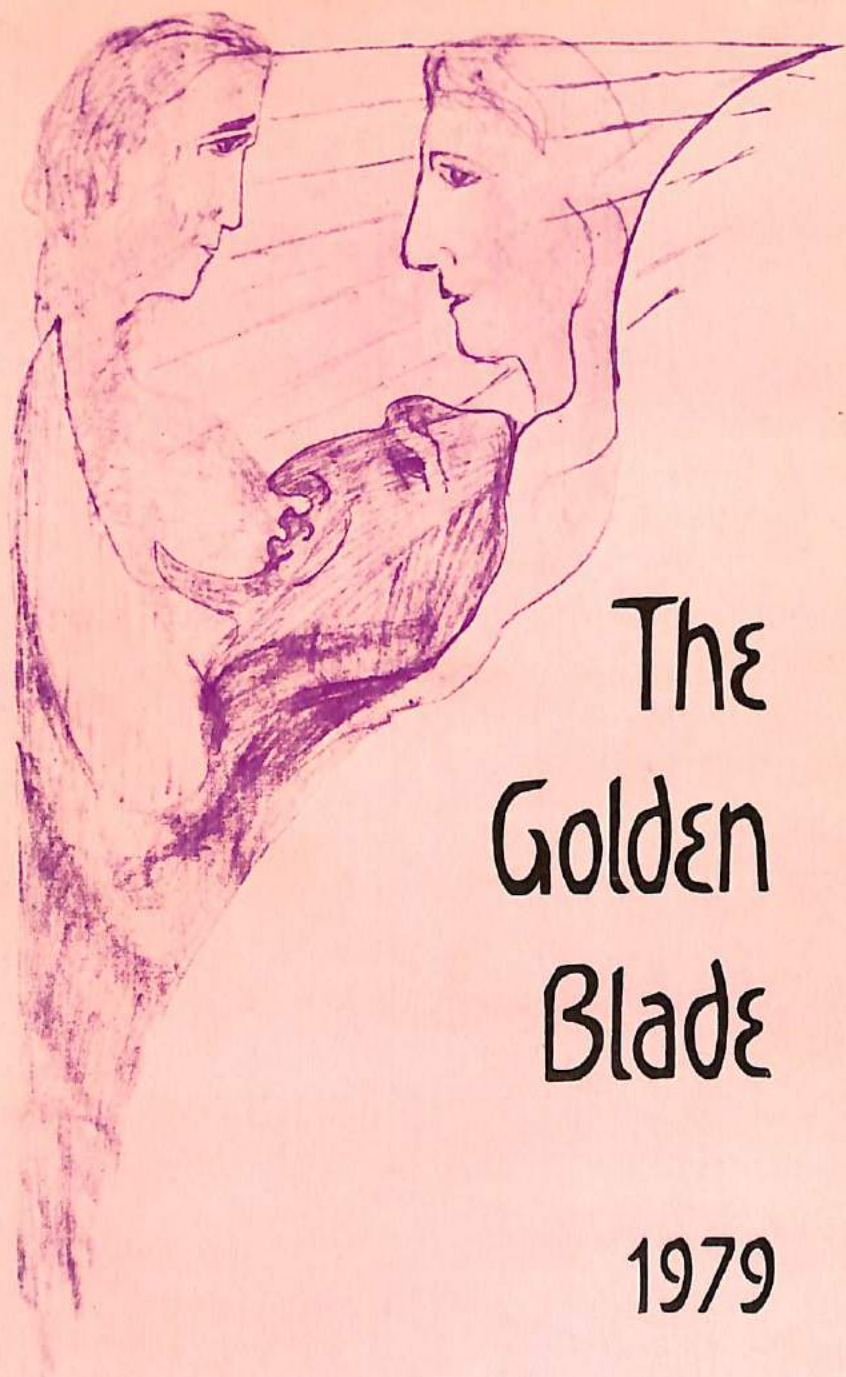




The Golden Blade

1979

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THIRTY-FIRST (1979) ISSUE

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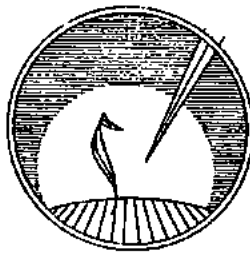
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EDITORIAL

A Hundred Years of the Michael Age



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”.

HUMANITY stands close to the threshold of a new consciousness. The world around us is ceasing to appear as composed of material objects; we are beginning to see it as a veil that is becoming transparent, and to feel behind it worlds where countless spiritual beings are active. And in the depths of our own feelings we are growing aware of the effects of past and future; a past in which we ourselves have been members of those worlds of spirit, and have descended again and again into earthly existence, under conditions quite different from those of our present life—and a future in which we shall enter again into the spirit, and prepare for lives in which we can complete what we are here leaving unfinished.

Because consciousness is changing in these ways, the knowledge that we have gained so far about the outer world, and the standards of behaviour which are pressed upon us by our human environment, are felt as much more relative and open. To most of us what we are beginning to learn for ourselves appears uncertain and confusing, lacking the precision of scientific discovery and the definiteness of inherited moral standards. In the midst of these uncertainties our innermost freedom, and the qualities which we feel most truly our own, grow towards maturity; but we are in great need of maps which in some way indicate the relationships between the physical and spiritual realms, rather as mankind has needed, from the 15th. century onwards, maps of the world of space. What is needed can of course hardly at all be drawn on sheets of paper, and enters indeed only with great difficulty into human words. But all human life depends on mutual help; and help is very much needed here.

Those who study the work of Rudolf Steiner attentively very often come to recognise in him a man who had developed other *levels of consciousness* in a clear and steady way, and who was able to give help to others because of this, help not only through words but also as an artist and by his actions. In many different ways he described the

changes in consciousness which are approaching us, and by his advice and his example showed how they can be developed steadily, in a harmonious accord of body, soul and spirit. He showed us how it is possible to look at the events in the world around us without losing our confidence in man.

He often described, for example, the years since 1879 as the beginning of a Michael age. Among all the achievements and disasters of our age we should seek the presence of a spiritual being, profoundly concerned for the freedom of the individual and for the unity of mankind. Rudolf Steiner was not here saying something completely new. Further on in this issue, John Meeks writes about Trithemius of Sponheim who summed up all human history as divided into periods inspired by seven Archangels in turn. He connected, as does Rudolf Steiner, these Archangels with the seven planets, as they were seen by the astronomy of his time, in the *opposite order* to that mirrored by our weekdays—that is, in the sequence Saturn, Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Moon and Sun. (In Latin, Friday is the day of Venus, Thursday of Jupiter, Wednesday of Mercury, Tuesday of Mars,—as can be seen in the French names). Trithemius wrote almost at the end of a Mars age, inspired by the Archangel Samael. This was a period of almost constant war, often of a particularly senseless and miserable kind,—the period almost exactly covered by Shakespeare's History plays, from King John to Henry VIII. Trithemius foresaw the coming of a Gabriel age, followed then by a Michael age beginning in the same year as that given by Rudolf Steiner.

Michael is the Archangel whose impulses are drawn above all from the spiritual Sun-realm. And we may find it very difficult, looking back on the last 100 years, to think of them as filled with warmth, and light, and life-giving power. We may regard our time as filled with still worse conflicts, and with a deeper materialism, than the previous ages. But we need to face two things. On the one hand, the course taken by an age of freedom really does depend upon human initiative, upon the creative power and perseverance of individual human souls—it is not automatically filled with goodness. And on the other hand, if human creativity and initiative are insufficient, the shadows and echoes of previous ages will be all the stronger. And in fact we can see how during the past 100 years Mars and Moon impulses have shown a terrible strength. We need not think here of the Archangels themselves, but of influences coming from the spheres

concerned,—the temptation to plunge into senseless conflict, and obsessions arising from the forces at work in man's physical body. Shadows from the Samael age grow darker and more powerful, not only in conflicts between nations, concerned with territorial aims, but in the battle of classes and ideologies enveloping the whole earth.

All this threatens the delicate flower of human freedom. We should look more closely at the meaning of freedom in a Michael age. It is not just room to do what we like. True freedom comes about when we can hold back many influences that press upon us, both from outside and from within, even what can become the tyranny of our own thoughts. Only when we can choose an inner tranquillity to bring into effect an imaginative thought of our own making, shining in its own gentle and selfless light, are we free in the Michael sense. Thought must be no longer shadowy, or just the echo of outer voices, but brought to life within us as something born afresh.

Outer history cannot tell us directly how far human beings have failed or succeeded in this. But at a critical turning point of our time, soon after the ending of the First World War, Rudolf Steiner did test human souls for the presence within them of a genuine and effective love for human freedom. In the social turmoil through which middle Europe was passing, Rudolf Steiner tried to awaken an interest for threefold ordering of human affairs—for the achievement of brotherliness in all economic relationships; for the protection of every human being's rights; and for the liberation of the human spirit in science, art and religion, and their expression in education. In countless lectures and meetings and in a stream of publications, he tried to make such ideas widely known. In German they could be summed up in the single word "Dreigliederung"—three-membering. Four years later, at Easter 1923 he looked back sorrowfully upon this attempt; "When the impulse of Dreigliederung in social life was described, it was a kind of test whether the Michael-thought is already strong enough that it can be felt how an impulse of this kind springs directly from the forces which shape our time. It was a trial of the human soul, whether the Michael-thought is strong enough in a number of human beings. This test had a negative result. The Michael-thought is still not strong enough even in a small number of people to be felt really in its full power and might to shape our time."

The test of which Rudolf Steiner speaks was made in 1919, 40 years after the beginning of the Michael Age. As we come to 1979,

what progress can we see towards an understanding of the essential tasks of humanity, as Rudolf Steiner saw them then? Are we nearer to worldwide brotherliness in our economic relationships? Do we see the protection of the rights of every human being as the essential task of governments? Are we building, as free spirits, a true bridge between the earthly world and the realm of eternal being?

Not long before Rudolf Steiner began his work for a consciously three-fold social order, Russia came under the power of a Marxist party. 30 years later, in 1949, this was to happen also in China. No other social theory has achieved today anything approaching the influence achieved by Marxism. It is a form of thought worked out before the Michael Age began. Is its influence due simply to a kind of inertia of the human spirit, an unwillingness to think afresh? We have inherited from the Samael age thoughts of egotistical, all-pervading conflict, in nature as well as in humanity. Along with these has come a strong conviction about property, that a man can and should have possessions. Capitalism in its earlier stages saw private property, conflict, in the form of competition, and as things undoubtedly good in the social life. It is important to see that Marxism has its tremendous influence partly because it tries to see beyond conflict and beyond private property in a way that corresponds to deep needs in the human heart. We feel indeed attached to our possessions, and yet we feel as well, though we seldom recognise it clearly, that this hinders us in looking through external things into spiritual reality, and can injure our human relationships. It is one of the great tragedies of history that Marx, in his longing for social justice, neglected the need for justice towards the individual human being, and the creative power of the individual human spirit—seeing as he did the life of ideas and of the arts as, in the main, an end—product of economic processes. Marx hoped for worldwide economic co-operation serving the needs of all men, although the only path towards this that he could imagine, dictatorship by the Communist Party, has had such terrible consequences.

For Rudolf Steiner, the real hope for worldwide co-operation in the economic field lay in the formation of Associations of producers and consumers, not administered by governments or themselves working in a nationalistic or power-hungry way. We may think that very little progress has been made towards this. The world economic order is continually distorted, in disastrous ways, by ideological and

nationalistic influences. Yet there have been positive changes. When Rudolf Steiner wrote, for example, it was hard to see how any effective representation for the consumer could come about. Today there are countless consumer organisations, mainly in Western countries, and though their influence is generally indirect, the need for their participation in economic life is much better understood; and very slowly it is being recognised that every worker in an industry should participate in its direction and control.

It is not only human needs that are served by any progress we can make in these ways. Everywhere it is being seen that, where industry acts irresponsibly, the life of the earth suffers harm. We shall only really awaken into the Michael Age when we take into account that the health of the earth depends upon the activities of countless elemental beings who are around us. How we treat the substances of earth concerns them deeply. What is done for others in a selfless mood helps the elemental beings as well; work coloured by the selfishness of a group or a nation is just as much a pollution in the elemental world as the discharge of poisons into the sea for human consumers. It is not just a question of the individuals within an organisation having a selfless or self seeking mood; the whole structure of an organisation may predispose it towards a particular policy. Wherever understanding for human needs prevails, whether these are the needs of the consumer or those who work in an undertaking—and in the long run these converge—a kind of sunlight breaks through in human work.

In the middle sphere of the three-fold social order, we can perhaps also see some progress. It is being more widely accepted that respect for the rights of every human being is the whole world's concern. The objection is still very often made that to complain of injustice in another country is an interference with its sovereign rights. But organisations whose whole purpose it is to make examples of injustice widely known, as does Amnesty International, are widely respected. And again, just as it is accepted that Scandinavia has the right to complain of the damage done to its forests by English smoke, it may come to be felt that there is a terrible kind of pollution at work here too; each injustice is a source of sickness, at first in the immediate environment, and then more widely. In "The Tempest", in which much of Shakespeare's prophetic insight is expressed, men who have shared in doing a great injustice have to hear through the voice of

Ariel how sea and earth have to answer their deed:

"... for which foul deed
The powers, delaying, not forgetting, have
Incensed the seas and shores, yea, all the creatures,
Against your peace...."

Humanity will come to feel more and more, not only the effects of conscience as a personal quality, but as cosmic storm around us. This will come about as a consequence of injustices done; and also as the effect of one-sided or erroneous thinking.

In this field above all, in the transformation of human thinking, the character of the Michael Age should show itself. This depends utterly on our own free will. "Today we are standing at a point of time when only what human beings let approach their free understanding will be decisive. Only what human beings do not let themselves be ordered to understand, but what they will to understand out of their innermost being, will be significant".

The Marxist sees thinking as arising out of economic processes; and what he thinks, he seeks to impose on all. The purpose of the Michael Age will only be achieved when human thoughts are raised, out of freely won insight, towards what can be given from higher levels of consciousness. In the work of Rudolf Steiner we find these higher levels of consciousness described under names taken from ordinary speech but given by him a special meaning; Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition. When thinking lifts itself towards these realms it leaves behind the grittiness of separate pieces of information to comprehend the world first in mighty pictures, then in creative words, and then through a love that enters the innermost will of all creative beings. In the Michael Age the need develops to open ourselves towards these forms of knowledge, and feel something of their qualities. Even by the elements themselves are we challenged to develop such understanding. The knowledge we possess, great frozen stores of information, is akin to the solid state. All the living waters, outside or inside the organisms we recognise as living, call to us to hold their activities in our souls in the form of Imaginative pictures. Air would speak to us through Inspiration, Fire enkindle within us pure Intuitive love.

The arts have always had the character of these higher levels of consciousness. None of them can ever quite make sense to our minds when they stay on the solid, externally factual level. Poetry, for example, has long been described as imaginative or inspired. We know

the disastrous effects of attempting to dissect it. Architecture has sometimes submitted to the bondage of utility; but it is very quick to make its escape, and to let such buildings crumble behind it.

30 years after the beginning of the Michael Age Rudolf Steiner gave a lecture in Berlin, of which a translation is printed in this issue. From beginning to end, this lecture was given in the language of Imagination. It describes the sources of the arts in spiritual realms, and the healing effect which the arts can have upon our frozen knowledge. This lecture was given at the beginning of a decade in which Rudolf Steiner's creative powers in the arts were to show themselves most abundantly; for example in the Mystery Plays, the beginnings of Eurythmy, and the forms of the first Goetheanum. What is brought into being artistically can never be fully understood by the ordinary consciousness, but it can enliven our ordinary thinking nevertheless. It helps us to comprehend the world and each other in pictures rather than quantitatively. But these pictures can be exact and possess an exact and healthy, not arbitrary and erratic.

It is evident that we have today a boundless thirst for pictures. In our addiction to television we let ourselves be absorbed in a kind of substitute for Imagination. A recent survey of the use of leisure in Britain reckoned that the average adult spends 17 of his 35 hours of leisure in a week on watching television, compared to 2 hours on reading a book. In order to reach Inspiration a deep attentiveness and quiet has to be developed in the human soul. Into this stillness the beings of the spiritual world can speak. Michael himself says very little; his earliest movement, his sparing words, prepare the right mood in which men can listen, above all, to the Christ. When the first half century of the Michael Age was passed more and more human beings, scattered over the earth, began to hear, in their moments of greatest need, the counsel and the comfort of Christ. It was not easy for those who had such moments to speak of them to others. They had to test them over many years in their own lives.

Recently, a study has been published of descriptions by people declared clinically dead of their experience outside the physical body. Many of them felt themselves moving towards a light they described as brilliant but not dazzling. This light spoke with them and also asked questions. "When the light appeared, the first thing he said to me was 'What do you have to show me that you have done with your life?', or something to this effect." Dr Raymond A. Moody, who made this

study, says that these questions never seem to have been felt as accusing or judging the person addressed, but as filled with understanding. "It is, if you will, a Socratic question, one asked not to acquire information but to help the person who is being asked to proceed along the path to the truth by himself". Often the questions were a kind of introduction or elucidation for the panorama of his past life given to the soul at this time. The Being of Light seemed to draw the attention of the one who had died to the quality of the love, or the lack of love, present in the life behind him, and also to the opportunities for learning which had been given him.

Rudolf Steiner's descriptions of the meetings with Christ as Lord of Destiny after death correspond very closely with these accounts. We can expect that, during the remaining centuries of the Michael Age, understanding will grow for such meetings with the Christ, whether during life or after death. Sometimes such encounters are given to a living person who has just suffered bereavement. It will be of great significance that such things are understood, and that the power to distinguish between the voice of Christ and the voices of other Light bearers, who may sometimes be very dazzling, grows stronger.

Intuition, in Rudolf Steiner's sense, is nothing at all hazy or uncertain. It is developed in growing for concern for other beings, until such concern is just as intensive as any feeling about oneself. Intuitive knowledge makes possible a clear understanding for the links between one earthly life and another, and with past and future periods in the spiritual world. Rudolf Steiner gave a kind of school for Intuitive understanding when, towards the end of his life, he spoke of the Karmic relationships of many historic personalities. Such descriptions need to be approached with reverence for the individualities concerned, whether or not we approve of their actions. Love is, indeed, not a matter of approval or disapproval.

In our time, we see the effects of what are not just substitutes for Intuition, but forces radically opposed to it, but which can in some ways take its place. We grow fascinated by violence, cruelty and destructiveness, and obsessive sexuality takes us prisoner. In an age of gentle light, of mutual compassion, there are appalling shadows. From dark depths arise powers who try to destroy the meaning and destiny of man. Technology can easily be brought into the service of these powers. They are there, and they are active. Michael has to wait for the free decisions of man; made at first within our minds, and ripening

into action.

A very significant development over the last 100 years has been the women's movement. We can see the connection of this with the Michael Age in more than one way. First of all, it has been an assertion of the dignity and freedom of every human being, denied so often to women. That the essential being of each one of us transcends the differentiation between man and woman, and can indeed incarnate in either kind of body—this feeling has been coming to the surface with elemental power all over the world. Owen Barfield writes of this in his article "Why Reincarnation?". It showed itself first in the field of Rights—the right to share in democratic processes, to personal property, to equal opportunity in the professions and in work generally, and many other ways. It begins to shape economic life generally, and is very significant in the consumer movement. It protests most earnestly against every kind of violence.

But in the Michael Age the difference between man and woman has also to be seen more deeply, not just as a biological fact. It is a reflection of cosmic polarities, for instance in the solar system between comets and moons, and between sun and earth.

The physical body of man has become too earthly, the physical body of woman has remained too cosmic. In an incarnation as a woman our souls do not have to unite with a physical organism so thoroughly imbued with earthly and sub-earthly influences as in a male incarnation. Women have not become, to the same extent as men, the prey, as is described so imaginatively, to the Dragon. They have preserved more of the cleansing powers of comets and suns.

An Imagination which has to be achieved on the spiritual path, and which is a kind of touchstone for everything else experienced in the imaginative world, is that of the Shadow or Double. Increasingly, human beings catch disturbing glimpses of this being, who in each one of us sums up our individual faults and limitations. The more exactly we see him, the more we can become bearers of the truth. For this, courage is needed.

The greatest protest of all, which can be awaited from the women's movement in the next 100 years, is the protest against the lie. Humanity is entangled in a dark net of anonymous lies. In Communist countries the sources of these are generally more obvious, in Capitalist countries more elusive. Mothers will not accept much longer the obvious, or subtle, indoctrination of their children where they

themselves become aware of it. More and more the impulses of a true mother are awakening in fathers too. The children themselves are beginning to see, half in dream, Ahriman walking beside them; and they need help with this.

The Lie is the polar opposite of Inspiration. Through our involvement in lies, a deep longing for the truth can grow up in us. As the Michael Age continues, we shall grow more aware of our need for the presence and voice of Christ, not now incarnate in an earthly body, but walking like an Angel among us, preparing our spiritual ears and voices for right converse with invisible powers great and small. And we shall long too for the return of Initiates among us, in physical incarnation. The wish for their help must grow strong and insistent—then they will appear. "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Like a great trumpet call this rings out to humanity in the Age of Michael. In the course of this Age, we may have two lives on earth.

If in this life we respond to Michael's trumpet call, we shall remember it when we enter the body again, quite soon. We shall recall what we did and experienced in this life. Then we shall have about us not only earthly light, but the eternal light of the spirit. And the beings who work in nature, who sustain and refresh the earth, will receive what they need from man.

