomena, yet missing the deeper but less visible issues, is a critical problem of conservationist planning.

Different modes of travel cause different perceptual involvement with the places we pass through, and different ways of meeting these places when we stop. Very different sorts of places grow up alongside footpaths, railways, quiet lanes and major roads. Travel through an area determines what we see of it, how we distinguish its parts, how we form an image of the area and whether the sense of place is able to develop.* The residents in a place develop quite different perceptions from those of people passing through. Over a period of time they make many journeys on foot, see more but notice less. They become more attuned to human events in the place, less to the material background which now speaks to them in an unconscious way. In this process their awareness develops from consciousness of a place's character to a sense of its soul, then of its spirit.

How does a place speak to us? First, it speaks through our senses. We see, hear, touch and smell our environment. The optic nerve greatly exceeds in size the nerves from the other sense-organs,

* Kevin Lynch, in *Image of the City* (M.I.T. Press, 1961) distinguished nodes (focal points), paths, edges, districts and landmarks as the elements from which people's image of the city is built up.

and seeing is indeed the most important sense, but we must not infer that the others do not matter. We need only consider the great deprivation of the blind, the social problems of the deaf, and the impaired ability to taste of those without the sense of smell, to realise how vital all the senses are to a full life. Yet these same sensory deprivations are widely imposed by environmental design.

One sense can dominate the others. Noise alongside an arterial road, or fumes alongside a steel works, render meaningless any visual improvements (such as the removal of wirescape and street-sign clutter demanded in such books as *Outrage*,* or the immaculate gardens outside the British Steel Corporation's offices at Port Talbot). In such cases the senses are saying different things. Purely visual treatment (and conservation is often purely visual) is meaningless; it is a lie. The reason is that all the senses are together telling us of the reality of the world; each sense is telling us only of a surface of that deeper reality.

What qualities are right for a place? A place has certain levels we must consider: its character, its soul, its spirit.

Character and soul are surface, manageable qualities, but they speak to us of its deeper reality, its spirit. Spirit is philosophy made living and leaving an imprint on the inanimate and artefact world (and the people who inhabit it).

Character we can consider as the nouns—what the place is made of; soul as the adjectives—its qualities. In human analogy: words are not our only speech. The whole body and mannerisms speak in another way and the inner spirit shines through all these. In such a way we can speak of the spirit of a place. It is the same in architecture.

A place speaks most obviously by its character. Character is what we experience and especially what we see. There are two levels of character: surface and living. At the surface, we can consider how quite small changes—often in ephemera—can drastically transform the character of a place. Comparative photographs of a town today and in the past—a hundred or even only thirty years ago—demonstrate this clearly. The normal architectural vocabulary is primarily concerned with these character elements. It is this aspect that is dealt with in such books as *Outrage* (Nairn), *Counter-*

* Ian Nairn, *Outrage* (Architectural Press, 1955).

attack (Nairn), *Townscape* (Cullen), *The Character of Towns* (Worksett).

Living character is what we commonly mean by the life of a place. The bustle of a town square or the quietness of a street at night. Apparently minor elements, such as bird life, can be quite important, as in the expansion of a village into a town. Below a certain size, chickens, and below a certain density, hedgerow birdsong, can be heard. When size, density, traffic and urban noise exceed these thresholds, the town changes significantly in quality.

Colour and light

How does a place speak to our soul—to our feelings, not to our thinking or to our body? What elements strike deeply into our feeling life?

We know that colour is a strong influencer of mood. There has been much research on this subject.* Most conclusions confirm intuitive beliefs—that warm colours excite and cool colours calm, physiologically and psychologically. In the past, building materials carried a colour and life within them. So many of our buildings are now made up of lifeless materials (concrete being the paramount example) that colour needs to be applied to surfaces to try to bring back some life. This means that the designer has to make a conscious choice of colour, while in the past this was not often the case. This gives the opportunity to enhance other qualities of a space by infusing it with appropriate colours.

The natural colours of the materials of the past (e.g. stone, brick, timber, tiles) were often enhanced by the processes of ageing. The reverse tends to be true of superficially applied colours. However, we are not limited to paints but can also use dyes and stains which penetrate into the material. Substantial colours (e.g. blues and browns) can cope with deposits of dirt and soot, while light-bearing colours (e.g. yellows and white) cannot. A knowledge of the inner aspects of colour, as introduced in the writings of Goethe and Rudolf Steiner, is essential to design if it is to evolve as a healing art.

Light moves us deeply. Most especially the living light of the seasons and the weather works very strongly upon us. A clear bright morning can cheer us even from depression, and the dark of

* Kenneth Bayes gives a full summary of research into the psycho-physiological effects of colour in *The Therapeutic Effect of Environment on Emotionally Disturbed and Mentally Subnormal Children* (Gresham Press, 1967).

endless drizzle wears us all down. To some extent, these weather conditions are influenced by man. Dead, humid, urban haze on a sunny day and sulphurous, foggy drizzle on a wet day, are largely attributable to man's works. They are the direct result of a communal attitude, a spiritual force, working through the form and action of industry and city and expressed in the local weather.

More positively, the designer can use light and reflection to create mood. Think for example of the qualities of light reflected off rippling water on to a wall, or the patterns of light and shade filtered through foliage. Electric lighting, ranging from downlighters and spots, illuminating objects but not defining space, to gentle, diffuse, coloured lights, can create a wide range of moods. The peace and warmth of candle lighting is even recognised commercially in many restaurants.

Sound speaks directly to our soul, whether as quantity or quality, rhythm or chord. Music and song work deeply into our soul, whether we participate or merely listen. The effect outlasts the transience of the music. We must consider the music of nature as well as of man: birdsong, the seasonal sounds of the wind, the warm, summery buzz of insect life and the stillness of frost. Noise also has a powerful effect, and currently there is much research into its physio-psychological effects, ranging from hearing damage, through psychological stress, to heart strain.*

It is an unfortunate effect of our modern culture that the sense of smell has come to be disregarded. Modern industry and synthetic products bring this about, and obsession with hygiene (manifest as packaging and deodorising) carries this process further. It should be a challenge to designers to reopen the opportunities to live again more in our sense of smell (e.g. by a wider use of natural materials). The sense of smell has a much deeper effect than is usually acknowledged. It is especially important in the initial impression given by a situation.

Cathedral and subway

Space is the medium we live in; consequently we are hardly aware of it. Yet space can deeply influence our mood. There has been research on the psychological effects of quantitative space and the spacial needs of people in different circumstances and from different

* M. Rodda, *Noise and Society* (Oliver and Boyd, 1967); C. Duarden, *Noise Abatement* (Butterworth, 1970).

cultural backgrounds.* Most studies of response to qualities of space are based on observations in psychiatric homes.† Studies tend to be limited to clear-cut categories of space and of response, so as to eliminate other influences. Although it is difficult to disentangle our response to space from all the other elements of environment, we can sense its profound range when we compare, for instance, the coloured light space of a Gothic cathedral with a subway under a road.

Colour, light, sound, smell and space—all these are ambient in our surroundings. Yet, in the everyday environment, most colour is that of materials chosen for other reasons (e.g. cheapness and maintenance). Most lighting is also chosen for purely practical reasons (e.g. alleged optimum lighting for particular tasks and daylight regulations). Most space is arranged for practical and economic reasons (above all, ease in design). Most sound is the by-product of activity (mostly mechanical), and we smell the waste-products. All these are soul-elements, yet they are all dead. These same elements are all used in healing. Colour-light therapy, music therapy,‡ spacial design for therapeutic establishments, the clean air of sanatoria or flowers in hospitals—all these are well established, though not widespread.

All these soul elements are ambient in our surroundings; all are used for healing, and all of them can be stressful to the point of causing illness. It is worth reflecting on their ubiquity and power.

* * * * *

A place is always speaking to our soul with its soul, as it were. If we listen we can hear it. If we do not, it still works deep within us. It is a spirit that is speaking through the concrete phenomena of a place. A place is a spirit made manifest.

What does a place say? The soul-message can be either pleasant or stressful—in extremes it can be healing or harmful. There are no simple, singular situations. We need a spectrum of places which

* Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (Doubleday, 1966); Robert Sommer, *Personal Space*.

† Kenneth Bayes, *op. cit.*; Lyall Watson, *Supernature* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1973). It is argued that psychiatric patients are more sensitive and respond more clearly to environment than do other people.

‡ Lionel Stebbing (ed.), *Music: Its Occult Basis and Healing Value* (New Knowledge Books, 1958).

are the foils to our inner (soul) moods—and these moods vary from day to day and from individual to individual, as well as among different cultural and sub-cultural groups. The environment should provide an easily accessible spectrum to fulfil all needs, not just one.

What are these soul-needs? A simplified list could be:

peace—tranquillity
humanity
mystery
awe
stimulus—adventure
identity
sense of continuity in time
security—privacy

On another plane we can add:

space—freedom (for thoughts and soul as well as action)
warmth
closeness—cosiness
life (a sense of the living world)

Some of these are incompatible, such as tranquil/adventure, awesome/privacy, cosy/freedom. A peaceful looking playground, tranquil parkland open to the noise and visual activity of a main road, or a quiet, spacious, unexciting city-centre, all demonstrate such incompatible qualities. Others reinforce each other, such as spacious/peace, or identity/humanity/security. The tranquil expanse of a wide landscape, or the handmade, varied, solid forms of a vernacular street, are examples.

Upon these soul-needs a whole aesthetic can be built; one that works at the levels of character and soul. Everything in a particular place can be chosen and designed to reinforce selected qualities. The sense of humanity can be reinforced by (for example) human-scaled spaces and materials (e.g. the hand-scale of brickwork), and focus can be brought to human activities by screening out traffic noise and emphasising footsteps and voices (e.g. by choice of materials). This is an aesthetic that we all respond to because it works through our feelings, not exclusively in the realm of thought.

In the current widespread use of computer analysis, physical needs and some character elements are relatively easily identified, but the deeper soul-needs are not easily articulated or included in questionnaires. This makes the apparently objective findings of such environmental analysis somewhat suspect. Specific preferences and dislikes are often the articulation of deeper needs. For instance, a

dislike of trees in a street may well express the need for more light—not a dislike of trees wherever they are to be found. Character preferences are formed partly by soul-needs, partly by advertising pressure, and partly by the status images of the dominant cultural group (e.g. the bungalow is more an image of the comfortable life than a fulfilment of soul-needs). Here, again, we must be careful in interpreting preference patterns.

Suburbs and slums

We must also be careful that all sections of the community—not only the articulate or wage-earning ones—can be fulfilled in their surroundings. Suburbia, for example, is an environment suitable to one age-group. While it offers private territory, and relative privacy and quiet to middle-age groups, it imprisons the young, elderly and others who cannot drive. While adults often withdraw into comfortable, ordered, stable surroundings, children need stimulus, adventure, mystery and awe as essentials for their full development.

Decaying urban streets are so easily dismissed as slums, to be renewed or improved. Improvement frequently sets in train (and often necessitates) population displacement. Yet these same streets are material memories of past life. For old people, the physical reminders and the continuing (though evolving) social pattern (of friendship and amenity) are of the greatest importance. Improvement by demolition ("slum clearance") shatters, or, with slower processes, erodes, the orientation of the many elderly people who have become fixed in their relationship to the outer world. For them, reinforcement of humanity, security and continuity in time would represent real environmental improvements. The bulldozer provides the reverse.

Planning and architecture, purchasing and financing are all executed by a small section of the community—mostly middle-class, middle-aged men. Tower-block flats have been quoted as the kind of architecture originating from such a narrow base, but there are many more widespread and insidious effects. Design should be for the whole community, and for inner as well as outer needs.

However architecturally striking, places that do not fulfil our deeper needs have no positive meaning for us. They are dull. Dull surroundings can dull the feelings. They do not encourage the

development of environmental responsibility and morality. Lack of sensitivity and concern are the early symptoms.

The environment can be seen as a cybernetic teaching system: PLACE induces RESPONSE which encourages ACTION which affects PLACE . . . etc. This pattern is well illustrated in the litter cycle. The dirtier a place, the lower the threshold of what constitutes litter (e.g. from cigarette ends to cigarette packets to crisp packets to fish-and-chip papers, etc.). The more litter there is, the dirtier the place, inviting yet more litter.*

In terms of social morality, various people have associated crime with bad environment. The Victorians associated crime with the environment of opportunity and overlaid this with a middle-class concept of slums and dirt (not always wholly unjustified), using terms like "slum warrens of thieves". Since crime in the streets dropped dramatically with the introduction of gas-lighting, they were to some extent right about the opportunity factor. More recently, Oscar Newman also associated crime with the environment of opportunity, but in addition he identified the soul-less environment.†

High-density living

Some behaviourists associate crime with high-density living. They have shown that rats, at least, resort to aberrant ("criminal") behaviour under high-density stress. This can be relieved by shutting them up in smaller boxes within their large cage (the "tower-block" analogy); this, however, produces a duller rat. (For research by Dr. John Calhoun and others see Hall, *The Hidden Dimension*, *op. cit.*)

On the other hand, Jane Jacobs associates crime prevention with high-density living, because so many people can support great diversity and vitality in the street, thus ensuring constant casual supervision by "eyes in the street".‡ She associates crime with "blind" unseen areas—unseen because they do not attract people—dull, dead streets. Such soul-less places support fewer activities, attract fewer people and (in American cities) become more dangerous by turns. Lack of soul initiates a cycle of social decay.

* Colin Ward in *Vandalism* (Architectural Press, 1973) cites a reverse example, where the initiative of heating and carpeting unloved stair-landings in a block of flats was rewarded by tenants adding vases of flowers.

† *Defensible Space* (Collier Books, 1973).

‡ *Death and Life of the Great American Cities* (Jonathan Cape, 1962).

Although there are disagreements as to the more immediate causes of crime, one underlying problem is agreed. Victorian industrial slums, contemporary project housing, suppression of the individual's identity by 'mass' treatments (e.g. mass housing), and sterile, uninviting streets are all saying the same thing: "Nobody cares, why should I care?"

Typically, these same environments provide the most opportunities for street crime, but we must have a poor view of human nature if we regard opportunity as a primary cause. Jane Jacobs has shown how the roots of opportunity for crime lie in the soul as well as in the character of a place.

Vandalism is on the threshold of what we consider criminal. Colin Ward (*op. cit.*) shows how "vandalism" is largely the unacceptable actions of the young in a society that condones legal vandalism in the form of demolition and "development". Vandalism is one way to make personal protests and to make your mark on otherwise unresponsive surroundings. Adolescents are seeking to find their identity from their surroundings, as their inner sense of identity is growing. Frustration in this sphere is damaging to the individual and frequently leads to anti-social actions.

The spirit of unresponsiveness, of gross abstraction and thus of inhumanity, has breathed into such surroundings. Does it breathe everywhere in contemporary design? Is it, in fact, inherent in the nature and scale of today's work? However good our intentions, once we move into abstractions, can we recognise the individual? Or is he inevitably reduced to a member of a group with abstract characteristics that are described quantitatively. If this happens, his feeling soul becomes lamentably forgotten.

In *The Hidden Dimension* Edward Hall shows the striking differences in perceptions and evaluations of the environment by different cultures. To see through others' eyes is obviously a necessary aim. Although we can be guided by a statistical profile, to stop at that point is not to see with any eyes, or feel with the heart.

For a true Christian impulse to enter into environmental design, we must never downgrade the individual to a member of a statistical group, or ever forget his spiritual nature. Design can and should provide the opportunity for the individual to contribute, rather than deter him by providing everything material and reducing the need

for help and the opportunity to give.* It can enable the spirit to unfold—in an atmosphere of humanity, peace and beauty, not to withdraw in surroundings of conflict, or to sink in mere material comfort.

And tell me, people of Orphalese, what have you in these houses?
And what is it that you guard with fastened doors?
Have you peace, the quiet urge that reveals your power?
Have you remembrances, the glimmering arches that span the summits of the mind?
Have you beauty, that leads the heart from things fashioned of wood and stone to the holy mountain?
Tell me, have you these in your houses?
Or have you only comfort, and the lust for comfort, the stealthy thing that enters the house a guest, and then becomes a host, and then a master?†

* * * * *

It is to the spirit of man that the spirits of nature and of place communicate. Ancient and (so-called) primitive civilisations sensed that each place had a spirit. Every knoll, copse or spring had its own spirit and so was sacred. The especially sacred places of particular spirits became the sites for centres of worship—temples, monuments or tombs.‡ Groups (such as tribes, cities or nations) had a stable relationship with a particular place or area and with the spirit (Deity) of that place. Groups as diverse as the Greek city-states and the shifting American-Indian villages manifest in their culture the influence of the patron spirits of their lands.§ In Europe, this legacy endured long into the era of institutional Christianity.

What happens when a place is changed? What of the spirit of the place? An impulse arising in man enters the place. In the creation of a temple, for example, the physical place was changed but the

* Housing projects, for example, can mix age groups in a sensitive way so that they are given the opportunity to help each other, and to ask for help.

† Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1963).

‡ This is reinforced by observations which show how cosmic and terrestrial powers are concentrated at such places. See (amongst others) Guy Underwood, *The Pattern of the Past* (Pitman Publishing Co., 1971) and John Michell, *The View Over Atlantis* (Sphere Books, 1969).

§ In American-Indian culture, the myths and their geographic locations have maintained a living meaning until very recent times. Hence they are authentically documented in many books, such as: John Neihardt *Black Elk Speaks* (University of Nebraska Press 1961); Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes, *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* (Touchstone Books, 1972); T. C. Mcluhan, *Touch the Earth* (Pocket Books 1972).

spirit was strengthened. In the growth of a typical modern city—originally sited because a life-bringing river ran in that particular place—we can see that the original spirit has been completely replaced. A place that once spoke of life now speaks of inhuman abstraction, of the death of the soul.

Machinery and muscles

In physical terms, so long as man modified the environment by pick and shovel, its essential nature was not much changed. People *had* to be responsive to the characteristics of a place (the slope, soil, rock structure, water-table, trees and roots). To ignore them meant much needless work; and to recognise them meant, inevitably, that the modifications grew organically; the evolution of the material form reflected the slow evolution of the spirit.

Attack by machinery is *in its nature* unresponsive. The machine is not sensitive, so the operator is not aware of subtleties, and indeed it is hard for him to use it sensitively, even if he so wished. Furthermore, the nature of the machine and its onslaught tend to harden the operator. Sudden and complete change is typical of machinery and of the thinking that accompanies it.*

Organic evolution is typical of the muscle-powered era and its thinking. It brings harmonious development. Compare the slow evolution of the agricultural landscape in Europe and the rapid transformation of buffalo prairie into the sterile soil of thousand acre, continuous-corn fields, and even—in extreme cases—into dust-bowls.

We can see that scale (in both size and speed) is a symptom of an attitude of spirit. Scale can speak to us of love and care or of brutal inhumanity and callousness. The characteristics of scale are no coincidence; the ecological impact of large-scale industry is much more severe than that of small-scale plants, however numerous.† Newman relates large apartment blocks and housing proj-

* In *Technics and Civilisation* (Routledge, 1934), Lewis Mumford observes how the values and methods of the mine ("mine, blast, dump, crush, extract, exhaust") have entered daily life. Industrial civilisation is both founded upon, and brutalised by, this assault on the earth.

† See E. F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful* (Blond and Briggs, 1973).

ects to higher crime rates.* As Mumford has pointed out, the central problem of planning is the conflict of democracy and scale; indeed, others consider that meaningful democracy is threatened or even overcome by scale. In architectural terms, the larger a public building is, the more institutional its atmosphere tends to be (both in its form and in its social implications). Increases in scale bring increasing remoteness to all concerned. Large scale is a de-humanising force.

What is ugliness? In natural surroundings there is always an element of intolerance and hostility to man. In some cases (e.g. glaciers, tropical swamps) they are hostile to an extreme; but they were not made for human environment, nor are they ugly. Ugliness is the physical manifestation of an evil spiritual force (e.g. oppression, racism, profit-obsession, all of which oppose the recognition of the individual and the force of love). Ugliness strikes deep into our feelings. It is our soul-response to that evil spiritual force. We can *feel* that the *soul* of a place is telling us about its underlying *spiritual* structure.

The spirit is speaking through the soul; what can it say? It can speak in a harmful way, it can speak loudly but dishonestly, or it can speak in a healing way.

We are all familiar with environments of ugly spirit—places that depress us unutterably, stressful places, dead places, exhaustingly dull, spiritually squalid places, or—to a lesser extent—places where we just cannot find soul satisfaction.

We are also familiar with environments that speak loudly (and often emptily). Disco-boutique style presentation and modern advertising are examples. Immediate, attractive impact obscures the real meaning—usually intense commercialism. This strong, attractive immediacy has overflowed from the Chelsea King's Road into all areas of design and of art. Within the context of this spirit, there can be created highly attractive, stimulating environments—but what is the reality behind them? Do they really fulfil the soul?

We are familiar also with healing environments—that is with healing *landscapes*, such as tranquil lakeside, empty mountain, sea or land, the soothing rhythm of the sea, the living gurgle of stream

* This conclusion, derived from studies of New York housing projects, computer-related to police records, is recorded on graphs and tables in *Defensible Space*, *op. cit.*

water. But what of the harsher world of town, industry and suburbia in which so many of us are doomed to spend our lives? In the attempt to make healing landscape easily and widely accessible, it is all too easy to compromise a place—destroy its essential qualities and leave only the physical shell. That is obviously not the way. The healing environment must enter the city.

A healing landscape in the city? We can easily introduce the breath of nature—sky, light, seasons and weather, trees, vegetation and birdsong, etc., as refreshments for our soul. Trees must be introduced sensitively, not imposed as aliens, as can happen when they are planted to improve a street that has never had them. Its character may be based largely on *not* having trees, and some of its residents may have a strong aversion to trees as stealers of light and shedders of leaves. If other matters are more important but are not attended to, planting trees may really be saying: Of course we care about the street, but not about you.

The London *Evening Standard* once conducted a survey, asking people which in a list of London streets had trees. Most people, including myself, got some wrong. The *Evening Standard* attributed this to unobservance, but I believe the reason is that trees have no meaning in some streets (e.g. Charing Cross Road).

Is there something more a place can do, besides making the weather and season apparent? Can it truly respond in a *complementary* way to sunshine, wind, cloud and rain, to the lushness of summer and to winter? If for every mood of weather we can think of places that are its perfect foil, and places where we would like to be (indoors and outdoors), then it can. It is not hard to design places with qualities such that people seek to be there on a sunny day, or that emphasise cosiness in bleak weather, or the refreshing drama of heavy rain. Places that give shelter from the wind, yet emphasise it at tree-top level, are a simply achieved alternative to the wind-intensifying townscapes typical of so much modern design. Places that warm you in the winter sun and are lightly shaded in the summer are so technically easy and they mean so much, yet they are lamentably rare.

If a city can achieve this harmony with nature, while in its surroundings it fulfils our deeper soul needs and enables us to live fully as individuals, the environment can act in a healing way.

If the creation of healing environments is our aim, then should we not give first priority to the strong soul-elements, rather than to the pursuit of material efficiency, prosperity and well-being? If so, colour, light (especially of season, weather and sun), sound, smell, space and scale should come first. Forms, shapes, patterns and images are the substantive complement to these feeling qualities; they should come second, not first. The fact that organisation systems and building requirements are first realised in form has misled us into thinking that colour, light, sound and smell are secondary qualities, to be subsequently applied to form. Consideration of more spiritual goals shows that the reverse is true. Those qualities that speak to the soul cannot be given second place if we are genuinely committed to designing for the spiritual in man.

JOURNEY INTO DAWN

Christian Morgenstern

Before the dawn I drove across the land,
The wet fields silent, the woods black and dead,
Till at the furthest rim of the sky there showed
Faint streaks of light, yellow and rosy red.

Not long—and now like fire and like blood
A red ball rises out of mist and cold,
And pours across the fields a crimson flood
And turns the dark woods into waves of gold.

On me, too—in the half-dark of the coach
There fell a fiery shaft. Softly it came
To arm me for a fight and wake my soul:
Out of eternity a kiss of flame.

Translated by Sylvia Eckersley

THREE POEMS

Carol Coates

There is a stillness

There is a stillness beyond cities
that is green,
caught between sunset and dawn
where breathing branches
brood above great lawns
and the sky is open
to the sky.

Abundant air pours pungent into nostrils
raises the beat of spirit
to a rarer rhythm.
There is a stillness beyond cities
that is green
and shining.

The Candle

Now that the evening sits at my window
darkening it,
I light one candle—
not to prove the sun's desertion
nor signify season or occasion,
but to prompt your Guardian Angel
to remember this night
to pour blessing over your pain.

Many births, many deaths

In the inmost sanctuary of the Self
your face
from darkness
from deeps of Time
emerges at the centre.
As the curtains of sleep roll back
out of the mystery of the waking dark
your face moves forward
to celebrate the day.

PRAYER AND THE ELEMENTAL BEINGS

ADAM BITTLESTON

FROM the time of the coming of Christianity to Europe until recently, countless human beings found in prayer a source of steadiness and confidence in life, and of help in enduring the tension between what they felt as earthly, and what they felt as akin to the heavens, within themselves. This source of help has been lost for Western man, except by a very small minority; and many now turn in their need to the practice which has never been lost in the East: the practice of meditation. But we are in general unsure not only how this is to be done, but of what we are trying to achieve by it.

Almost at the same time as prayer lost its certainty, men became widely aware that in every human being there is much which influences his feelings and actions, but of which he is not clearly conscious—and he can bring it to full consciousness only with great difficulty, if at all. And many have seen that there must be some reconciliation between the conscious mind and the forces that work in the subconscious or unconscious realms—whatever they may be. There is the hope that in meditation the conscious mind will achieve a quietness which will allow the unconscious to manifest its being, and take a positive part in the whole life of man.

But what *are* the forces that work in the unconscious? In the West, most of the answers given are arid indeed. Ways to a more positive understanding have been suggested by Jung: but comparatively few have grasped what his hopes and intentions were, even in the most general way. And the work of Rudolf Steiner has remained in most Western countries as if it did not exist: the scientists, the academics, the artists, the theologians—hardly any of them take it into account. A reason for this is that he himself never lost a sense for the oneness of the world. A theologian today, for example, can make nothing of someone who describes, as Rudolf Steiner sometimes did, the Resurrection of Christ in terms of Salt, Mercury and Sulphur. The specialist often dismisses

THREE POEMS

Carol Coates

There is a stillness

There is a stillness beyond cities
that is green,
caught between sunset and dawn
where breathing branches
brood above great lawns
and the sky is open
to the sky.

Abundant air pours pungent into nostrils
raises the beat of spirit
to a rarer rhythm.
There is a stillness beyond cities
that is green
and shining.

The Candle

Now that the evening sits at my window
darkening it,
I light one candle—
not to prove the sun's desertion
nor signify season or occasion,
but to prompt your Guardian Angel
to remember this night
to pour blessing over your pain.

Many births, many deaths

In the inmost sanctuary of the Self
your face
from darkness
from deeps of Time
emerges at the centre.
As the curtains of sleep roll back
out of the mystery of the waking dark
your face moves forward
to celebrate the day.

PRAYER AND THE ELEMENTAL BEINGS

ADAM BITTLESTON

FROM the time of the coming of Christianity to Europe until recently, countless human beings found in prayer a source of steadiness and confidence in life, and of help in enduring the tension between what they felt as earthly, and what they felt as akin to the heavens, within themselves. This source of help has been lost for Western man, except by a very small minority; and many now turn in their need to the practice which has never been lost in the East: the practice of meditation. But we are in general unsure not only how this is to be done, but of what we are trying to achieve by it.

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without hesitation someone who will not limit himself to his own specialised language.

To those who will listen, Rudolf Steiner offers real answers to questions about the unconscious, about meditation, and about prayer. But these answers are not to be understood or applied very quickly or easily. A way of looking at things which has become habitual during three or four centuries, for a great part of mankind, has to be overcome. This way of looking at things has taken a very strong grasp on us, excluding every alternative, taking as reality only what is counted, measured and weighed. The unconscious protests, but its protests are rejected. The conscious mind has come to believe that there can be no other certainty than this.

Rudolf Steiner describes a path of knowledge by which both Nature and history become transparent, revealing the activity and experience of spiritual beings. He has to struggle with language in doing this, and he can achieve a measure of success only by describing something first in one way, and then a few months or years later quite differently, arousing his hearers or readers to reach beyond the words by their own active effort of comprehension.

Often he described man as most conscious in his sense-perception and thinking, while in his feeling he dreams, and in the real activity of his will he is asleep. Only in sense-perception and thinking is man spiritually *alone*, achieving in these the "modern consciousness" just described: into the dreams and the sleep of his feeling and willing there work other beings; ultimately, indeed, beings of all the spiritual Hierarchies. Even in thought and sense-perception the spiritual beings have not withdrawn utterly from activity, as will be seen.

Among the realms of spiritual beings are some which were forgotten by most men, long before prayer was lost. For the Christian tradition has always been hesitant to speak of them, and in its austerer forms has sometimes attacked any belief or interest in them as paganism. Paul writes of them quite clearly, but with a warning. These are the elemental spirits, and it is not without reason that men have had to neglect them for so many centuries. The consciousness which finds knowledge only through counting, measuring and weighing could not have developed if men had

remained aware of beings so close to them, so significant for their lives, and so little to be counted, weighed or measured.

In Europe, the belief in measurement as the essential element in knowledge took hold of educated men particularly in the seventeenth century—very much at the same time as the spread of tobacco-smoking. And there is perhaps a connection—for tobacco-smoking seems to encase the smoker in a kind of box, insulating him from the elemental beings in particular, making it very unlikely that they will reach his consciousness. The real turning away from tobacco in our time among young people is not just an acceptance of health warnings, I believe, but partly due to the longing for greater sensitivity in this realm.

For our feelings the elementals have always worked, and continue to work very powerfully. Moods of depression or contentment, despondency and courage, alternate in us in ways for which no ordinary reason can be given. For our feeling, events in our lives far apart in time come to be linked. Powers can develop in us, of which we do not know the source. In all these things, the elemental beings may have a hand. Other explanations can always be found, and may be both true and useful. Yet for the vision of the spirit the work of such beings is of great significance—and for us all, before we were born, and after we die.

They try to speak to us, and find us very stupid. Towards the end of his life Rudolf Steiner summed up what they have to say, in a few majestic words. It was in the late autumn of 1923, not long before the Christmas Foundation Meeting. In three lectures, he gave his last and most splendid description of what some of the elemental beings are and do: the Gnomes, Undines, Sylphs and Salamanders—beings of earth, water, air and fire.

For all these beings, earthly matter is no obstacle. The Gnomes pass through the earth, experiencing the different qualities of rock and metal, helping the formation of the roots of plants, supporting in living organisms the processes which lead to solid structure. The Undines dream in the moving waters, and receive the plant-shoots as they come forth from the earth, leading them into growth. The Sylphs flash through the air, accompanying birds in their flight and inspiring their song, touching leaf and petal with their own light-filled friendly goodness. The Fire-Spirits make ready the seed,

and glow where the butterfly opens its wings, and where love weaves between man and the animals which draw near to him.

Man receives the help of all these beings in abundance. But they are not so patient as the spirits known in Christian tradition as guardian Angels, whose work is nearly always unnoticed by those they watch over throughout earthly life. The elementals wish often for some gleam of recognition, or at least for wonder and thankfulness towards their masterpieces on earth and in the sky. In places which are famous for beauty, and where human beings try especially to use their eyes in recognition of it, the elementals may feel less neglected. But they would like to be known in full consciousness.

Man isolates himself from the spiritual universe. The elemental beings have their work on earth, but feel themselves in the service of the Macrocosm; they are sensitive to the changing movements of moon and planets, and to the inpouring grace of the stars. The elemental beings could not feel themselves truly known by men unless he began to share this sense of participation in the universe beyond the earth. When he most regards himself as an earthly being, for example when he is obsessed by thoughts of inherited qualities in himself and all that is connected with these—then he alienates himself from them. And yet man cannot help the fact that he is an earthly being, though he belongs as well to the world of spiritual, creative powers. He has to live in this tension. In centuries to come it will indeed grow more acute; what he is, will become more and more incomprehensible to him; the elements within him will become harder and harder to reconcile.

In meditation and prayer, man needs to find the Christ, who is a cosmic Being, but has accepted and indwelt earthly manhood. Now, in our age, the Christ remains with the earth, but not incarnate in a mortal human body. He walks among the elemental beings in the form of an Angel, and yet with all the consequences of incarnation as man. He renews order and harmony among the elemental beings, who at the time of his incarnation were threatened with chaos. In the utterances of the Sibyls, and in the New Testament, evidence of this can be found. And this, too, was a reason for the historic necessity that man should forget for a time the spirits at work in nature.

The Christ gave to man words that are both a meditation and a prayer, in which the tension between cosmic man and earthly man

can be resolved. In the Lord's Prayer we begin with words which have their full sense for us when we are not incarnate in mortal bodies: "Name," "Kingdom," "Will". Then a great transition is made: "... as above in the heavens, so also on the earth. Give us this day our daily bread..." What follows is concerned with the necessities of earthly incarnation—debt, temptation, evil. These can be met and overcome because the great "golden triangle"—as it is described in the Temple Legend of Hiram and Solomon—shines into our earthly being. Name, Kingdom, and Divine Will—as Rudolf Steiner shows in his lectures on the Lord's Prayer—express the promise of what man can become, when he develops the qualities which in Sanskrit are called Manas, Buddhi and Atma, or by Rudolf Steiner Spirit-Self, Life-Spirit, Spirit-Man.

Man's relationship to these is deeply paradoxical. On the one hand, were he to have nothing of them, he would not be worthy to be called man. And yet, here on earth as he now is, he has no right to call anything of them his own. It would be terrible pride to claim Spirit-Self as his own possession, by his own achievement; men who think of themselves as having a certain 'genius' are in danger of succumbing to this pride. And yet, what would man be if no share of heavenly wisdom, no sense of heavenly community, no divine creative power were his?

The elemental beings see man in this tension. Shakespeare knew the harsh and yet moving description of the seeker after wisdom in the "Golden Ass" by Apuleius. Lucius, his central figure, has for long years to bear the form and the sufferings of a clever donkey. In a gentler form Shakespeare shows the elemental beings playing their tricks with a man who tries, in his own way, to be a creative artist—Bottom the Weaver. In the end, the reproaches and warnings from their realm are kind, leading us both to humility and hope. Often indeed we wear the ass's head; but the elves know what we are meant for. What they say to us has in mind Name, Kingdom and Will.

When Rudolf Steiner gives words addressed to man by Gnomes, Undines, Sylphs and Salamanders, these need not be thought of as spoken like human words, on a single occasion. What is heard in spiritual Inspiration is in the form of timeless words, spoken from the essential being of a spirit or rank of spirits to others, abidingly.

This has to be clothed in the words of a human language, which is necessarily inadequate.

All that the Gnomes say to us can be summed up in the challenge: "Strive to awaken!" What we have as our clearest level of consciousness in thought and perception is still for them only like a dream; we are not aware of our own being, or of what surrounds us, in its full reality. Even other people are shadowy; they pass us by, their joys and griefs, their judgements and ways of seeing the world unnoticed by us. For the Gnomes we stumble about, walking in our sleep indeed, but insecure, not noticing our blunders until they become calamities.

The Undines tell us: "Think in the Spirit!" Our thoughts move continually, concerning themselves with the things of the visible and tangible world around us—but very little aware of what thinking itself is and does for us. We attend to the topics of our thought, seldom to its own character and methods. It appears as if everything that we use in thought came to us originally through one or other of the bodily senses. And we do not notice that we are using great comprehensive concepts and ideas—for example truth, beauty, causality, similarity—even in quite trivial trains of thought. But the Undines observe it. Rudolf Steiner gives as one of their sayings, leading towards their appeal "Think in the Spirit!", a description of how our ordinary mental life appears to them:

Thou thinkest the work of the Angels,
But knowest it not.

The Undines are near to the Angels, who see them making for themselves in the waters of the earth something like an ever-changing bodily nature. Man, before entering the earthly body, in which bones and teeth harden into solidity, shared in the Angel's world; and among them his thinking was a living thing, at one with theirs. Only as we grow up does our thought die into shadow-forms, which still bear witness to its original life, as a corpse does to the living organism that preceded it.

Particularly in the years between about twelve and thirty, there can be something like a painful, restless, subconscious recognition of these facts. And young people may therefore turn towards forms of meditation which leave out thought entirely, or try to do so. It is rightly felt that thinking *about* something is not meditation;

we continue to wander among the shadow-pictures, and make no progress towards reality. And yet a thought can live at the centre of a meditation; then it begins to shine, and to reveal itself as part of a spiritual world, interwoven with other living thoughts.

No longer isolated within man, it shows its kinship with those feelings by which we are drawn into unity with the greater powers of the universe, feelings such as thankfulness and confidence.

During the last summer of his life, in June, 1924, Rudolf Steiner gave to a group of young people in Breslau something like a definition of what meditation is. Certainly this should be compared with many other descriptions he gave at other times. But it is very illuminating. He said: "Meditation means indeed to transform what one knows into devotion."

The words of the Lord's Prayer have to be approached from many points of view. But here we are very close to the first petition, "Hallowed be thy Name". In every genuine name an idea or concept lives and shines, and is to be felt as holy. The Father-God is beyond all conceiving, beyond all naming; and yet wherever a name becomes true in us, being transformed in devotion, we are nearer to the Father's Name—which is not just a part of earthly speech, but spoken by him as men say "I"; it is a living being, the Christ, the eternal Logos.

From our place as men, we can respond to the challenges of the Gnomes and Undines, not with any pride about our own achievement of knowledge, but with thankfulness and confidence about the life of spirit-thoughts which is beginning to grow within us, in the words of the Lord's Prayer, "Hallowed be thy Name."

Men have forgotten the names of heavenly beings, and the names of the Elementals, even the names of the powers which tempt men; but they will be found again, and with them our own true names as individual men, with which the Christ himself calls us to wakefulness in the Spirit.

* * * * *

The Sylphs, who flash through the boundless air, say to men "Live breathing existence, creating!" What is it in the world around us that breathes, in shorter and longer rhythms? We have the outbreathing and inbreathing of night and day, in which man shares with his sleeping and waking. And in most regions of the earth the rhythm of the year, with which man's life of feeling is

closely connected, sways between the outbreathing of summer and the inbreathing of winter. Man's ability to be creative depends upon his participation in these and other rhythms.

Our social life at the present time is in general uncreative. It is tied up in rules and conventions, and most of all in the fixed ideas which individuals or groups have about themselves and each other. We do not recognise the truth of the saying of Heraclitus, that the sun is every day new. The Sylphs see how creative power shines out for the soul of man, and how he fails to recognise it, and to take it into the forming of his own life.

Every civilisation needs particular men who are creative in a quite specific sense—the artists. In our time it is evident that the process of artistic creation is hindered, within the artists themselves, in very troubling and bewildering ways. They are often not able to contribute by their work what is needed for the loosening of rigidities in social life and men's thoughts about each other. Buildings are designed, for example, which are quite unsuitable for the human experience that should be achieved within them, and quite unrelated to the life and forms of plants and trees around them. Such buildings can become desert regions for the elemental beings and can make it all the more difficult for people who live or work in them to form socially helpful ideas. On the other hand, the greater a work of art is, the more will it awaken those who experience it to the destinies and needs of their fellow-men.

A true work of art is created for a community, but also *from* a community. The artist does not stand alone; he is always a member of a small or large group of people who are significant for him. If, as can happen, this group withers away as a community, and he cannot find an appropriate place in another, he may cease to be creative, though the fact may be disguised. It is often possible for him simply to repeat himself, and this may be found very acceptable. But what is really needed is not achieved.

The health of a community depends on its breathing. The creative artist needs a community, perhaps a very small one, in which he can breathe himself and share in the breathing life of the group as a whole. And what can be seen with him, perhaps in tragic greatness, applies in the end to everyone; for we are intended to be artists in our lives, whatever our occupation may be. Each individual goes out in attentiveness, in reverence, to the world

around him; each draws back into himself. And so every community has to do. But unless certain qualities are strong, both in the individual and the group—thankfulness, responsibility, confidence, openness to what is new—this breathing process will be disturbed. Through the presence of these qualities griefs can be borne, fears overcome. But the individual or the group wrapped in grief or fear cannot be approached by the Sylphs with all the help that they would like to bring. The breathing is troubled, the sources of creative power lost.

In this realm, true prayer is active. It thanks, it accepts responsibility, it grows confident, it is open to the future. And so, looking towards the Christ as he shines in the realm of the clouds where the Sylphs are ascending, the praying human heart can respond with the words, "Thy Kingdom come!" In the Kingdom of Christ men will become free and creative beings, united in communities which serve the future. Of any particular earthly community, of course, we have to recognise that it fulfils its purpose only very imperfectly; it has an Angel, but also a shadow. When the seven churches in Asia are described at the beginning of the Revelation of St. John, their virtues are praised, but often they are warned of their characteristic faults. Members of the community do well to cultivate self-knowledge in this way—the recognition of their particular community's shadow. To be impatient or censorious about it is of course as useless as to condemn the weaknesses of others, or one's own; the shadow has everywhere to be accepted, lived with, and redeemed. Thus in the Lord's Prayer the strong hope of "Thy Kingdom come!" is completed by the humble "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We become debtors to the world in our very breathing. The burdened air we breathe out has to be received and transformed where the work of Sylph and Undine meet, at the surface of the living leaf, through the help of the light. But we, who give the Elementals so many hard tasks, can contribute greatly to their lives if we share in the right way in the breathing of the earth, by celebrating the festivals of the year.

In each of these the cosmic and the earthly in man, the hope of the Kingdom and the recognition of debt and weakness, come to expression in their reality, not as theoretical knowledge, but in active

experience and acceptance. In the great festivals of Christmas and Easter, Ascension and Whitsun, St. John and Michaelmas, knowledge becomes prayer, and thereby a directly redeeming and healing influence upon the breathing of man becomes possible. When the Elementals see this coming about, they can recognise with joy that men are beginning to share in some of their tasks and do not only hinder them. And the creative works of men will take their harmonious place among all living things on earth.

* * * * *

Of the speech of the Fire-Spirits to us, Rudolf Steiner says that it sounds "as in fiery anger, though anger that is not felt to be annihilating, but rather as something that man must receive from the cosmos, a fiery and at the same time an enthusiastic anger." It is like "a mighty voice of thunder from the whole environment." It says:

Receive in love the Will-power of the Gods.