MICHAEL AND THE DRAGON

RUDOLF STEINER

When we turn our gaze back into earlier times of human evolution, we are inevitably struck with the change that has come about in the pictures man makes — on the one hand of Nature, on the other hand of Spirit. We need not look very far back. As late as the eighteenth century the forces and substances of Nature were thought of in a much more spiritual manner than they are today, while spiritual things were conceived more in pictures taken from Nature. It is only in quite recent times that men's ideas of the Spirit have become completely abstract and their ideas of Nature have been referred to a spirit-estranged matter that human perception cannot penetrate. For present-day human understanding Nature and Spirit fall apart and there seems to be no bridge to lead over from one to the other.

The consequence is that sublime world-pictures, which in past times had great significance for man as he sought to comprehend his place in the universal whole, have passed completely into the region of things deemed no more than fancy; mere fancy to which man could only give himself up so long as an exact science was not there to forbid him.

Michael in conflict with the Dragon is a cosmic picture of this kind.

This picture belongs to a time when man traced back his own evolution quite differently from the way that is done today. Today as we follow the history of man back into primeval times, we look to find beings less and less human from whom the man of the present day is descended. We pass from more spiritual to less spiritual beings. In earlier times it was different. Then, as men traced back the evolution of mankind they came upon more spiritual conditions of existence than prevail today.

They looked back to a pre-earthly condition when the present form of man did not as yet exist. They pictured to themselves beings in the universe of that time who lived in a finer substance than that of which man is composed today. These beings were 'more spiritual' than the

men of today. Of such a nature was the Dragon-being whom Michael fights. This being was destined in a later age to assume human form. But he must bide his time. The time did not depend on him, but on the decree of Spirit-beings who stood above him. Until that time it was for him to remain entirely within the will of these higher Spirit-beings. But now, before his hour was come, pride was born in him. He wanted to have a will of his own in a time when he should still have been living in the higher Will. Thus he set himself against the higher Will. Independence of will was only possible to such beings in a denser state of matter than then existed. If they persisted in opposition, they must needs change and become different beings. This being was no longer fitted to live in the same spirituality. His fellow-beings felt his presence in their realm as disturbing, even destructive. Michael felt it so. Michael had remained in the Will of the higher spiritual Beings. He undertook to compel the opposing being to assume the form which was alone possible for an independent will at that stage of the world's development, to assume, that is, animal form: the form of the 'Dragon', of the 'Serpent'. Higher animal forms had not yet made their appearance. This 'Dragon' was of course not even now imagined as visible, but as supersensible.

Such was the picture the man of an earlier time had before his inner vision of the conflict of Michael with the Dragon. For him it was a fact that had taken place before ever there was a Nature visible to the human eye, before even man was, in his present form.

The world we know has proceeded from out of the world in which this event took place. The kingdom into which the Dragon was driven has become 'Nature', which has taken on a material form visible to the senses; it is as it were, in substance, the sediment of the earlier world. The kingdom in which Michael has preserved his spirit-devoted will has remained 'above' — purified, like a liquid from which a substance once contained in solution has been deposited. It is a kingdom that must still continue concealed from the senses.

Nature however, apart from man, has not succumbed to the Dragon. The power of the Dragon was not strong enough to achieve visibility in Nature. It remained in her as invisible Spirit. The Dragon had to sunder his being from Nature. She became a mirror of the higher spirituality from which he had fallen away.

Into this world Man was set. He was able to partake in Nature and in the higher spirituality. He became thus a kind of double being. In

Nature herself the Dragon remained powerless. In Nature as she comes to life in man, he acquires his power. In man, there lives what he takes from Nature as desire and animal lust. Into this sphere the fallen spirit has entrance. And so we have the 'Fall of Man'.

The Adversary has found his abode in man. Michael has remained true to his nature. When man turns to Michael with that part of his life which has its origin in the higher spirituality, then in his soul there arises the inward conflict of Michael and the Dragon.

As recently as the eighteenth century such a conception was still current. External Nature was still to many men the mirror of a higher spirituality, Nature in man the place of the Serpent which the soul must fight through devotion to the power of Michael.

And now, when conceptions of this kind were living in a man's soul, how must he look out upon external Nature? The time of the approach of Autumn must needs recall the fight with the Dragon. The leaves fall from the trees, the blossoming life of the plants dies away. In gentle and friendly guise Nature received man in spring: tenderly she cherished him through the long summer days, nurturing him with the warmth-laden gifts of the sun. When autumn comes, she has nothing more to give him. Her forces of decay press in upon him, through his senses he beholds them in pictures. From out of his own being man must give himself what hitherto Nature has given him. Her power grows weaker and weaker within him. From out of the Spiritual he must create for himself forces that shall help where Nature fails. And with Nature too the Dragon loses his power. The picture of Michael rises up before the soul, Michael the opponent of the Dragon. That picture was weakened when Nature and with her the Dragon were powerful. With the oncoming of frost, the picture looms up again before the soul.

The picture is a reality for the soul. It is as if the warmth of summer had dropped a curtain before the spiritual world, and this curtain were now lifted. Man shares in the life of the year, goes with it in its course. Spring is his earthly friend and comforter; but it enmeshes him in that kingdom where the adversary sets his invisible power within man as ugliness over against the beauty of Nature.

With the beginning of autumn appears the spirit of a 'strong beauty', while Nature hides her beauty, driving the adversary also into concealment.

With such thoughts and feelings did men of ancient times keep the Festival of Michael in their hearts.

* * *

In the picture of the fight of Michael with the Dragon was a strong consciousness that man himself must give to his inner life of soul the direction and guidance that Nature cannot give. Our present-day thinking is inclined to mistrust such an idea. We are afraid of becoming estranged from Nature. We want to enjoy her in all her beauty, to revel in her abundance of life and we are unwilling to let ourselves be robbed of this enjoyment by admitting that Nature has fallen from the Spiritual. In our striving for knowledge we want to let Nature speak. We fear to lose ourselves in some kind of fantasy, if we allow the Spirit that transcends the perception of external Nature to have a voice concerning the reality of things.

Goethe had no such fear. He found in Nature no estrangement from the Spirit. He opened his heart to her beauty, to the inner power of all that she revealed. In the life of man he felt the presence of much that was inharmonious, much that was torn apart or that gave rise to doubt. And he felt an inner urge and impulse to live in communion with Nature, where the eternal laws of consistency and balance prevail. Out of such a life with Nature he drew forth the shining, magical pearls of his poetry.

At the same time, however, Goethe was fully conscious of how the work of man must fulfil and complete the work of Nature. He felt all the beauty of the plants. But he felt too something incomplete in that life which the plant displays before man. In that which weaves and works unseen within the plant, there lay for him far more than is manifest to the eye within the bounds of visible form. Beside what Nature achieves, Goethe found something further, something like 'purposes of Nature'. He did not let himself be deterred by the fear of personifying Nature. He knew well that he was not as it were dreaming such purposes into the life of the plant out of any subjective fancy, he beheld them there quite objectively, as he could behold the colour of the flowers.

That is why he was so indignant when Schiller designated as 'idea'

and not 'experience' the picture Goethe had sketched with a few strokes for his poet friend of the inner striving of the plant towards life and growth. Goethe replied: if that were an idea, then he could see ideas with his eyes just as well as he could perceive colours and shapes.

Goethe was conscious of how there is in Nature not only an ascending but also a descending life. He felt the growth from seedling to leaf and bud, to blossom and fruit; but he also felt how in turn, all withers and decays, dries up and dies away. He felt the spring; but he felt also the autumn. In summer through his own inner sympathy he could live with the unfolding of Nature, but in winter he could share in her death with the same openness of heart.

We may not find this twofold experience in Nature coming to full expression in Goethe's works, but we cannot fail to be aware of it in the whole bearing of his soul. It had an echo of the ancient experience of Michael's fight with the Dragon. But in him the experience is lifted to the consciousness of a later age.

The nineteenth century has not given us any further development of thought on these lines. The new perception of the Spirit now being attained must strive for a continuation of his understanding.

The experience of Nature is incomplete so long as we share in our inner being with her ascending life alone; seed, shoot, leaf, bud, blossom and fruit. We need to have a feeling also for the withering and dying away, and shall not thereby become estranged from Nature. We do not shut ourselves off from her spring and her summer but feel as well her autumn and her winter.

Spring and summer require of man that he give himself up to Nature; man lives his way out of himself and into Nature. Autumn and winter would have him withdraw into his own human domain and set over against the death and decay of Nature the resurrection of the forces of soul and spirit. Spring and summer are the times for the experience of his own human self-consciousness.

As Autumn approaches Nature withdraws her life into the depths of the Earth; she takes away all sprouting and blossoming from the sight of man. What she leaves to his view bears within it no fulfilment; therein lies hope: hope for a new spring to come. Nature leaves man alone with himself.

Then begins the time when it rests with man to prove by his own forces that he is living and not dying. Summer said to man: I receive

your Ego, your I; I let it blossom in my breast with the flowers. Autumn now begins to say to him: Gather forces from the depths of your soul in order that your I may live in itself while I hide my life in the depths of the earth. Goethe objected to Haller's saying:

"No created spirit can penetrate the inner being of Nature: happy is he to whom she shows even the outer shell."

Goethe's feeling was:

"Nature hath neither shell nor kernel; she is everything at once."

Nature has need of death for her life: man can *live* this dying through with her. Thereby he enters the more deeply into her inner being. In his own organism man experiences his breathing process and the circulation of his blood. They are his life. The germinating life of spring is in reality as near to man as his own breathing, it entices him out into Nature-consciousness. So too, the death and decay of autumn is no further from him than his circling blood; it forges within him self-consciousness.

The festival of the consciousness of self, bringing man near to his true humanity is there as soon as the leaves are falling. Man has only to become conscious of it. It is the festival of Michael, the festival of the beginning of autumn. The picture of Michael the Victorious can be there; it lives in the human being who in summer is received lovingly into Nature but would lose the centre of his being if he could not rise in autumn from being lost in her to strengthen his own spiritual being.

COSMIC RHYTHMS AND THE COURSE OF HISTORY

JOHN MEEKS

HUMAN history, as Rudolf Steiner illumines it, does not run its course in a uniform stream of events, no more than does a river; it meanders, and in so doing, reveals its essentially rhythmic character. Set a stream of water flowing over a perfectly smooth surface, and it will come naturally into pulsation, the intensity of which will grow until the very course of the flow has brought its inherent systole and diastole to direct spatial expression.

We speak of the "flow of time", of the "course of events", but also of spiritual and historical "streams" which emerge from unknown sources and often disappear as it were into subterranean channels once more, where they may flow on unseen to reappear later in another form. It is this, which makes the rhythmical or cyclical quality of history so difficult to comprehend: its alternating phases of expansion and contraction take place for the most part over vast periods of time; moreover, historical impulses which may appear to have faded away altogether may in fact have merely withdrawn to a different sphere of influence.

Rudolf Steiner spoke on numerous occasions of rhythmical cycles in history which can reveal themselves to a meditative study of the development of human consciousness over longer or shorter periods of time. One of these periods, generally known as the Platonic World Year, of about 26,000 years' duration, corresponds to a definite cosmic phenomenon: namely the precession, or retrograde movement of the vernal equinox through the entire zodiac. Other rhythms, such as the successive reigns of the archangels, which Rudolf Steiner gives as about 350 years, may be of variable length, and seemingly more dependent on human than cosmic criteria. In the present article we shall be looking in particular at these two rhythms with the particular task of discovering something of their significance for man out of their cosmic origin.

The Platonic Year

Let us dwell for a moment on the astronomical phenomenon which underlies the so-called Platonic World Year. The most familiar image used to explain this movement is the comparison between the earth's axis and the axis of a spinning top. Like the body of a top, the earth is not a perfect sphere, but has a slight equatorial bulge, inclined at an angle of $23\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ to the ecliptic (the line demarcating the apparent yearly path of the sun). It is thereby subject to a wobble, similar to the wobble of a top, and caused by the cumulative effect of the varying attraction of sun and moon on the bulge. A complete wobble takes place in about 26,000 years. Seen from a particular locality on the earth, the entire sphere of the fixed stars would appear to perform this wobble, whereas the sun, the moon and the planets would be unaffected.

From a purely phenomenological point of view, therefore, it would be more accurate to speak of a precession of the stars than a precession of the equinoxes. Indeed, the equinoxes and solstices are unaffected by this movement, as are the rising and setting points of the sun at the different times of year. Were a single being able to follow the movement of precession over a complete cycle of 26,000 years, he would see the constellations of the zodiac moving slowly from west to east past the equinoxes and solstices. At the same time, the rising and setting points of the individual stars would shift along the horizon, reflecting their changing relationship to the celestial equator. This would mean that the entire aspect of the night sky would be changing over the whole of the period. The constellations which we now see high in the southern sky at midwinter will, 13,000 years hence, appear low over the southern horizon in midsummer and vice-versa. Moreover, constellations now visible below the summer solstice, such as Argo, Eridanus and the lower half of Orion, will gradually descend below the horizon to complete invisibility at our latitudes, while the very bright and impressive constellations now invisible below the winter solstice, such as the Wolf, the Centaur, and even the Southern Cross, will rise above the horizon and be visible during the long winter nights. The centre of this wobble is the pole of the ecliptic which is located in the constellation of the Dragon. As the sphere of the fixed stars rotates about this point, different constellations pass through the

celestial pole. Our Pole Star has only occupied its present position in comparatively recent times; during the flowering of Greek culture in the fifth century B.C. the star Kochab (β Ursae minoris) was much nearer the pole, and in about 10,000 years Vega, one of the brightest stars in the northern sky, will circle within about 5° of the pole.

There has been much argument about whether this phenomenon, which bears the name of Plato, was in fact known during his lifetime. Hipparchos, who lived during the second century B.C. is normally credited with its discovery. But there can be little doubt that something of its effects were experienced long before this time in the mysteries, most particularly in Egypt. Many Egyptian temples were, as inscriptions testify, orientated exactly to the rising or setting point of a particular star, which was looked upon as the dwelling-place of a deity holy to the temple. The light of that star might thus enter along the whole length of the central passageway to the innermost sanctuary, the Holy of Holies. Such a relationship between the temple-architecture and the frame of the surrounding cosmos could, however, only endure for a few hundred years. As the effects of the precessional movement accumulated, the light of the star no longer reached as far as the innermost sanctuary. Over many generations, therefore, the priests must have experienced something like a slow withdrawal of the god from the temple, a fact which will have assumed the greater significance through the fading of the old clairvoyant faculties which accompanied it. The fundamental importance attached to the orientation is clearly demonstrated by a number of temples in which the direction of the passageway for the light was changed, or which were abandoned in favour of a new temple adjusted to the changed cosmic situation. (The slight difference in orientation of adjacent temples, such as those of Medinet-Habû, which differ by about 5° , was a long puzzle to archaeologists, and sometimes explained with a supposed malady called "symmetrophobia". The astronomer Norman Lockyer first offered the correct explanation in his book "The Dawn of Astronomy", 1894).

This may, of course, be taken as clear evidence that the Egyptians did not "know" about the precession, for if they did, they would surely not have constructed temples designed to endure for millenia, knowing that they would be obsolete in a few hundred years. But this is not, I think, the essential question. If the Egyptian star-cults were indeed born out of initiation-wisdom, then we cannot speak of "mistakes" as

we would today, with respect to merely functional architecture which had failed to fulfil its function. We must try rather to understand how the *experience* of this seeming failure becomes an essential part of the Egyptian initiate's awareness of the changing relation between macrocosm and microcosm, between the world of the Gods and the world of man.

A similar experience of "falling away" from the true cosmic rhythms was given by the Egyptian calendar of exactly 365 days. Because no leap years were utilized to make up the difference from the true year of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days, the twelve months of the calendar wandered through the seasons of the year over a period of $365 \times 4 = 1460$ years. This period was in fact well known to the Egyptians as the Sothis Period, named after the bright star Sothis (Sirius) whose first morning visibility (heliacal rising) was awaited as a herald of the floods around midsummer, and the true beginning of the year. Again, it may be asked: why, if the Egyptians were aware of this discrepancy, did they not adjust their calendar accordingly by the insertion of leap years? The answer is suggested by an indication of Rudolf Steiner that the succession of Sothis Periods in Egyptian history was experienced in direct connection with the loss of the old clairvoyant faculties. And the outer expression of this might well be sought in the way in which the Sothis Period comes about: as the temple built by man in union with the gods slowly falls away from the true rhythms of the cosmos, so the calendar, made by man through divine inspiration, falls away from the true, cosmic year.

We have thus far been concerned primarily with a spatial experience of the Platonic Year, which comes to expression in the orientation of the temple. It is the temporal aspect, however, which brings us to the conception of a world year which always returns to its beginning, as does an ordinary year. Seen in its totality, the world year is divided into twelve "months" of about 2160 years, each of which represents the passage of the vernal equinox through a particular constellation of the zodiac.

The two dates specifically and frequently referred to by Rudolf Steiner as demarcating the beginning of a "world month" or cultural epoch are 747 B.C., the beginning of the Greco-Roman age under the sign of the Ram γ , and 1413 A.D., the beginning of the subsequent fifth epoch in Central Europe, under the sign of the Fishes $\text{--}\text{--}\text{--}$. Extrapolating from these dates, it is possible to give a chronology for

the great Post-Atlantean periods:

B.C. 7227 — 5062	Ancient Indian Epoch
5067 — 2907	Ancient Persian Epoch
2907 — 747	Egyptian, Chaldean, Babylonian Epoch
B.C. 747 — A.D. 1413	Greco-Roman Epoch
1413 — 3573	Fifth Epoch

Again the question arises, whether some experience of this rhythm might have preceded its scientific discovery. There can hardly be any doubt that the gradual passage of the vernal equinox from one constellation into another is reflected in ancient mythology. The bull was sacred to the Egyptians and figures prominently both in their myths and in their religious rites and customs. The Pleiades, which were regarded, then as now, as a part of the Bull, were looked upon in almost every contemporary culture as the beginning of the zodiac. The regression of the equinox into the Ram appears to have been anticipated by the Theban cult of Ammon-Ra, at a time when the thinking faculty had begun to individualize.

All three forms in which Ammon was represented: with a ram's head, with a sparrow-hawk's head, or with a pair of feathers above the disc of the sun, exemplify his connection with the thinking faculty in man. Indeed, the Greeks recognised in Ammon their own god Zeus, who was looked upon as the father of thought. The horns of the ram make visible the forces which underlie the thinking faculty; they also created the physical organ of thinking, the brain, with its convolutions, which provides them with the necessary resistance to allow thoughts to light up into consciousness. During the Greco-Roman age the transition was made from mythology to clear philosophical and scientific thinking. A true understanding of what this transition meant may throw an important light on the scientific discovery of the precession and its relation to the mystery-wisdom which had gone before.

Hipparchos' discovery was, like so many other revolutionary discoveries, accidental. In comparing his own observations with the star catalogue of Timocharis, compiled some 150 years earlier, he noticed a consistent discrepancy of about $1\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ in the position of the

stars in relation to the equinoxes. In order to explain this, Hipparchos assumed that the vernal equinox wanders by about 1° in a century. This was roughly confirmed by Ptolemy in the 2nd century A.D., who gave an overall length of 36,000 years to the period. It is characteristic that Hipparchos' discovery does not seem to have aroused a great deal of attention at the time when it was made. And indeed, it had to compete with a rival theory by Theon of Alexandria, which tried to interpret the same observations by postulating that the stars move alternately forwards and backwards to a limit of 8° on either side of the equinoxes, with an overall period of 2560 years. This controversy was resurrected by Arabian astronomers in the 9th century. A particularly ingenious theory was that of Thabit ben Korrah (836–901), who attempted to explain both the precession and the variations in the observed obliquity of the ecliptic out of a single movement, similar to that described by Theon, but with a period of 4171½ years. The rival theories continued to exist for some considerable time side by side, and in the Alfonsian Tables (published in the second half of the thirteenth century in Spain) both Thabit's and Ptolemy's figures for the precession are given.

This struggle to comprehend the phenomenon and to discover its causes lasted for nearly two millenia. Even Copernicus, who held to Ptolemy's view of a continuous movement of the equinoxes through the whole zodiac, laid too great a trust in the accuracy of the Greek and Arabian observations, and was thus induced to postulate a complicated double "libration" to account for the irregularities. Tycho Brahe, towards the end of the sixteenth century, finally dispensed with these irregularities, on the basis of his own accurate observations.

The richness and fullness of the mythological traditions surrounding the zodiac and the transitions from one cultural epoch to the next stand in the greatest possible contrast to this grappling to understand. It is as though, in order to arrive at a new level of understanding, the old awareness had to disappear. Today the possibility of a new deepened understanding of the Platonic Year is given through the indications of Rudolf Steiner. In attempting to understand what has been given, we are faced with the task of re-uniting what has become separated during the course of history: the inner experience and the outer phenomenon.

A closer look at the chronology of the cultural epochs shows that these do not exactly correspond with the periods during which the

vernal equinox was in fact passing through the associated constellation. Moreover, the astronomical periods are of unequal length, in accordance with the different sizes of the visible constellations.

Cultural epochs		Astronomical epochs
India	B.C. 7227 — 5067	7900 — 6500
Persia	5067 — 2907	6500 — 4500
Egypt	2907 — 747	4500 — 1900
Greece	B.C. 747 — A.D. 1413	1900 — 90
Present	1413 — 3573	B.C. 90 — A.D. 2500

The chronology given by Rudolf Steiner does not appear to be based on any outer astronomical event. Its starting point is the year 747 B.C., in agreement with Ptolemy, who begins his catalogue of planetary positions and eclipses in the same year, which marked the beginning of the reign of Nabonassar in Babylon. From this time onwards exact records were kept of celestial phenomena, which in earlier times were experienced in a more inward, imaginative way.

It will be seen that the astronomical epochs begin consistently many centuries before the cultural epochs. It is as though an impulse working towards the earth from the cosmos could not begin at once to transform the whole of human culture, but had to work inwardly for a time in order to prepare for an outward change. We have seen that the worship of Ammon-Ra, as a kind of anticipation of the Greek age which was to follow, began during the 12th Dynasty in Thebes (ca. 1991–1786 B.C.). This corresponds closely with the beginning of the astronomical age of the Ram around 1900 B.C. The actual birth of Greek philosophy, which marks the maturity of this age, did not take place until about 700 B.C., well past the middle of the astronomical γ – Period. Or again, in the early centuries of Christianity the symbol of the Fish came to be associated with the being of the Christ who through His sacrifice (the sacrifice of the Lamb) had begun to lead humanity across the threshold into a new age. Yet the revolution in human culture which would initiate the fifth cultural epoch did not take place until the beginning of the fifteenth century, more than half-way through the astronomical age of the Fishes.

The Archangel Periods

Superimposed, as it were, on the great rhythm of the Platonic Year, are the successive rulerships of seven archangels, who have their dwelling places in the spheres of the sun, moon and planets. These beings, whose reign lasts for about 350 years, succeed each other in the sequence opposite to that of the days of the week with their planetary rulers:

Saturday – Saturn	Oriphiel – Saturn
Sunday – Sun	Anael – Venus
Monday – Moon	Zachariel – Jupiter
Tuesday – Mars	Raphael – Mercury
Wednesday – Mercury	Samael – Mars
Thursday – Jupiter	Gabriel – Moon
Friday – Venus	Michael – Sun

The earliest written reference to these periods was made at the beginning of the sixteenth century by the German abbot Johannes Trithemius von Sponheim (1462–1516). Trithemius had been questioned at great length by the Emperor Maximilian I about theological matters. He replied in "The Book of Eight Questions" (Published 1515) but expressed the wish to add to this a special matter the knowledge of which would be of use to the Emperor. This he did in a work entitled "Die septem secundeis, id est intelligentiis sive spiritibus orbes post deum moventibus", which takes the form of an elaborate historical chronicle, based on the periods of archangelic rule, which had until that time only been known in esoteric circles.

Trithemius begins with the creation of the world, for which he gives the date 5206 B.C. The first round of seven archangel periods was initiated by Oriphiel, the spirit of Saturn. Each period of rule lasts exactly 354 years and 4 months. A complete round therefore lasts 2480 years, after which time Oriphiel once again leads over into a new cycle.

Saturn, besides being the outermost planet of the solar system, bears within its sphere the memory of all that has passed in the

evolution of the world. According to Trithemius, Oriphiel has ruled three times since the beginning of the world, once immediately following the creation, once during the beginning of the Egyptian cultural epoch, from 2726 to 2372 B.C., and once during the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, from 246 B.C. to 109 A.D. Regarding the central function of Oriphiel's reigns he writes:

"Herein we may see how the divine providence is most wonderfully ordered: the world was created under the first rule of Oriphiel, and under the third mercifully redeemed, raised up and renewed. . . . For in the first reign of Oriphiel there was not more than a single rule in all the world; in the second . . . it was divided into many parts; and in the third, as we see, it was reunited."

In this connection Trithemius remarks that the recognition of such correspondences in the course of history greatly adds to the credibility of the archangelic periods which, as he admits, make no small demands on a Christian belief. In addition, when speaking of the first reign of Samael, he suggests that these periods do not achieve their full unfolding in human culture until the second half of the reigns – a phenomenon we have already discussed in connection with the cultural epochs:

"But this angel Samael does not fully reveal the character of his influence from the beginning, but generally after the mid-point of his regiment has been passed. This will be found to hold true for the spirits of other planets as well."

* * *

There can be no question of the value of these and other insights set forth by Trithemius. But at the same time it must be said that anyone seeking for a deep and penetrating understanding of the spiritual forces working into human history is likely to be disappointed. Now and again there is some reference to the "personality" of the planetary intelligences, but he is not always consistent in this, and all too often allows the confusing chronicle of events to stand on its own, without any real attempt at characterization. Nowhere, for example, does he tell what singles out Gabriel from the other archangels, and it is difficult indeed to discover this from the events – mostly of a martial character – which he mentions as having taken place during his reigns. Indeed, it is difficult to avoid the impression that he is struggling with an esoteric tradition which he either does not fully understand, or else

feels compelled not to reveal in its full depth. In a sense, one could say that all the cosmic rulerships he describes are seen in the light of his own age of Samael, the regent of Mars, which had brought such confusion and upheaval to the civilization of Europe. Such an impression is only strengthened by the prophetic note with which his chronicle concludes:

"At the end of this third age of Samael his warring nature will reach its greatest intensity; if divine providence does not lead the gamma back to the alpha, or the hundredth back to the first, then some change of kingdom or empire lies in store. A great sect or division will arise in the Church; the old priesthood will be destroyed. In the first reign of Samael the flood took place, in the second the destruction of Troy. One may in this manner see how later events arise from those which have gone before. This third reign of Mars will not be consummated without the succession of a new clergy. From the year 1508 there are but 17 years to the end of Samael's reign . . ."

Barely half of this period had elapsed when Martin Luther hung his famous 95 Articles on the door of the Schlosskirche in Wittenberg in 1517 (less than a year after Trithemius' death), thus initiating what was to become the Reformation. It is as though Trithemius, living under the shadow of a gathering storm, whose consequences he well guessed, could not sufficiently free himself from the struggles of his own age, to enter fully into the qualities of others. In them he saw war, conflict and cataclysm raging, as they have throughout history, and so made little distinction between outer and inner struggles; indeed, he seldom paused to look beyond the external events into the inner world of human consciousness which always underlies them.

Is there an Astronomical Basis for the Archangel Periods?

The association of the ruling archangels with the planetary intelligences raises the question, whether an astronomical rhythm might underlie the period of their rule, which Trithemius gives as 354 years and 4 months. He does not mention any such correspondence, and in fact seems to exercise considerable caution regarding any astrological interpretation. Only once, in his description of Anael's third reign, does he touch on the question of direct influences from the celestial bodies and their movements on human life. Here he takes pains to point out that the soul (*Gemüt*) is free and not subject to such

influences, unless it be driven by desire too deeply into the flesh. This passing remark seems aimed at clarifying Trithemius' position with regard to a sensitive theological point, which had become particularly acute since the direct confrontation between Christian and Arabian philosophy in the Middle Ages. The common association of astrology with Mohammedanism might easily have raised the suspicion that Trithemius was embellishing a Christian view of history with an oriental superstition. His remark seems aimed rather at pushing away a possible objection, than directly confronting a serious question.

Not until Kepler, in fact, nearly a century later, was the attempt made to elaborate in all detail how celestial influences reach the soul, and to discover their connection with Christian teachings. This was a question of destiny, which had to be asked out of the new awareness at the beginning of the age of the consciousness soul, at a time when nothing could be taken on the strength of tradition alone, however deeply rooted. Trithemius, however, did not write as an astrologer or astronomer, but as an historian, and his questions arose primarily out of the human sphere. The exact period which he uses is undoubtedly one passed on to him and not of his own invention.

Astronomically, the period of 354 years and 4 months would seem to be derived from the length of the lunar year. Twelve synodic months (phase months) of $29\frac{1}{2}$ days each give a period of 354 days, 8 hours and 49 minutes or roughly $354\frac{1}{3}$ days, which would exactly correspond with the archangel period of 354 years and 4 months. The lunar year appears as a kind of microcosmic archangel period, in which each day corresponds to a year in the historic cycle. The Moon was looked upon by the ancients as forming the boundary between celestial and terrestrial events. In the Aristotelian teachings, which still constituted a central pillar of European learning at the time of Trithemius, only the "sublunar" realm was subject to change and historical development, whereas the planetary world as such was subject only to the cyclical repetition of perfect, archetypal movements.

While the Moon's orbit constituted the lower boundary of the celestial world, that of Saturn, the outermost of the then known planets, was seen as the threshold between the cyclical planetary world and the absolutely unchanging, eternal world of the fixed stars. And here, too, in the movement of Saturn, we find a very close correspondence with the archangel period. To make a complete circuit

of the Zodiac, Saturn requires 29 years, and 167 days. Twelve times this period is 353 years and six months, only ten months short of the exact archangel period. During this period Saturn performs the same number of revolutions through the zodiac as the moon in a synodic year; each such revolution of Saturn thus appears as a kind of month in the whole period. The archangel period thus may be seen as an image of the transition from the eternal to the cyclical realms, and again from the cyclical to the transitory realm, represented in a single period.

Rudolf Steiner and the Archangel Periods

In numerous lectures Rudolf Steiner spoke of the significance of the archangel periods for the development of human consciousness. Unlike Trithemius, he did not ascribe to these a single fixed period, but indicated that the length of rule could be variable, being about 350 years on the average. One might say: a true spiritual understanding sees these periods emancipated from a strict cosmic dependency; they have been brought closer to man. Nevertheless there is considerable agreement between the approximate dates given by Rudolf Steiner and the exact ones given by Trithemius:

Archangel	Trithemius	Steiner
Oriphiel	246 B.C. — 109 A.D.	200 B.C. — 150 A.D.
Anael	109 — 463	150 — 500
Zachariel	463 — 817	500 — 850
Raphael	817 — 1171	850 — 1190
Samael	1171 — 1525	1190 — 1510
Gabriel	1525 — 1879	1510 — 1879
Michael	1879 — 2233	1879 —

Another significant difference is the special importance attributed by Rudolf Steiner to the archangel Michael. If any archangel were to be singled out of Trithemius' account as being of central importance for the entire cycle, it would be Oriphiel, who not only initiated the first round, but also presided over the world at the time of the Mystery of Golgatha. This association with the creation and redemption of the

world makes him a kind of guiding spirit for the whole of evolution. And we have seen that Mars, the ruler of Trithemius' own age, may have played more than his due rôle in setting the whole tenor of the work. Michael is described as the spirit under whose initial reign the first kings ruled over men. Many "liberal arts" arose during this time, among them astronomy, mathematics and magic. But there is little to single out Michael's qualities.

In a lecture given on 2 May 1913 in London, Rudolf Steiner spoke of the relation between Michael and the other ruling archangels as being similar to that between the sun and the planets. Just as the planets do not send forth their own light to the earth, but the reflected light of the sun, so the other archangels send to man what they have individualized from Michael's inspiration. He also indicated that Michael was still able to inspire humanity directly even after the period of his last reign, until after the Mystery of Golgatha had taken place.

"Michael inspired humanity for several centuries, over a period of about 500 years before the Mystery of Golgatha. . . . But soon after the Mystery of Golgatha had taken place and Christ had united himself with the evolution of the earth, the direct influence of Michael ended. At the time when those old documents were written, which we possess in the form of the Gospels—as I have described in my book "Christianity as Mystical Fact"—Michael could no longer himself inspire humanity, but his companions among the archangels inspired men in such a way, that many soul-forces could be taken up.

The writers themselves had no clear occult knowledge, for the inspiration of Michael had ended shortly after the Mystery of Golgatha. The other archangels, the companions of Michael, could not inspire mankind in such a way as to make the Mystery of Golgatha intelligible. Thus the deviating interpretations of the various Christian teachings. In these teachings much was inspired by the companions of Michael. These teachings were not inspired by Michael himself, but stand in the same relation to his inspirations as the planets to the mighty sun.

Only in the present time is such an influence once again present, a direct inspiration of Michael. This direct inspiration of Michael has been prepared since the 16th century. At that time it was the archangel who stands nearest to Michael who gave humanity the inspiration which led to the perfection of natural science in our modern age. The natural science of the modern age does not stem from the inspiration of Michael, but from that of one of his companions, Gabriel. This scientific inspiration inclines to create a science which is connected with the physical brain, and which only gives an understanding of the material world.

Within the last few decades Michael has assumed the place of this inspirer of science, and in the next few decades Michael will give the world something which in a spiritual sense . . . is incomparably more important than material science, which has advanced step by step since the 16th century. Just as his companion among the archangels once gave science to the world, so Michael will give us spiritual science in the future, the first beginnings of which we can now experience."

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WHY REINCARNATION?

Owen Barfield

YOU may have found the title of this address rather sensationally interrogative. It has the advantage however that it can be taken in two different ways. It can be taken as meaning: Why should any sensible person interest himself in anything so fantastic and unprovable as reincarnation? It can also signify: Why would it be a good thing if a good many sensible people did so? I propose to deal with both these questions, and to deal with them separately.

If one tries to take a sort of birds-eye view of the mind of humanity as a whole, one does find that a conviction to the broad effect that one individual has more than one life on earth is a very persistent ingredient in it. I think this is true, whether the bird in question is surveying humanity as a spatially distributed whole at the present moment—or as a historical whole in time. In our own time, the anthropologists seem to turn it up in almost every part of the globe that has remained unaffected by Western civilisation. As one or the other variant of Hinduism or Buddhism, it pervades the whole of the densely populated Far East.

Historically, even in the West, when the human mind first became self-conscious as doctrine and philosophy, the notion of reincarnation was very strong in it. One thinks for example of the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, of the teaching of Pythagoras and its development by Plato. It is there in Zoroastrianism. Systems such as Taoism and Confucianism, which do not emphasise it, nevertheless allow of it. But I am not here to tabulate. What I do suggest as fairly obvious is, that if the bird already referred to were to combine his spatial and his temporal perspectives and, from somewhere outside it, to survey the inhabited earth (the "oecumene", as the Greeks called it) as a sort of tapestry of beliefs about the invisible world (let us suppose him doing it in the future, say 1000 years from now) he would see it as woven in a very large measure out of a belief in reincarnation. True, he would

¹ A public lecture given in Cambridge in May 1978 on the invitation of the Cambridge University Anthroposophical Study-Group.

see one large hole in the tapestry—the hole being 2000 years or so of that part of the oecumene which is covered by one of four widespread systems of belief—either Judaism or Christianity or Islam or Materialism. It is a large hole, and a very important one. It raises for instance the question of the supposed incompatibility between belief in reincarnation and belief in Christianity—which I shall not have time to go into this evening. A large hole in itself, but by comparison with the size of the whole tapestry, not so very large. Everywhere else—you cannot quite say *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*; but everywhere else—this tenacious conviction concerning some form or other of reincarnation.

Some form or other. Much turns on that, and I will return to it in a moment. Meanwhile I hope I have shown good reason why a sensible man who is interested in the world around him, and behind him, and its relation to reality, and who is not minded to hide his head in a bag, can really hardly avoid being at least *interested* in the subject.

If he does begin to interest himself in it, and to enquire a little into details, I suppose the first thing he discovers is the extraordinary number of different forms it has taken and still takes, this belief in reincarnation—forms so widely divergent from each other that he may well begin to doubt whether there is really any justification for grouping them together under a single label at all. It is a far cry, for example, from the system that characterises one variant of Buddhism—which is often referred to as reincarnation—a better name is probably “Karma”—and which is really no more than an application of the principle of causality to the relation between one particular earlier human life and one particular later one—to the notion of a so-called Transmigration of Souls, or Metempsychosis, that takes in not only human beings but animals—and even plants. In some communities there is a fixed belief that the soul returns to earth always in the body of one of its physical descendants. Some suppose a long interval of time between one earthly birth and another; others imagine the soul transferred to a new body at the instant of death. And so on. You have in fact a vast array of beliefs, some of them very fantastic, at all events in our eyes, some of them less so, and many of them quite incompatible with each other. Nevertheless the term “Reincarnation” *can*, I think, justly be used as a category label; inasmuch as they all have that one element in common: for one person, or at all events for one psychic entity, more than one life as a

physical body on earth.

Confronted with this historical and social phenomenon, it seems to me that a sensible man who is at the same time open-minded—and, after all, if he is not open-minded he is not really very sensible—is bound to ask himself this question: leaving aside the intricate variety of its manifestations, how do we account for this one kernel of conviction which they all have in common? How did it *originate*? Is it just an aberration that has gone on repeating itself in different times and places, and in some places has persisted through thousands of years? Something for which there is *no* reason? There is tradition of course, but tradition can only preserve, it cannot originate. Does it originate as a mere invention of the human fancy or do its persistence and its ubiquity betoken a deeper source altogether, call it what you will, a sub-conscious intuition, an instinctive wisdom, a non-scientific knowledge, innate in the structure of the human spirit?

One thing is clear. If it was some kind of knowledge that it came from in the first instance, it must have been a very inaccurate kind of knowledge. The incompatibility between the different forms in which it has found expression makes that clear. If there is a kernel of truth behind them, there is obviously also any amount of superstition and error among them. Is it by any chance possible to winnow the truths from the errors?

I have just used the expression “inaccurate knowledge”, and you may think that was a contradiction in terms. I shall not be surprised if you do; because—and here you must allow me a fairly lengthy digression—it is an outstanding characteristic of our age that we demand accuracy as an absolute condition of knowledge—if not indeed as the very substance of it. What is not known accurately, we feel, is not knowledge at all; it is mere *speculation*. It is from that conviction that the word “Science” gets its contemporary meaning, and on which modern science rests its reputation. We may think it a well-deserved reputation, and we shall be right. But we are not obliged to forget that it is a very *recent* conviction among men—one that dates from about the 17th or at earliest the 16th Century of our Era. Putting it loosely: one that dates from the Scientific Revolution, or a little before it. Moreover, anyone interested in the history of ideas will have noticed that this increasing emphasis on accuracy went hand in hand with another change in the general attitude towards what constitutes knowledge. I mean a more and more exclusive

concentration on the evidence of the senses, as being the only possible *source* of knowledge—of any knowledge that is not mere speculation: in other words a more and more conscious limitation of the field available to knowledge to all *that* in the universe for which the generic term is “matter”.

Previously it had not been so, for the simple reason that this sharp distinction we make between Material and Immaterial, between Matter on the one hand and Mind or Spirit on the other, was not clearly perceived and felt, as we today perceive and feel it. No doubt it was already being felt more and more clearly before his time, but it was the philosopher Descartes who first formulated that distinction in his famous dichotomy between Extended Substance on the one hand and Thinking Substance on the other. On that dichotomy the whole of modern science—if we except a few advanced philosophical Physicists—is firmly based. Meticulous observation of any data presented to the senses, the formation of hypotheses to account for them, the verification or falsification of those hypotheses by prediction and experiment, statistical organising of any data for which the hypotheses fail to account—such is broadly speaking the method of cognition, which has been developed since the Scientific Revolution; and it is a method in which accuracy has become all in all. Avoidance of an error takes undisputed precedence of any inaccurate divination of a truth.

Its advantages are obvious enough; and it is really only during my own lifetime that certain concomitant disadvantages have begun to be at all heavily stressed. One of these is, that, if you think it through, you find this method involves, in the end, the reduction of all Qualities to Quantities. Everything in our experience that comes under the heading of quality—light, sound, colour, beauty, ugliness and so forth, and indeed pretty well everything that we actually experience, as distinct from merely inferring it—must be reduced, and thus transformed, into quantitatively measurable (or ponderable or numerable) material, before we can be said to *know* about it. It is a growing realisation of this particular disadvantage, I think, which has produced a tendency I have noticed in the vocabulary of those who are interested in these matters to substitute the word “Reductionism” for the older term “Materialism”.

This is proving, as I warned you, a long digression from my principal topic. But it is really a very necessary one. Why am I here at

all, speaking to you under these particular auspices? I am here because Rudolf Steiner is, as far as I have ever discovered, the only thinker who has made a certain very important observation concerning the Scientific Revolution and its place in history. Its major significance, he said, for the future of mankind lay, not in the contribution it has made up to now to the general sum of knowledge of ourselves and the world about us, though it certainly has made a very important contribution to that (since knowledge of quantities *is* certainly knowledge); but precisely in its novel emphasis on accuracy. And the real importance of this determined pursuit of accuracy lay, not in the results it was to achieve—and has since achieved—but rather in itself; in itself as a habit of thinking, or rather as a new kind of *activity* in thinking, a new kind of self-consciousness in thinking.

What we call the Scientific Revolution then, was characterised by those two outstanding features: on the one hand, exclusive attention to the material realm; on the other, a new self-consciousness in accuracy. The second was correlative to the first and could not have come about without it. But now that it is there, this faculty of accurate attention—well, it is *there*. And there is no reason (Steiner insisted) why it should go on for ever being confined to the material realm. Moreover, if it should go on being so confined, the only real contribution it can offer to humanity will be an increasing precision and ingenuity in technology. And this does seem to be what is happening. Scientist and Engineer have already become less and less distinct from one another—at least in the domain of Rocketry—and already there are not wanting those who maintain that there *is* no real distinction between technology and knowledge itself.

If on the other hand this same self-consciously accurate mental activity—not, you understand, the restricted methodology that has so far been based on it, but the psychological *core* of the method—should now be brought to bear, not only on the material realm, but also in the immaterial, it will be a different matter. As far as knowledge is concerned, the immaterial realm is the domain of inaccuracy. Or it has been so up to now. We have known it only as the domain of myth, mystery-teaching, revelation, tradition, wisdom—and also of superstition, fancy and fiction—all of which played into the method of pre-Cartesian science, to confuse it. Yet if it is knowledge we have in mind, and not merely technology, we must concede that they also enlighten it. They at least preserved its field

from growing ever narrower and narrower. Above all, pre-Cartesian science, by contrast with modern science, was a Science of Qualities as well as Quantities. Science could continue to include qualities in its field, precisely because that sharp distinction between material and immaterial had *not* yet been apprehended. For quality is both material and immaterial. It is at the same time objective Fact and subjective Experience. Nevertheless it can be not only experienced but known, and (as Goethe pointed out long ago) *accurately* known. Only it requires a different kind of accuracy from the kind that can only be applied to quantities—something that could perhaps be called “perceptual accuracy”—the kind of accuracy that poets and artists still have to develop for their own ends. And this kind of accuracy (if men succeed in developing it) can be applied not only to the material realm—for instance in the cognition of qualities—but also to that wholly immaterial realm which Cartesian science itself has trained us to discriminate so antiseptically from anything material.