In everyday life the human will sleeps; it is not inactive, it is present in everything we do, but we are very little conscious of its true nature. The mightiest heavenly Spirits are ready to bestow on us strength for action; we use it, and yet we are unwilling to use it; often we reject it. The anger in the voice of the Fire-Spirits is stirred by man's choice of transitory things, rather than eternal purposes, as motives for his will. Each day brings him opportunities to respond, when he observes what the world needs of him; each day there is someone lying afflicted by his path, like the traveller from Jerusalem to Jericho. The instincts of his own bodily nature drive him on to disregard what is needed. And so he alienates the Fire-Spirits who try to aid him.

From the Christian soul there sounds the prayer "Thy Will be done, as above in the heavens, so also on the earth." The beings of earth, man among them, could carry out in their actions the Divine Will, as do the beings of the highest heavens, the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones. But often men and demons claim the earth as if it were their own. This must show itself more and more plainly as the earth goes towards its end. On the way to Golgotha, the Christ Jesus spoke of this necessity. "For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

The earth is slowly dying, from century to century, whether men act well or ill. But this death can lead to the birth of a new universe,

in triumphant fulfilment of all that has been prepared through the ages by angels and men in the service of God, or it can lead to dust. This was the great warning given by Jesus, when he told the disciples to shake off the dust from their feet against the villages which would not receive them, as a testimony. And the Elementals are profoundly aware of this difference. For them it is not necessarily a matter of grief that the earth must pass away; it can be for them the promise of a liberation, and great new tasks. They call on man to share in preparing that new world of which the earth can be the seed.

But man does not always find in himself the ability to receive the Will-power of the Gods into his loving actions. Often he may find in his physical being weaknesses, which he seems quite unable to master. And indeed, as long as he looks only *within* himself, there may seem to be no strength at all. His will *uses* the limbs, the muscles and the chemical processes of the body; but in its real being it extends, in space and in time, far beyond them. He finds this real being of his will completely only after his feeling has awakened to the Will of Christ. Then he can know himself as rooted in the harmonious order of the world, and able to sacrifice what limits him within his own needs and wishes.

This may happen in full consciousness only at rare moments in the course of an incarnation. Less consciously, what is done in a selfless way in the service of other men, perhaps in what seems to be a very uninteresting occupation, may also reveal the real will, and unite in a positive sense with the work of the elementals.

In the realm of the will, man is not only weak; he can also become evil. He is given the opportunity to separate himself more and more from the divine Beings who are his source—beginning with the intellect, when it is used without reverence, and then in his feeling, when it is not illumined by any ideals, but isolates him in his own wishes and resentments. Finally, his will can be possessed by the impulse to destroy—at first those who oppose or frustrate him, at last the whole beautiful order of the world. We pray in the Lord's Prayer that man may not fall into this darkness: "Deliver us from the Evil." Living with these words, we should feel their very positive sense; not as an anxious warding off of the adversary, but as containing hope of complete liberation, when nothing at all is left in man which the destroying spirits could use for their purposes.

For this liberation the elemental spirits, and indeed all creatures of the earth, have a profound longing. St. Paul wrote of this in the Epistle to the Romans: "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God." And wherever the elementals are, they watch human beings as they come and go, and look for the signs of the will to destroy, or the signs of peace, in their souls.

This does not happen only in woods and on open hills, and other places rich in plants and trees; as F. H. Julius has shown, even in great cities there are corners where such beings can gather. And from every place human souls in sleep seek their way towards the elemental realms, revealing all the conflicts which have beset them.

When man begins to achieve peace within himself, his words grow stronger. They become more capable of encouraging and comforting his fellow human beings; they become effective among the elemental beings as well. And this will be needed. Much that seems today simply part of the order of nature, to be relied on as a matter of course, will before very long begin to fail, if men do not bring to it their active help, in return for all that they themselves have received. In this connection Rudolf Steiner spoke of the formation of dew, which is so significant in many climates. In this the Undines are at work; but they will not be able to continue this work in the future, unless men bring the right help.

Dew-formation is a Mercury process. The whole earth can become more and more a realm of healing, of Mercury-will, and of Mercury-speech, if what begins in wonder, and is continued in genuinely compassionate communities, learns to use the substances of earth as they should be used. The Good Samaritan poured upon the wounds of the man who had fallen among thieves "oil and wine"—substances which bear witness to the activity of the Fire-Spirits.

Whatever man touches, tries to tell him how it should be used. If he listens and speaks and acts in response, out of a wide cosmic understanding and love, new life springs up among the elementals, and their relationship to the heavenly Hierarchies is strengthened. If he uses the substances of earth in the service of his own unilluminated wishes and fears, he drives the elemental beings into the hands of the adversary powers, into the service of Lucifer, the Lord of Wishes, and into the service of Ahriman, the bringer of fear.

Meditation and prayer culminate in a right mastery over the substances of earth, a good magic—both inside and outside the

physical body of man. "Grace before meals" has thus a far-reaching significance; and "Give us this day our daily bread," stands with reason at the heart of the Lord's Prayer. With what mood of soul the nourishment of man is grown, and shared, and received, means very much for the destiny of the earth. Just as old age for individuals can be a time of bitter self-absorption, or a time of radiance and blessing, so the earth can be given into the hands of Christ or into the power of demons, by the thoughts and feelings and actions of men.

In meditation and prayer, man seeks again his place among the beings of the cosmos. He transforms earthly speech, developed by him for his own concerns, once more into words which can be shared between him and the invisible beings, including those nearest neighbours, the elementals. Question and answer can begin to live between him and them. He can declare his own deepest purposes in accord with theirs; and be at peace.

NOTE

The main source for the description of the Elemental beings in this article is 'Man as Symphony of the Creative Word,' twelve lectures given by Rudolf Steiner in 1923, especially lectures 7, 8 and 9. A new translation of these lectures was published by the Rudolf Steiner Press in 1970, price £1.40. See also the article, 'Nature-Spirits', by F. H. Julius, in the *Golden Blade*, 1971.

TWO POEMS

Cynthia Nicholson

I

At night before sleeping,
I saw a web of gold
Flung from the sun and stars
And moon to earth.
Intricate figures glowed
At every joining.
At rest, aware, I lay
Watching the golden net
Sway shining against the dark
In a light wind.

My heart hastened its anxious beat.
The strands that held me
To what I saw,
One by one,
Snapped.
I fell.
The shimmering mesh had failed,
Letting me slip, slide into the chasm,
Plunge
Abandoned among unnumbered millions,
I fell alone.

II

Through the past I came
To the garden of the honey-coloured castle.
Steep tower stairs climbed open to the sky,
Yet trees, trained to the walls, still grew.

I looked out upon long cared-for country,
Round and content, sleeping in the sun.
Below me small roads curved around the hills,
And sheep grazed in a green field.

For this, I knew, the dead return,
Begin again
To guard the islands beyond the islands,
Renew the turning world.
I heard the ring of falling water
And saw the sinking sun
Set the seas afire.

DESTINY HEWN IN STONE

A Study of the Life of Michelangelo

BARUCH URIELI

Mr. Urieli, a recently ordained priest of the Christian Community, was born in Austria and has lived in this country since 1951, working in various centres of the Camphill Organisation. On a visit to Florence in 1968 he became aware of the great importance of its Platonic Academy and has not ceased since then to study the work of the Renaissance Platonists. His essay on Michelangelo is a fruit of these studies.

EVERY human life can be seen as an attempt to engrave a particular individual message into earth-existence; to imprint one's individuality into the earth and thereby to transform it. In a destiny such as that of Michelangelo this is more evident than in many others, since he imprinted the script of his life into stone. Sculptured stone reveals the destiny and the mission of Michelangelo on earth. The following essay is an attempt to read the destiny of Michelangelo as it reveals itself in the sculptures of the Medici graves and in his last Pietas.

* * *

Five years after the foundation of the Platonic Academy of Florence by Lorenzo the Magnificent, Michelangelo Buonarroti was born. Florence at that time was an outstanding centre of culture, the well-spring of the Renaissance. Cosimo de' Medici and after him his son, Lorenzo the Magnificent, had used their influence, their wealth and the greatness of their humanity to gather round them philosophers, artists and scientists in an attempt to permeate life with a renewed and christianised Platonism.

Marsilio Ficino, son of Cosimo's physician, had been educated by Platonist philosophers to become the leader of a renewed Academy which only those would enter who, at least once in their lives, had glimpsed the reality of the world of ideas and to whom this glimpse had brought a certainty that while man in his earthly body is cut off from the spirit, he can carry the spirit into earthly existence through the power of meditation and can make it visible through

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Snapped.
I fell.
The shimmering mesh had failed,
Letting me slip, slide into the chasm,
Plunge
Abandoned among unnumbered millions,
I fell alone.

II

Through the past I came
To the garden of the honey-coloured castle.
Steep tower stairs climbed open to the sky,
Yet trees, trained to the walls, still grew.

I looked out upon long cared-for country,
Round and content, sleeping in the sun.
Below me small roads curved around the hills,
And sheep grazed in a green field.

For this, I knew, the dead return,
Begin again
To guard the islands beyond the islands,
Renew the turning world.
I heard the ring of falling water
And saw the sinking sun
Set the seas afire.

DESTINY HEWN IN STONE

A Study of the Life of Michelangelo

BARUCH URIELI

Mr. Urieli, a recently ordained priest of the Christian Community, was born in Austria and has lived in this country since 1951, working in various centres of the Camphill Organisation. On a visit to Florence in 1968 he became aware of the great importance of its Platonic Academy and has not ceased since then to study the work of the Renaissance Platonists. His essay on Michelangelo is a fruit of these studies.

EVERY human life can be seen as an attempt to engrave a particular individual message into earth-existence; to imprint one's individuality into the earth and thereby to transform it. In a destiny such as that of Michelangelo this is more evident than in many others, since he imprinted the script of his life into stone. Sculptured stone reveals the destiny and the mission of Michelangelo on earth. The following essay is an attempt to read the destiny of Michelangelo as it reveals itself in the sculptures of the Medici graves and in his last Pietas.

* * *

Five years after the foundation of the Platonic Academy of Florence by Lorenzo the Magnificent, Michelangelo Buonarroti was born. Florence at that time was an outstanding centre of culture, the well-spring of the Renaissance. Cosimo de' Medici and after him his son, Lorenzo the Magnificent, had used their influence, their wealth and the greatness of their humanity to gather round them philosophers, artists and scientists in an attempt to permeate life with a renewed and christianised Platonism.

Marsilio Ficino, son of Cosimo's physician, had been educated by Platonist philosophers to become the leader of a renewed Academy which only those would enter who, at least once in their lives, had glimpsed the reality of the world of ideas and to whom this glimpse had brought a certainty that while man in his earthly body is cut off from the spirit, he can carry the spirit into earthly existence through the power of meditation and can make it visible through

works of art. Artists such as Verrocchio, Botticelli, Perugino, Ghirlandaio, Filippino Lippi and Leonardo united with poets and philosophers to build the foundation of a new age.

The young Michelangelo found himself rather soon in the centre of this world. He asked his father to apprentice him to Ghirlandaio, but since he preferred sculpture to painting he found his way to Bertoldo, a pupil of the sculptor Donatello, whom Lorenzo had employed as a teacher for young promising sculptors. There his outstanding talent was discovered by Lorenzo who took him into his own house in order to see to his education. Thereby Michelangelo had reached the centre of the Platonist world of Florence. For three years his destiny allowed him to live in the company of the best of his age: philosophers, artists, men of knowledge who were imbued with the power of Platonist wisdom.

During these three years which were perhaps the foundation for Michelangelo's life as an artist, Savonarola was called to Florence. Much hope had been set on his fervent power of morality. Would it be possible through a union of renewed Platonism and renewed Christian morality to overcome and transform the unchristian Christianity which was centred in Rome? The attempt failed. Savonarola was unable to see the future elements in Platonism. He turned the fire that burned in him against the Platonists. Lorenzo, who had called Savonarola to Florence, died in 1492 at the age of forty-three. The failure of his great aims no doubt contributed largely to the untimeliness of his death.

After Lorenzo's death Michelangelo left the house of the Medici and Florence. The dream of his youth had come to an abrupt end, for Piero, the son of Lorenzo, was an incompetent and unenlightened ruler. Michelangelo went to Rome. From now on most of his life was spent in Rome. Florence saw him only for a number of mainly short periods. Most of these were periods of Republican rule, when he worked for the glory of the Republic or for its defence. During such periods he created the statue of the young David, which was considered a statue of liberty, and the cartoon of the Battle of Cascina. There was only one long stay, the years 1520-1534, when he created the sculptures of the Medici tombs in the service of Giulio, the nephew of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who had become Pope Clement VII.

* * *

The commission which Michelangelo received from Clement VII was to build a chapel, with the tombs of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his brother Giuliano as well as those of the dukes Lorenzo of Urbino and Giuliano of Nemours. Lorenzo the Magnificent and his very beautiful, gifted and beloved brother Giuliano, who had been murdered in 1478, had been the centres of the Platonic revival. Lorenzo of Urbino, the grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was an incompetent tyrant like his father Piero, and spent his life in warfare and libertinism. Giuliano of Nemours, a man of withdrawn and morose disposition, had accomplished no deed worth mentioning in his entire life. The dukes had died in the years 1516 and 1519 respectively and their statues were to be created for the chapel in order to glorify the memory of the Medici family.

Michelangelo made a multitude of sketches and models for the planned chapel, a rather elaborate building. However, as in so many of Michelangelo's works, time and circumstances reduced the plans to a minimum and the chapel as we know it today is composed in masterly simplicity. As one faces the altar, the tombs of Lorenzo of Urbino and Giuliano of Nemours are to the left and the right respectively. Each of them is marked by a magnificent group of three sculptures, one sitting figure flanked by two reclining. The tombs of the Magnificent and his brother are at the back, and between them is a most beautiful Madonna and Child.*

At this juncture it is necessary to point to a fundamental distortion in the present arrangement of the chapel. Already at a very early date the statues of Lorenzo of Urbino and Giuliano of Nemours must have been exchanged, for unknown reasons, with the result that the statue of Giuliano stands to the left, on Lorenzo's tomb, and the statue of Lorenzo to the right, on Giuliano's tomb. It is not thinkable that a sculptor such as Michelangelo would have placed the two statues in such a way that both turn away from the altar, nor does the character expressed in these sculptures as they are now placed match their historical description. In fact, each figure shows the opposite of his historical character.

This change-over must have happened before Vasari's visit to the chapel, for with him starts the long series of attempts by art

* The statues of St. Damian and St. Cosmas, which were executed by Michelangelo's pupils and placed on both sides of the Madonna, are unnecessary from an artistic point of view.

critics to explain why Michelangelo should have presented both dukes in such contradiction to their known characters. Hermann Grimm first became aware of these discrepancies and took the view that the names had been mixed up. This view, however, is contradicted in a poem by Michelangelo, which links Giuliano with Day and Night, saying: "Day and Night speak, they say: in our swift course we led to death Duke Giuliano . . ." Rudolf Steiner suggested* that an interchange of statues had taken place. This suggestion is clearly confirmed by the portraits of the dukes painted by the contemporary Il Bronzino (1503-1572); they are marked with the names of the dukes and thereby leave little doubt as to the correctness of Rudolf Steiner's suggestion.

* * *

It is therefore necessary to make a mental interchange of the statues of the two dukes and then look anew at the chapel. The left-hand side is then dominated by the statue of Lorenzo of Urbino, flanked by the female figure of Dawn and the male figure of Dusk. Lorenzo is represented as a leader of armies; Michelangelo took hold of a significant part of his character, purified it and created the ideal image of the Active Man. The right-hand side is dominated by the statue of Giuliano of Nemours, flanked by the female figure of Night and the male figure of Day. Giuliano is represented as a pondering ruler; here too Michelangelo reached out to the world of ideas for the truest part of his character and as a result created the image of the Meditative Man. In this way we are suddenly faced with the fundamental question of the Platonist Academy of Florence: What is the relationship between man's spiritual, meditative life and man's active earthly life? Can they be united in one human heart or must they forever clash with each other?

* * *

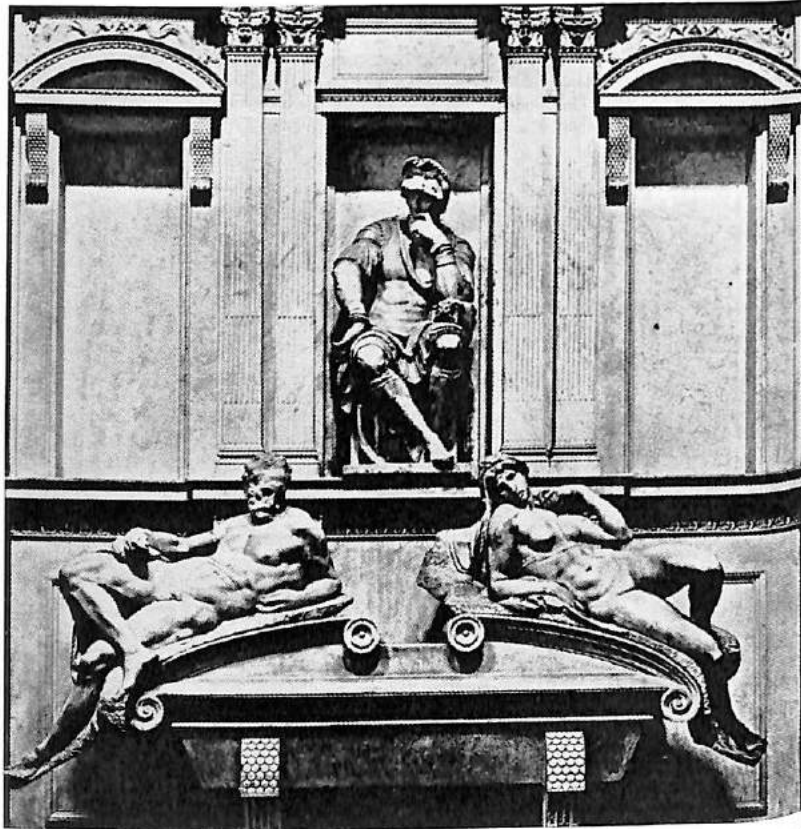
On the left side of the chapel, below the niche where we now imagine Lorenzo of Urbino, the Active Man, the figures of Dawn and Dusk are placed. Radiant beauty wells through the body of Dawn. Yet as the head rises from sleep it is gripped by pain, a pain that has its origin in the region of the forehead and from there envelops the body. The young soul awakens into the realities of earthly life, into the battle of earth-existence. It is willing to leave the realms

* In the lecture of 26.11.1912.

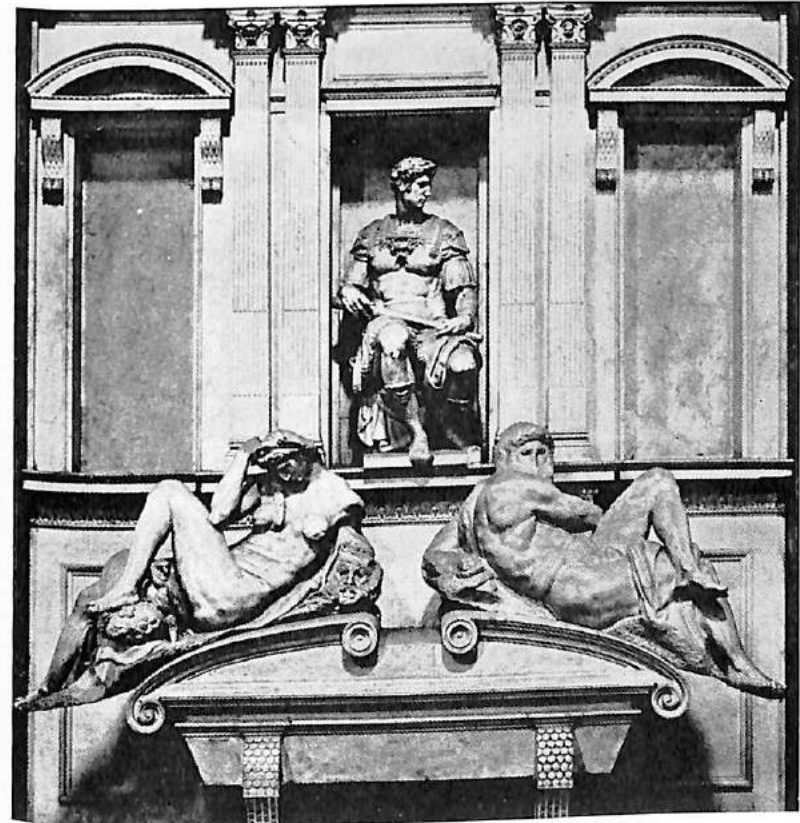


Giuliano, Duke of Nemours (1479-1516)
Portrait by Bronzino

Michelangelo's sculptures for the Medici tombs in the Medici Chapel, Florence



Giuliano, Duke of Nemours, portrayed here as the 'Meditative Man'
 The reclining figures represent Dusk (left) and Dawn
 As Mr. Urieli explains in his article, the statues of the two Dukes must have been transposed at some unknown early date. Hence we should mentally picture the statue of Lorenzo on the left, above the figures of Dusk and Dawn, and the statue of Giuliano on the right, above the figures of Night and Day



Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, portrayed here as the 'Active Man'
 The reclining figures represent Night (left) and Day



Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino (1492-1519)
Portrait by Bronzino

of heavenly beauty and to bring the sacrifice of incarnation. This sacrifice, however, lights up its beauty, lets it shine in the glory of the moment of parting.