There are really three aspects of Steiner's life work, which can be considered separately. In his early publications he sought to establish, on purely philosophical grounds, the bare possibility of such an accurate cognition not only of qualitative nature, but also of the immaterial reality in which all quality participates. Any accurate cognition can properly be termed a science. By definition *that* kind of cognition could not be Cartesian science (which is what the word “science” by itself has gradually come to denote), and therefore he called it “spiritual science”. The other two aspects belong more to the later part of his life. On the one hand he expounded in much detail the kind of training and self-development that is needed by those who seek to develop the perceptual accuracy of which I have spoken. On the other hand he developed it to a very high degree in himself. I should perhaps add that all three of these aspects are connoted by the label “Anthroposophy”, but that in sheer quantity it is the third which predominates; and very much of the literature of Anthroposophy consists of a quantity of books and a vast body of transcripts of lecture-cycles, in which he endeavoured to communicate to others the facts, relating to both the material and the immaterial realm and, above all, to the relation between the two, which his own highly developed faculty had enabled him to perceive. I am simply stating all this as fact, not because I assume everyone agrees with it, but because it is not my purpose this evening to argue the validity of such a

statement. I have tried to do that elsewhere on occasion, but all I am now concerned with is its bearing on the topic of reincarnation.

So now — to resume after the digression—whatever else it is, or purports to be, a doctrine—any doctrine—of reincarnation is an account of transitions from the material to the immaterial realm, and vice versa. It was inevitable therefore that Steiner should have much to say about that among other things. There was, by his own account, no question of any picking and choosing from among that welter of beliefs of which I spoke at the beginning. He simply reported what he actually perceived. I believe it is just because his pronouncements on the subject were *not* the product of any eclecticism or syncretism that a slowly increasing number of people in many different parts of the world (of whom I am one) are well assured that those perceptions of his do have the effect of winnowing the truths within that welter from the falsities.

You may think it a little abrupt, but what I am now going to do is to enumerate, quite baldly and very briefly, three or four of the features that characterise Rudolf Steiner's teaching on this subject. If it is a little abrupt, there are nevertheless two good reasons for it. In the first place you are presumed to have come here at all, because you want to hear some more about Rudolf Steiner. And in the second place it will lead into the second, and shorter, part of my lecture; in which I shall attempt to answer the alternative interpretation of the brute question, *Why Reincarnation*—according to which it signifies: why would it be a good thing if more and more people did come to believe in it?

In the first place, then, the entity which he presented as experiencing more than one life on earth, was a trans-personal one. It is not the personality familiar to himself and his friends—and which the more trendy educationalists think it so important that he should be encouraged to “express”—but the core of a man's being, of which he is normally unconscious, that passes from one life to another. Earthly personality is more like a shadow, or mirror-image, of the ultimate Self (for which Steiner used the term “Ego”). And it is rather what the ego has *made* of that personality during one particular lifetime that will be transmitted to the new personality it will assume—or build—or grow—in a subsequent one. Putting it more briefly, it is the spirit and not the soul, that is born again.

Secondly, there are indeed relations of a causal nature between one life and another, and in this case Steiner normally used the oriental

term. There is in fact a moral law of "Karma" that obtains in the immaterial realm, just as the law of gravity does in the material one. I cannot go into the many differences which nevertheless distinguish his presentation of Karma from the characteristically oriental one. I will only mention that with him—as perhaps generally with the idea of Karma, where it has reappeared in the West—the emphasis was mainly on the future rather than the past. Not the gradual elimination of the individual spirit's apostasy and its eventual extinction in Nirvana, but the continual enhancement of that individual being from life to life.

Thirdly—and here, by contrast, his treatment of the subject departs very far from anything that I at least have found elsewhere—the experiences undergone by the spirit between one life and another—its experiences, that is, in the spiritual world—are presented as being at least as important as its experiences during its incarnation on earth. He often dealt with them in great detail.

More specifically—and it was his habit to be very specific indeed, both on this and on other subjects—the *normal* length of the period that elapses between one incarnation and another is of the order of 1,000 years. It is a norm that is often widely departed from—as is of course the case with life on earth; where, although the norm is, say, threescore years and ten, plenty of human beings die before they are three years old, and quite a few live on to ninety or even a hundred.

Finally, it is again normal—though here again only in the qualified sense I have just emphasised—for an incarnation as a man to be followed by an incarnation as a woman.

Such a bald and abstract summary gives, I fear, no real impression of what it is like to read Rudolf Seteiner on Reincarnation and Karma—of the manner, for instance, in which he illustrated their process by particular historical developments, and indeed in the lives of particular historical individuals. Anyone who wants the substance rather than the mere shadow I have sketched, would have to read for himself. I have risked it only because I want now to go on to the rest that I have to say. And, before doing so, I must make clear what I am *not* saying. I am not saying that, because it looks as if it would be a fine and healthy thing if a lot of people came to believe something, therefore it must be true. I am merely passing on a reflection which has been born in on me more and more forcibly during the last few years. After all, thought is free, and there can be no harm in my

sharing such reflections with you, supposing you are willing to listen. If the majority of people were to become convinced of reincarnation, as I have just outlined it, as a fact, what an enormous difference it must make to many of the discords that are at present threatening to tear our civilisation to pieces!

Take for instance the Women's Liberation movement. Well, there is first of all the rather obvious and crude reflection that the emotions of a woman confronting a male chauvinist pig could hardly help being considerably modified by a firm conviction that the said pig will himself in all probability be born as a woman a little later on in the course of evolution. But I am not thinking of that so much as of the narrow and jaundiced view of the past history of mankind which the movement seems to engender in its more enthusiastic adherents, and of the bitterness that results from it. Historical judgements are one thing; personal bitterness is another. The judgments need not be affected. Women, let us say, have always been the oppressed sex. But the bitterness, the venom in it comes of the speaker identifying herself with her sex as a whole, both now and in the past. Whereas, if she is aware that, in the core of her being, she is as much masculine as feminine, she is free to identify herself not with an artificial class consisting of all women living and dead (which is after all a numerical abstraction) but with Humanity as a whole; which I would say is a reality and not an abstraction at all; and which is in any case not a divisive concept, like that of sex.

I am thinking of course of *conviction* and not of a half-hearted belief in reincarnation. I am thinking of a state of mind that would take its truth for granted in much the same way as most people, under the present dispensation, take for granted the Lyell-Darwin-Freud model of the past history of the earth and humanity. Perhaps I can make more vivid the sort of difference I feel that would make with the help of an impossible analogy. Suppose a man who was well-up in all such things as geology and physics, but who for some reason or other had never heard that there is such a thing as sculpture. And now suppose that, in the course of some digging operation or other, he unearths a marble statue. He wonders about its peculiar shape and about the whole nature and origin of the object before him, and he starts to form theories about them. But owing to the defect in his knowledge which we have supposed, these theories can only take the form of more and more elaborate hypotheses about the geological

adventures of marble in the remote past, and perhaps the operation of climatic changes on it in the more recent past and in the present. And now, if you will imagine the difference it must make to such a man to learn that, in addition to the substance marble, there is such a thing as sculpture, and that in addition to the history of marble, there is a separate history of the art of sculpture, it may help you to see what I am driving at. You have only to substitute for the statue the idea of *homo sapiens* that prevails in the minds and imaginations of most sociologists—and indeed in the minds of most men and women in the West in our time.

I believe it would affect profoundly the relation of every man jack (or woman jill) both to himself (or herself) and to his fellow human beings. I see it operating as a kind of disinfectant, inasmuch as it would tend to substitute the right kind of identification for the wrong. Especially when that is extrapolated into history. A good example of what I mean by the wrong kind of identification would be what is called "class-consciousness". There is nothing more abstract than a *class*. In fact, it is almost *the* abstract word. "Class" and "member of a class" are the terms employed by modern logicians, in preference to the older terms "genus" and "species", precisely because they do not admit any immaterial unity underlying a collection of similar individuals. The collective noun *Lion* means simply the numerical sum of all the individual lions that have been, are, or will be. Now there is no doubt a real underlying unity there, when a man emotionally identifies himself with his ancestors—inferior, if you like, but real. But there is no underlying reality, only a fancied and artificial unity, when a poor and despised man, or a rich and honoured one, in the twentieth century identifies himself emotionally with "his" class in, let us say, the fourteenth century—a fancied and artificial unity, which has no real significance beyond the part it can play in superheating animosity. I do not see why the pricking of that bubble should discourage anyone from struggling just as hard as before to reform the evils and injustices that oppress the present; but I do feel it would take much of the personal venom out of the struggle, if it became habitual to think of history and our relation to it as embodying not only the development of groups and movements and their relation to each other, but also our own previous lives on earth; if we identified with the thought of *them*, at least *as well as* with the groups and movements.

Whatever group or association a person may feel identified with—

or choose to identify himself with—there can be no identity more real than his identity with his own existential kernel—a kernel which transcends divergences of race and nation and sex as absolutely as it must obviously close the so-called "generation gap". In the case of race—and in a different way of nationality—there is of course a real underlying unity between the individual and his community, including the past history of that community. And it is most unfortunate that well-meant attempts to legislate it away, with the persistent emphasis on the topic which that entails, tend rather to enhance than to diminish the awareness of that unity and a consequent relapse into it.

People today—and maybe this applies especially to the young—do seem in a peculiar way—obscurely and half-consciously—to be groping after the roots from which they spring. The growing appeal of Archaeology, far outside professional circles is, I would say, one symptom of it, and I suspect that the startling success of Alex Haley's book *Roots*, and of the film based on it, may be another. For that, and those other reasons I have tried to adumbrate, I can see almost no bounds to the healthful changes in the face of society that might come about, if most of its members should acquire an abiding sense of their spiritual root—of a spiritual heredity alongside of, or rather permeating, their physical heredity and their cultural inheritance—an awareness, let us say, of the sculpture as well as of the marble.

In conclusion I feel disposed to modify a little the disclaimer with which I began this second and more speculative part of my address. You may remember I emphasised that I was not arguing that, because a belief would be beneficial, it must be true. Nor am I. But that is not to say that the two propositions have *no* bearing at all on each other. Quite apart from Jamesian pragmatism, at this sort of metaphysical depth I feel they *are* related. Either the universal process in which we are caught up is a mere fortuitous concourse of atoms, or it is in some way meaningful, morally as well as physically. And if the latter, then a hypothesis which it would be morally healthful for humanity to accept must, I think, be judged, more likely to be true than its contradictory.

A WORLD SPLIT APART

ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN

On 8 June, 1978 Alexander Solzhenitsyn ended two years of self-imposed exile when he received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Harvard University. What follows is the text of the address delivered by him on that day to the Associated Harvard Alumni. Many readers of the *Golden Blade* will not know the address, but what it contains appears to be related to the theme of the present number. This should not be taken to imply that the Editors agree with all that Solzhenitsyn says, but we welcome his words as a deeply felt and powerful contribution to the understanding of the times in which we live. "A World Split Apart," © Alexander Solzhenitsyn is included in a book to be published by The Bodley Head in November 1978 at £1.95 under the title *Alexander Solzhenitsyn Speaks to the West*. We are grateful to the Bodley Head for their special permission to publish the address.

THE split in today's world is perceptible even to a hasty glance. Any of our contemporaries readily identifies two world powers, each of them already capable of entirely destroying the other. However, understanding of the split often is limited to this political conception, to the illusion that danger may be abolished through successful diplomatic negotiations or by achieving a balance of armed forces. The truth is that the split is a much profounder and a more alienating one, that the rifts are more than one can see at first glance. This deep manifold split bears the danger of manifold disaster for all of us, in accordance with the ancient truth that a Kingdom—in this case, our Earth—divided against itself cannot stand.

There is the concept of Third World: thus, we already have three worlds. Undoubtedly, however, the number is even greater; we are just too far away to see. Any ancient deeply rooted autonomous culture, especially if it is spread on a wide part of the earth's surface, constitutes an autonomous world, full of riddles and surprises to Western thinking. As a minimum, we must include in this category China, India, the Muslim world and Africa, if indeed we accept the approximation of viewing the latter two as compact units. For one thousand years Russia belonged to such a category, although Western thinking systematically committed the mistake of denying its autonomous character and therefore never understood it, just as today the West does not understand Russia in communist captivity. It may be that in the past years Japan has increasingly become a distant part

of the West. I am no judge here; but as to Israel, for instance, it seems to me that it stands apart from the Western world in that its state system is fundamentally linked to religion.

How short a time ago, relatively, the small new European World was seizing colonies everywhere, not only without anticipating any real resistance but also usually despising any possible values in the conquered peoples' approach to life. On the face of it, it was an overwhelming success, there were no geographic frontiers to it. Western society expanded in a triumph of human independence and power. And all of a sudden in the 20th century came the discovery of its fragility and friability. We now see that the conquests proved to be shortlived and precarious, and this in turn points to defects in the Western view of the world which led to these conquests. Relations with the former colonial world now have turned into their opposite and the Western world often goes to extremes of obsequiousness, but it is difficult yet to estimate the total size of the bill which former colonial countries will present to the West, and it is difficult to predict whether the surrender not only of its last colonies, but of everything it owns will be sufficient for the West to foot the bill.

But the blindness of superiority continues in spite of all and upholds the belief that vast regions everywhere on our planet should develop and mature to the level of present day Western systems which in theory are the best and in practice the most attractive. There is this belief that all those other worlds are only being temporarily prevented by wicked governments or by heavy crises or by their own barbarity and incomprehension from taking the way of Western pluralistic democracy and from adopting the Western way of life. Countries are judged on the merit of their progress in this direction. However, it is a conception which developed out of Western incomprehension of the essence of other worlds, out of the mistake of measuring them all with a Western yardstick. The real picture of our planet's development is quite different.

Anguish about our divided world gave birth to the theory of convergence between leading Western countries and the Soviet Union. It is a soothing theory which overlooks the fact that these worlds are not all developing into similarity; neither one can be transformed into the other without the use of violence. Besides, convergence inevitably means acceptance of the other side's defects, too, and this is hardly desirable.

If I were today addressing an audience of my country, examining the overall pattern of the world's rifts, I would have concentrated on the East's calamities. But since my forced exile in the West has now lasted four years and since my audience is a Western one, I think it may be of greater interest to concentrate on certain aspects of the West in our days, such as I see them.

A decline in courage may be the most striking feature which an outside observer notices in the West in our days. The Western world has lost its civil courage, both as a whole and separately, in each country, each government, each political party and of course in the United Nation. Such a decline in courage is particularly noticeable among the ruling groups and the intellectual elite, causing an impression of loss of courage by the entire society. Of course there are many courageous individuals but they have no determining influence on public life. Political and intellectual bureaucrats show depression, passivity and perplexity in their actions and in their statements and even more so in theoretical reflections to explain how realistic, reasonable as well as intellectually and even morally warranted it is to base state policies on weakness and cowardice. And decline in courage is ironically emphasized by occasional explosions of anger and inflexibility on the part of the same bureaucrats when dealing with weak governments and weak countries, not supported by anyone, or with currents which cannot offer any resistance. But they get tongue-tied and paralyzed when they deal with powerful governments and threatening forces, with aggressors and international terrorists.

Should one point out that from ancient times decline in courage has been considered the beginning of the end?

When the modern Western states were created, the following principle was proclaimed: governments are meant to serve man, and man lives to be free and to pursue happiness. (See, for example, the American *Declaration of Independence*). Now, at last, during past decades technical and social progress has permitted the realization of such aspirations: the welfare state. Every citizen has been granted the desired freedom and material goods in such quantity and of such quality as to guarantee in theory the achievement of happiness, in the morally inferior sense which has come into being during those same decades. In the process, however, one psychological detail has been overlooked: the constant desire to have still more things and a still better life and the struggle to obtain them imprints many Western

faces with worry and even depression, though it is customary to conceal such feelings. Active and tense competition permeates all human thoughts without opening a way to free spiritual development. The individual's independence from many types of state pressure has been guaranteed; the majority of people have been granted well-being to an extent their fathers and grandfathers could not even dream about; it has become possible to raise young people according to these ideals, leading them to physical splendor, happiness, possession of material goods, money and leisure, to an almost unlimited freedom of enjoyment. So who should now renounce all this, why and for what should one risk one's precious life in defense of common values, and particularly in such nebulous cases when the security of one's nation must be defended in a distant country?

Even biology knows that habitual extreme safety and well-being are not advantageous for a living organism. Today, well-being in the life of Western society has begun to reveal its pernicious mask.

Western society has given itself the organization best suited to its purposes, based, I would say, on the letter of the law. The limits of human rights and righteousness are determined by a system of laws; such limits are very broad. People in the West have acquired considerable skill in using, interpreting and manipulating law, even though laws tend to be too complicated for an average person to understand without the help of an expert. Any conflict is solved according to the letter of the law and this is considered to be the supreme solution. If one is right from a legal point of view, nothing more is required, nobody may mention that one could still not be entirely right, and urge self-restraint, a willingness to renounce such legal rights, sacrifice and selfless risk: it would sound simply absurd. One almost never sees voluntary self-restraint. Everybody operates at the extreme limit of those legal frames. An oil company is legally blameless when it purchases an invention of a new type of energy in order to prevent its use. A food product manufacturer is legally blameless when he poisons his produce to make it last longer: after all, people are free not to buy it.

I have spent all my life under a communist regime and I will tell you that a society without any objective legal scale is a terrible one indeed. But a society with no other scale but the legal one is not quite worthy of man either. A society which is based on the letter of the law and never reaches any higher is taking very scarce advantage of the high

level of human possibilities. The letter of the law is too cold and formal to have a beneficial influence on society. Whenever the tissue of life is woven of legalistic relations, there is an atmosphere of moral mediocrity, paralyzing man's noblest impulses.

And it will be simply impossible to stand through the trials of this threatening century with only the support of a legalistic structure.

In today's Western society, the inequality has been revealed of freedom for good deeds and freedom for evil deeds. A statesman who wants to achieve something important and highly constructive for his country has to move cautiously and even timidly: there are thousands of hasty and irresponsible critics around him, parliament and the press keep rebuffing him. As he moves ahead, he has to prove that each single step of his is well-founded and absolutely flawless. Actually an outstanding and particularly gifted person who has unusual and unexpected initiatives in mind hardly gets a chance of assert himself; from the very beginning, dozens of traps will be set out for him. Thus mediocrity triumphs with the excuse of restrictions imposed by democracy.

It is feasible and easy everywhere to undermine administrative power and, in fact, it has been drastically weakened in all Western countries. The defense of individual rights has reached such extremes as to make society as a whole defenseless against certain individuals. It is time, in the West, to defend not so much human rights as human obligations.

Destructive and irresponsible freedom has been granted boundless space. Society appears to have little defense against the abyss of human decadence, such as, for example, misuse of liberty for moral violence against young people, motion pictures full of pornography, crime, and horror. It is considered to be part of freedom and theoretically counterbalanced by the young people's right not to look or not to accept. Life organized legalistically has thus shown its inability to defend itself against the corrosion of evil.

And what shall we say about the dark realm of criminality as such? Legal frames (especially in the United States) are broad enough to encourage not only individual freedom but also certain individual crimes. The culprit can go unpunished or obtain undeserved leniency with the support of thousands of public defenders. When a government starts an earnest fight against terrorism, public opinion immediately accuses it of violating the terrorists' civil rights. There are

many such cases.

Such a tilt of freedom in the direction of evil has come about gradually but it was evidently born primarily out of a humanistic and benevolent concept according to which there is no evil inherent to human nature; the world belongs to mankind and all the defects of life are caused by wrong social systems which must be corrected. Strangely enough, though the best social conditions have been achieved in the West, there still is criminality and there even is considerably more of it than in the pauper and lawless Soviet society. (There are a huge number of prisoners in our camps who are termed criminals, but most of them never committed any crime; they merely tried to defend themselves against a lawless state resorting to means outside of a legal framework.)

The press too, of course, enjoys the widest freedom. (I shall be using the word press to include all media.) But what sort of use does it make of this freedom?

Here again, the main concern is not to infringe the letter of the law. There is no moral responsibility for deformation or disproportion. What sort of responsibility does a journalist have to his readers, or to history? If they have misled public opinion or the government by inaccurate information or wrong conclusions, do we know of any cases of public recognition and rectification of such mistakes by the same journalist or the same newspaper? No, it does not happen, because it would damage sales. A nation may be the victim of such a mistake, but the journalist always gets away with it. One may safely assume that he will start writing the opposite with renewed self-assurance.

Because instant and credible information has to be given, it becomes necessary to resort to guesswork, rumours, and suppositions to fill in the voids, and none of them will ever be rectified, they will stay on in the readers' memory. How many hasty, immature, superficial, and misleading judgments are expressed every day, confusing readers, without any verification. The press can both simulate public opinion and miseducate it. Thus we may see terrorists heroized, or secret matters, pertaining to one's nation's defense, publicly revealed, or we may witness shameless intrusion on the privacy of well-known people under the slogan: "everyone is entitled to know everything." But this is a false slogan, characteristic of a false era: people also have the right not to know, and it is a much more

valuable one. The right not to have their divine souls stuffed with gossip, nonsense, vain talk. A person who works and leads a meaningful life does not need this excessive burdening flow of information.

Hastiness and superficiality are the psychic disease of the 20th century and more than anywhere else this disease is reflected in the press. In-depth analysis of a problem is anathema to the press. It stops at sensational formulas.

Such as it is, however, the press has become the greatest power within the Western countries, more powerful than the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. One would then like to ask: by what law has it been elected and to whom is it responsible? In the communist East, a journalist is frankly appointed as a state official. But who has granted Western journalists their power, for how long a time and with what prerogatives?

There is yet another surprise for someone coming from the East where the press is rigorously unified: one gradually discovers a common trend of preferences within the Western press as a whole. It is a fashion; there are generally accepted patterns of judgment and there may be common corporate interests, the sum effect being not competition but unification. Enormous freedom exists for the press, but not for the readership because newspapers mostly give enough stress and emphasis to those opinions which do not too openly contradict their own and the general trend.

Without any censorship, in the West fashionable trends of thought and ideas are carefully separated from those which are not fashionable; nothing is forbidden, but what is not fashionable will hardly ever find its way into periodicals or books or be heard in colleges. Legally your researchers are free, but they are conditioned by the fashion of the day. There is no open violence such as in the East; however, a selection dictated by fashion and the need to match mass standards frequently prevent independent-minded people from giving their contribution to public life. There is a dangerous tendency to form a herd, shutting off successful development. I have received letters in America from highly intelligent persons, maybe a teacher in a far away small college who could do much for the renewal and salvation of his country, but his country cannot hear him because the media are not interested in him. This gives birth to strong mass prejudices, to blindness, which is most dangerous in our dynamic era.

There is, for instance, a self-deluding interpretation of the contemporary world situation. It works as a sort of a petrified armor around people's minds. Human voices from 17 countries of Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia cannot pierce it. It will only be broken by the pitiless crowbar of events.

I have mentioned a few traits of Western life which surprise and shock a new arrival to this world. The purpose and scope of this speech will not allow me to continue such a review, to look into the influence of these Western characteristics on important aspects of a nation's life, such as elementary education, advanced education in the humanities and in art.

It is almost universally recognised that the West shows all the world a way to successful economic development, even though in the past years it has been strongly disturbed by chaotic inflation. However, many people living in the West are dissatisfied with their own society. They despise it or accuse it of not being up to the level of maturity attained by mankind. A number of such critics turn to socialism, which is a false and dangerous current.

I hope that no one present will suspect me of offering my personal criticism of the Western system to present socialism as an alternative. Having experienced applied socialism in a country where the alternative has been realized, I certainly will not speak for it. The well-known Soviet mathematician Shafarevich, a member of the Soviet Academy of Science, has written a brilliant book under the title *Socialism*; it is a profound analysis showing that socialism of any type and shade leads to a total destruction of the human spirit and to a levelling of mankind into death. Shafarevich's book was published in France almost two years ago and so far no one has been found to refute it. It will shortly be published in English in the United States.

But should someone ask me whether I would indicate the West such as it is today as a model to my country, frankly I would have to answer negatively. No, I could not recommend your society in its present state as an ideal for the transformation of ours. Through intense suffering our country has now achieved a spiritual development of such intensity that the Western system in its present state of spiritual exhaustion does not look attractive. Even those characteristics of your life which I have just mentioned are extremely saddening.

A fact which cannot be disputed is the weakening of human beings

in the West while in the East they are becoming firmer and stronger. Six decades for our people and three decades for the people of Eastern Europe; during that time we have been through a spiritual training far in advance of Western experience. Life's complexity and mortal weight have produced stronger, deeper, and more interesting characters than those generated by standardized Western well-being. Therefore if our society were to be transformed into yours, it would mean an improvement in certain aspects but also a change for the worse on some particularly significant scores. It is true, no doubt, that a society cannot remain in an abyss of lawlessness, as is the case in our country. But it is also demeaning for it to elect such mechanical legalistic smoothness as you have. After the suffering of decades of violence and oppression, the human soul longs for things higher, warmer, and purer than those offered by today's mass living habits, introduced by the revolting invasion of publicity, by TV stupor, and by intolerable music.

All this is visible to observers from all the worlds of our planet. The Western way of life is less and less likely to become the leading model.

There are meaningful warnings which history gives a threatened or perishing society. Such are, for instance, the decadence of art, or a lack of great statesmen. There are open and evident warnings, too. The center of your democracy and of your culture is left without electric power for a few hours only, and all of a sudden crowds of American citizens start looting and creating havoc. The smooth surface film must be very thin, then, the social system quite unstable and unhealthy.

But the fight for our planet, physical and spiritual, a fight of cosmic proportions, is not a vague matter of the future; it has already started. The forces of Evil have begun their decisive offensive, you can feel their pressure, and yet your screens and publications are full of prescribed smiles and raised glasses. What is the joy about?

Very well known representatives of your society, such as George Kennan, say: we cannot apply moral criteria to politics. Thus we mix good and evil, right and wrong and make space for the absolute triumph of absolute Evil in the world. On the contrary, only moral criteria can help the West against communism's well planned world strategy. There are no other criteria. Practical or occasional considerations of any kind will inevitably be swept away by strategy. After a certain level of the problem has been reached, legalistic

thinking induces paralysis; it prevents one from seeing the size and meaning of events.

In spite of the abundance of information, or maybe because of it, the West has difficulties in understanding reality such as it is. There have been naive predictions by some American experts who believed that Angola would become the Soviet Union's Vietnam or that Cuban expeditions in Africa would best be stopped by special U.S. courtesy to Cuba. Kennan's advice to his own country—to begin unilateral disarmament—belongs to the same category. If you only knew how the youngest of the Moscow Old Square* officials laugh at your political wizards! As to Fidel Castro, he frankly scorns United States, sending his troops to distant adventures from his country right next to yours.

However, the most cruel mistake occurred with the failure to understand the Vietnam war. Some people sincerely wanted all wars to stop just as soon as possible; others believed that there should be room for national, or communist, self-determination in Vietnam, or in Cambodia, as we see today with particular clarity. But members of the U.S. anti-war movement wound up being involved in the betrayal of Far Eastern nations, in a genocide and in the suffering today imposed on 30 million people there. Do those convinced pacifists hear the moans coming from there? Do they understand their responsibility today? Or do they prefer not to hear? The American intelligentsia lost its nerve, and as a consequence thereof danger has come much closer to the United States. But there is no awareness of this. Your shortsighted politicians who signed the hasty Vietnam capitulation seemingly gave America a carefree breathing pause; however, a hundredfold Vietnam now looms over you. That small Vietnam had been a warning and an occasion to mobilize the nation's courage. But if a full-fledged American suffered a real defeat from a small communist half-country, how can the West hope to stand firm in the future?

I have had occasion already to say that in the 20th century Western democracy has not won any major war without help and protection from a powerful continental ally whose philosophy and ideology it did not question. In World War II against Hitler, instead of winning that war with its own forces, which would certainly have been sufficient,

*The Old Square in Moscow (Staraya Ploshchad') is the place where the headquarters of the Central Committee of the CPSU is located: it is the real name of what in the West is conventionally referred to as "the Kremlin".

Western democracy grew and cultivated another enemy who would prove worse and more powerful yet, as Hitler never had so many resources and so many people, nor did he offer any attractive ideas, or have such a large number of supporters in the West—a potential fifth column—as the Soviet Union. At present, some Western voices already have spoken of obtaining protection from a third power against aggression in the next world conflict, if there is one; in this case the shield would be China. But I would not wish such an outcome to any country in the world. First of all it is again a doomed alliance with Evil; also, it would grant the United States a respite, but when at a later date China with its billion people would turn around armed with America weapons, America itself would fall prey to a genocide similar to the one perpetrated in Cambodia in our days.

And yet—no weapons, no matter how powerful, can help the West until it overcomes its loss of willpower. In a state of psychological weakness, weapons become a burden for the capitulating side. To defend oneself, one must also be ready to die; there is little such readiness in a society raised in the cult of material well-being. Nothing is left, then, but concessions, attempts to gain time and betrayal. Thus at the shameful Belgrade conference free Western diplomats in their weakness surrendered the line where enslaved members of Helsinki Watchgroups are sacrificing their lives.

Western thinking has become conservative: the world situation should stay as it is at any cost, there should be no changes. This debilitating dream of a status quo is the symptom of a society which has come to the end of its development. But one must be blind in order not to see that oceans no longer belong to the West, while land under its domination keeps shrinking. The two so-called world wars (they were by far not on a world scale, not yet) have meant internal self-destruction of the small progressive West which has thus prepared its own end. The next war (which does not have to be an atomic one and I do not believe it will be) may well bury Western civilization forever.

Facing such a danger, with such historical values in your past, at such a high level of realization of freedom and apparently of devotion to freedom, how is it possible to lose to such an extent the will to defend oneself?

How has this unfavourable relation of forces come about? How did the West decline from its triumphal march to its present sickness? Have there been fatal turns and losses of direction in its development?

It does not seem so. The West kept advancing socially in accordance with its proclaimed intentions, with the help of brilliant technological progress. And all of a sudden it found itself in its present state of weakness.

This means that the mistake must be at the root, at the very basis of human thinking in the past centuries. I refer to the prevailing Western view of the world which was first born during the Renaissance and found its political expression from the period of Enlightenment. It became the basis for government and social science and could be defined as rationalistic humanism or humanistic autonomy: the proclaimed and enforced autonomy of man from any higher force above him. It could also be called anthropocentricity, with man seen as the centre of everything that exists.

The turn introduced by the Renaissance evidently was inevitable historically. The Middle Ages had come to a natural end by exhaustion, becoming an intolerable despotic repression of man's physical nature in favor of the spiritual one. Then, however, we turned our backs upon the Spirit and embraced all that is material with excessive and unwarranted zeal. This new way of thinking, which had imposed on us its guidance, did not admit the existence of intrinsic evil in man nor did it see any higher task than the attainment of happiness on earth. It based modern Western civilization on the dangerous trend to worship man and his material needs. Everything beyond physical well-being and accumulation of material goods, all other human requirements and characteristics of a subtler and higher nature, were left outside the area of attention of state and social systems, as if human life did not have any superior sense. That provided access for evil, of which in our days there is a free and constant flow. Merely freedom does not in the least solve all the problems of human life and it even adds a number of new ones.

However, in early democracies, as in American democracy at the time of its birth, all individual human rights were granted because man is God's creature. That is, freedom was given to the individual conditionally, in the assumption of his constant religious responsibility. Such was the heritage of the preceding thousand years. Two hundred or even 50 years ago, it would have seemed quite impossible, in America, that an individual could be granted boundless freedom simply for the satisfaction of his instincts or whims. Subsequently, however, all such limitations were discarded

everywhere in the West; a total liberation occurred from the moral heritage of Christian centuries with their great reserves of mercy and sacrifice. State systems were becoming increasingly and totally materialistic. The West ended up by truly enforcing human rights, sometimes even excessively, but man's sense of responsibility to God and society grew dimmer and dimmer. In the past decades, the legalistically selfish aspect of Western approach and thinking has reached its final dimension and the world wound up in a harsh spiritual crisis and a political impasse. All the glorified technological achievements of progress, including the conquest of outer space, do not redeem the 20th century's moral poverty which no one could imagine even as late as in the 19th century.

As humanism in its development became more and more materialistic, it made itself increasingly accessible to speculation and manipulation at first by socialism and then by communism. So that Karl Marx was able to say in 1844 that "communism is naturalized humanism."

This statement turned out to be not entirely senseless. One does see the same stones in the foundations of a despiritualized humanism and of any type of socialism: endless materialism; freedom from religion and religious responsibility, which under communist regimes reach the state of anti-religious dictatorship; concentration on social structures, with a seemingly scientific approach. (This is typical of the Enlightenment in the 18th century and of Marxism.) Not by coincidence all of communism's meaningless pledges and oaths are about Man, with a capital *M*, and his earthly happiness. At first glance it seems an ugly parallel: common traits in the thinking and way of life of today's West and today's East? But such is the logic of materialistic development.

The interrelationship is such, too, that the current of materialism which is most to the left always ends up by being stronger, more attractive and victorious, because it is more consistent. Humanism without its Christian heritage cannot resist such competition. We watch this process in the past centuries and especially in the past decades, on a world scale as the situation becomes increasingly dramatic. Liberalism was inevitably displaced by radicalism, radicalism had to surrender to socialism, and socialism could never resist communism. The communist regime in the East could stand and grow due to the enthusiastic support from an enormous number of

Western intellectuals who felt a kinship and refused to see communism's crimes. When they no longer could do so, they tried to justify them. In our Eastern countries, communism has suffered a complete ideological defeat; it is zero and less than zero. But Western intellectuals still look at it with interest and with empathy, and this is precisely what makes it so immensely difficult for the West to withstand the East.

I am not examining here the case of a disastrous world war and the changes which it would produce in society. As long as we wake up every morning under a peaceful sun, we have to lead an everyday life. There is a disaster, however, which has already been under way for quite some time. I am referring to the calamity of a despiritualized and irreligious humanistic consciousness.

To such consciousness, man is the touchstone in judging and evaluating everything on earth. Imperfect man who is never free of pride, self-interest, envy, vanity, and dozens of other defects. We are now experiencing the consequences of mistakes which had not been noticed at the beginning of the journey. On the way from the Renaissance to our days we have enriched our experience, but we have lost the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility. We have placed too much hope in political and social reforms, only to find out that we were being deprived of our most precious possession: our spiritual life. In the East, it is destroyed by the dealings and machinations of the ruling party. In the West, commercial interests tend to suffocate it. This is the real crisis. The split in the world is less terrible than the similarity of the disease plaguing its main sections.

If humanism were right in declaring that man is born to be happy, he would not be born to die. Since his body is doomed to die, his task on earth evidently must be of a more spiritual nature. It cannot be unrestrained enjoyment of everyday life. It cannot be the search for the best ways to obtain material goods and then cheerfully get the most out of them. It has to be the fulfillment of a permanent earnest duty so that one's life journey may become an experience of moral growth, so that one may leave life a better human being than one started it. It is imperative to review the table of widespread human values. Its present incorrectness is astounding. It is not possible that assessment of the President's performance be reduced to the question of how much money one makes or of unlimited availability of

gasoline. Only voluntary inspired self-restraint can raise man above the world stream of materialism.

It would be retrogression to attach oneself today to the ossified formulas of the Enlightenment. Social dogmatism leaves us completely helpless in front of the trials of our times.

Even if we are spared destruction by war, our lives will have to change if we want to save life from self-destruction. We cannot avoid revising the fundamental definitions of human life and human society. Is it true then man is above everything? Is there no Superior Spirit above him? Is it right that man's life and society's activities have to be determined by material expansion in the first place? Is it permissible to promote such expansion to the detriment of our spiritual integrity?

If the world has not come to its end, it has approached a major turn in history, equal in importance to the turn from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. It will exact from us a spiritual upsurge, we shall have to rise to a new height of vision, to a new level of life where our physical nature will not be cursed as in the Middle Ages, but, even more importantly, our spiritual being will not be trampled upon as in the Modern Era.

This ascension will be similar to climbing onto the next anthropologic stage. No one on earth has any other way left but—upward.

OUT OF THE DARKNESS

H. L. Hetherington

HINDU cosmogony, with its usual sense of timelessness, speaks of a dark age, beginning in B.C. 3102 and destined to last for 420,000 years. This age has been preceded by others, each happier and more blessed than the succeeding one, and each longer in duration. The two earliest ones, the Krita and Trita Juga, lasted over a million years each! Rudolf Steiner, although agreeing with the picture of four ages, shortens their length very considerably, while conforming to the traditional pattern. However the most startling of his amendments was his statement that the dark age, the Kali Juga, beginning at the time (more or less) of Hindu tradition, ended in 1899! We are already, according to his view, some seven decades into a new age of light.

Forty years ago it was hard to see any evidence for this assertion. Then we were living in the decade which ushered in the Second World War, trying to square our consciences with the unspeakable facts of Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, seeing nothing ahead but an inevitable conflict—a conflict furthermore which H. G. Wells had prophesied would bring an end to civilisation. However civilisation survived, but in most essential ways on the old pattern and according to the old values. The hopes for a new world and new attitudes, which for a moment burnt bright among the ashes of a devastated Europe, were soon extinguished as the cold war developed and economic recovery gained momentum, bringing in an age of affluence for the west with all its attendant ills.

Now something did happen round about B.C. 3000, as all prehistorians know. The earlier, essentially rural settlements began, where favourably placed, to develop into great trading cities and the requirements of complicated business records gave birth to writing. In the terms used by historians, prehistory became history. Eastern traditions describe this development as an advance into darkness.

That something in history had happened round about B.C. 3000 is obvious enough then but at least until the late fifties or early sixties of

our century no comparable change of direction was discernible. The 'economic miracle' in Germany was the envy of all western countries, Harold Macmillan was reminding us in England that 'we had never had it so good', a whole range of new luxuries was being made available to a far larger section of the population than ever before. New life, it seemed, was being breathed into old bones. The new-found prosperity, however, soon proved to be more fragile than expected: the dream world of the glossy magazine advertisements remained as elusive as ever.

Then, in the last decade or so, it has become plainer that something may be happening, that far-reaching changes may be taking place in human attitudes and expectations. Whether or not these changes are symptoms of a larger change as radical as that which took place in B.C. 3000 remains to be seen. They are clearly worth a closer examination. Books like Theodore Rosak's *Unfinished Animal* suggest that we are living in a new Aquarian Age, that many are making adventurous journeys, with varying success, across the 'Aquarian Frontier' into an as yet uncharted country. That informative little compendium, *The Many Ways of Being*, edited by Stephen Annett, describes a bewilderingly rich choice of paths of inner development, showing the hunger of many for direct and personal spiritual experience, for progress along a spiritual path, for the means of inner nourishment and growth. Many now do not want philosophical systems, theological treatises, creeds or dogmas, but rather precise and clear instructions for their advance along a spiritual path. They want to see for themselves in inner experience in just the same way that the early scientists insisted on experiment rather than ideal systems as the basis for their investigations into the outer world.

In this country, but above all in America, there have sprung up many 'growth centres' which offer to cater for just such needs. Most have come into existence within the last fifteen years or so. Some are plainly developments for the west of age-old eastern traditions, especially Tibetan; others seem to be the fruit of direct personal revelations made to individuals, who then feel called upon to impart what divine grace has entrusted to them. Some of the more organised movements charge, and manage to obtain, high fees for what they have to offer. Is all this evidence of a new age of light, or merely confusions in a rapidly degenerating culture? Christopher Fry, as

early as 1951, was in no doubt that we were witnessing the beginning of a new age of spiritual opportunity:

The frozen misery

Of centuries breaks, cracks, begins to move;
The thunder is the thunder of the fates,
The thaw, the flood, the upstart Spring.

It might just be that the quarter century which has elapsed since those words were written is proving him right.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves first what it is that changes when men become dissatisfied with the current views of the establishment and turn to new masters. Generally 'new' ideas are not new at all; what is new is their power over the minds of men. It is men who change, not ideas. The Greeks played with the idea of atoms forming the ultimate basis of matter, but the idea did not assume any compelling force of conviction until our own age. The idea that somehow man lost his innocence and purity once he left his natural surroundings and became civilised is as old at least as Greek pastoral poetry and yet it remained no more than a pleasing fancy until Rousseau began a movement that has gained, and continues to gain, great momentum in our day. Here we are dealing with irrational forces, the immediate responses which men make to ideas which are 'of the hour.' This is one of those mysterious, imponderable factors of history, connected with the hidden depths of the soul from which such involuntary responses spring. Those authors who manage to be the spokesmen of their age write best sellers. A distinguished example of this is of course the late Dr. Schuhmacher's *Small is Beautiful*, the very title of which bids fair to become a current catchword.

If there is some justification in the suggestion that it is men who change and not ideas, is there any evidence that we are witnessing a very important transformation in human experience as the century progresses, one that would throw some light on to Steiner's assertion that the Dark Age finished in 1899? In all probability we are far too close to events to be able to judge them sufficiently objectively, but at least we might examine with profit the more important developments in the evolution of consciousness since the Renaissance. Such a study may throw some light on the contemporary scene and give a few pointers in the direction we may have to go for an answer.

No such study could possibly omit Descartes, for he was, par

excellence, a spokesman for his age. He felt deeply the inadequacies of the learning of his day and resolved to find a quite different approach and begin again, basing his results no longer on the teachings of long-established authorities, but solely on the evidence of his own mental powers. There was something Faustian in his situation. He felt hemmed in and half suffocated by the clobber of ancient, half understood scraps of learning, shabby, dog-eared, shreds of outworn doctrines. Unlike Faust, however, he did not turn to magic, but to his own, everyday, individual powers of mind. In so doing he rejected a belief probably as old as man himself: that the way to enlightenment was to be found at the feet of ancient teachers and that all study was fundamentally the study of authorities. Descartes was a true modern in his intention to find out for himself.

The dualistic picture of the world that Descartes arrived at was no more than a description of what he experienced. The response of his contemporaries showed well enough that his ideas were indeed 'of the hour' and possessed that compelling force which gained adherents. He described well the modern dualism of experience: the inner world of reasoning and the outer world conveyed to us by our senses. The universe was divided into two disparate halves: thinking substances and extended substances, and neither kind of substance could in any way partake of the essential attribute of the other.