In Dusk the sacrifice has been completed. A long day, or perhaps a long life, has been battled to its end. The earthly body has become tired and heavy; the muscles have lost their tension, the weight of the body draws down. Hands and feet are not fully completed, as if they were clouded by weariness. The traits of the head fade out, for the task of this life is completed. The legs form a clear cross: the cross of the life on this earth has been borne. It is done.

Looking back again to Lorenzo we now can see in him one who knows what it costs to enter the battle of life and is yet willing to venture it. In his stature the pain and the beauty of Dawn carry the weight of Dusk.

On the right side of the chapel, below the niche that should belong to Giuliano of Nemours, the Meditative Man, the figures of Night and Day are placed; one might even be justified in saying the figures of Midnight and Mid-day. Night is a figure of great mystery; so alive that in Michelangelo's time rumour had it in Florence that she would come to life and walk about when Michelangelo was with her alone.

It is, however, strange to see that Night does not have the bodily beauty of youth, as we find it in Dawn. Ernst Steinmann, the art critic, suggested that this is the body of a woman who has just given birth. Indeed, the skin of the body is full of folds and the breasts are like those of a woman who will suckle a child. The body has given itself to what is to come, what is to be received; between chest and knee a receptacle has been formed. The head bends in humility and devotion over the receptacle formed by the body. Its features are filled with an unearthly beauty which has, however, become fully human. The body gave itself up and received the gift of the heavens; the head beholds it and makes it its own. No wonder that the head of the Night is adorned with a sickle and a star. The soul has opened itself to the spirit-gift at the deepest hour of night. The gift received becomes a star of soul* that leads into the next day; we may perhaps even say, into the next life. This star

* Compare Rudolf Steiner, *The Soul's Awakening*, Scene 9.

of soul reveals its nature in the unearthly yet deeply human beauty of the face of Night.

Opposite Night the mighty figure of Day is placed. Here, also, the left knee is drawn towards the half-raised body, forming a beautiful balance to the statue of Night; but here everything is determined will. Coagulated, clenched will-power towers in taut muscles. Above these hills of will the countenance of man rises like a radiant sun. Why did Michelangelo not complete the head? Perhaps because we begin to face here a future, a future that is still veiled, is still to come. The will of a life taken fully in hand begins to create the outlines of a far future.

Let us now look back at the statue of Giuliano. As in the statue of Lorenzo we can glimpse here the union of the two accompanying statues. In the traits of his face live the receptivity and the vision of the Night, whose hair tresses have been transformed into a helmet. The body is full of held strength: inner vision will become deed and create future.

* * *

It is an astonishing fact that Michelangelo did not make statues of Lorenzo the Magnificent and his brother Giuliano. Was not the Magnificent his benefactor, his teacher, even his spiritual father? Was not Giuliano the joy and hope of Florence until he was murdered by Roman intrigue in 1578? Should not these two have been the ones whose statues would crown the reclining figures to the left and to the right?

Perhaps this is so. But perhaps it was possible for Michelangelo to find those two minute grains of gold in the characters of the Duke of Urbino and the Duke of Nemours, and to present them to the eye free of an immense weight of slag, only through a mediation of the two who had carried the same names. For in them had lived similar grains of gold—far more powerfully and creatively—and they had sacrificed their lives. Their graves in the back of the chapel form a well-spring for the two-fold hope of the Florentine Platonists: that man could become again truly active and truly meditative—active without being lost in the world, meditative without being lost for the world. The beautiful Madonna with Child, which Michelangelo placed between the two graves, tells in gentle eloquence where the soul-mother could be found who was to bear

the spirit-child, and in what kind of people was the origin of all that wanted to flow from Florence.

* * *

Eleven years after stopping the work on the Medici graves and moving to Rome for good, Michelangelo started another great work of sculpture, a *Pieta*. It had not been commissioned by anyone. The master, then seventy years of age, began to work on a *Pieta* for his own grave. The marble for it came from the capital of one of the pillars of the Temple of Peace on the Forum. Vasari tells us that the master worked on it often during sleepless nights, by the light of a candle fixed to a headgear he wore.

In this way Michelangelo worked for ten years. Then, however, so rumour has it, he discovered faults in the marble. At first he wanted to smash the statue, but later he changed his mind and gave it away. This *Pieta* was restored where it had been broken and has now found its place in a side-chapel of the Duomo of Florence.

This *Pieta* consists of a group of four: Joseph of Arimathea, Mary Magdalene and Mary the Mother receiving the body of Christ from the cross. The group is created not only by Michelangelo the great sculptor, who is able to give the human being in masterly perfection the most unusual positions and movements; here the great builder Michelangelo has united with the great sculptor. For now the statues are not balanced against each other as in the Medici graves, but they intertwine and carry each other in a most intricate way.

The body of the Christ in the centre is held on its right by the powerful figure of Joseph of Arimathea who towers above it; on its left it is supported by the arm of Mary the Mother, who in her turn is supported by the left arm of Arimathea. While Arimathea bends forward, carrying the weight of Christ's body, and Mary the Mother sits, Mary Magdalene is the only one in the group who stands upright. She stands at the right hand side of the Christ, disproportionately small. She supports with her right hand the right upper leg of the Christ. Her head, tilted to its right, touches the right arm of Christ, while his right hand touches and nearly supports the centre of her back.

All the figures of the group are incomplete, yet in varying degrees: Mary Magdalene is the nearest to completion, Mary the Mother is the furthest from it. Yet in spite of all this their features are

clearly recognisable, and all four are related by a fine web of similarity to the four figures of the Medici graves. In the heaviness of the body of Christ we can find again Dusk and its weariness, but the weariness has become immensely meaningful. The meaning of the earth begins to reveal itself. In the loving embrace of Mary the Mother, against whose head the Christ leans his, in the angle of her arm that forms a receptacle, we recognise once more the figure of Night.

Mary Magdalene is unmistakably a sister to Dawn. Yet now she stands upright, and between the two tresses of her parted hair, which previously could be seen as a first indication of those spiritual organs that would become in their full strength the horns of Moses, the image of an angelic being can be seen. Why must we enter the realm of earth, why must we suffer it, why must we be drawn to it in love? Because our higher being, our true self, wants to find its place there, wants to become one with it.

In the dynamic relationships of the group the close relationship of Mary the Mother and her son is balanced against the distant relationship of Arimathea and Mary Magdalene. The relatively large face of Arimathea towers above the group, just as the face of Day towered above his will-filled body. Here too the future begins to show itself in Arimathea, the future for which Mary Magdalene always longed and searched; for Arimathea will carry the cup of the Grail on its future pathways.

Thus the four elements which were polarised into two pairs in the active and the meditative man begin to interweave through what is flowing from the deed of Christ at Golgotha. Night can behold in its receptivity that death is the meaning and the reality of life on earth. Dawn begins to glimpse her own true being and starts to learn that pain forms the footholds of the path which leads to a new, a resurrected earth.

* * *

There is a mystery woven around the figure of Joseph of Arimathea. The uncompleted, still not fully born face of the statue discloses some of the traits of Michelangelo himself. What did the master intend to express thereby? Did he once more attempt to answer the great question which had accompanied him all his life: Can man be a citizen of both worlds? Must he not become a stranger to the world of the spirit when he turns actively to the life



The Florentine Pietà, in the Duomo, Florence
The body of Christ is supported by Joseph of Arimathea, with Mary the Mother (right) and Mary Magdalene (left)



The unfinished Pietà Rondanini, Milan

on earth? Must he not become a stranger to this world when he turns his heart to the world of the spirit? The Medici rulers had become tyrants and libertines, while men and women of the spirit such as Giuliano, the brother of the Magnificent, Savonarola, Vittoria Colonna, had been destroyed or rendered powerless.

Dusk had reached the existence of Michelangelo. But during the long years of work on the Pietà which was to be his grave-stone he had learned that Dusk was the meaning and the reality of earthly life. Out of it a new Day was to grow. A new Day indeed, a new Michelangelo began to be born in him. "To him who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone with a new name written on the stone . . ." says the Book of Revelation (2, 17).

These developments can perhaps be seen as the true background to the fact that Michelangelo was unable to complete his Pietà. The new Day of the Pietà could not wear the features of Michelangelo. He would receive a new name: and who is the man who would know this new name before the hour of his death?

When Michelangelo had realised that he was unable to complete the Pietà, he began a new attempt. For the last nine years of his life, until the very last day of it, he worked on this new Pietà, the so-called Pietà Rondanini. This is no longer a group of four. What remains is only the Christ and the one who stands above him to carry him. In the language of the Medici graves one could read here that Dusk is carried by the new Day. However, this is not Arimathea who now carries the Christ; it is Mary. With a gesture of immeasurable humility and love she bends over her Son.

Has Night become Day?

Here the inexpressible is expressed, is hewn in stone.

Sources in addition to the work of Rudolf Steiner:

E. Uehli: *Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael.*

F. Niedermeyer: *Die Medicäer Grabmäler Michelangelos und La Pietà im Dom zu Florenz.*

O. Neeracher: *Florenz.*

E. Wind: *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance.*

ANCIENT MYSTERIES AND THE TASKS OF OUR TIME

ITA WEGMAN

Prefatory Note: Ita Wegman was born in Java, of Dutch parents, on 22 February 1876. She had a free and happy childhood. When she came to Europe she wished to find a helpful task, and trained first in curative gymnastics and Swedish massage. In Berlin she encountered the work of Rudolf Steiner, very soon after his decision to appear publicly as esoteric teacher. She showed understanding for both elements in his task—the courage to face the civilisation of his time with the results of spiritual investigation, and the patience to develop the inner capacities of individuals.

She herself decided to enter full medical training; this she did, and built up an extensive general practice in Zurich. But when Rudolf Steiner gave his great course on *Spiritual Science and Medicine* in 1920,* she resolved to move closer to Dornach, and with the help of his advice opened a clinic in Arlesheim, only some twenty minutes' walk from the Goetheanum. Her initiative played a great part in the development close by of work with children in need of special care, and in the production of medicines (the Weleda).

From the summer of 1923 her co-operation with Rudolf Steiner, beyond the limits of medical and healing tasks, showed itself also in the special understanding and support she gave to all he did in the description of ancient Mystery-knowledge and its renewal at the present time—for example, in the study of earthly substances in their spiritual origin and significance—and, above all, in her response to Rudolf Steiner's account of the being and task of the Archangel Michael. Her understanding was never simply a matter of the mind, but involved all her warmth and strength of personality.

When the Anthroposophical Society, with Rudolf Steiner as President, was founded at Christmas, 1923, Dr. Wegman became a member of the Vorstand, the group of personalities responsible for the general leadership of the Society, and also head of the Medical Section. During Rudolf Steiner's last illness it was her task to care for him as physician, as well as completing with him the book for which they shared responsibility, published in English as *Fundamentals of Therapy*.†

* Rudolf Steiner Press, second impression, 1975. Hardback, £3.60; paperback, £2.00.

† Rudolf Steiner Press, Third Edition, revised, 1967. 0.80p.

After his death she tried to express to members of the Society how Rudolf Steiner had met the months of sickness, winning from them every possible hour for work and for conversations with other members of the Vorstand; and she took up certain themes, about which she herself had been able to speak with him, and on which he had given lectures or had written during this last period of his life. (Many of these lectures were not yet available in print for the Society when she wrote.) She sought to impart not only the information Rudolf Steiner had given, but also the warmth and deep enthusiasm which had lived in his words at such moments; in doing so she hoped to bring the best comfort she could to the many who were stricken by a sense of irreparable loss.

In those early days, what she attempted did not find full understanding. Looking back now over fifty years, it is easier for us to see what was meant. But Mysteries remain Mysteries; they ask the human being to transform all he has, if he is truly to pass through their doors.

Later, Dr. Wegman was able to be active mainly in the fields of medicine and curative education, where she gave encouragement to people from many countries. She died at Arlesheim on 4 March, 1943.

It is hoped that the three Letters printed here will give a characteristic impression.

A.B.

MICHAEL AND HIS ADVERSARIES*

2 August 1925

WE are now living in the Michael Age, and in order to be able to comprehend fully the work of Michael we will bring together all the building aids given us by Rudolf Steiner. His purpose was to awaken us from sleep and to show us the tasks incumbent upon us. We shall have to realise more and more clearly how deeply we are united with Michael, and that Anthroposophy is a Michael impulse, which was deepened, illuminated from all sides, brought over from the spiritual world by Rudolf Steiner, and so made comprehensible on earth for men in their present state of consciousness.

We have heard that Michael is concerned with the development of the cosmic intelligence; that Michael, as the most important Archangel and Sun Spirit, had to renounce his rulership of the cosmic

* Dr. Wegman's Letters were first published in the Goetheanum News-Sheet, 1925-6; translations were printed in *Anthroposophical Movement*, the News-Sheet of the Anthroposophical Society in Britain at that time. All the Letters, together with articles and reports by Dr. Wegman on her journeys and other activities of the period, have been collected in a volume entitled *An die Freunde*, published in 1968 by the Natura-Verlag, Arlesheim, to whom our thanks are due for permission to print three of the Letters in revised translations.

intelligence as a result of the natural development of the world-order, and how this cosmic intelligence came to earth and became the property of mankind. In his earlier period of rulership Michael sent down intellectuality with the physical sun-rays, and the men who were receptive to it were inspired by this cosmic intellectuality. These inspirations took place in the old Sun Mysteries, where these secrets were known.

Gradually the time came when men developed intellectuality in themselves through their own power. By the 8th century A.D. this process was completed, and we find on earth men with thoughts of their own, a thing not yet generally possible before the complete descent of the cosmic intelligence. This time was prepared through the philosophy of Aristotle, in which was expressed the slow releasing of the earthly intellect from cosmic intellectuality. This was also the period wherein the Mystery centres gradually passed away.

The necessity for the cosmic intelligence to be given over to the world lay in the fact that the Christ Being united Himself with the earth. With the descent of the Christ the sign was given to Michael to give up the rulership of this cosmic intelligence. By so doing Michael was placed in the strange position of no longer being able to send his impulses down to the earth. He had to wait until his own period of rulership came round once more in 1879; while earlier it had been possible for him, even outside these periods, to send out his impulses continually from the sun. By renouncing his rulership over the cosmic intelligence, Michael had come to a state of inactivity.

On earth, men were now without any impulse from Michael; this was most noticeable from the 15th century onwards, when the Consciousness Soul began to develop in mankind. Men certainly had their own thoughts, but impulses from the spiritual world could not be given directly to their thinking.

During this period Michael sought to renew the bond with mankind by gathering round him, from the 15th to the 17th-18th centuries, souls who were in the spiritual world and had been united with him in the previous Michael Age. Here he could bring together the leading personalities of the time when the Dominicans were in their prime, the souls connected with them, souls from the time of Alexander, the souls of the Platonists who worked in the School of Chartres; and a large number of striving and seeking souls who

united with the others. Michael assembled all these round him and instructed them. Thereby arose a supersensible School, in which was taught all that had been made known in the Mystery centres as Initiation-wisdom in the most ancient times. These souls participated in something very extraordinary that took place for the first time under Michael's leadership; and what these souls then experienced impressed itself deeply upon them.

Before this time, the Karma of a following earth-life had been worked out by human souls under the guidance of spiritual Beings during the period between death and a new birth. But it had never been worked out in the particular way taught in this supersensible School, so that human souls had never previously had a clear conception of the laws of Karma. And when now they returned again to earth, the souls prepared in Michael's school felt an impulse to unite themselves with the Anthroposophical Movement. In this Movement they found—though not yet consciously—a continuation of what they had experienced in the supersensible worlds before their life on earth. Deep in their hearts rested the knowledge given to them by Michael, inwardly bound up with their Karma.

To occupy oneself in Anthroposophy now with the laws of Karma means to occupy oneself with the teachings of Michael, which have been given in the spiritual world.

The work of Ahriman, who from the earth tries to destroy what Michael imparts as wisdom teaching, is the earthly polar antithesis to the activity of Michael. Ahriman works ceaselessly in opposition to Michael, and human beings left to their own devices, without inspiration from Michael, are in constant danger of falling into the clutches of Ahriman. At the dawn of the Michael age, Anthroposophy confronts this danger; its task is to lead men to experience what was taught by Michael during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, and what was given by him in the form of powerful imaginations right on into the 19th century, in order to awaken man to a higher state of consciousness.

It is just in this heightened consciousness that Ahriman sees the greatest danger to the enhancement of his power. It suits him very well to keep man in a sleeping condition, for then the effects of Karma are not experienced consciously. He opposes with all his might the revelations of the laws of Karma. Watchfulness and

conscious experience in man are very disagreeable to Ahriman, for he can exert his influence only on those who lack this watchful consciousness.

During the present period of Michael's rulership, the further development of mankind demands the revelation of the laws of Karma. This is also demanded by the further development of the Anthroposophical Movement and of the souls connected with it.

If the knowledge of Karma is suppressed by Ahriman, and this comes to expression in people in a fear of concerning themselves with it, the Michael impulses will be lost, and the first century of our Michael age will pass without the accomplishment of the task entrusted by Michael to those faithful to him. And human civilisation will then follow a path leading to the abyss and will not find the path of light appointed by the Gods.

Yet another danger threatens, from a different side, the side of Lucifer. If the necessary earnestness does not reign in the hearts of men, if the souls of those who concern themselves with these great truths are not imbued with humility and good will, then Lucifer gains power over these souls. Ahriman does not want the laws of Karma to be experienced consciously in the hearts of men; Lucifer rejoices when people take up the problems of Karma in a frivolous, self-important spirit.

Those human beings who have received Anthroposophy into themselves in the right way will take their course between Ahriman and Lucifer and will unerringly follow Michael, who leads the way, sure of his goal. The dangers which threaten from the right, through the whisperings of Ahriman, and those which threaten from the left, through the enticements of Lucifer—these we must recognise courageously, fully aware of the presence of Ahriman and Lucifer, but not allowing ourselves to be led astray by them, and always going forward, in order to carry into action the impulse of Michael.

Leading Thoughts

Karma revelations are necessary in the present Michael Age, for the development of mankind demands it.

Ahriman opposes the revelations of Karma, because knowledge of Karma destroys his power. Lucifer lays hold of those souls who occupy themselves with Karmic questions in a frivolous way, without a firm foundation.

Michael's impulse requires a heightened waking-consciousness, in order that the workings of Ahriman and Lucifer may be recognised. A selfless study of karmic connections means a sure overcoming of Ahriman and Lucifer, and signifies the victory of Michael.

THE MYSTERIES OF EPHEBUS

23 August 1925

In pre-Christian ages the Mysteries played a great part in human evolution. By them the whole of the spiritual life was guided. Nothing of importance was done unless the spiritual impulses for it had their origin in the Mysteries. In these Mystery centres meetings took place between the initiates, or those to be initiated, and the Gods; and nowhere else was this possible.

With the progressive evolution of human freedom the Mysteries gradually receded. After the fourth century A.D. they were gone, save for a few stragglers. The possibility of initiation never ceased; only the form of it changed. But the guidance of humanity, which had come through the Mysteries straight from the spiritual world, was henceforth silent. Men had now to be thrown back on their own resources and brought to the stage of acting out of their own initiative.

There were Mysteries from the earliest ages, on into Grecian times. We can speak of the old or Oriental Mysteries and of the new or Grecian Mysteries.

In the old Oriental Mysteries the Gods themselves appeared, and through the priest-sages and Initiates they bestowed on mankind such heavenly blessings as were theirs to give. The Gods descended into actual substances, and the sacrificial rites and prayers of the priests were thus determined. Man felt himself to be, not isolated, but in a very real sense united with the Cosmos—with Sun, Moon, Saturn and the other planets—and he beheld the spiritual within the realms of nature. The ceremonies and sacrifices were kept in accord with the seasons and the courses of the stars. For it was only at certain times and under certain constellations that the Gods could reveal themselves in the Mysteries.

In the later Greek Mysteries it was different. Here the Gods no longer descended, but man had to raise himself to them. Henceforth man only saw an image of the Gods. But now, once he was sufficiently mature, he could reach these divine images in the Mysteries independently of seasons and constellations, simply by enacting certain soul-exercises and sacrificial rites. It was the spiritual insight of the priests that now directed the ceremonies. Man felt himself united with the Earth and was initiated into the Earth-Mysteries.

Between the old and the new Mysteries are those that were half old, half new. Here the Gods sent their forces into the Mystery centres, and man could find these forces. The ceremonies were imbued with magical words, spoken by the priests.

Among these Mystery centres was that of Ephesus. Here, too, the Gods no longer had the means to descend; it was their forces that worked in these Mysteries. Magical words sounded forth in the ceremonies. The disciples were initiated, as in the older Mysteries, into the secrets of the Moon. These are the Mysteries connected with man himself, leading to a knowledge of the human etheric body. The disciple was taught how, as man descends from a pre-earthy into an earthly life, his etheric body is formed out of the Moon-forces, in which the forces of Mars, Jupiter, Mercury, Venus and Saturn are also working. Moreover, he was taught that the forces which must be held back in order that the forming of the etheric body may not be disturbed come from the Sun. From the Sun, it was said, come the forces of Beings who had nothing to do with the forming of man's etheric body. The Sun-forces are related only to the Ego and astral body; their effect on the etheric body is to dissolve and destroy it. Whatever part of the Sun-forces works in the etheric body must first have passed through the Moon; it must have become Moon-light.