The outer world, then, shorn of any spiritual attributes whatsoever, was conceived of as a vast mechanism, a kind of clock, wound up by God, Who then absented Himself from His creation and let it tick on by itself according to its own immutable laws. The investigation of this clock and the search for physical laws which might govern it brought about a tremendous sharpening of vision and formed the basis of a startlingly powerful technology. It worked, and therefore it was thought to be more or less true. Even if it was not, this mattered little as its very success was its own justification. This sharpening of vision can be likened to a lens which magnifies the object immediately under scrutiny, but at the same time blurs all objects adjacent to it. What is being looked at becomes amazingly clear, but its surroundings are out of focus and left entirely out of account.

The classical physics as outlined by Newton can with some justification be called the physics of the microscope. It was mechanistic and atomistic, looking for physical causes for physical

effects. When the cause was not immediately apparent, the Newtonian physicist analysed what he found, hoping all the time that the hidden first cause would be revealed in the smallest particles of which matter was composed, for surely, it was thought, the nature of these particles must explain the phenomena which were based on their existence. His brother scientists who were investigating the living world sought to do precisely the same thing in their research culminating in the discovery of the gene, which like the atom, was thought to contain the ultimate cause of the phenomenon it gave rise to.

Protests had been made about this arid reductionism almost as soon as the new science had become established, a century and a half ago:

Do not all charms fly

At the mere touch of cold philosophy?
there was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
We know her woof, her texture; she is given
In the dull catalogue of common things.
Philosophy will clip an angel's wings,
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
Empty the haunted air, the gnomed mine -

But then Keats was a fanciful poet, out of touch with Mr. Gradgrind's world of hard facts. In our day the protest is no longer confined to poets. On the one side some of the leading physicists of the century are turning from an atomistic to a holistic approach to phenomena, maintaining that the part will only be understood in relation to the whole; on the other, as we have seen earlier, a growing body of 'fringe' literature and activities reveal a new longing and sensitivity for phenomena well outside the regular purview of 'science'. Fringe literature varies widely in quality and caution; it contains sober appraisals of the subject under discussion, as in Francis Hitching's *Earth Magic*, as well as the most blatant and sensational appeals to human credulity, examples of which will no doubt spring easily to the reader's mind. Fringe literature is not well served by the fact that there is a growing hunger for marvels of all kinds in this field.

The reason for this hunger is not far to seek. The materialistic view of the origins and evolution of the world from primeval nebula to final burnt-out slag heap, mindless, subject to immutable, blind laws, fortuitous and insignificant against the vast backdrop of cosmic existence, is deeply depressing and can lead to nightmare. Small wonder, then, that there is a tremendous emotive power in an

'alternative' view, which includes purpose, creative mind and above all a place for man in the scheme of things. Such a view is seductive and can on occasion sing some strange siren songs. The warm paradise ahead bids fair to replace the arid wasteland we have been passing through, and we hurry on, all too eager to shed the mental disciplines thrust upon us in recent centuries. But surely we should take stock of our recent journey and ask ourselves whether or not, despite the privations and hardships of the experience, the trek across the Waste Land has not brought us some valuable, indeed priceless qualities which we should be foolish to abandon. Here is a tentative list.

The first quality is a new kind of humility. Hitherto the humility enjoined by orthodox Christianity was that of a helpless child kneeling before an almighty father, but the humility of the Waste Land was sterner and more terrible. The vast, unthinking spaces of an infinite cosmos of wheeling galaxies composed of fire and dust and surrounded by an awesome emptiness reduced man to an unconsidered speck of no significance at all. The discovery, after all, that he may well be of some account and that the universe is in a mysterious way of the same stuff as his mind, awakes in him a quality of gratitude not unlike that of one of Solzhenitsyn's prisoners. The second quality is that of stoicism, engendered by long centuries of ignorance concerning his origin and destination. This particular quality has been long in the making and was touched upon very early on in the dark age, in the intensely moving epic of Gilgamesh.

The third quality is that of lonely self-sufficiency. Earlier ages had experienced the human being as continually influenced by planetary and astral forces of all kinds. Spiritual currents flowed back and forth through him, indwelling him at moments of great emotion or exaltation. In the old pagan world man was never alone. There was always some god or goddess close to him. In contrast the man of the last three centuries at least found himself merely an object among objects. He was no longer being got at. He was at a distance from the surrounding world. He felt himself enclosed within his own castle. He was therefore at liberty to set his own house in order, according to his own lights, to believe or disbelieve, to accept or reject, according to his own decision. In one sense he was free for the first time in his history.

The fourth quality was perhaps the most subtle and easily misunderstood of all. It is the one most likely to be rejected as we move away from the Waste Land. It concerns the privacy of personal







emotion. Waste Land science makes a firm distinction between the objectivity of outer fact and the subjectivity of emotion. Emotion was held to be of little or no scientific value as external evidence, it was an irrelevance. Sensuality or ecstasy were essentially private experiences and must be kept so. This view harmonised very much with so-called 'protestant ethic' which eschewed the indulgence in emotion for different reasons. It gave considerable impetus to the growing sense of personal isolation and estrangement which is so marked a characteristic of Waste Land travellers. Nevertheless the wise distinction between purely personal emotion and the more universal expression of passion in great art is surely a lesson we bring with us into a new age.

The isolation we have just mentioned bore marvellous fruit, considering the starkness of the tree; this fruit is scientific objectivity, a much used term for what is often good, but sometimes great evil, though difficult to characterize. It is selfless, heroic, impassive, alert, enquiring, cool, attentive, intensely interested, questing, doubting, intuitive, patient, all at the same time. Above all it is in control, has perfect freedom of movement spiritually, to come and go as it pleases. Here is no ecstasy, no surrender to a god, no self indulgence of any kind, no reward except the sober joy of discovery, of making a further small step on the way to understanding. These are new attainments, won at the cost of weary journeying and not lightly to be despised or cast as we move forward on the next part of our journey.

It seems to be part of a kindly and wise dispensation that before a culture enters into a perilous, if necessary development, the seeds of the right future progress are planted, even though they may not sprout immediately. Just at the time of the first developments of the Industrial Revolution in England and the birth of our megalopolitan society, the young Goethe was spreading his wings at Strasbourg and establishing his long and immensely important career as one of the last universal geniuses of our time. If we are to speak of a new age of light, it may be to him and to those who, like Rudolf Steiner, built on his foundations, that we are to turn to find our way. It is sad that so few of the eager bands of seekers pushing across the Aquarian Frontier (to use Rosak's slightly melodramatic term) know of him or his work.

In approaching Goethe's central significance in the evolution of consciousness, we must return for a moment to a description of what consciousness is conceived to be by those crossing the Waste Land.

Man experiences himself as an object among objects. On analysis larger objects are seen to be composed of smaller objects. The world is a mass of *things* composed into systems, but things all the same. The most baffling system is consciousness itself, but this fades away into nothingness, once the system on which it is based, the human brain, disintegrates at death. All is outer fact. What we, as conscious beings, experience as inner life is merely a projection on to the screen of consciousness of the activity of the busy nerve centres with their little electric impulses darting to and fro along them. When these break up or cease to function, consciousness disappears. This is the Waste Land of our experience. Mr. Gradgrind would be delighted.

In according reality only to outer existence, and explaining the inner life of ideation and emotion as a kind of temporary, uncertain flickering over the surface of matter, we make all understanding hypothetical and tentative, a guessing, but never a seeing. That our guesses have often been very clever is proved by the success of technology, but they are guesses at most, all the same. Against this view Goethe struggled indignantly. G. H. Lewes, an Englishman and Goethe's first biographer, describes a meeting between Goethe and Schiller which illustrates very clearly how Goethe differed from the philosophers of his day – including Schiller:

One day, in May 1794, they met, coming from a lecture given by Batsch at the Natural History Society in Jena; in talking over the matter, Goethe, with pleased surprise heard Schiller criticise the fragmentary Method which teachers of Science uniformly adopted. When they arrived at Schiller's house, Goethe went in with him, expounding the Theory of Metamorphoses with great warmth. Taking up a pen, he made a rapid sketch of the typical plant. Schiller listened with great attention, seizing each point clearly and rapidly, but shaking his head at last, and saying: "This is not an observation, it is an Idea." Goethe adds: "My surprise was painful, for these words clearly indicated the point which separated us. The opinions he had expressed in his essay *Anmuth und Würde* recurred to me, and my old repulsion was nearly revived. But I mastered myself, and answered that I was delighted to find I had Ideas without knowing it, and to be able to contemplate them with my own eyes."

What Schiller could only *think*, Goethe *saw*. Lewes's comment on the conversation is interesting, because it well shows why, in the mid-nineteenth century, when Lewes was writing, Goethe's viewpoint found few adherents:

There can be no question of Schiller having been in the right, though perhaps both he and Schiller assigned an exclusively subjective meaning to the phrase. The typical plant, Goethe knew very well, was not to be found in nature; but he thought it was *revealed* in plants. Because he arrived at the belief in a type through direct observation and comparison, and not through a priori deduction;

he maintained that this type was a perception (*Anschauung*), not an idea. Probably Schiller was more impressed with the metaphysical nature of the conception than with the physical evidence on which it had been found. The chasm between them was indeed both broad and deep; and Goethe truly says: "It was in a conflict between the Object and the Subject, the greatest and most interminable of all conflicts, that began our friendship, which was eternal."

Most of Goethe's contemporaries would have given his conception of the primal plant (*Urpflanze*) the status of a theory, saying it existed only in Goethe's subjective world of ideation. Goethe stoutly maintained that it was as objectively discernible as physical plants growing by the wayside. One indeed had to be very active inwardly to come upon it, but it could be seen nevertheless, if one expended sufficient effort in seeing it out.

The argument is an epistemological one and has been beautifully discussed by Steiner and later by Barfield, his pupil; the former's *Philosophy of Freedom* and the latter's *Saving the Appearances* tussle the whole problem out. It must be confessed, however, that epistemology is not of general appeal and will not bring conviction unless the student can support the arguments he follows with direct and personal experience of the interrelationship of outer and inner life. Enlightenment is not to be commanded; it is a moment that may come at any time; all that argument can do is to bring greater maturity and awareness of the nature of the problem.

Goethe was extremely sensitive to all the sources of his information. He looked upon his sense organs as the finest scientific instruments he possessed and depreciated the increasing use of apparatus which would displace the subtle instruments of his own eyes and ears, hands and so on, which conveyed more surely than any man-made lens or measuring device the essential qualities of the phenomenon being studied. He was equally sensitive to the reaction of his mind to what he was investigating, and far from looking upon the thoughts which arose in him during his studies as merely subjective, he regarded them as "higher experience within experience" and equally objective. The important thing, however, was to keep the thought pliant, mobile and never finally fixed into dogma. The questions were more important than the answers on the path of understanding. For him it was extremely distasteful to divide experience up into the subjective and the objective; for him information came from two different directions: from without through the senses, and from within, through the active and questing mind.

Thus, because of a happy natural disposition to see his experiences as parts of a greater whole, Goethe reunites what Descartes had felt necessary to keep so firmly separate. Goethe's monism was instinctive and he had little patience with the Kantians who maintained that the inner world of ideation could never reach through to the actual realities—the things in themselves. In one sense he never entered the Waste Land, or rather found a way round its borders, seeing no necessity to find a path across it.

The manifest insufficiencies and absurdities of a materialism which accords final reality only to an 'extended substance' in a space-time continuum and sees all conscious experience merely as a subtle manifestation of nervous systems, dependent on, and co-terminous with them, are becoming plainer to more and more as the century wears on. Now is the time one might expect Goethe to come into his own. However those who might be attracted to his magnificent breadth of vision bring with them new standards of awareness created and fashioned by their Waste Land journey. Will Goethe match up to these standards? The answer must be unequivocally 'yes'. We demand to cognize spiritual things, that is, existence not in space and time at all but beyond the world of 'extended substance', in the same cool, almost matter of fact way as we have learnt to experience physical things. We expect to be aware of Blake's angelic hosts as we are aware of chairs and tables. Surely Goethe's primal plant—a sensible, supersensible entity—exactly fulfils these conditions. Goethe's cognitional standards are thoroughly modern and worthy of extended study.

There is much talk nowadays of a 'new' or 'cosmic' consciousness often careless in nature and open to justified suspicion. The steps to be taken from Waste Land consciousness to another, more comprehensive understanding of our surroundings have been insufficiently spelt out. This engenders an unhealthy make-believe and a dilettantism which does great disservice to the age.

The difficulties in working out the route across the frontiers of the Waste Land are plain enough. How does the world of 'reasoning substance', the realm of creative mind, impinge on and form the world of 'extended substance', the realm of hard facts? The nexus between them is still an enigma. How does a cell form itself into the kind of organisation required by its position in a living body? How does it know that it is part of a liver and not an eye? What is the connection

between a vibrating ear-drum and the experience of sound? How does the earth manage to maintain exactly the right amount of oxygen in the atmosphere to support life, within very narrow limits of tolerance? All these questions contain within them queries concerning the relationship between reasoning and matter. The answer can only lie within ourselves. Unless we can resolve the dualism of the past three hundred years it would seem that illusion and prejudice will be our undoing.

The purpose of this essay was to seek to indicate the regions where the great questions lie, rather than attempt an extended answer to them. In any case, as we have seen, mere argumentation is of little use to those multitudes who seek a path of training rather than a cerebral discussion. Many such paths are offered; the choice lies with the traveller. People are on the move. The danger is that sloppiness and make-believe could squander the splendid achievements of the new objectivity; but provided we remain true to our heritage, the suffering in the Waste Land will not have been in vain.

THE GRAMMAR OF DARKNESS

PAUL MATTHEWS

There were no stars in the beginning. The sky was a blank eye, seeing nothing. Skytongue lolling on silence. Skyhand grasping a web. It was all window. It was song of transparent birds unheard, with a great ear thrashing in emptiness.

In the beginning there were no apples to polish against your sleeve. It was very still. A still moving. Moving still. A darkness filled with the absence of. An emptiness of apples.

In the beginning I was not writing this. Your shadow had never slanted across my stairs. Nothing to remember then. Like last Summer I mean, and the children laughing inside the rainbarrel.

Not even the thought of us? Not even this Question? What was it then? what was it like? what wasn't it? what wasn't it like? It was a finger listening, stopping all clocks. Ear tasting an air of sugarcane. It was a web of birdsong twisted.

Nothing to begin with. Not a blackbird even. Unless.

Unless the darkness clenching its first
was compacted there.

Was beginning to fall. Rounding its knuckles off
into an apple. So fast that it was slow. Full of
fiery pips. And sweet like one. Ready to be eaten.

If it was eaten.

Then the spat out pips went raging through empty space
creating worlds and blackbirds.

You should have heard them sing from the appletree
that first morning.

But there was no one. The birds grew silent.

What shall we do they said. Sing a man into existence.

They did so. A hungry one. Who made his hunger a stone.
Who killed a blackbird with it. Who scattered its feathers.

A lonely one. A man facing a feather. It was a flame.
It was a nakedness full of breasts and eyes.

He cried out. His cry ran through the forest.

Rabbits and wolves poked their heads out to see what
was going on.

Plenty was going on. Has been going on ever since.

But if you stop sometimes you can hear them
ringing in your blood that first morning.

THIS is the first 'once upon a time.' Where time begins. Where story. Attempting to explain what no language can—the leap out of nothing.

Which must have taken place I suppose because here I am, listening to my daughters playing in the yard. Unless I'm dreaming.

But that too is of the myth—the Creator dreams us into being, and whatever I write here's part of that dream. Is bound to be. An imagination. An approximation. An artifice. A lie. A work of art.

I cannot deny that to say blackbirds sang us into existences is a falsehood. Perhaps though I'm being true to something, interpreting that aspect of the universe which a blackbird alone gives body to (in which case every creature is a myth of the Creation—re-enacted in the embryo and so wrapped up in us).

Or I'm interpreting myself; interpreting (if I can presume in any way to call myself poet) this time and culture I'm alive in.

Presuming to attempt such a myth . . . I find it impossible out of a sense for truth alone; for that leads either to allegory whereby ideas are dressed up with pretty images, or to the aridity of modern science whose cosmology elbows the soul out.

My sense for the beauty of it comes too. The universe I shape in the poem must fit in my hand and feel right. Where feeling is raised to such a pitch that heart becomes eye.

I don't come to that easily though, and only rarely. My sense for beauty is as prone to its own form of illusion (i.e. sentimentality) as my sense for truth is. Unless I have the heart to suffer Beauty, the naked shudder of Creation.

Around the age of 28, as I came into the consciousness of my craft in poetry, I found that consciousness to be an inhibition on my work. Having fallen away from those adolescent passions which first informed my poetry I found myself hedged about by the truth. Unable to move. And having reached that place it is impossible to turn away from it.

It is only as I write this, pushing to this verge of language, that I begin to stir again. And to play. Must play in fact, because my sense for truth alone cannot enter here. Playing—as in some of the old myths the Creator himself plays the universe into existence. For how could anyone respect a Creator chained by laws of logic or of necessity?

Yet even as I do write I have a sense I'm trespassing. I am

embarrassed; eavesdropping on the very jet of my art and language, as on a floodlit love-making. As though my eye suddenly turned and caught itself in the act of looking.

This nothingness or oneness of things before the creation of the world is the same state I must enter here and now before the creation of the poem.

si lence
 and then a sense
 a sigh
 and then
 then the sense of sight
 where are you?
 Always an inch away
 between your hand
 and my hand
 an inch
 to shape an owl in
 (sighing for each other)
 it hoots in the silence
 for a branch
 this yearning shapes one
 tree owl and our
 great sighing for each other
 and then
 then the tree sighs too
 seeking to root itself
 let it be rooted then
 sun and moon be its fruits
 let them sway among branches
 here I am always an inch
 between your hand and my hand
 and a great owl crying over us

Prose or verse can be a writing *about* something, starting from what we know, meanings to be expressed. But poetry is not so (this is the essential difference). Or it is only secondarily so. Rather it is an enactment. A creation.

Sometimes as I write I come into such an arrogance of spirit that the words no longer seem just something to be understood (as we

would understand the meaning of a symbol); they are that *understanding* itself. *Sub-stance*. Which is the same word, whatever that word implies. Creating worlds and blackbirds.

St. John calls it 'the Word made flesh.' Christ's body. Dare I say then that an achieved poem partakes of that body? That to share words with someone is to share (beyond communication) in a communion?

I do dare. Poetry is bread. This is the event itself. An act in darkness.

leaves catching light
 are the true scriptures
 I'm freed then
 from the need
 to describe them
 they describe themselves
 they are their own
 green messages
 a book which
 the wind is turning
 searching a word
 where each man
 reads of himself
 reads into it theologies
 of thrush and sparrow
 but the tree itself
 seems occupied
 with a more urgent matter
 look how it writhes here
 this speech
 turns always upon itself
 reveal and veil again
 where each man reads
 (freed from the need to)
 a green theology
 which the wind is turning

Then the priests, kings, soldiers, literary men, and our own shadows interpose and turn this bread into stone. But behind them we can glimpse figures such as Moses, who receives the Law on Sinai, or Zarathustra, who gazes ten years directly into the body of the sun. Into lawlessness. Who do not invent the laws. Who have to suffer them.

Yet even Moses, having seen God face to face on the mountain, must descend to his people with the law graven on stone. All our myths and laws and poems and social orders are stones before the unfettered energy of their origins, limitations on the inexpressible event of things, and as such the universe stands judgement over us.

If I define the universe as image it is invisible image

If I define the universe as sound it is silent sound

If I define the universe as rhythm it is still rhythm

If I define the universe as form it is chaotic form

If I define the universe as meaning we must suffer the paradox involved in all this: a poetry of hints and riddles; no longer just in the sounding. The silence too is recognized. 'A frog jumps in,' and we listen to the ripple of it long after the words have died away. A poetry with hollows in it, pause and hiatus, to admit the universe. Form never fixed, always emerging, formed and chaotic at the same time, allowing for interventions. A language becoming music, playing between sense and nonsense (they both limit the language). A poetry which has come to the end of itself and so comes close to its beginnings. Thrown back into the crucible.

Out of this agony of always falling short of what we mean new forms (which serve for a time) appear as cries out of chaos. It rips up dictionaries. All that we know as the 'devices' of poetry and language are kindled here. Only they are not devices. Not here. Though they become so. At the instant of Creation (before there's a world to talk about) language is sheer. I think of Odin, God of poetry, who moved into that naked presence:

'Nine nights I swung
On the windy tree,
Pierced by a spear,
Offered to Odin,
Myself to myself;
There's no one wise enough
Can guess where its root runs.

Hungry and thirsty
I scanned the abysses,
Until, with a wild cry,
I snatched up the runes
Falling giddy.'

— his own naked presence. As I, in writing this, strive to come into mine.

Ygg-drasil is the tree he swings on; the 'I-bearer.' 'I' that is both noun and verb. 'I' that is the sentence of itself. Unveil it a little and it becomes 'I AM I'—the unutterable name of God (thought, word, and deed in one) from which all worlds and grammars unfold,

and keep unfolding, thought into word into deed, till all energy of its original impulse is spent upon trinkets—leaf. stone. book. flute. window.—these created things, which lie, scattered around us.

This is the poet's hell. Nothing is related. And the language too falls from the one Word, till what remains in our mouth is suited only for discussing facts and catalogues. The changing shadows around a sundial.

When I was 19, sitting under the fluorescent lights of the Brighton Jazzclubs, I used to watch my hands moving among glasses and ashtrays. I thought that if I stared long enough my hands would become transparent; a window. Or that simply by stretching my hand I could tear the façade away and let the Real World flood through.

And still I'm looking for openings, but differently now. For an opening into the thing, not its annihilation.

My own poems are full of images of opening—'a snowflake opens inwards,' or 'the heart threatens to become a window.' I get a bit tired of it in fact, that a knife must be 'an edge where the dead throng' and never just a knife.