After this had been taught, the candidates for initiation had to come to an experience of the etheric realm. They had to become free of the physical body and live in the etheric body. After manifold preparations, the pupils at Ephesus were at last led into the centre of the Temple. Here, at the very midpoint of the Temple, stood a statue of the Goddess Artemis, a female figure with many breasts. The Goddess Artemis is a Moon Being; in the spiritual world she has another name, very near to Michael. She rules over the angels of the Moon, and she was the Goddess who poured wis-

dom into the Ephesian mysteries—a wisdom not only of the Moon, but permeated and strengthened by Michael with Sun-wisdom.

Thus there arose in Ephesus a far-reaching knowledge of the Cosmos; that is why the Temple of Diana or Artemis was so important in those times. The Michael impulses, intensified through this being an Age of Michael, expressed themselves, among other ways, in the fact that admission to the Mysteries was not restricted to natives of the country. Strangers, and women too, could be admitted and initiated—a thing not possible in other Mystery centres.

The pupils were brought into the centre of the Temple and there, after many preparations, they were led to concentrate on experiencing the image of the Goddess Artemis, in order to receive from it an impression of the cosmic life-forces that build the human form, and to identify themselves with this experience. The effect of thus identifying themselves in consciousness with the Divine image was that they no longer looked upon the earth and earthly things, but felt themselves freed and loosened, as it were—freed from the human limits of the skin and in direct connection with the etheric realm. Now they were altogether within the Moon-sphere; they lived in the Moon-light; but a Moon-light that included all that came from the other planets of our planetary system. The disciple became a Light-being of the Moon, capable of receiving all that took place in the etheric realm of the Moon-sphere encircling the earth.

By a criminal hand the Temple of Ephesus was set on fire and perished in the flames. This was in 356 B.C. Great and powerful was the fulness of wisdom that had flowed through its temple spaces, and all these treasures of wisdom were imparted to the cosmic ether and inscribed there, while the flames broke forth from the burning Temple. And this wisdom, which in ancient times was guarded in the holy places of the Temple, is now spread out in the cosmic ether, and is visible to man when he ascends to Imagination.

By a like destiny the Goetheanum was destroyed. This work of art went up in flames, and the spiritual life in it was communicated to the cosmic ether.

Two similar destinies are thus set before us. We feel in our hearts that mysterious threads lead from one to the other. And our beloved teacher has shown us that what is inscribed in the cosmic ether dwells too in the hearts of men. If we open our hearts in the

right way, as we can do by receiving the teachings of Anthroposophy, we may come to a knowledge of what can be experienced out of the cosmic ether concerning Ephesus and the Goetheanum.

Let us think again of what Rudolf Steiner told us about Aristotle, when once with Alexander he visited the Mysteries of Samothrace. Through the magical Word that resounded there, there came to life in him again the secrets of the Mysteries of Ephesus, and a recollection of his former life on earth, when he had been associated with the Ephesian Mysteries. We shall then realise that by inwardly steeping ourselves in the events of the Goetheanum fire and the treasures of wisdom that were woven into that work of art, the possibility may be given us of attaining to an experience of the secrets of evolution, which can be read in the cosmic ether, in the script of the stars.

And that which is dwelling in the depths of human hearts—this too will be unlocked and will reveal itself as a knowledge that harmonises with the script of the stars. Such is the path of Initiation, which will at the same time awaken in us a true enthusiasm for our task. Here, at the very place where the catastrophe of fire took place, our task is to bring about that renewal of the life of the Mysteries towards which Rudolf Steiner made so grand a beginning. For only apparently has it ceased since his death. We shall realise that in reality it cannot cease if we take seriously the fact that the Spiritual cannot be destroyed. It is just now that there can come from the spiritual world the very strongest impulses for calling this knowledge to life again and for establishing here a place of the Mysteries, which may become, as in ancient times, an earthly dwelling of the Gods; a place where Christ in His etheric body may reveal Himself to men who have prepared themselves at this sacred place of the Mysteries.

Leading Thoughts

The Mysteries, which in ancient times undertook the guidance of spiritual life in human evolution, passed away gradually with the unfolding of human freedom. Save for a few stragglers, the life in the places of the Mystery Centres had wellnigh died out after the 4th century A.D.

It must be possible for the Mysteries to come to life again, not in the old instinctive way, but with full consciousness, in accordance with the evolution of the Spiritual Soul.

The possibility of Initiation was not lost after the places of the Mysteries were gone. It lived on in other forms: at first in a hidden way, here and there, until it could blossom forth again in true Rosicrucianism.

SECRETS OF THE SUN AND MOON

20 December 1925

The secrets of Sun and Moon always played an important part in the Ancient Mysteries. And it is not possible to come to an understanding of man without possessing this knowledge of Sun, Moon, planets and stars, and of their connection with the whole human being. Without this knowledge, true healing is not possible, and this knowledge must once again permeate our medicine if the doctor would become a true healer.

Everything that is necessary to-day for understanding this true nature of man was given to us by Rudolf Steiner.

If one wishes to understand how human beings are related to the activities of the Sun, Moon, planets and fixed stars, and the importance of these relationships, one has to begin with embryonic development. In the embryonic development of the human being we have a repetition in miniature of processes that occur in Earth and Cosmos. Just as the starting-point in the genesis of the Macrocosm is a state of chaos, so in tracing embryonic development back to its first stages, we arrive at a kind of chaos. If we go back to the germ-cells, we must see in the spherical shape of the female germ-cell an image of the Cosmos, where the activecosmic forces are in a state of balance. When the germ-cell is fertilised, it becomes imbued with movement; chaos arises, and out of this again a differentiation; of form. Here, as always, chaos is the starting-point for new life.

As a result of fertilisation, the forces radiating from the Earth become active, and the germ-cell in the maternal organism is thus introduced into the duality of cosmic and earthly forces. At first it is principally the cosmic, spherical forces, united with the forces of the outer planets, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, which act on the developing embryo through the maternal organism; while the dif-

ferentiating forces from the Earth and the inner planets, Mercury and Venus, come only gradually into operation.

This is physically apparent in the fact that the head-organisation is the first to be formed, and stands out in the foreground of the embryonic process at that stage. It would go on developing until the whole embryo eventually became a sphere, if the differentiating earthly formative forces did not also gradually make themselves felt. It is these forces which bring about the development of the metabolic and limbs system of man. And if these two types of forces fail to work together in the right way during the growth of the embryo, we have in this disproportion of activities the first ground for later illnesses.

By the time of birth the embryo has grown through the working of cosmic and earthly forces into a complete physical body, but no more. The supersensible entity which desires to incarnate has had little to do with the development of this body, so far. It has worked only in the sheaths which surround and protect the embryo, and at birth these are discarded and destroyed. Thus at birth the incoming human being finds a kind of preliminary model of his physical body, bearing within it the paternal and maternal hereditary forces. He has to enter into this body in order to fulfil his earthly mission, but at first he has little connection with it; coming from the Cosmos, he wishes to build further cosmic forms. He now has to become familiar with his body, and so begins the phase we can observe as the first development of the child.

An essential process in the child during the first seven years is a changing of the body into a second, *individual* physical body, which will bear within it hereditary forces to a greater or lesser degree, according to the intensity of the action of the individual, soul-spiritual principle. There is opposition to the hereditary forces, and the physical expression of this struggle may become apparent in various ailments of childhood.

The forces that lead to the overcoming of the hereditary element are fundamentally Sun-forces; those apparent in the heredity itself are Moon-forces. Thus, in the period of the child's life from birth to the change of teeth, we have a process in which the Sun-forces are active alongside the Moon-forces. This applies in particular to the present age.

In earlier times the Sun-forces could take effect on man only at a later stage, for the Moon-forces governed and determined him to a much greater extent. In an evolutionary sense he had not yet acquired the possibility of freedom; he was firmly bound by his temperament, instincts and emotions, which permeated him as inner necessities and were the driving-force of his actions. Up to his thirtieth year he came under this rule of inner necessity through the Moon-forces, and it was only then that the spiritual Sun-forces could liberate him from this dependence and make him a free being, a Sun-being. That is why in the Ancient Mysteries, where the operation of the forces of Moon and Sun was taught, one spoke of the solar birth of man as a second birth, which took place in his thirtieth year, and of the first birth as a lunar birth.

Afterwards came the time when this second birth, the solar birth, was no longer experienced so clearly. Then, in the Mystery Centres, those about to be initiated were led to this experience of the second birth by means of certain exercises and rites. It was also through the Mysteries, in which knowledge had a living character, that the liberating forces of the Sun went out from the Being of the Christ. And while the pupils were instructed in the Sun-activity, they gained a knowledge also of the activities of the Moon. The teacher spoke directly about the Moon secrets and the pupils came to a knowledge of the following:—

When man as a being of soul and Spirit prepares to descend to the Earth, he must invest himself with an etheric body. With the aid of the cosmic Moon-forces, he builds for himself an etheric body which has an outer and an inner side. The outer side is formed from the flowing light of the Cosmos, which is transformed sunlight that has passed through the Moon-sphere. It is this outer side of the etheric body that is then perceived as a form of light. The inner side is formed from the forces of the new Moon raying out into the Cosmos, so that this rhythm of the external brightness of the Moon when it is full, and its darkening at the time of new Moon, is connected with the outer and inner sides of the etheric body.

By means of the etheric body thus formed, the human being descends and unites himself through birth with the physical body he encounters.

Now follows the process already described as a transformation of the inherited physical body. And it is the Sun-forces of the

etheric body, weakened by the Moon in the Cosmos, which are active in promoting this change. Were the Sun-forces to act directly upon the etheric body, their effect would be destructive, annihilating. In order that this should not happen, the Moon had to separate itself from the Earth in the course of the latter's development and place itself between Sun and Earth.

In the animals we still have an example of how the unweakened Sun-forces act. The animal form, during its embryonic period, is directly subject to the effects of the Sun. That is why the animal is born as a completely formed being, often endowed with all its faculties. At the time of its birth, accordingly, the animal is at a more advanced stage of development than man; but its form has reached a certain fixity and so has to remain at the stage reached at birth. If the Moon had remained in the Earth, so that subsequently the Sun could have sent forth only its direct activity, the evolution of man could not have taken place. In his form man would have remained at the animal stage and would not have been capable of experiencing his manhood on Earth. He is able to build up his human form because Moon-light has a restraining effect on its development. Certainly, as compared with the animals, man at his birth is a being still incomplete; but he has in himself the possibility of further development. And while his soul-spiritual being works its way into the incomplete physical, the forces of the Moon, planets and fixed stars can work on into his physical body even after birth, during subsequent seven-year periods. Meanwhile, up to the change of teeth, the etheric Sun-forces help to overcome the forces of inheritance in the physical body. It is only towards the end of the twenties that the forces of the Universe cease to flow into man. He is then made to depend upon himself, and reaches out, as Aristotle said, to touch the Crystal Heaven.

Children of movement

The
children of movement
recall:

new
skin,
life in a pool
rock as a drop.
womb as a world
sky as a dream.

these oils of our imaginings
drip thus into spaceless coloured float
among the waters,
among the water's
waters.

we are born back into the
waters out of which we have come.

the
children of movement
recall:

holding hands with everything.
yellow, as a river
love as a Number
homes in globes.
animals like cucumbers
perfumes as rain
and Jonah, the best friend to play,
skip-a-rope with.

back into spaceless,
coloured float
among the waters
out of which we have come
the children of movement recall!

Gail P. Langstroth

THE TREE

Higher and higher the salt sap flows,
The dark earth follows, and slowly grows
With Moon for measure and Sun for leaven
The finger that branches its way to heaven.

Sylvia Eckersley

THE AFRICAN WAY

Where different paths will meet

EVELYN FRANCIS CAPEL

IS it possible to speak realistically about people in terms of race today? Rudolf Steiner thought it was, and spoke to the work-people who built the Goetheanum about the distinctions of race and their effect on history. He described Mankind as divided into three races, with two others that have arisen through mixing. The three are known by differences in skin-colour—white, black and yellow—produced in very early times by the reactions of the first people on earth to the light.

Members of the three races are found now in all parts of the earth. They have divided in the course of time into much smaller groups, nations, tribes and families. Distinctions of another kind have come about through these groupings.

Today there emerges something which is essential to everyone, whatever his group: his individuality, which belongs to him alone. Nevertheless, the oldest kind of distinction, the racial one, still has an influence on the manner in which the individuality is experienced. To regard the psychological distinctions between races as unreal or wrong is to lose sight of the special virtues that are behind differences in the colour of skin. Distinctions between types of people can be creative; it is important for history that they exist.

It can be of value, for instance, to think of what it means to be European, over and above the distinctions between the many nations of Europe, and of what it means to be African, over and above the characters of the many tribes that are still known. For our present purpose these two races will be put side by side, without the third. Practical experiences in Africa, from the equator southward, will provide anyone who travels there with material for such thoughts. A main street in London today has almost equal value.

The word "Mankind", if it is more than a theory, means a varied pattern of consciousness spread out through the world. Misunderstandings about states of mind divide people from one another. At the present time, when the condition of the world is the concern of us all, to understand other modes of consciousness than one's own is a task for which the ideas of Rudolf Steiner give special help. Within his Spiritual Science the human mind is discovered as an organic structure, not yet finished but in process of formation through the ages of history. The varied patterns of consciousness contribute to the forming of the human mind as a whole. Have the differences between people a value? Should they in terms of social justice be eliminated? Within the development of the human mind as an organism differences can be valued for their own sake.

In going on now to speak of 'the African', I am well aware of the wide variations to be found among the populations of this vast continent. I use the phrase to signify certain basic characteristics which I believe can be discerned in a large majority of Africans, wherever they may live. In this sense one can say that the African walks differently from the European. He moves with emphasis on rhythm, with none of the feeling that he is intent on getting somewhere, which is so obvious in the European. The landscape is there for walking about. The African, it would seem, could walk on over any horizon, if it were not for the urge, which may have no reasonable cause, to go back to the place from which he set out.

Gait is individual to everyone, whatever his race or nation, and speaks of a personal past. But it is not so personal that the trend of the group, shared by all its members, is quite over-ridden. The African tends to move through the world, the European to stamp away towards a destination. It is a fact to be observed again and again that the African is devoted to the circle, the European to the straight line. Riding a bicycle, building a house, planting seedlings, the African, if he follows his bent, will favour the circle. With notable skill he is able to build a circular hut out of rectangular bricks.

The African contribution to the evolution of the human mind includes keeping a relationship to the past, now largely lost to Europeans. While the European is pressing on towards the future

because he is a planner, the African is more easily able to feel and behave out of the real presence of what has been. He seems to be aware of what happens to human experiences when they go over into the unconscious. They sink down below the surface of the mind and unite with the forces of vitality working in the part of the human constitution that produces energy. No experience is lost; a complete record is kept, even when much cannot be recalled easily. There is no magical filing system, but past experiences, by becoming unconscious, actually live on to the end of life as a continuous part of our nature.

The European is obliged to become a good forgetter for the sake of what he intends in the future. The African has the gift of taking the living past on through the present. The guest who returns after an absence of some years is immediately present as if he had never left. The author of a book is never dead and gone. He sits beside the reader as if he were telling him a tale. "My friend Keats," said an African once, who was explaining how he had been led into the appreciation of English poetry by this particular poet. Another exclaimed that he would go to Europe to become the servant of Walter Scott, after he had read several of his books. A gardener, making compost heaps, went every evening to the picture of the missionary, long dead and gone, who had trained him. What, Mr. Robinson, do you think of the work I have done today?

Whom shall I meet tomorrow? says the European. How can I be faithful to those whom I have known in the past? says the African.

* * * *

The state of mind belonging to childhood is not suppressed in the mind of an African by the changes that come with growing up. He keeps the child's gift of direct perception, whether it be of a person's character, or a situation, or of the reality of birth and death. Heaven and earth, the Divine and the human, are still interwoven in the consciousness of the child. So it is that he often knows something which in later life he will have to work out by reason and explanation. To ask an African why he is doing something may put him in a dilemma. He knows why, and he expects the other person to see for himself without explanation, just in fact as the

child will do. The first reaction on any occasion is not to talk about something, but to behave or to move. From the European point of view, the situation is altered without comment.

In African folklore the human situation that arises when Heaven and earth are not yet quite separated is often pictured. The psychological experience of childhood is seen as part of history. What each child knows now was once the universal experience in the childhood of mankind and has been retained more clearly in the folklore of the Africans than in that of most other peoples. The experience is presented in the folk-tales as a problem. How can people live human lives when Heaven and earth are still too close?

Looking back into the earliest times of history in the sense of Spiritual Science, it is clear that history began with the condition in which mankind, together with the earth, which is Man's place of development, was enwrapped in the Universe. In the course of advancing time the process of separation developed more and more strongly. The earth emerged from the womb of the universe and Man began to find himself in a state of separation from the world of God.

African folk-tales are very often concerned to show how difficult it can be for puzzled people to find the right relationship between the two worlds. One story tells of the time when the Sun was not always willing to stay in the sky. He was given to coming down to sleep on the earth. The human mother called her children, telling them how nothing could grow because of the Sun's heat, no fire could be made, no hut could be a safe home because the Sun was too close. She told the children to lift up the sleeping Sun, throw him into the sky and beg him to stay there. They were to tell him that he was needed to shine from above, but not to bring all his light and heat to earth. The children obeyed their mother and the Sun accepted their request. Since then he shines down, and the mother can make a home for the children.

The European may seem to suffer from having lost Heaven too thoroughly. In the tradition of the African the pains of being caught too strongly between the two pressures, from Heaven and from earth, are clearly remembered. A treasure of legends about the creation and early history of the world has been made known in recent years by a Zulu writer who claims to have learnt them through being taught the secret lore of his tribe. His books con-

tain legends of a style and content quite distinct from folk-tales. They appear to fill the gap previously felt by experts on African lore, who even sometimes stated that the Africans had produced no myths about the history of the world. The fact will have been that such myths existed and were passed on by word of mouth, but very strictly guarded as the secrets of the tribes. Those that can now be read in a book reveal on a granderscale than the folk-tales the same dilemma. The gods are described as very much at hand. They work out their own impulses in the same place of existence where people are trying to emerge into a human history of their own. The myths speak of terrible evils brought about by fallen gods.

The European outlook has been formed from the Bible. The effect of evil is described there as the fall of Man. It is said that a human action, the taking of the apple by Adam and Eve, has brought about the expulsion of Man from his innocent childhood. Quite another picture is to be found in the African myths. Human beings are the victims of terrible tragedies caused by evil urges from the immortals. Some of the immortals have lost their place in Heaven and seem like the tragic exiles which Adam and Eve are pictured to be outside Paradise, when they become the father and mother of the human race. The gods have fallen and people have been dragged down into their guilt and misery. The struggle of people to become sufficiently independent of the gods to make their own existence on earth fills a part of these myths.

There is little to redeem the tragedy of these legends, but something there is. They describe a beautiful young goddess who, because of a curse, must encounter great suffering. Through her trials she is said to have discovered how to fashion musical instruments out of the weapons with which gods and men were fighting their battles with each other.

It has been a feature of African life, as long as it was untouched by other influences, that the needs of people could be readily satisfied by using what the world around naturally provides. The Africans in their natural condition have always found what they wanted near at hand. Clay, bones, grass, feathers and the branches of different trees have been their material. So it was with the weapons and the musical instruments of the ancient type. The legend of this goddess Marimba says that the discovery of how to make music on instruments was an act of redemption following

on suffering. A Divine Being made the discovery and gave it as a gift to human beings, who had suffered so much because of the immortals. Music in the African sense was intended to reconcile man with the gods, to be a benign influence from Heaven for the consolation of Man.

The theme of music in this sense has passed over from the myths into folk-tales. One of them tells of a little boy who, with others of his age, went out into the forest to herd the cows. Instead of playing games, he spent the time composing music. He made his own instrument from the branch of a special tree, from a gourd and a thong. He had chosen the right ingredients and worked with skill. His music rose from the forest into the air and was heard by the lightning-bird. The music made by a human child could be received into the sphere of the gods, where those who live handle the fearsome powers of nature. The spirit of the lightning, in the form of a bird, became the friend of the boy. He gave him a magic ox to be both his companion and his wealth.

Divine gifts recur many times in African folklore, but they always prove to be dangerous and lead to suffering. It is just so in this story. The boy goes through loss and pain, and only in the last hour, when he is in a desperate situation, does the firebird again help him, rescuing the wonderful ox and the child.

Through his trials the boy has become a strong young man and his music has matured with him. The lightning bird will always wish to hear his songs, just as the people in his father's kraal rejoice on his return. The gods have given their gifts to man, but they are willing to hear what is offered to them again from the side of human beings.

The happiest relationship to the gods, in the African outlook, is a harmonious give and take, the right offerings made and suitable benefits received. It means a right awareness of the gods, who have minds of their own, and the courage to go on living in human independence.

Man's quest to find himself is world-wide. It takes different forms among different peoples. The European tends to look for himself in what he does, in the effect he has on the world around. The discovery of diamonds in Africa began with some farmer's children playing with pebbles. A passing visitor noticed what kind of stones they were. Now there are five enormous pits at Kimberley from

which the diamonds are extracted. The Africans had played with pebbles for as long as they had been in the neighbourhood and had dug no pits. It was the European passer-by who discovered the diamonds for what they were and knew what to do with them.