Looking around me now, everything seems full of trapped energy. Words do. But it happens sometimes by a grace that God himself assumes the role of poet. As Odin does. As Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita:

'I am the Oblation, the Sacrifice and the Worship; I am the
Fuel and the Chant; I am the Butter offered to the fire;
I am the Fire itself; and I am the act of Offering'

— assuming all created thing back into the great I AM. The energy is released, and we are overwhelmed by it.

And sometimes, taken by surprise, the poet himself becomes Godlike. Seeing a naked horse galloping across a field he suddenly cries out 'I am that,' coming again into the presence of that fearful paradox where eyesight meets itself and rears astonished.

This is either a poetry I am verging on. Or it is madness. A disease of language.

Rimbaud, coming to such a verge of language, rejected poetry as 'ridiculous.' But I want to say there is a respect in which we *achieve* the ridiculous—that realm of paradox which Lao-Tze tells us is the highest truth, and about which Nicholas Cusanus says 'how needful it is for me to enter into the darkness and to admit the coincidence of opposites, beyond all grasp of reason, and there to seek the truth where impossibility meeteth me.'

So I'll take my stand here. Our intimations of Spirit are always paradoxical: in sex, where the finite self outleaps itself an instant and we can no longer distinguish joy from suffering; in mysticism—the eye with which I see God is the same as that with which he sees me (Meister Eckhardt); and children, so newly born out of the 'coincidence of opposites,' delight in paradox—'One fine day in the middle of the night, two dead men got up to fight . . .'

Of course we who cling so tightly to 'real life' with its solid furniture of cars and newspapers consider that to be ridiculous, trivial, even madness. But then we fail to grasp what it is the enactment of. Of a basic human striving. To break down the barriers between things. Not to be bruised by this multiplicity of objects which stand over against us. To be naked. Naked to the event. Nakeder to the rain than skin is.

To speak about Creation means always to start again. Means to start again every moment in the speaking of it. It's a renewing and a sustaining source as well as a creative one.

That's why, whenever there's a famine or a disease in the land, 'primitive' people enact their creation myths. Or to heal a wound must name the origin of the metal of the sword which caused it.

That's why, when the Feast of Fools comes round, we break the tabus a moment, make the thief a bishop to lead us in the praise of that 'Assinine Power'—which title Christ responds to on such a day.

We have forgotten such things. The Fool's no longer licensed to whisper in the ear of kings. And so the poet has to.

If a conscious relationship cannot be made to that sustaining energy of the Spirit through art and festival then it will inevitable impose itself as chaos, either form inside as neurosis, or from outside as plague and revolution.

This is the Fenris Wolf, destined to devour Odin at The-End-Of-All-Things. So powerful, he breaks all chains the Gods cast on him. Only a slender impossible thread, forged out of 'the sound of a cat's

footsteps, the beards of women, the roots of a mountain, the yearnings of a bear, bird-spittle, and the breath of fishes,' succeeds in binding him. A thread of paradox and imagination.

Such is the power of poetry.

But that stuff wears out. Or the wolf begins to doubt its power to entangle him. Therefore the thread must be spun continuously. And out of new materials, whatever's at hand—a laugh, a limp, a haberdasher's eyebrow. It's a necessity, and yet impossible. The material is impossible. Poetry begins here.

to stand
between sea
and sand
(that impossible
intervention)
where I'm
caught up
in their
private quarrel
the seafoam
is not wisteria
it is madness
it is white
teeth gleaming
becoming mist
becoming mystery
where no

flowers ramble . . . it feels like the poem should go further. The word 'anonymous' keeps insisting, but the poem refuses to accept it. Too crassly symbolic I suppose. That the sea is anonymous, ever-shifting background to our days. Or, if it has identity, it's beyond our ability to comprehend. And so the old cliché comes—that we, helplessly watching it, are as the grains of sand.

But something else caught my attention. My daughter. Prodding a jellyfish. And beyond her a horse galloping through the surf. It seemed so blatant suddenly. Me too. Enjoying the sharpness of my elbows as this nothing stuff kept rolling in.

Away to the right of me a boy was. Facing the sea. Motionless. But, with his kite, laughing and plunging. It is his heart I thought,

continually risking itself at the edge of things. Sending red streamers out.

And suddenly I didn't care anymore about the Infinite. If we *are* grains of sand it's the ones Blake spoke of, full of eternity. It's these particular people I love, playing out their myths right here on the beach,

and to forge a language strong enough and subtle enough to engage our contemporary universe, even to such particulars, my only justification for writing this.

THE BEING OF THE ARTS

RUDOLF STEINER

Let there be spread out before us a wide plain, covered with snow; streams and lakes here and there, frozen over. Partly frozen too, a seashore not far away, with floating icebergs; some scattered bushes and low trees covered with snow and icicles. It is evening. The sun has already gone down, leaving a golden glow in the sky. Close by stand the figures of two women. And from the sunset a messenger is born, sent forth from the worlds of Spirit. He approaches the two women and listens attentively to what they have to say about their innermost feelings and experiences. One of them, standing there, presses her arms to her body; she shrinks into herself and says, "I am cold!"

The other woman gazes across the snow-covered plain, and across the frozen waters and at the icicles hanging from the trees. Words come from her lips — as she utterly forgets her own feelings, forgets the cold that the physical landscape is making her endure: "How beautiful everything is!" Warmth pours into her heart; for she has forgotten what she might feel under the influence of the physical cold. She is moved to the depths of her being by the solemn beauty of the frozen landscape.

The twilight deepens and the last red fades from the sky. The two women fall into a deep sleep. The woman who had felt the cold so intensely in her own body sinks into a sleep that could almost bring about her death. The other woman falls into a sleep in which there can be seen the consequences of her feeling, expressed in those words "How beautiful everything is!" Through her sleep, her limbs are warmed, her being remains fresh. As she was falling asleep, this woman heard the words of the youthful messenger who had been born out of the sunset, "You are Art." She brought into her sleep the results of her experience, her impressions before the landscape which has been described. A kind of dream mingled with her sleep — and yet it was no dream, it had a certain reality, a quite special reality; only its form was like a dream. It disclosed a reality which her soul could not easily have approached before. What this woman experienced was no

dream, only the likeness of a dream — what she experienced can be called astral Imagination. The expression of that experience can only be clothed in words which describe the pictures by which Imaginative knowledge speaks. The soul of this woman knew at this moment that what the youth had meant when he said "You are Art," could only be described in any real, intimate way by using pictures taken from Imaginative knowledge. And so let the experiences of this woman be clothed in words belonging to Imaginative knowledge.

As her inner sense awoke and she could distinguish something, she perceived a remarkable form — a form utterly different from what ordinary knowledge might picture as that of a spiritual being. This form was poor in any quality which could still remind one of the physical world. The form recalled the physical world only in so far as it presented three inter-penetrating circles — three circles standing at right angles to one another — as if one were horizontal, another vertical, and the third reaching from right to left. What flowed through these circles could be perceived, but was not anything which recalled an impression of the physical senses; it was reminiscent rather of something purely of the nature of soul, only to be compared with the soul's sensations and feelings. Something streamed from this form which can only be described as like a reserved, intimate sorrow, sorrow which had a definite cause. When the soul of the woman saw this, she resolved to ask, "What is the cause of your sorrow?"

The figure responded: "O, I have reason to show this mood for I spring from a high spiritual origin. As I appear to you, I appear like the human soul. But you must go high in the realms of the Hierarchies if you wish to discover my origin. I have descended hither from higher realms of existence. But human beings, who live on the other side of existence, in the physical world in which at this moment we are not, these human beings have torn from me the last of my offspring. They have taken from me the last being which originated from me and made it their own, and they have chained him to something like a rock after making him as small as possible."

And the woman made the effort to ask: "Who are you in reality? I can only describe things with the words which I remember from life on the physical plane. How can you make your being comprehensible to me — and the nature of your offspring, chained by human beings?"

"Over there in the physical world men refer to me as one of the senses, a quite small sense organ. They call me the sense of balance,

which has become quite small and consists of three incomplete circles which are fixed into the ear. That is the last of my offspring. They have carried him over into their world, and they have taken from him what he possessed here, which made it possible for him to be free. Each of the circles they have torn, and fastened to a foundation. Here, as you see me I am not fettered, here I reveal in myself complete circles in every direction. This is my true form as you see it!"

Once more the soul of the woman was able to ask: "How can I help you?"

The spiritual form replied: "You can help me only by uniting your soul with mine, so that you carry over into me here all that men experience over there through the sense of balance. Then you will grow into me; then you will grow as great as I am. You will liberate your sense of balance and raise yourself — spiritually free — above the enchainment to earth!"

The soul of the woman did this. She united herself with the spirit form, there in the world beyond. And as she became one with it she felt that she must perform something. She put one foot before the other, transforming stillness into movement and transformed movement into the rhythmic performance of a dance, which she completed.

"You have transformed me," the spirit form said. "Now I have become what is only possible for me through you, if you act as you have just done. I have become part of you; I have taken a form of which men can have only a dim feeling. I have become the art of dance. Because you wished to remain a soul and did not unite with physical matter, you could liberate me. At the same time, by following one step with another, you led me up to the Hierarchies to whom I belong; the Spirits of Movement; and you led me to the Spirits of Form, by completing the dance. But now you must go no further; if you were to make even a single step further than you did for me, everything you have done would be in vain. For it is the Spirits of Form who have had to bring about everything in the course of earthly evolution. If you were to encroach on the task of the Spirits of Form you would destroy again everything that you have just accomplished: for you would of necessity fall into that region of the astral world known as 'burning desire' to those who, over yonder, bring tidings of spiritual realms.

Your spiritual dance would be changed into something arising from

wild desire, as happens in the dance today, because men have scant knowledge of me. But if you remain faithful to what you have now achieved, you will create through the form of your dance and by bringing it to completion, an image of those mighty dances, performed in the heavenly spaces by planets and suns, to make possible the physical world of the senses!"

The soul of the woman continued to live on in this state, and another spiritual form approached her — again very different from what men picture as a spiritual being when they use an understanding based on the physical senses. A form stood before her, not possessing three dimensions, but complete in one plane. This form had a peculiar quality. Although it was only on a single plane the soul of the woman in her Imaginative condition could see it from both sides at once. From one side or from the other, this form revealed itself in two utterly different ways.

Once more the soul of the woman asked, "Who are you?" The form replied "O, I come from higher regions. I have descended to the region called here the realm of the Archangels. I came down to this level and then I had to descend into contact with the physical sense-perceptible realm of earth. There human beings wrested from me the last of my offspring and took him away. They have imprisoned him in their own visible physical body, and they call him there one of their senses, the "sense of one's own movement". It lives in them when they move their limbs or different parts of their body." And the soul of the woman asked, "What can I do for you?" The form answered: "Unite your being with mine, so that yours passes over entirely into mine."

The woman's soul did this. She became one with this spiritual form — entering it entirely. Once more her soul grew, becoming great and beautiful. And the spiritual form said to her: "Now that you have done this, you have attained the capacity to bestow a gift upon the souls of men on the physical plane — a gift expressing one part of that in you which the youthful messenger described: for you have become what is known as "the art of mime".

And because it was not long since she had fallen asleep and she still remembered her earthly form, she could pour into it everything that was in this spirit-being. And she became the archetype of the artist working through mime.

"You may only go as far as a certain step," said the spirit-being. "What you carry out as movement you may pour into form. But if

you were to pour your own wishes into the form you would distort it into a grimace and the destiny of your art would come to nothing. This has happened with human beings over yonder. They have put their wishes and desires into mime, their own self has been expressed in it. But you should let only selflessness be expressed."

The soul of the woman lived on in this condition. And another spiritual form drew near revealing itself only in a single line and moving only upon this line. And when the soul of the woman observed that this spiritual form, moving upon a single line, was also grieving, she asked: "What can I do for you?" The form answered, "O, I have sprung from higher regions, from higher spheres. But I have come down, through the ranks of the hierarchies to the region you call, in the cultivation of spiritual knowledge, the realm of the Spirits of Personality, which men possess only in an image." This being too had to acknowledge that through coming into contact with human beings it had lost the last of its offspring. And it went on, "The human beings over there on the earth call the last of my offspring their sense of vitality, of their own life — through which they feel their personality, their momentary mood, their sense of bodily comfort, the supporting strength of their own form. Men have chained this sense within themselves."

"What can I do for you?" the soul of the woman asked. Once more the spiritual form made the request: You should enter my being entirely, leaving behind everything which human beings have as sense of self; pass over into my form. You shall flow into me and become one with me!"

The soul of the woman did this. Then she observed that although this being was extended only upon a single line, she herself was filled with strength in every direction and filled the form that was hers upon the earth. She remembered it and it appeared to her here in a new splendour and beauty. Then the spiritual form said, "Through this deed of yours you have achieved what makes you once more a particular part in that great realm after which you have been named. You have at this moment become something, in a measure possible for man; you have become the archetype of sculpture!"

The soul of the woman had become the archetype of sculpture and could pour an ability into the souls of men through what she had received. Through the Spirit of Personality she could pour this into the souls of men on earth. Thus she gave them sculptural fantasy, the

possibility to create in sculpture. "You may however go no single step further than you have gone. You must remain entirely in form. What is in you may be led up only to the regions of the Spirits of Form. If you go any further, you will have the effect of that realm which arouses human desires. If you do not remain at the noble form, nothing good can come to expression in this region. But if you remain in the noble structure of the form, then you can pour into it what will become possible in a remote future. Then, although men are far from having achieved that form through which they will bring to life, in purity, what now has fallen into the possession of quite other powers within them, you will be able to show to them what human beings in a nobler estate may experience upon the future planet Venus, when their form has become utterly different. You will show them, through comparison with the present human form, how pure and chaste that form will be in the future."

And there appeared from the ever-changing sea of the Imaginative world something like the archetype of the Venus de Milo. "You may go only up to a certain boundary in the expression of the form. In the moment when you go beyond it and destroy the strong personality which must hold man's form together, you will stand at the borderline of what is possible as a work of art, the borderline of what can be beautiful."

A form appeared from the surging waves of the astral Imaginative world. What this form contained revealed the external human form brought close to the borderline, where the form would deny its connection with the personality, where the personality would be lost if any further step were made. From the astral pictures arose the form of Laocoon.

The experiences of this woman continued in the Imaginative world. Now she approached a form of which she was conscious, "This is not physically present over there; I am recognising it for the first time. Many things present on the physical plane faintly remind one of this form; but nowhere is it to be found complete, as it is here." It was a wonderful, austere figure which announced, when asked by the woman, that it sprang not only from high realms but from widespread realms; that to begin with however, it had to work in the realm of the Spirits of Form. "Nobody yonder," said this form to the woman's soul, "nobody has ever been able to represent me entirely or to bring anything to fulfilment which would mirror me as a whole; for my form

as it is here does not exist on the physical plane. Men therefore had to tear me in pieces, and this makes it possible that I give you a capacity to bestow on human souls a creative fantasy — if you will do what I ask of you. Unite yourself with me. Because my form is torn in pieces, it can only appear here or there in particular forms, and only in part. Nothing of me can be called one of the human senses; and so human beings could not chain me, only tear me apart. The last of my offspring, too, they have taken from me and torn in pieces."

Once more the soul of the woman united herself with the spirit form, not hesitating before the sacrifice of being herself for a moment torn in pieces. Then this spiritual form said to her: "Now that you have done this, you are once more a part of that whole after which you have been named. You have become the archetype of the art of building, the art of architecture. And if you pour into human souls what you have now achieved, you can give them the archetype of that fantasy which is at work in architecture. But you will only be able to give them an architectural fantasy akin to what is represented in the Pyramid: to show them in details, what will make their buildings appear as if spreading from the spiritual world downwards. By leading them to use their art of building for a Temple of the Spirit, you will enable human beings to produce something like an image of what I am — not in the service of any external purpose — revealing this quality in a visible form." And as before the Pyramid had appeared, now out of the waves of this astral sea, appeared the Greek Temple.

And another form arose out of the waves of this astral sea. A form not striving from above downwards, in order to widen at its base, but striving upwards, growing more youthful as it rose: a third form into which architectural fantasy had had to be divided, the Gothic Cathedral.

The soul of the woman lived on within the Imaginative world. And another form approached her, even more strange and remarkable than the previous figures. Something streamed from it like warming love and something else as well which could be very frosty. "Who are you?" asked the woman's soul. "I have only one name. It is rightly used over yonder by those on the physical plane who give accounts of the spiritual world. But only they use it rightly, for I am called

Intuition, and come from a wide realm: and out of that wide realm I have descended from the region of the Seraphim."

This being had a form like one of the Seraphim. Once more the soul of the woman said "What do you wish me to do?"

"You must have the courage to unite with me. Then you can enkindle in the souls of men over yonder a capacity which again is a part of their fantasy. Thereby you will become a part of what the youthful messenger called you."

The soul of the woman resolved upon this deed. Thereby she took a form very remote from that of man on earth — something only to be appraised by one who had looked deep into the human soul itself. The form into which the woman had changed could now only be compared to something in the soul; before, it had always been ethereal.

"Through having done this" said the seraphic being who was called by the name of Intuition, "you can enkindle in men the ability to paint. For you have become the archetype of the art of painting. One of their senses, the eye, has something in it untouched by the thinking of the human self; carrying rather the all-inclusive thoughts of the external world. When you have given men the creative power of painting you will so enrich the eye that this sense will recognise soul-being in what is otherwise soul-less and inanimate, known only from its surface. Men will ensoul all that on the surface appears as colour and form, so handling it that form will tell of soul. And through the colours, not only the outwardly-perceptible will speak, but men will enchant into the field of colour the speech of the colours themselves, telling of their inner nature. Just as all that comes from me passes from inner being to outer appearance.

You will give men a capacity enabling them by their own soul's light to carry the soul's power of movement even into the lifeless world, into otherwise empty colours and forms. Through your gift they will transform movement into rest — they will hold firm what in the outer world is in continually changing movement. The fleeting colours, touched by the rising sun, the hues of lifeless nature, you will teach them to hold fast."

A picture arose from the waves of the Imaginative world — a picture representing landscape painting. And a second picture arose representing something different, and interpreted by the spirit-being saying, "Through the capacity that you give human beings you will teach them to hold fast what happens and is experienced in human life,

be it in a shorter or longer time, in a minute or in centuries, or concentrated in a single moment. You will give men the capacity, even where past and future meet in solemn encounter, to hold them fast at their meeting point in peace and tranquillity."

And there arose from the waves of the Imaginative world Leonardo da Vinci's picture of the Last Supper.

"But you will have difficulties. You will have the greatest of these when you allow human beings to use their capacity for something that already has soul and movement: where they have brought soul and movement into the physical plane — there you may easily stumble. That will be the frontier where the images springing from your archetype can still be called art. There will be danger there."

And there arose from the waves of the Imaginative sea, the portrait.

And the soul of the woman lived on in the Imaginative world, and another form approached her, once more very strange and unlike anything to be found in the physical world — again something that could be called a heavenly form, not to be compared to anything on the physical plane. The soul of the woman asked, "Who are you?" The spirit-form replied, "Over all the earth I have one name only. It is rightly used by those who bring descriptions of spiritual realms to man. They call me Inspiration. I come from a widespread realm, but I had to have my place at first in what — over yonder, in speaking of the spiritual world — is called the region of the Cherubim."

A being of the rank of the Cherubim arose from the Imaginative world. After the woman had asked "What can I do, what should I do for you?" the being of the Cherubim replied: "You must transform yourself into my being, becoming one with me."

And in spite of the danger that this brought, the woman entered fully into this being of the Cherubim. She became even more unlike anything physical to be found on earth. It could be said of the earlier form, "There is at least something to be compared with it on the earth", this being of the Cherubim must be described as wholly strange to the physical world, without anything at all to which it could be compared. The soul of the woman became quite unlike anything on earth. She took a form from which it could be seen that she had passed into the spiritual world, belonged with all her being to a spiritual kingdom that cannot be found in the sense world.

"Because you have done this, you can implant a capacity in the human soul. And when this capacity develops on earth in human souls

it will live within them as musical fantasy. Men will have nothing they can take from outside. You have now become so strange to the earth that there is nothing to be taken from outside to express inner feelings through your inspiration. They will have to enkindle this anew, through a sense that is known to them quite differently: they will have to give a new form to their sense for tones, finding the musical tone within their own souls. They will have to create out of their own souls as if from the heights of heaven, and in this creation let something flow like a human reflection of all that in outer nature can only imperfectly spring up and flow out. From the human soul there will flow a reflection of the trickling of a spring, of the power of the wind, of the sound of thunder — not a representation of this but something that meets like a sister all these splendours of nature which appear from unknown depths of the spirit. This will spring up from the souls of men. Thus human beings will be able to create something which enriches the earth, and quite new to it. Without your capacity it would not have been there. It will be a seed for the future upon the earth. You will give them the power to express what lives in their souls but could never be expressed if they relied on what they now have as thought, as idea. All those feelings which burn away the concept — these would freeze were they dependent on a conceptual form. Through you, such feelings, for which a concept is the ultimate enemy, will find expression on wings of song and breathe the soul's innermost being into the environment, giving it the impress of something that could not otherwise exist.

All those great many-sided feelings, living in the human soul like a mighty world in themselves, are not to be experienced outwardly in any other way. They could be experienced only by journeying the widths of the universe and the course of human history; never in the outer world. For in what men have experienced at this place and at that place, contesting currents meet, and must flow through centuries and millenia. All these realms, beyond the outer world, you will be able to concentrate. Through the ability you have won you will pour it into music, into your symphonies".