The great pits are the enterprise of Europeans. The vast landscape of mountains that look as if they were on the moon, but are in fact on the edge of Johannesburg, is the evidence of gold mining. The whole artificial countryside of waste-dumps testifies to the work and planning of Europeans. The Africans, who are the migrant labourers in this setting, would never have discovered gold mining.

The African has never, to speak generally, sought to experience himself by altering the world around. A true grass hut looks as if it were growing like a tree. Come spring-cleaning time, when the new grass has grown high, the hut would be burnt down and another constructed in its place, just as the new plant grows in due season. The European is busy mastering the world around and producing from it that which Nature would not bring about alone—orchards, cornfields, irrigation works. He is likewise the one who pollutes. Learning by experience, he starts campaigns against pollution. When African and European unite in a common enterprise, when their understanding merges, the earth begins to flourish. European planning and African feeling for living creatures flow together.

How then does the African conduct his part in Man's quest for himself? He is preoccupied in the first place with human relationships. The education of children in the old tribal society, which has almost disappeared, included a complicated system of relationships, all of which had to be expressed in different ways of addressing and treating the many relatives who surrounded the child in a network. He may not have spent part of the day in a schoolhouse—the absence of which produced the impression on strangers that there was no schooling—but he was being trained in behaviour and taught the lore of his tribe all through the day. Correct African greeting between two people meeting on the road is even today very lengthy by European standards. To pass someone by without greeting and enquiries is the first of sins. How can the African understand the European, with no time to lose, who hurries by ignoring other people?

The African lives in the world as an actor on a stage. He is surrounded by an audience on both sides. On the one side are all the people of his family and neighbourhood, his workmates, his street companions. On the other are the rows of his dead ancestors, still looking on at what he is doing and saying, having their own views. Illnesses and misfortunes are commonly reckoned to be a way of making their comments felt. A good witchdoctor is supposed to know which of the many ancestors is speaking through which complaint. Behind the ancestors are Beings of the Spiritual World, those who inspire Nature and those who look on from the heights of the Cosmos. How indeed should someone find himself before so vast an audience?

The African is much more aware of his behaviour than of what he achieves. He moves naturally in groups. His skill in handling psychological problems is far beyond that of the European. But he, like his fellow men, has in terms of evolution to look for the individual in himself, to find the purpose of being human. The renowned Zulu Chieftain, Shaka, was able to see his enemies and his own people die by thousands without compunction. But one day a young British seaman, from a ship seeking shelter on the coast, rode alone on a horse into Shaka's kingdom. He had undertaken to find the way to a town where he could get medicine for the sick captain of his ship. Shaka was so moved to see a young boy riding quite alone through a strange land for such a purpose that he gave him his personal protection throughout the countryside where his power was feared. The one who went alone, made brave by his sense of purpose, inspired him with awe before the European.

The greatest discoverer of Africa also went alone. He was protected by the respect that he inspired in the Africans whom he met. He walked. He walked for many miles and many years. David Livingstone planted into Africa what was best out of the European mind. That is to say, he moved out of his sense of purpose through the unknown Continent, without wishing to conquer, to dominate or to exploit. He was the living symbol of the self which can act alone before people and before the gods.

Within Rudolf Steiner's picture of the structure of the human mind, as it has developed up to now, the European is representative of the Consciousness Soul. It is the expression of the experience which the individual person has when he lives within his own separ-

ate will. The African is the representative of another kind of soul, the Sentient Soul. It is to be experienced when the individual is devoted to all of which he is aware, when he knows through feeling the nature of other people and the world. Through both kinds of experience Mankind advances to the discovery of the Ego, the individual Spirit, which is preparing itself to meet the Spiritual Universe with knowledge.

The aim is the same all the world over; the paths of experience are different. The danger of the Consciousness Soul is to become imprisoned in cold egotism, that of the Sentient Soul to dissolve away in sympathy for what is around. But the next step forward in the evolution of Man will be found where, the hindrances being overcome, the different paths will meet.

Descent deferred

Descending,
coming to a stream,
stumbling on a cold hollow in a dip of the Downs,
aware suddenly of human habitation,
human presence and its implied pollution,
of man as foreign visitor
touring the strangeness of nature
uneasy at the idea of removing shoes
for fear of earth feel underfoot
and the unaccustomed wetness of stone.
Strangers in unsure surroundings
careful to return before dark
to the solid certainty of pavement
and the simple unquestionable facts
of flickswitch and teleknob.

Defer your descent, you as yet unprepared.
Below, the path leads to an inescapable meeting
with the formless element of stream
the owl omen to be faced at the ford.
Defer. Till you be steeled
with the fire essential for confronting
and the fierce heart courage needed
for the navigation of rapids
for contention with currents
for the overcoming of water,
so that definite foothold may find dry firm
and the night of evil be enlightened.

Charles Austin

C. S. LEWIS: SCIENCE-FICTION AND THEOLOGY

CHARLES DAVY

WHEN C. S. Lewis chose the name Ransom for the hero of the first of his three science-fiction novels, *Out of the Silent Planet*, he must surely have had its successor, *Perelandra*, already in mind, for it is only there that the significance of the name comes out.*

In *Out of the Silent Planet*, Ransom is taken to Malacandra (Mars), where he learns that the Earth has fallen under the sway of the Bent One, who as a radiant spiritual being had been its Regent but had rebelled against the Divine order in order to establish a dominion of his own. In the second novel, Ransom is transported to Perelandra (Venus), a paradisaal planet inhabited by two persons only, the King and the Lady. He finds himself among wooded islands floating in a warm sea, with the cliffs of a continental land-mass in the distance. He has been brought there to thwart a plan by the Bent One to cause the fall of Perelandra by tempting the Lady to disobedience. The Bent One reaches Perelandra through the agency of a human being, a scientist named Weston, whose body he has invaded and possessed. He sets out to persuade the Lady to disobey the command of Maleldil (God), whereby she and the King are forbidden to stay after dark on the land-mass; they must keep to the islands.

The Bent One is on the verge of triumph when Ransom is told by Maleldil that he must kill the possessed Weston in bare-handed combat. After a tremendous fight, lasting two days, he succeeds; he is battered and bruised and has a bleeding wound where the Bent One has bitten him in the heel. Perelandra is saved, and in a final

* The third novel in the series, *That Hideous Strength*, need not be discussed here. It has science-fiction elements but no space-travel and not much explicit theology. It seems to me inferior to the other two and declines towards the end into serio-comic melodrama, but with excellent episodes, notably the return of Merlin as Ransom's ally in the struggle to overcome a science-minded conspiracy to set up a ghastly kind of demonic dictatorship in England.

ceremony is handed over to the King and the Lady, to care for and to populate.

This ceremony, and the angelic beings who attend it, are marvelously described; indeed, the whole account of this unfallen world, its seas and islands and friendly animals, its fruits and flowers and tastes and odours, is a masterpiece of descriptive imagination. But the climax of the story is strange. Ransom is told by Maleldil that the redemptive act of Christ on Earth cannot be repeated. On Perelandra, where the Bent One appears in the body of a man, he has to be fought by a man. And the only absolute way in which one man can overcome another is to kill him. So the defeat of cosmic evil on Perelandra is made to depend on a single human being, Ransom, who is asked to risk his life as a ransom for many; and finally it all depends on his prowess in a bodily combat. What are we to make of this?

Lewis, we can suppose, is not suggesting that the events he recounts could really happen on some planet, but neither is he simply telling an adventure story. His science-fiction novels are apt to be ignored by serious critics of his work, but in all of them the light and dark of his Christian theology can be discerned. They are meant to adumbrate, in mythical form, his beliefs concerning humanity in relation to God on the one hand and to the powers of evil on the other. Absolute obedience to God and absolute rejection of evil—this, Lewis seems to say, is the simple but exacting duty of man. Certainly these are essential points in Lewis's theology: he reverts to them time and again.

The virtue of 'obedience' figures widely, of course, in Christian teaching and in the testimony of Western mystics. It is often supported by the example of Christ, perfectly obedient to the will of his Father. But a God who demands obedience under threat of penalty, and requires blind obedience to arbitrary commands, seems to me more akin to the Old Testament than to the New. Of the command imposed by Maleldil on the King and the Lady in *Perelandra*—not to stay overnight on the solid land—Ransom says: "Where can you taste the joy of obeying unless He bids you do something for which his bidding is the *only* reason?"

But this may not be quite fair. Lewis does recognise that obedience has value only if it is given freely. God, he says, gave free will to angels and to men "because he saw that from a world of free



C. S. Lewis (wearing hat) in a walking-tour group photographed by Owen Barfield somewhere in Wales during the mid-thirties. The others (left to right) are A. C. Harwood, Captain W. O. Field, W. E. Beckett (later Sir Eric Beckett, legal adviser to the Foreign Office), Colonel A. Hanbury Sparrow

creatures, even though they fell, He could work out a deeper happiness and a fuller splendour than any world of automata would admit."*

But what is this freedom that God is said to have bestowed on men? What does it amount to in practice?

Suppose a human father gives a great deal of freedom to a child. He will not expect perfect obedience from the child, nor will he regard disobedience as in itself a fault. But he knows that the child will sometimes misuse freedom, perhaps by doing something dangerous or destructive, or something morally wrong. A wise father will not then punish or even blame the child. He will recognise that by giving the child freedom he is himself a part-cause of the child's wrong action. He will explain or show why the action is wrong, hoping that from this experience and others like it the child will gradually acquire insight and responsibility. Only in this way, by sometimes disobeying and by learning from mistakes, can the child grow up into a morally responsible adult.

It is not this kind of freedom, freedom to learn through experience without being censured for it, that God, according to Lewis, has given to human beings. He endows them with free will, knowing that disobedience will occur and what its consequences will be. These include not only the terrible record of human history, but the banishment of many human beings to the Hell they create for themselves by turning away from God and refusing the redemption offered them by Christ. In order that God may be freely loved by a proportion of human beings, the others are to be lost. Certainly Lewis allows that repentance can occur, both before or after death, but he does not expect this to apply to everyone; and there is no suggestion that fallen angels ever will or can repent. Their kingdom of Hell and its unrepentant human beings will draw further and further away from Heaven, eternal darkness severing itself completely from the Source of heavenly light.

* * *

These aspects of Lewis's theology are brought out most sharply in his long short story, or 'dream' as he calls it, *The Great Divorce* (1945). The unnamed narrator, clearly meant to be Lewis himself, accompanies as spectator a group of people, or 'ghosts', who are

* *Miracles*, 1947.

taken by bus from Hell, a twilit region of mean streets and straggling shabby houses, to a radiant landscape on the outskirts of Heaven, which lies beyond a distant mountain range. They are met by a group of 'bright people', relatives or friends they have known in earthly life. The bright people have come from Heaven, hoping to persuade the ghosts to cast off their egoisms and grievances and to set off for Heaven with their happy guides. Nearly all the ghosts find reasons for preferring to make the journey back to Hell, where they will not have to change themselves or their habits.

The narrator listens to a series of individual dialogues between the bright people and the ghosts. The dialogues are rendered with brilliant psychological insight, but for me there is something cruel in the way these ghosts are required to face a choice which for most of them is not a real choice. They are so conditioned by their lives on earth, so self-obsessed, that they are incapable of choosing rightly. And there is not much endeavour by the bright people to enter with sympathy into their plight. The ghosts are up for judgment, and a merciless light—quite foreign to Lewis's own way of behaving in earthly life—is thrown upon them.

Presently the narrator encounters the presence of George Macdonald, the Scottish clergyman and author (1824-1905) whose mythical stories and Christian teachings were greatly admired by Lewis in real life.* He has come from Heaven and now acts as the narrator's Teacher, while together they listen to the painful dialogues.

The narrator remarks that the happiness of the bright people is not impaired by the drifting away of the ghosts on their way back to Hell. How can this be, he asks his teacher, for 'what some people say on earth is that the final loss of one soul gives the lie to all the joy of those that are saved.'

That sounds very merciful, the Teacher replies, but 'see what lurks behind it. The demand of the loveless and the self-imprisoned that they should be allowed to blackmail the universe: that till they consent to be happy (on their own terms), no-one else shall taste of joy: that their's should be the final power: that Hell should be able to veto Heaven.'

* See *George Macdonald: An Anthology*, chosen and with a Preface by C. S. Lewis (Bles, 1946).

But how could that veto, or something like it, *not* exist? Can one imagine a Heaven where joy would be untouched by any feeling for the lost souls in Hell?

However, the Teacher has more to say, and this sets the story in a rather different perspective. First, he reminds the narrator that what he is seeing and hearing is no more than a dream, not to be taken as a veridical account of life after death. Then he says that the inhabitants of Hell are not entirely deserted. Christ has descended into Hell, and his descent is timeless. 'All moments that have been or shall be were, or are, present in the moment of His descending.' There 'is no spirit in prison to whom he did not preach', and 'some hear Him.'

Finally, the teacher says that at the end of all things it may be that all will be well, 'as the Lord said to the Lady Julian, but 'it's ill talking of such questions', for 'all answers deceive.' If the question is put from within Time, "the answer is certain . . . Any man may choose eternal death. Those who choose it will have it." But if you try to see the final state of things, "when there are no more possibilities left, but only the Real", you are asking "what cannot be answered to mortal ears." Time is a lens through which you see something that would otherwise be too big for you to see at all. "That thing is Freedom: the gift whereby ye most most resemble your Maker and are yourselves part of eternal reality. But ye can see it only through the lens of Time"; and "every attempt to see the shape of eternity except through the lens of time destroys your knowledge of Freedom."

The Teacher seems to be saying that we have a freedom to choose which is effective in earthly life, but that from the viewpoint of eternity it is not the kind of freedom we suppose it to be—but I may not have got it right. This discourse has a mystical note, an acceptance of paradox, which is not often apparent in Lewis's writings on religion: they are mostly too clear-cut and cogent to leave scope for it.

Nevertheless, *The Great Divorce* is for me the least congenial of Lewis's mythical stories. In spite of the Teacher's commentary there is something complacent in its picture of the bright people, and something heartless in its treatment of the lost souls.

* * *

A tinge of the same colouring, I feel, is in the Narnia books for children—splendid stories with wonderful descriptive passages and

ingenious characterisation, especially of the talking animals. Like some other outstanding books for children, they can be enjoyed also by adults, though in my case with some doubts.

In Narnia, a magical country visited by children from our world, various conflicts and pitched battles occur between the forces of evil, represented mainly by a wicked Witch, and the forces of good, inspired by Aslan, the great Lion, in whom is symbolised something of the power and nature of the Christ.

In one of the Narnia stories, 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,' Aslan offers himself to the Witch as a sacrificial victim in place of one of the children, Edmund, who by committing an act of treachery has given the Witch a valid right to his blood. That night Aslan is bound and put to death on a stone table. The children are miserable, but next morning, at sunrise, the stone table cracks from end to end and the children find that Aslan's body has disappeared. And then, almost immediately, the children hear a great voice, and "there, shining in the sunrise . . . stood Aslan himself."

This symbolic episode does not ring quite true to me. Aslan knew all along (this is made clear) that his death would be followed almost at once by his return to life: hence his death was not a real sacrifice: the Witch was cheated and gained nothing from it. It is rather as though, directly after the Crucifixion, Christ had returned to bodily life in triumph and had led his followers to victory on earth.

But am I taking these children's stories too seriously, reading far too much into them? They *can* be read simply as children's adventure stories and very good ones, but a religious intent is implicit in them, and sometimes quite explicit. It leaves me uneasy, chiefly because evil, represented by the Witch and her adherents, is treated as something to be crushed and banished, not as something that might be redeemed. The concluding scene in the last Narnia story, where after a final victory Aslan leads the children (who by now have died in a railway accident on earth) over the hills towards Heaven, reminds me a little of the scene in *The Great Divorce*, where the bright people set off happily on their way back to Heaven and all but one of the ghosts are left to go back to Hell.

* * *

How are we to account for this harsh strain in Lewis's theology, quite unlike his character as a man? He called his autobiography

Surprised by Joy, and the joy to be expected in Heaven, far transcending any earthly joys and yet gathering them all into itself, is one of his frequent themes. His emphasis on it may be partly responsible for his black-and-white treatment of good and evil. For him, there had to be an absolute contrast between the radiance of Heaven and the sordid twilight of Hell; and for human beings there had to be always a clear-cut choice between the good and the evil. Lewis was much more a moralist than a theologian, and to allow any virtue to opposition can seem to confuse the moral issue and blur the hard edge of choice.*

It is this refusal to allow a necessary place for opposition in the cosmic scheme that I feel to be the weakest point in Lewis's religious outlook. It vitiates his concept of freedom, for what is freedom if it does not include permission to oppose? And it leads him to give a superficial account of the fall of the angels and the consequent fall of man.

We must always expect that questions concerning the origin of evil, in relation to God and to man, will lead into mysteries and paradoxes. Lewis would probably not have disputed that, but his over-riding concern with morality and right conduct leaves him content, apparently, with an unduly simplified scheme. It is enough for him to say that the angels fell through self-willed pride—'better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven'. But to suppose that high spiritual beings would have been impelled merely by this all-too-human motive seems to me to trivialise an event so strange that I doubt if it can be comprehended in human terms.

I feel rather the same about Lewis's references to the fall of man:

What Satan put into the heads of our remote ancestors was the idea that they could 'be like gods'—could set up on their own as if they had created themselves—be their own masters—invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empire, slavery—the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.†

* Lewis often denied that he was a theologian, but a Christian theology, mainly orthodox and conservative, is indicated or implied in most of his writings.

† *Mere Christianity*, 1952.

There is some powerful truth in this passage, yet it seems to me inadequate, even misleading. For what Satan (Lucifer) offered to 'our remote ancestors' was not happiness, and not merely independence, but (as the Bible indicates) an opening of their eyes to a knowledge of good and evil—i.e. a capacity to form their own judgments, instead of reflecting the thoughts and purposes of the gods.

Whatever Lewis may have meant here by 'our remote ancestors', he came to realise, I think, that the fall of man cannot be fitted into any account of human prehistory on earth. In other writings he left the when and how of the fall fairly vague. It was enough for him, as a Christian moralist, that there had been a fall, first of the angels, then of man, and that human history was its consequence.

Probably Lewis had heard from friends something of Rudolf Steiner's account of the great sweep of evolution, embracing earth and man and the Hierarchies, but it was alien to him. He may have thought that for anyone to claim such far-ranging knowledge of Divine purposes was presumptuous folly, and that for human beings to study it was a vain distraction from the essential duty of trying to lead a Christian life on earth. Human conduct was always his prime concern.

* * *

When Rudolf Steiner spoke of the fall of the angels, he said that it could be seen both as a gesture of independence and as an act of sacrifice, whereby certain spiritual beings, by electing to 'stay behind' in their evolution, enabled other beings to advance. When he spoke of the fall of man, he said that it was not the outcome of human sin, for human beings were not then able to withstand the Luciferic temptation. This was before human souls had come down to earth, and it brought about their premature descent. By then the evolution of bodily forms on earth was on the way to providing vehicles through which the human souls could begin to experience earthly life. Thus the fall of man, also, can be seen in two different lights—both as contravening the intention of the gods, and as marking for man the necessary beginning of his education on earth in the use and misuse of freedom.

Thus we find that in Steiner's approach to the problem of evil and its origin (barely touched on here), we are brought up against paradoxes which cannot be resolved on the level of human understanding. But from Steiner's approach we can gain (I feel)

more insight into the nature of the problem, and into the necessary role of opposition in cosmic and human evolution, than we can get from Lewis's treatment of the subject in the relatively simple terms of disobedience and pride.

From Steiner, also, we can gain a picture of human freedom which is much more closely in accord with everyday experience than Lewis's picture of a person having always a clear-cut choice between good and evil, virtue and vice.

Take a recognised virtue—courage. Courage is a very real virtue, but it can be inflated by egoism and bravado into foolhardy recklessness, pride in self-display, which may endanger the lives of others. Or unselfishness: it is often a beneficent virtue, but it can become a sort of self-gratification, an advertised self-sacrifice which puts the recipient under an irksome obligation. Or it may be invoked in order to work on the feelings of someone, as when a mother says to a child, 'Darling, think of all I've done for you'

Or take a universally condemned vice—cruelty. It is rightly condemned, yet there is in it an element that can have virtue. The phrase, being cruel in order to be kind, often means being cruel for the power and pleasure it brings. But there are occasions when truths that will cause pain have to be spoken, actions taken that will fall hardly on individuals, if worse is not to happen to more people in the long run. A person may have to "steel" himself to cause pain in this way, and if a man has absolutely none of this steely quality in his character he may tend to be weakly sentimental, always taking the easier path, always saying what others will like to hear.

We can generalise by saying that man is constantly exposed to pairs of temptations that pull him in different directions. One member of the pair has a warm expansive character: it pulls him towards vanity, self-display, vain-glorious dreams. The other pulls him towards selfish isolation, there to engage in cold calculation for his own advantage. Both temptations work on egoism, but on different sides of it.

Our task in facing these two temptations is to hold them in balance, sometimes using one to help us resist the other, rather as we may use cold water to prevent scalding water from harming us.*

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This is very like Aristotle's doctrine of the mean—finding the right half-way house between extremes—but what Aristotle meant by it is often misunderstood. It is not a question of sitting down comfortably in the middle, but of constantly wrestling with the two attractions, holding them in tension; and it is just here, because one temptation often pulls against the other, that we can have some freedom. Then we find that in each temptation there is an element of good, and that this, if we are not carried away by the temptation, can bring us gifts. From the fiery tempter we can gain ardour, courage, imagination; from the cold tempter we can gain clear thinking, objectivity and self-restraint. "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety"—only in the moral life there never is safety: we are repeatedly on a tight-rope of choice.

In speaking of the two tempters I have of course had in mind the beings, or hosts of beings, to whom Rudolf Steiner gave the names of Lucifer and Ahriman, but I believe a way to them can be found through ordinary experience, even if one has not heard of them under those names. In dealing with them we must be aware that while each has a permitted role in the scheme of things, they are constantly impelled to trespass beyond it, and are then inimical powers, with Lucifer bent on leading humanity away into dreams and illusions and Ahriman bent on imprisoning humanity in a cold materialism.

In these ways we can come to a better understanding of temptations, but beyond it, I always feel, an impenetrable mystery of evil remains. If one looks back over human history, not only at its conflicts and cruelties but also at the calamities and sufferings that fall on the innocent, it can seem that these are the outer happenings of a tremendous tragic drama which takes its course beyond our ken. We can discern in it the archetypes of creation, sacrifice, redemption; and perhaps we can see as relevant to it the coexistence of darkness and light. It is as though the light calls forth the darkness and requires it, and enters into it with an act of sacrificial redemption which will continue until the end of time.

* * *

Now I want to consider briefly, in conclusion, one more aspect of Lewis's theology—the aspect which bears most closely on his attitude towards Anthroposophy.

In a sermon called 'The Weight of Glory', preached at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford,* Lewis speaks of the 'promises of Scripture' regarding the rewards to be expected in Heaven. He lists them under five heads:

It is promised, firstly, that we shall be with Christ; secondly, that we shall be like Him; thirdly, with an enormous wealth of imagery, that we shall have 'glory'; fourthly, that we shall, in some sense, be feasted or entertained; and finally, that we shall have some sort of official position in the universe—ruling cities, judging angels, being pillars of God's temple.

Lewis proceeds to discuss the meaning of the first four promises, but the fifth is not mentioned again. Certainly it is not an easy promise to interpret, but not beyond Lewis's discerning skill. I think he may have left it out because he never seems to have imagined an actively responsible role for human beings in the working out of God's intentions for humanity and the world. He is inclined to look on human living as an obedient preparation for the joys of Heaven. It is not that he favours an ascetic spurning of the world: "There is no good trying to be more spiritual than God. God never meant man to be a purely spiritual creature. That is why He uses material things like bread and wine to put new life into us."† But the things of this world, all human activities and pleasures, are not to be valued for their own sake, but only in so far as they bring us nearer to God, and that depends on our approach to them. "Most men must glorify God by doing something to His glory which is not *per se* an act of glorifying but which becomes so by being offered. If, as I now hope, cultural activities are innocent and even useful, then they also (like the sweeping of the room in Herbert's poem) can be done to the Lord. The work of a charwoman and the work of a poet become spiritual in the same way and on the same condition."‡

It is rather the same with the Earth and the realms of Nature: they are to be valued because of the presence of God in them, sometimes hidden, sometimes revealed in flashes to those who are open to them. "Any patch of sunlight in a wood will show you something about the sun that you could never get from reading books

* Printed in *They Asked for a Paper* (Bles, 1962).

† *Mere Christianity* (Bles, 1952).

‡ 'Christianity and Culture,' included in *Christian Reflections* (Bles, 1967).

on astronomy. These pure and spontaneous pleasures are 'patches of Godlight' in the woods of our experience."^{*}

Lewis, however, emphasises that he is not a Pantheist:

One is always fighting on at least two fronts. When one is among Pantheists one must emphasise the distinctiveness, and relative independence, of creatures. Among Deists . . . one must emphasise the divine presence in my neighbour, my dog, my cabbage-patch.[†]

Lewis does not speak, as Steiner often does, of human responsibility for the care and nurture of the Earth as a living being. Probably he would have regarded the exploitation and spoliation of the Earth as to be condemned mainly because they deface God's creation and cloud the window through which the Divine Glory can sometimes shine.

* * *

It would be foolish to criticise Lewis for not following Steiner's outlook, alien to him in so many ways. But one can feel that his theology is cramped and conformist: he had no use for "modernist" Christian writers. It may seem surprising that someone endowed with such wonderful imaginative gifts, evident both in his reanimation of the Middle Ages and in his science-fiction (particularly in *Perelandra*, said to be his favourite among his own books), should be so restricted in his theological concepts. For him, nothing not relevant to the salvation of individual souls has any lasting importance. "The Christian", he writes in 'Christianity and Culture', knows from the outset that the salvation of a single soul is more important than the production or preservation of all the epics and tragedies in the world."

Even his picture of Heaven is limited and almost static. The souls who attain to Heaven will have, it seems, no more concern for the Earth and no variation in their timeless joy. The Earth will eventually perish, and only Heaven and Hell, separate for ever, or at least until the unimaginable 'end of all things', will remain.

In this theology there is no place for repeated earth-lives, or for any continuing evolution of the solar system and its creatures, as far as I can see. Lewis's picture of the cosmos is curiously reminiscent (apart from a modernised astronomy) of that picture of the medieval cosmogony which he drew with such marvellous vividness in *The*

* *Letters to Malcolm* (Bles, 1964).

† *Ibid.*

Discarded Image.^{*} One could surmise that in this and some other respects he was influenced by unconscious memories of a previous life in medieval times.

However this may be, one dominant influence on Lewis's religious outlook was certainly his emphasis on humility as the only right and proper attitude for himself and for all men. And humility was rated much more highly as a virtue in the Middle Ages than it has been since 'scientific man' (a term by no means embracing all scientists, of course) began to think of himself as master of the world, capable of reshaping the Earth to meet his demands and of determining the future evolution of his own mental and physical organism. Lewis regarded pride as the basic sin both of men and of angels: pride mainly in the form of a claim by any created being to have a will of its own, or to be anything more than an obedient servant of the Almighty. Lewis once said to Cecil Harwood, "I was not born to be free—I was born to adore and obey." And in a letter to Harwood on another occasion he wrote:

If one is taught to treat even religious emotion as a servant which must never be allowed to rule, how much more must we think this of erotic emotion! All these things, in my view, are capable of *receiving* spiritual value, but can't *give* it. And the moment they forget their *creaturely* status they become demons . . . I don't think the conception of creatureliness is part of your philosophy at all, and your system is anthropocentric. That's the real 'great divide'.[†]

What should we take 'anthropocentric' to mean in this context? There is of course a radical difference between the view that 'scientific man' has of himself and the world, and Rudolf Steiner's view of the present and future status of mankind. We are told by Steiner that man is still in his spiritual infancy, with a severely limited consciousness which in our epoch exposes him to all sorts of illusions and tends to give him a very misleading picture of the world, often with disastrous consequences in the fields of applied science and technology. He is also something of a moral cripple; he has a conscience but is very often tempted to disregard it. No glorification here of man as he is to-day. But Steiner tells us also that man has nascent faculties which can and will be developed to open his inner eyes to the spiritual world. Morality will then come to have a new meaning for him; it will be founded on obedience, but on obedience

* Cambridge University Press, 1964; paperback 1967.

† See 'C. S. Lewis and Anthroposophy,' by A. C. Harwood, in *Anthroposophical Quarterly*, Winter 1973.

not to the arbitrary commands of the Almighty but to the moral laws which will be seen as taking the place in the spiritual world of the laws of nature in our earthly world.

Anthroposophy, however, is anthropocentric in the sense that it credits man with an essential role in the cosmic evolutionary scheme. He is the bearer of necessary freedom, with all its dangers and abuses, on earth, and in an immensely far-distant future he is intended to become—as Harwood mentions—"a tenth Hierarchy, a unique Hierarchy of freedom and love", and this is something that "Lewis could never have accepted." His use of the word "creatureliness" suggests to me something like the situation of children, entirely dependent on an all-powerful father, and it is perhaps not unfair to feel that Lewis never envisaged the human race growing up.

These comments are of course offered only as personal impressions, perhaps influenced by some prejudice of which I am not properly aware. My admiration for Lewis, both as a human being and as a writer, is not in question. He is superb on the Middle Ages and their literature; as a Christian moralist and adviser on Christian living he is unsurpassed. His biting criticisms of the modern world are sometimes one-sided, but often apt and salutary; they are at their best in *The Abolition of Man* (1943). He enjoyed argument and liked winning; this can make him seem overbearing and dogmatically assertive at times, but on a deeper level it was different. I would like to conclude by quoting a short poem from his *Collected Poems* (Bles, 1964):

THE APOLOGIST'S EVENING PRAYER

From all my lame defeats and oh! much more
From all the victories that I seemed to score;
From cleverness shot forth on Thy behalf
At which, while angels weep, the audience laugh;
From all my proofs of Thy divinity,
Thou, who wouldst give no sign, deliver me.

Thoughts are but coins. Let me not trust, instead
Of Thee, their thin-worn image of Thy head.
From all my thoughts, even from my thoughts of Thee,
O thou fair Silence, fall, and set me free.
Lord of the narrow gate and the needle's eye,
Take from me all my trumpery lest I die.

The humility that Lewis valued so highly was never far from this wonderfully gifted man.

Postscript

OWEN BARFIELD

Charles Davy's article on Lewis reminds me that quite a number of English anthroposophists, impressed by some of his writings, have divined a perplexing link between them and the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. Parts of the planetary novels, some of his poems, the *Abolition of Man*, the *Discarded Image* may be cited as examples, and the knowledge that two or three of Lewis's close and respected friends were deeply committed anthroposophists has played its part in strengthening the impression. It is an impression that is sharply contradicted by much else that Lewis wrote, for example on the subject of religion and of Christianity in particular, as well as by his explicitly detached and indeed hostile attitude to Anthroposophy itself as he understood it.

This last is, I feel, something Davy has understated. He writes: "Probably Lewis had heard from friends something of Rudolf Steiner's account of the great sweep of evolution . . . but it was alien to him. He may have thought that for anyone to claim such far-ranging knowledge of Divine purposes was presumptuous folly . . ." I would have put it much less cautiously. He *had* heard, and he *did* think.

To any anthroposophist, or anyone else who is sympathetically inclined to what I will call—loosely and for present purposes only—"that way of thinking", I would offer the following advice. If you are anxious to make a fruitful contact with the mind of C. S. Lewis, reverse the natural order. Do not begin with the resemblances you find there to your own way of thinking, and then start worrying about the differences. Begin by assuming total divergence and then enjoy, appreciate and benefit by the unexpected resemblances. For the divergence goes much deeper than opinions; it goes to the very texture of Lewis's thought.

This is not really a matter to be handled briefly, but two observations may help. It comes naturally to us to think of many, perhaps most things in a certain mode of thought for which the only possible name appears to be 'polarity'; that is to say, of opposites which nevertheless interpenetrate each other, of antagonists who are nevertheless co-operating, and so on. That whole mode of thinking was

entirely alien to Lewis's temper. I am not sure that it was even intelligible to him; so that, if you tried to base any argument or description on it, he would assume you were merely bemusing yourself with sentences that had no meaning. It is inevitable that most of the great questions that have exercised the mind of man should strike differently upon a mind that thinks in that way and upon one that is unwilling or unable to do so: for example, the relation between light and darkness, between good and evil, between spirit and matter, between freedom and necessity, and one must add, I think, between life and death.

Again, anthroposophists and of course many others begin by assuming that human consciousness, and indeed the world in general, is in process of evolution or development. Lewis emphatically repudiated this view; for instance in the essay, "Historicism", to be found in the volume *Christian Reflections*. And he went farther than most in doing so. Without being 'historicists' in general, many people, both within and without the Church, take it for granted that Christianity differs from other religions precisely because it *is* historical. But Lewis will have none of this, at least if the word "historical" is to be taken as smuggling in any notion of development in time. Again, it is the whole texture of his mind that is in issue. It is not simply an opinion about history. For if you examine Lewis's writings as a whole, you will find extraordinarily few references to the notion of process, or development or growth, in *any* context—any number on the other hand to the notion of cause and effect. We understand its utterances best if we remain aware that the working of that mind, as apart from the imagination behind it, was somehow innately inorganic.

I have made two observations, but I think myself that at a deeper level they are one and the same. Or we can make them the base of a sort of surveyor's triangle, directing us to a point still farther back that gives rise to both, and is probably not formulable in words at all. Either way, the more clearly we apprehend it, the less obstruction there will be to our enjoyment of Lewis and the more fruitful our contact with that richly furnished and very powerful mind of his, which has slashed through so many wishy-washy 'modernisms' in religion and elsewhere and rescued so many from inanity in doing so. It can be a very fruitful contact indeed. If for instance we are interested in self-knowledge, not only at the lofty level

of *Gnothi seauton* but also at the more humdrum and everyday one of eliminating minor self-deceptions—as we well may be, since world-wide Movements have been wrecked before now on persistent endeavours to cultivate the former without attending to the latter—then there is nourishing provender in plenty to be found in the *Screwtape Letters*, *Mere Christianity*, the *Great Divorce* and elsewhere.

But we shall also find ourselves freer and happier in our enjoyment of the other Lewis; not now the moralist and mordant Christian apologist, but the joyous delighter in myths and maker of them. We shall no longer bother ourselves too much about what he believed. Lewis held that imagination has nothing to do with knowledge. We hold that, although it is not knowledge, it is a step towards it and may develop into Inspiration and Intuition—with which he would have nothing to do. But the point is that he *had* imagination (which is not quite the same thing as talking about it) and with it a wonderfully firm intuition of the imaginal substance of myth and fantasy themselves.

We shall perhaps welcome this all the more warmly for its coming to us across the gulf of divergence. And if, in the skilful uses his fancy makes of a scholar's acquaintance with some of the literature of Neoplatonism, we notice here and there a specially penetrating touch that is due to his having heard a little, and read less, of the wisdom of Rudolf Steiner—well, all the better.

BOOK REVIEWS

BEYOND THE DARK GATE

Between Death and Rebirth, by Rudolf Steiner. Ten lectures given in Berlin between November, 1912, and April, 1913. (Rudolf Steiner Press, £3.25).

Occult Reading and Occult Hearing, by Rudolf Steiner. Four lectures given in Dornach, October, 1914. (Rudolf Steiner Press, 90p).

BOTH these lecture-courses deal with life after death, from different points of view. The first is concerned mainly with experiences after the Kama-loka period, when the soul begins to journey outwards through the planetary spheres, and particularly with the effects of earthly life on the soul's capacity for relating itself to other souls and other beings in these various realms. For the Mercury sphere, the soul needs to have led a moral life on earth; for the Venus sphere it needs to have developed strong religious feelings; for the Sun sphere it needs to have learnt to approach with sympathetic understanding all religions, besides its own.

In the first lecture Dr. Steiner refers to the Medici tombs in Florence, designed and built by Michelangelo. By a fortunate coincidence his words are helpfully relevant to the article, 'Destiny Hewn in Stone', in this issue, where Baruch Urieli describes in detail the four allegorical figures, Dawn and Evening at the foot of one statue, Day and Night at the foot of the other.

Dr. Steiner points out that the limbs of the recumbent figure of Night are apparently distorted, and critics have often remarked that no-one could sleep in that position. However, what is actually portrayed in this figure, Dr. Steiner says, is the activity of the etheric body during sleep, when the astral body and Ego are outside. "The movement is conveyed with such precision that no more appropriate presentation of the etheric body under such circumstances can be imagined." Similarly, the figure of Day represents the activity of the Ego; the Evening, the physical body in a relaxed condition; and Dawn, the activity of the astral body.

The fifth lecture, "a gift placed under the Christmas tree," deals with Christian Rosenkreutz and the mission of Buddha in the Mars sphere. The concluding lecture, for me a difficult one, shows how the treatment in the preceding lectures of the soul's experiences in the planetary spheres after death can be harmonised with the accounts in the book, *Theosophy*, of the regions of the Soul-world and of Spirit-land, or Devachan.

From the many passages in these lectures that could be quoted, I will choose a short one from lecture eight, where Dr. Steiner has been speaking

of the specific time in the life after death when the soul begins to prepare a body, a "spiritual embryo", for its next life on earth:

There is nothing that can truly be called bliss or blessedness except vision of the process of creation, of 'becoming'. Perception of anything already in existence is trivial compared with vision of what is in process of coming into being; and what is meant by speaking of the states of bliss or blessedness which can be experienced by man between death and rebirth is that during this period he can behold what is in process of coming into being.

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In the first of the four lectures on 'Occult Reading and Occult Hearing', Dr. Steiner mentions that he had intended to give a course on this subject in Munich in August of the same year, 1914, but the war intervened, and "the most important and essential information that was to have been given there must be reserved for less turbulent times. . . . The highest truths cannot be communicated when storms are raging."

However, these four lectures are rich in content, especially in their vivid descriptions of what the seer experiences in learning and practising this 'reading' and 'hearing', and how his experiences are related to those that human souls may encounter after death. Dr. Steiner also describes in detail the difficult procedures that may be required for entering into a conscious relationship with a deceased person, and he gives this warning:

It is an act of grace on the part of the spiritual world for us to be able actually to behold the dead whom we are seeking. As a rule in such striving, curiosity will certainly not be satisfied. Anyone who were to start merely with the intention of satisfying his curiosity in searching for someone who is dead would either see nothing at all or would inevitably be exposed to errors of every possible kind.

In April, 1914, about a year after the first of the two lecture-courses noticed here, and a few months before the second, Dr. Steiner gave in Vienna the well-known course, 'The Inner Nature of Man and the Life between Death and a new Birth'—a course he considered particularly important and often quoted from. This course has been available in English for many years (a revised translation came out in 1959), and it is now most welcome to have two other courses from the same period, both of them concerned with different aspects of the after-death theme. The first course is ably translated by E. H. Goddard and D. S. Osmond, the second by D. S. Osmond alone. I would like here to record the gratitude that I (and certainly many others) feel for all that Dorothy Osmond has done over the years, and is still doing in face of some physical handicap, to make a steadily widening range of Rudolf Steiner's work accessible to English-only readers.

C.D.

SHAKESPEARE AND ROSICRUCIANISM

Shakespeare's Last Plays: A New Approach, by Frances A. Yates (Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.25).

This book is a particular application of the theme of Dr. Yates' earlier book, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, which described the general expectation of a new 'instauration of learning' and its connection with Rosicrucianism in the early years of the seventeenth century. It led up to the great hopes attending the marriage of James I's daughter, Elizabeth, to Frederick, Elector of the Palatinate, and the tragic death of his eldest son Prince Henry in 1612, when Frederick had already arrived in England for his betrothal and wedding.

The present volume—a much slighter work—is centred on these last events and more particularly on the way the author believes them to be reflected in the last plays of Shakespeare.

During the years concerned there was undoubtedly something like a revival of the spirit of the Elizabethan age in the reign of James I. After the defeat—or wreck—of the Armada, Elizabeth had come to be regarded as the champion of Protestantism in Europe. The aura that surrounded her was that of the 'Imperial Reformation', a purified order and peace which could appeal to religious and chivalric traditions to maintain it. James substituted for it the Divine Right of Kings. He aimed at a neutral peace policy, of which an important outer symbol was the continued imprisonment of Raleigh in the Tower.

Prince Henry by no means approved of his father's policy. He admired Raleigh, visited him frequently and declared: 'No one but my father would keep such a bird in a cage.' Everyone agreed that the Prince was a youth of exceptional parts. He even hoped to 'heal the jars in religion'—not merely to hold a neutral position—presumably by some religious form capable of embracing both Catholic and Protestant.

His coming out on to the public stage was planned with significant ceremonial. The Tudors had revived the old tradition of the 'British' Kings, of whose line Brut of Troy was held to be the founder. But the line passed through King Arthur and was intimately connected with the knightly tradition. Henry VII, the first Tudor, arranged for his son (he took a chance on the sex) to be born in the old Arthurian capital of England, Winchester. When a boy was born, he called him Arthur, and founded an order of knighthood in his honour. But for the young man's untimely death, England would have had an Arthur II instead of a Henry VIII.

All the Tudors loved jousts and knightly exercises. Henry VIII was himself a great performer in the lists. Elizabeth loved to watch the sport. And now a ceremony was devised to introduce Prince Henry as a knightly performer. Inigo Jones designed a 'ruined palace of chivalry' as the first scene of a Masque. It incorporated the tomb of Merlin, but the Masque showed Merlin rising from his tomb and summoning the hero—

Meliodus (*alias* Prince Henry)—who would restore chivalry to its former glory.

The scene promptly changed to a splendid Chapel of St. George, the patron saint of British chivalry, and out of a cave came the Maiden Chivalry, who cries:—

'Break your rusty doors,
That have so long been shut, and from the shores
Of all the world come knighthood like a flood
Upon these lists.'

Thus began the 'barriers' at which Prince Henry and his troop displayed their prowess, and were introduced to the world.

Another reversal of policy as between Elizabeth and James concerns that enigmatic figure John Dee, whom Dr. Yates considers to have been greatly traduced by historians. She claims that his Preface to Euclid was 'the Bible of the rising generation of Elizabethan scientists and mathematicians', and that he was deeply in the confidence of Elizabeth. He followed the theory of the 'three worlds' of Cornelius Agrippa—the elemental, the celestial and the super-celestial worlds, and the connections he saw between them was that of number. Different forms of magic appertained to each world.

Dee was entirely dismissed by James I, whereas Bacon became his Lord Chancellor. It is strange that Bacon, considered the 'father of modern science', had nothing to do with mathematics, whereas the dismissed 'magus' was the greatest mathematician in Europe in his time.

Now Dr. Yates finds much that reflects all this historical ferment in the last plays of Shakespeare, especially in the three great imaginative plays, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*, but also in that strange play *Pericles* which introduces them, and in the last play of all, *King Henry VIII*, which she accepts into the canon.

Both the *Winter's Tale* and *Lear*, the last of the great Tragedies, deal with kings of Britain. The last plays themselves (except the History) all have a Masque-like quality, and Masques were especially the fashion of the new age. They all end with the picture of a 'brave new world' to be realised by the younger generation. The young princes in *Cymbeline* live in a cave, and it was a cave from which Merlin issued to proclaim the new age of chivalry, while a cave is also a central image in the *Fama* of Christian Rosenkreuz. Postumus in *Cymbeline* lands at Milford Haven, where Henry VII, the first Tudor, had landed, and the play ends with a universal peace between Britain and Rome.

Magic plays an increasing part in the last plays. In *Pericles* we have healing magic in the physician Cerimon, whom Dr. Yates regards as a Rosicrucian figure. Then in *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* come pictures of rising from the dead in Imogen (the name of Brut's wife) and Hermione. A French writer, Paul Arnold, is quoted as holding that such plays reflect the ritual of initiation in enacting the Mystery of Death.

Finally we have the figure of Prospero, whom John Dee would have considered as enacting his magic in the highest sphere of the super-celestial.

Is Prospero, asks Dr. Yates, a vindication of that despised magus?

All this—and there is very much more in the same vein—is interesting enough. But if we consider the total picture of the last plays, it is hard to regard them as giving support to a new idealistic movement, or a revived magical tradition, centring on James and his children, Henry and Elizabeth.

Lear and Cymbeline are both monarchs who conspicuously fail to understand their infinitely good and gracious daughters, and hardly impress us with any reverence for the line of British kings. All the plays were written before the death of Prince Henry, who played a much more conspicuous role in the affairs of the country than his young sister. Yet it is the daughters of the kings who are the heroines of *Lear* and *Cymbeline*, and do not both Perdita and Miranda also out-top their respective princes?

Moreover, to portray a magus on a magic isle, who abjures his magic before he returns to take up the government of his dukedom, hardly suggests a new era to be based on magical power.

In the historical play, Henry VIII is certainly shown as at first misled by Wolsey. But when his eyes are opened he saves Cranmer from his enemies and may be said to purify the Church with the sword of justice. His Protestant virtue (as Dr. Yates points out) is balanced by the Catholic virtue of Queen Katharine. But the praise of Elizabeth and her successor James, prophetically pronounced by Cranmer, is so fulsome that one hopes that this part of the play at least is not by Shakespeare. And is it not a little far-fetched to see—as Dr. Yates suggests we may—Prospero as affecting an ‘imperial reform’ in the magic isle because he puts down the debased witchcraft of Sycorax and substitutes his own command of higher spirits, which he uses entirely for the ends of justice?

Dr. Yates claims for her book only that it opens new fields of enquiry. As such it needs to be read after the far more solid and convincing book, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*. Both books are stories of hopes that failed. Prince Henry died; the Protestant marriage took place, but James gave no help to his son-in-law when he accepted the crown of Bohemia. There was no healing of the ‘jars in religion’... Instead—the Thirty Years’ War.

A. C. HARWOOD

LOOKING AHEAD AFTER 50 YEARS

Work Arising from the Life of Rudolf Steiner. Edited by John Davy. (Rudolf Steiner Press, hardback £3.90; paperback £1.90).

If this excellent little book has a fault, it is the simple and forgiveable one of being too short. Seeing how profound and, though lucid, how difficult sometimes and diverse Steiner's teaching was, it was a laudable project to give us this year, a half-a-century after his death, good concise accounts of the work that in the interval has been done and is now under way in some of the main areas of his concern.

First we have an admirable biographical sketch by John Davy, which enables us to feel the sheer humanity of the man himself, his loneliness, courage and integrity, his enormous sense of responsibility and—one would have thought—the almost unbearable burden of the consequences of possessing the vision that was given him.

After this comes a discerning essay by A. C. Harwood on Steiner's conception of the threefold nature of the human organism, and how this can offer “a key to social renewal”.

These two essays provide an introductory background to the treatment of particular fields of work. Among the contributors are Arne Klingborg (The Arts in Life), Rex Raab (Architecture), Dr. M. R. Evans (Medicine), Christopher Schaefer (The Work of the Netherlands Pedagogical Institute). There are three essays on education, by Eileen Hutchings, Dr. Thomas Weihs and L. F. Edmunds; H. H. Koepf and C. J. Budd deal with Bio-Dynamic Agriculture, and Oliver Mathews writes on the work of the Christian Community.

Appetites whetted by these essays would be bound to ask for more, and one regrets there is not more about Steiner's work in the spheres of science, psychology and philosophy, and especially, in view of the conditions of life in Britain to-day, more on the Threefold Social Order.

It would be a carping critic who suggested that it is not clear to whom the book is directed, the sympathetic outsider or the committed anthroposophist. He might say that for the former it would hardly be adequate as an introduction to Steiner's teaching and anthroposophical activities generally, whereas the latter will find a good deal of repetition of familiar themes; besides which the critic might mention some rather original spelling—if it is not in fact misprinting—towards the end of the book.

The answer to these comments is that readers of both sorts will gain pleasure and profit from the book, and that if Steiner himself found it proper to repeat himself, where his central theme and emphasis required it, his followers, writing here each in his different context, would be likely to do the same.

Indeed from another point of view there is a more than epic vastness of subject, space and time in Steiner's work; and such is the essentially poetic nature of his vision that reading him is not wholly unlike reading Homer or Virgil, where we, like children listening to the tales they love, demand such repetition, finding in it assurance, necessary reminder and rest on long and arduous journeys.

But what are the thoughts that will occur to the reader when he puts the book down? Many, no doubt, but among them will certainly be that of the altogether greater relevance and urgency of Steiner's teaching to-day than when it was delivered over half-a-century ago. Thinking of all the practical activities that have sprung from it—the schools, clinics, theatres, farms, research centres and the rest that one has seen or heard of—one will indeed be grateful for a genuine achievement, but will one not also

feel with sadness how little all this is in comparison with what might have been done, in Britain perhaps particularly?

Ignorance and prejudice have been and still are immense, and many will feel that these, and our failure that goes with them, are due ultimately to those hostile principalities and powers of whom St. Paul wrote; for the persecution, if one can call it that, of the most vital truths to-day by neglect and indifference, by condemnation without examination, is indeed a cruel form of persecution.

Every reader of this book is likely to ask what he or she can do in the plight which is also our opportunity. And what is the answer? In the war you were taught that when, with few men and wholly insufficient arms and ammunition, you were surrounded in the jungle by an advancing enemy, you should concentrate your resources at the point where the enemy was weakest, force your way out and if possible attack him from the rear. Maybe this applies to all of us to-day. The *metanoia*, the transformation of our thinking and the awakening of the faculties of imagination and inspiration to which we are called, will certainly draw us into the battle of the mind, that mental fight from which we now, much less than William Blake in his time, must not for a moment allow ourselves to cease. For the war is on, and, we may be sure, will grow fiercer: the war in which we, in this onlooker age, since it is being fought within each one of us, as well as outside in the world, we would be traitors if we tried to remain spectators. The issue is no less than the nature and future of man and the world, whose destruction or preservation are now in his hands.

J. S. TURNER

FARADAY AND ELECTRICITY

Spiritual Science, Electricity and Michael Faraday, by Ernst Lehrs (Rudolf Steiner Press, 65p)

It is natural to assume that people are bound to reveal something of their real moral natures in their deeds. Yet, on the face of it, this does not seem to apply to many of the great scientists.

The individuals who have been responsible for many major scientific developments which have released dismaying new powers and forces into the world have not been, by any commonsense measure, wicked men. Indeed they have often been, by the world's standards, unusually selfless and idealistic, trying to live by the high ideal which Michael Faraday set for himself: "Truth should be his [the natural philosopher's] primary object. If to these qualities be added industry, he may indeed hope to walk within the veil of the Temple of Nature".

Many of the scientists who lifted the veil of atomic energy, opening the way for nuclear weapons, had such qualities. One of their leaders, J. Robert Oppenheimer, was not in every respect the strongest of characters. Nevertheless, he was a great scholar and idealist, and suffered deeply when he realised that the search for truth had released a death-

bringing force. As the first experimental nuclear device exploded over the New Mexican desert in 1944, a phrase from the Bhagavad Gita came into Oppenheimer's mind: 'I am become death, the shatterer of worlds'.

In his new work, based on two lectures, Ernst Lehrs explores this strange phenomenon in relation to Faraday himself, who opened the way to the 'electrification' of our culture and civilisation, and was at the same time an extraordinarily loveable human being, deeply religious, uniting, as a contemporary wrote, 'grey-headed wisdom' and 'wonderful juvenility of spirit'.

Rudolf Steiner spoke often of a relationship between electricity and the unconscious forces of will in the human being. In our present age, the moral being of man is seeking to reach into this region and bring it to conscious action. It is the realm of Intuition.

The last words which Rudolf Steiner wrote to the members of the Anthroposophical Society before his death* point to this mystery. There he refers to electricity as a force which leads man into a destructive world of sub-nature. This world can be met only if man rises in spiritual knowledge to equivalent heights in the worlds *above* nature. This theme Rudolf Steiner introduces in relation to the fact that in achieving our uprightness in childhood, we have to meet with our will the forces of gravity reaching up from below the earth.

Here are some clues to the apparent modern paradox of human beings of high moral calibre whose destiny leads them to face mankind with strange forces of immense destructive potential. In this remarkable essay, Dr. Lehrs explores several dimensions of this problem in relation to Michael Faraday, in a manner which also throws light on some of the most daunting events of this century. It is a theme which concerns, quite literally, matters of life and death in the future of mankind.

JOHN DAVY

* *Letters to the Members*, 12 April 1925.

A PAINTER'S SECRET LANGUAGE

The Pictorial Language of Hieronymus Bosch, by Clément A. Wertheim Aymès. Translated by E. A. Frommer. With 13 plates in colour and 147 in monochrome. (New Knowledge Books, £4.95).

MANY people, particularly in our present psychologically aware culture, are fascinated by the paintings of Bosch, but do not consciously know why. They sense, amid the wealth of perturbing and apparently irrational forms, a real meaning and accuracy, but the key that might unlock this meaning and make it comprehensible seems out of reach. This study by Wertheim Aymès is just such a key. It is a detailed examination of two of Bosch's major works, "The Temptation of St. Anthony" and "The Prodigal Son."

The author gives evidence that Bosch, through his relationship to the Rosicrucian movement of his time, made use in these paintings of the vast and rich symbolic imagery that had its source in that movement. By referring again to this symbolism and infusing it with the teachings of Rudolf Steiner's Spiritual Science, the author has been able to translate the apparent chaos of forms into a meaningful and living whole. This is rare in a world where art books seldom move beyond the aesthetic and the technical.

Bosch lived and worked at the end of the fifteenth century, at a time when freedom of spiritual belief and practice had been darkened by the forces of the Inquisition. According to the author, Bosch's strange juxtaposition of forms that we would today call 'surrealist' was a deliberate attempt to obscure their meaning from the Inquisition and the forces of orthodoxy. But for those who were spiritually aware and had knowledge of their source, these paintings could be "read" as the imaginative embodiments of spiritual wisdom and instruction.

Wertheim Aymès shows how they can be seen as a kind of map by which one can find one's way through the worlds of body, soul and spirit. He is at pains to show that Bosch's work is not a mere glueing together of Rosicrucian symbols, as much allegorical art of the time was, but that it has the quality of real imaginative metamorphosis, which is the quality of life itself. His genius lay in his capacity to balance the sense of ever-moving life, with a comprehensible structure of meaning.

However, it is probably true that the author's interpretation of Bosch as spiritual guide and teacher is not the only one—visual imagery of that kind is always ambiguous, just as dreams are. The preponderance of demonic and disturbing forms, which possibly reflected a real self-loathing on Bosch's part, and the scarcity of truly light and hopeful imagery, seem to imply that Bosch was to some extent caught in that sphere from which he hoped to achieve and to teach catharsis. One could certainly learn from Bosch about some of the dangers of the soul-world, but it is less than clear that one could also learn from him how to climb out of those dangers into new Being.

However, whether or not one likes Bosch, and the areas into which he delved, this splendidly illustrated and handsomely produced volume takes one on a fascinating and often profound journey into lands where physical form becomes spiritual meaning, in surprising and revealing ways. The author's capacity to integrate the Rosicrucian symbolism of the fifteenth century with the teachings of Spiritual Science makes of the book a great opportunity to explore this important area of our spiritual and cultural heritage.

PEARL GOODWIN

BREAKING THE ICE

Trapped Man, Break Out! By Charles Austin (Outposts Publications). Obtainable from the author at Shalesmead, Primrose Lane, Forest Row, Sussex. Price 60p, postage 9p.

BEFORE the trapped man can break out, he must be awake to his condition and aware of what he is trapped in. Fairly often in these poems, especially the later ones, a call to awakening can be heard; the trapped man is the scientifically educated modern man, for whom the universe often has no hope or meaning. He is confined in a sort of ice-age of the soul. Mr. Austin speaks indirectly of this condition, and of the way out from it, in some of his strongest verses: for example in *Alien*, which begins

The calm and terrible sea
deceives only the gentle simple
and the yet undrowned.

The bright and deadly sun
blinds the unsmiling eye,
isolates white bone . . .

but concludes:

For all that, we are none of these.
Sired of spirit, seed of soul, we take on sea
sun wind all elements,
but hold all at arms length strangers
alien till redeemed.

These 34 short poems may not be printed in exact chronological order, but a progression is evident from the slightly melancholy romanticism of the earlier pages to the much more positive and forcible note of the later ones.

It would be no use addressing to Mr. Austin Milton's invocation—

And ever against eating cares
lap me in soft Lydian airs—

he is more concerned to stimulate than to soothe. His work includes some lighter verses, agreeably touched with humour and satire; but for the most part his writing is serious and urgent. At times he crowds words together so densely, often without punctuation, that they get in one another's way, at least when read silently. Many of the poems would gain from being read aloud, when the reader could introduce breathing pauses in accordance with his own sense of meaning and rhythm. C.D.

PLANTS AND THEIR WORLD

The Plant, by Gerbert Grohmann (Rudolf Steiner Press, clothbound, £4.75; paperback, £3.00).

Botany, biology, physiology and kindred subjects are rather apt in these "scientific" days to pursue knowledge by the dissection method—dividing things into smaller and smaller material pieces to find out what they are made of. (In the end you usually arrive at something boring like an atom.) Dr. Grohmann's book, while presenting botanical facts in meticulous detail and with lavish illustrations (well over 100 plates and drawings) follows the path opened up by Goethe and Steiner into a world of life and metamorphosis, embracing the whole relation of the plant kingdom to the earth and to man. "A great deal would be gained", he writes,

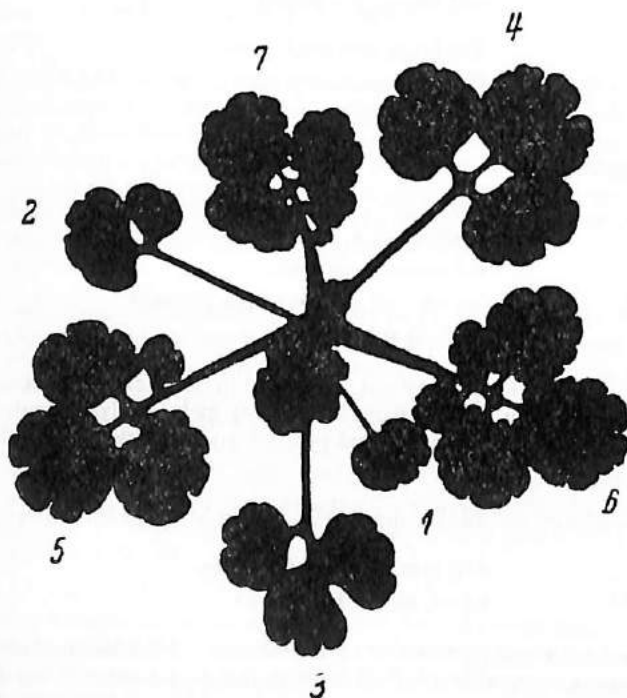


Plate 13: Young plant of *Chelidonium major* (Greater Celandine) with its first leaves, from the first simple undivided leaf to the lobed ones (7) through all the intermediate stages.

Natural size: from a herbarium specimen.

"if our scientific world-conception would allow for the development of the physical from the spiritual. Facts seem to demand a recognition of the spiritual; we need add nothing, only let them speak for themselves and interpret themselves. A break-through to the spiritual in natural science could be achieved if conventional materialistic habits of thought could be discarded . . ."

And in his Preface he writes, "Many are waiting for the mental stimulus which can come from a study of the plant world. Besides scientists, I am thinking of such people as artists, teachers, doctors, farmers and gardeners."

The territory into which this approach leads is wide and varied, as even a random glance at chapter and section headings will show: The Living Face of the Earth, Leaf Metamorphosis, From Pole to Equator, Goethe's Archetypal Plant, The Ladder of the Plant Kingdom, The Threefoldness of the Plant and the Image of Man, Flowers and Insects.

It seems to me not very useful to summarise the contents of this book in greater detail. It is essentially a botany book, and as such depends a great deal on the author's expertise and long years of study and observation. To the botanist it is, of course, of special interest, but it is also a revelation and a stimulus for anyone receptive to the wonders of the natural world. It seems strange that though this volume was published in German nearly 30 years ago, this is the first English translation. (And here I should like to congratulate the translator, Katherine Castelliz, on her excellent and lucid handling of an extremely difficult undertaking.)

The first edition of *Die Pflanze*, then only a booklet, came out in 1929. It grew by stages into two volumes, published in 1948 and reprinted unchanged in 1959, two years after Grohmann had died, unable to fulfil his plans for further expansion. It is the first volume of the 1959 edition that we now have in English; one must hope that a translation of volume II will follow more quickly.

DORIS DAVY

EXPLORING THE PARANORMAL

Flight towards Reality, by Victor Goddard (Turnstone Books, £2.50).

After a distinguished career in the R.A.F., Air Marshal Sir Victor Goddard retired to live in Kent, and there, in a chalet overlooking his house and its meadow-land, he wrote this book, a discursive account of his explorations in the field of psychical research and paranormal phenomena during the past twenty years. Inspiring it is the philosophy of Creative Imagining, developed in a series of books by that remarkable character, Edward Douglas Fawcett, who died in 1960, aged 94, with Sir Victor at his side.

Fawcett was never able to reach a wide public, or to make any impression on academic circles with his philosophy, but it has had several advocates and interpreters, notably Dr Raynor Johnson, who gave a good account of it in his *Nurslings of Immortality* (Hodder and Stoughton,

1957). The essence of it is that the entire manifested universe arises from Divine Imagining, a creative power also exercised by spiritual beings (including those who direct the processes of nature), and finally by man himself, for man is both the outcome of imagining by the Elohim and a creator whose imagining has brought into being everything in his environment that is not given him by nature. Sir Victor pays a warm tribute to Fawcett and includes some extracts from characteristic communications from Fawcett which have, he believes, come to him through various channels since his friend's death.

With this philosophy, somewhat modified, as background, Sir Victor describes his encounters with a wide variety of paranormal occurrences, including a personal experience of precognition (the Drem airfield story) which ranks high among the recorded examples of this baffling phenomenon. He is cautious in assessing the many strange events that have come his way; he is always aware that they are appearances and may often owe the form they assume to the unconscious activities of human minds. One might wish that he had given more space to narrative and less to speculation, but his leisurely, reflective book, imbued with a strong religious sense and his own warm-hearted response to Christianity, leaves one wishing for more of his company. He has an autobiography still to write.

C.D.

A FLORENTINE PLATONIST

The Letters of Marsilio Ficino. Volume 1. Translated from the Latin by members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, London. (Shepherd-Walwyn, £6.00).

Not many of the thousands who visit Florence every year will be acquainted with the writings of Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), the first leader of the Florentine Platonic Academy. This translation of his *Letters* offers an opportunity to gain access to the world of this great philosopher, scholar, physician, musician and priest. While the book can be considered a specialised work for scholars and students of the Italian Renaissance, the smooth flow of the translation, the pleasant lay-out, and above all the pearls of wisdom contained in it, will justifiably arouse the desire in many a layman to acquire it.

At a time when Europe seems to be so impoverished in its spirit that it turns to the East for enlightenment, it is good to be reassured that "the human soul is never impoverished, for it creates abundance even from poverty, weaves invention from its absence and digs up gleaming silver and glittering gold from the darkest corners of the earth," or that "man is an earthly star enveloped in cloud, but a star is a heavenly man". The work of Ficino is a proof of the validity and strength of the spirit of Europe and its Christianity, and as such should be rediscovered.

BARUCH URIELI

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