The woman's soul now knew that what he who seeks knowledge of the spirit can describe as the world of Inspiration itself can, on the physical plane and by physical means, only be presented as a musical work of art: and is then not given in a reflected form but in immediate reality. And the soul of the woman understood that music could

express the mighty event when the feeling of Uranos was enkindled through the loving fire of Gaia or what happened when Chronos wished to illuminate what lived as his spiritual being through the light of Zeus! The woman had deep experiences of this kind through her encounter with this being akin in form to the Cherubim.

The soul of the woman lived on in what is called the Imaginative world. And another form came to her, one that was again very remote from anything present on earth. And when the woman asked, "Who are you?" then the spiritual form replied, "My name is only rightly used by those in the physical world who bring descriptions of spiritual events from the spiritual world; for I am Imagination! I spring from a wide realm, but from this wide realm I have come into the region of the Hierarchies called the region of the Spirits of Will."

"What should I do for you?" the woman asked again.

This form too said that the soul of the woman should unite her own being with this form belonging to the Spirits of Will — and the soul of the woman once more became very unlike the usual form taken by the soul: yet it was nevertheless a soul form.

"Because you have done this you are able now to breathe into the soul of man the capacity which men experience all over the earth as poetic fantasy. You have become the archetype of poetic fantasy. Through this men will be able to express something in their language that they could never say, were they simply to hold to the outer world and just represent things present in this outer world. You will make it possible for them, through your fantasy, to express everything that touches their wills and which could otherwise not be expressed by earthly means. On the wings of your rhythms and metres, through everything you are able to give to men, human beings will express much for which ordinary speech would otherwise be far too crude an instrument."

And in the picture of the Lyric there appeared what, through centuries, had inspired generation after generation.

"You will be able to bring together what could never be represented by an external physical event. Your messengers will be the Skalds and poets of all ages. They will sum up in their epics what has come together in many circles of human beings. The form taken by the Will when passions clash together, what human beings on earth could never fight out to the end in the physical world, all this you will set before them by your magic upon the stage, where you will show them

how passions in their encounter bring about the death of one, the triumph of the other. You will give humanity dramatic art!"

And the soul of the woman noticed at this moment an inner experience of her own — an inner experience which can be described in ordinary earthly terms as awakening.

How did she awaken? This awakening was brought about by seeing, as in a mirror, something not present upon the earth. She had made herself completely one with the Imaginative world. What lives on earth as poetry is a mirror of Imagination. The soul of the woman saw in poetry this mirror image. And thus she awakened. Through this awakening she had to leave the dreamlike realm of spirit, though she entered something that resembled, if only in a dead mirror image, what lives in spirit as Imagination. Through this she awoke.

In awakening she could see that night had passed. Once more she was surrounded by the snow-covered landscape, before her the shore with floating icebergs, the trees with their hanging icicles. But as she awoke she observed that the other woman was lying beside her, stiff with the cold she had endured. This woman had not been inwardly warmed by taking with her the impression of the landscape's beauty. The first woman, who had passed through all these experiences during the night, now observed that the other woman who was almost frozen because she could not experience anything in the spiritual world, was human knowledge! And she took her to herself to pass on some of her own warmth. She protected and cared for her, and the other woman grew warm through the impression of all that had been brought from her experiences during the night.

Dawn arose from the east over the landscape, proclaiming the coming of the sun. The red of the dawn grew stronger, and the soul of the woman, who had passed through the experiences of the night, was now fully awake. She could listen to what is spoken by the children of men when they have experienced intimations of what can be found in the Imaginative world. And she heard in the midst of the choir of human voices what the best of them had brought into words, as their intimations of what they did not themselves know through Imagination, but could let flow from the deepest levels of their souls. Such things could become guidelines for humanity. She heard the voice of one poet who had gained an intimation of the greatness of what the human soul can experience from the Imaginative world. She now understood that she would have to rescue the science that had

become half frozen, she learned that she had to warm it and permeate it with all that she had herself become: bringing first what she was as Art, and with it everything that she had passed through during the night — to the science which was half frozen. And she observed how, with the speed of the wind, what has been half frozen can return to life when science takes what she can give into its knowledge.

She looked again at the dawn and it became a symbol for her of the realm from which she had wakened and a symbol of her own Imaginations. She understood what the poet had said so wisely out of his intimation. What she heard out of a new spirit reached from her all over the earth:

"Only through the dawn of beauty
Will you find the realm of truth."

The Golden Blade

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William Blake, *Orc in the Fires of the Elemental World*

BLAKE'S READINGS IN THE AKASHA

ANDREW J. WELBURN

WILLIAM Blake died—singing—in 1827 with the comfort that his works were much read among angels. His mortal audience was, and remained for well over a century, small. Certainly no-one would have predicted that the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of his death would see him celebrated as the greatest of the English Romantic poets, and even by some as the next in our language to Shakespeare. Only a couple of decades ago, Blake could be dismissed without apology as the author of a few sublime lyrics and a vast corpus of “occult” outpourings on the epic scale that witnessed his early lapse into insanity. That this “irregular and unscientific Eccentricity”, more or less unheard of in Rudolf Steiner’s day, has become a figure of vast literary importance to us today, and the representative of a profound visionary philosophy, may well help fend off despair at Steiner’s own current obscurity. Like Blake, Steiner has suffered from the circular argument against the Romantic tradition: these visionaries were never able to produce a mind that could gather intimations, insights and intuitions into a clear and unified whole; hence the very cases where this was most nearly accomplished were passed by without consideration.

Blake’s coherence springs in part from his single-mindedness, his unwillingness to taint with compromise; and in part from his inclusiveness. He saw the essence of man’s humanity in Imagination, in his power of creating expressive images that were not bounded by the “given” world of the senses—all his life he denounced those who either in theory or artistic practice limited Imagination to reproducing or selecting from earlier sense-experience, thus confounding it with mere memory. The images of memory and indeed of perception do, of course, belong to Imagination—though Blake sometimes seems to deny it: but then, as in Plato’s *reminiscence*, the visionary can also “recall” the pre-existent state from which we descended into physical birth; and, by “Spiritual Sensation” perceive realities that have never been present to our empirical senses. Blake’s vision of man’s nature as

transcending the world of the senses and the intellect is one that he shares with many of the Romantics—but he is more thoroughgoing in that he sweepingly identifies man's supersensible essence with its visionary organ, Imagination, "the Human Existence itself". Imagination does not depend on what is received from without, but rather, when it orders itself purely in accord with its inherent nature, gives expression to man's true, spiritual being. Hence Imaginative poetry at its "Most Sublime", though it may include physical events, treats of a knowledge that is essentially spiritual, "while it is altogether hidden from the Corporal Understanding". It is not hard to understand why this has seemed to many readers a very demanding, and to some, I fear, an unintelligible idea of the nature of poetry.

By way of explication, we may turn again to a comparison with Rudolf Steiner. Disparate, and in some ways quite opposed, he and Blake have at least this in common: in their work the concept of Imagination which struggled long to emerge in Romantic philosophy was grasped with immediate lucidity, and radically extended. The Imagination which Rudolf Steiner describes is, like Blake's, a mode of vision in which man apprehends a world of images, freed from the limitations of the senses, and again, this world is one which he feels to express his own being. He is no longer confronted with non-human, external order of things, but finds the manifestation of his own being in imaging forth the realities of the supersensible world. And once more, this exalted kind of Imagination is to be distinguished from its lower reflection in memory and ordinary imagination (*Phantasie*), both of which are determined by the outer world of the senses.

Now all this is of no great import so long as we are content with a view of mind as some sort of intrusion into a universe of material reality—a by-product, perhaps, of the struggle for survival. At most, it might then lead us into talk about Jungian "archetypes" and what not; the path of self-knowledge would lead into the depths of the psyche, but leave the objective universe untouched. It takes on a new significance, however, in the context of a world-view in which man and the universe are presented in mutual interaction and evolution; in which human inwardness and external nature are alike the product of a gradual process of separation, the metamorphosis of a unitary reality into a variegated whole. And it is just such a conception of man's belonging with the world that is urged upon us by the nature of

Imagination. For there the chasm between subject and object has been closed.

Blake responds to the force of this implication by refusing to see anything but "delusion" in the idea of a world that is independent of man, or in any truth that is not a truth of human experience. Rudolf Steiner responds more subtly, and with a "historical" emphasis that is alien to Blake, by an account of the evolutionary emergence of spirit, splitting and polarizing the world into outer and inner, nature and consciousness, so that the form of each bears witness, like a fossil record, to their shared history and common origin. In Blake's poetry, as we shall see, images from the evolutionary past of the universe present themselves spontaneously at the point where his profound self-exploration penetrates to the evidences in man of that common origination. But whereas Blake is forced to accept these moments of fusion instinctively, when something in the outer world is caught up in vision and made one with something in the depths of human nature, Rudolf Steiner's methods of spiritual investigation enabled him to scrutinize the process of separative evolution underlying these Imaginative glimpses. This, of course, called upon those higher faculties he termed Inspiration and Intuition—and of such things Blake had no more than an inkling.

Rudolf Steiner, following theosophical terminology, referred to this Imaginative record of the past as the "Akasha Chronicle", or more popularly as the "Cosmic Memory". Its contents form a very large part of his investigations. Blake sees its innumerable images spread out like "bright sculptures" in the great Hall of Los, the spirit of the Imaginative power in man, who walks back and forth in the whole sweep of history:

for not one Moment

Of Time is lost, nor one Event of Space unpermanent,
But all remain: every fabric of Six Thousand Years
Remains permanent, tho' on the Earth where Satan
Fell and was cut off, all things vanish and are seen no more ...¹

Rudolf Steiner draws out his survey into almost inconceivable distances of cosmic time, only to surprise us the more at how intimately these roots of our being concern us in a drastically changed universe—rather as if we travelled half way round the world, to be recognized in the street by someone we knew at school. So startled, we

are unlikely to forget our humanity even in the most remote domains of spiritual science; but there is at least an additional, more poetic (perhaps more English) reassurance in the minuteness of Blake's insistence:

For every thing exists and not one sigh nor smile nor tear,
One hair nor particle of dust, not one can pass away.

1. The Atlantic Continent

Blake's *America, A Prophecy* is among the more unusual commentaries on the American Revolution. It is also one of the earliest of the "prophetic" books; and Blake here sounds some of the themes that loom large in the longer poems. Beneath the outer conflict he discerns a clash of spiritual forces, the "Angels" of the combatants; the dragon-form of Albion's spirit reveals the eternal form of George III, the repressive tyrant of the physical world who stifles the expression of spirit; and fiery Orc, the spiritual-astral energies which, dammed up by long repression, finally burst forth in apocalyptic revolution. Worldly power, Blake sees, depends upon and sustains a whole mode of consciousness that is blind to the spiritual; and forces of revolt express a new vision in which man shares in the elemental powers of nature, burning away the narrow gates of the ordinary senses.

Suddenly, in a moment of marvelous tranquillity, he also sees the primordial world that this revolution will restore—the world as it was before human consciousness lost its ancient clairvoyant perception and became prey to external domination:

On those vast shady hills between America and Albion's shore,
Now barr'd out by the Atlantic sea, call'd Atlantean hills,
Because from their bright summits you may pass to the Golden world,
An ancient palace, archetype of mighty Emperies,
Rears its immortal pinnacles, built in the forest of God
By Ariston, the king of beauty, for his stolen bride.

Here man and the cosmos are beautifully commingled: from the high places of the mountains the spiritual world can be felt all

around—these mountain ranges are mentioned by Rudolf Steiner, too; and in the forest regions a rather Gothic palace suggests a blending of the divine in man with the divine in wild nature. It is especially interesting to compare with this suggestion Steiner's description of Atlantean dwellings, "in which the houses were built of trees with artfully intertwined branches. What the work of human hands created at that time grew out of nature. And man felt himself wholly related to nature..."² It is fascinating to think that Blake's interest in the "Living Form" of Gothic may derive from a vision of the literally organic architecture of the Atlantean forests!

The creator of this arboreal palace is Ariston, which simply means "best" in Greek. We may take him to be one of the "initiated kings and leaders of the Atlanteans... Enormous power was in their hands, and they were greatly venerated."³ Blake can hardly have been aware of the irony that these "mighty Emperies" were to become at least as tyrannical as that of England. Of the king's bride, whom he sometimes names Anana, the poet has intimated an archetypal romance and elopement; and in fact it was among the Atlanteans that such feelings and attachments, unknown to their ancestors, are said to have first developed.⁴ The details of Blake's momentary vista on this lost continent are curiously apt, strengthening the suggestion of a genuine reading in the Akasha.

Concerning the inhabitants of this land, Blake wrote of the "Atlantic Mountains where Giants dwelt in Intellect". He was not simply referring to the larger scale of the primitive human form.⁵ The Giants for him are "the Antediluvians who are our Energy", who "formed this world into its sensual existence... the causes of its life and the sources of all activity". This "Giant" nature of the soul has now been excluded from our ordinary awareness by the development of our more intense ego-consciousness: it represents that level of experience at which we are united with the energies of will and the elements that shape our perceived world, and in ancient Atlantis this kind of participation had not yet been eroded away or thrust into unconsciousness. "The soul powers of these first Atlanteans still possessed something of the forces of nature. These men were more closely related to the beings of nature which surrounded them than were their successors."⁶ Hence their ability to manipulate directly the energies of life and nature, and their Titanic achievements. Blake soon comes to identify "The Giant Albion", now the representative of all

humanity, as having once been the "Patriarch of the Atlantic; he is the Atlas of the Greeks" who gave his name to the continent, "one of those the Greeks called Titans."

Though it remains, far "above Time's troubled Fountains" in the cosmic memory, in earthly history the glory of Atlantis declined. It was given over, according to our poet, to the Druids—those ubiquitous figures in later Blake. They stand for the religion of self-seeking and materialism, so that however anachronous their presence in Atlantean prehistory, this is a fairly accurate rendering of the abuses of power that finally led to catastrophe:

The Atlantic Continent sunk round Albion's cliffy shore,
And the Sea poured in amain upon the Giants of Albion.⁷

2 War in Heaven: The Origin of the Earth and Extrusion of the Moon

Blake's probings of the soul's "Giant" nature—those elemental powers in which it participates beneath the normal threshold of modern consciousness—brought him to a vision of the earlier world to which it once belonged. Nor was this the only case: indeed, Blake had glimpses of far more primordial world-conditions, which we are able to understand with the help of Rudolf Steiner's investigations. We must return once again to the American Revolution.

Albion's Angel, the tyranny of a consciousness limited to the material world, looks westward, threatening America. As he does so, those astral energies of liberation, whose spirit is Orc, begin to well up:

Red rose the clouds from the Atlantic in vast wheels of blood,
And in the red clouds rose a Wonder o'er the Atlantic sea,
Intense! naked! a Human fire, fierce glowing, as a wedge
Of iron heated in the furnace . . .

The King of England trembles, fearing that his world will be dissolved and his power overthrown. As a portent of cosmic disaster and change, Orc appears like a comet; and then, these astral turbulences trigger the vast image of an immense disaster. The poet sees those cosmic upheavals connected with the origin of the earth out of its former astral condition.

Not surprisingly, Blake was confused by what he saw, and did not use some of the material in the final version of *America*—it now forms cancelled plate b in Keynes' edition. By using both sources, we can easily reconstruct what Blake saw. Firstly, the final version:

Albion's Angel stood beside the Stone of night, and saw
The terror like a comet, or more like the planet red
That once enclos'd the terrible wandering comets in its sphere.
Then Mars, thou wast our center, and the planets three flew round
Thy crimson disk: so e'er the Sun was rent from thy red sphere.

We can readily see from this that the poet envisages in the earlier world-condition: firstly, that the centre of the system was occupied by Mars, the red planet; further, that this planet still contained all the substance later rent from it as the Sun; and that this great central body was orbited by three planets. The comets form an additional problem.

Rudolf Steiner has given many descriptions of the early stages of planetary evolution, explaining how our physical earth emerged from a previous astral-spiritual condition, and that this was accompanied by a process of contraction. He generally referred to this stage as the Old Moon evolution. Before the Old Moon period, the cosmos consisted of a huge body whose circumference is described by the present orbit of Jupiter: the onset of the Old Moon phase "compressed the mass" of this body "up to the boundary of the present Mars, and Mars represents the boundary line for the size of the Old Moon. Imagine a sphere with the sun at its centre and limited by the orbit of the present Mars. There you have the size of the Old Moon."⁸ It was not yet a body circling the Sun, but an enormous astral world occupying the centre and having the present orbit of Mars as its periphery. Here, then, is Blake's central planet.

Moreover, the comets—whatever their exact role—confirm this interpretation. For on several occasions Steiner connected comets with the laws of the Old Moon system, insisting that "the substance of a comet does not obey the laws which exist in our solar system, but such as prevailed in the Old Moon-existence. Indeed, the laws of the Old Moon are preserved in the life of the comet."⁹ It is for this reason that their influence now is disruptive, as Albion's Angel fears. The energies of Orc threaten to restore a level of existence belonging to the distant past. Further details of the comets, and how exactly they are

enclosed in the sphere of the Old Moon-Mars planet, remain for the moment obscure. We shall return to them shortly.

The catastrophe that released the wandering comets is revealed in the cancelled fragment:

In a sweet vale shelter'd with cedars, that eternal stretch
Their unmov'd branches, stood the hall, built when the moon shot
forth,

In that dread night when Urizen call'd the stars round his feet;
The burst the center from its orb, and found a place beneath;
And Earth conglob'd, in narrow room, roll'd round its sulphur Sun.

A multitude of events are here presented overwhelmingly in rapid succession. In the "dread night" there was evidently a shift in the disposition of the planets, and the old organisation of the Moon-Mars body altered. The being known as Urizen is a key to these happenings: he is the God of the Jews, the creator of the material world, and the ruler of the cosmos who makes the stars his footstool. Thus, we are moving toward the emergence of our physical earth and the present order of the cosmos. The central planetary mass is thrown outward, partly collapsing back into a denser Sun, and the rest being flung out "beneath" to form a planet. "At first, so long as it formed one single body, the Moon extended to the orbit of the present Mars; then the Sun contracted, and was circled by a body approximately along the orbit of the present Mars—in other words, more or less at the periphery of the original single body."¹⁰

The spiritual events lying behind this division of the cosmic bodies, Rudolf Steiner goes on to say, belong to what is known as the "War in Heaven". It corresponds to a growing division between classes of spiritual powers. The more advanced spirits rent the Sun from the primal mass, while the retarded ones formed the planet that orbited it. But there were other devastations wrought by this heavenly struggle, which also bear on Blake's vision. The space between the Mars and Jupiter orbits was a battlefield in the cosmos, too; the wreckage is still visible today to astronomers in the form of asteroids, a multitude of small, wandering bodies in irregular orbits. They are "the wreckage on the great battlefield of the War in Heaven... which also brought about the severing of the Moon from its Sun."¹¹

In Blake's day no-one had seen an asteroid with physical eyes. Even the largest had not yet been discovered. But let us consider again:

Blake sees first the original Old Moon system with its vast central planet, orbited by a number of other bodies; then with the catastrophic reorganisation, a host of wandering fragments, formerly "enclosed within the sphere" of the Old Moon-Mars, are released with the appearance of terrible havoc. Not having the knowledge of any other kind of body, and already knowing the connection of comets with the ancient Moon—might we not, without being too speculative, find it plausible that Blake accounted as "comets" those fragments of wreckage that we have now come to recognize in the physical heavens as the asteroids?

But how exactly were the "terrible wandering comets" or asteroids "enclosed" in the sphere of the Old Moon—were they actually part of the primitive body of the planet? This is one obvious reading, but there is another which may also solve a further problem. What are the "planets three"? For only two stages of contraction, now corresponding to the orbits of Saturn and Jupiter, precede the formation of the old Mars stage. The answer seems to be that before their dispersal, Blake sees the asteroid-fragments as a single body, the third and innermost of the planets which are held in the orbit ("enclosed within the sphere") of the Old Moon. When Urizen-Jahveh summons the planets to assume their present cosmic disposition around the Sun at his feet, this body is scattered as the wreckage of the heavenly war.

With all this achieved, we are ready to commence Earth-evolution proper. Indeed—to complicate matters slightly—it must be said that Blake probably saw not the Old Moon condition itself, but its recapitulation in the early period of the Earth's development when it was still an astral body. In the vision recorded in the cancelled fragment, therefore, the events of physical evolution follow directly. There is a further contraction, as the remaining material "conglobes" into the solid Earth-planet, which now looks small and "narrow" after the vastness of the ancient Moon:

And Earth conglob'd, in narrow room, roll'd round its sulphur Sun.

The Sun has in turn contracted once again to become the material fire at the centre of the new system. The material world, into which Blake was so little pleased to find himself born, is essentially formed: this is the comfortable "hall" in which the ruler of the physical, Earth-

cosmos takes refuge at the beginning of the cancelled passage quoted. All that is needed to complete its present-day structure is that the moon (the heavenly body which now orbits the Earth, not the ancient astral planet) be shot forth into space. The tyrant Angel of Albion is then firmly instated, with Urizen's blessings on his head.

3. The intervention of Lucifer: Cosmic events and the Exodus

The peculiar and rather disagreeable role played by Blake's Urizen-Jahveh, the presiding god of Earth-evolution, leads us to a further general observation on the nature of the poet's vision: its resolutely atavistic character. George III's Angel may have been alarmed that the world of ego-consciousness was about to be overwhelmed by a more primitive mode of experience, but Blake is enthusiastic for the apocalypse. He longs to restore that ancient vision of the "Golden Age", when human consciousness had not separated itself from the world, leaving that world now external and seemingly devoid of spirit; he strives to re-attain an awareness in which the deities active behind nature are again felt to reside in the human breast. The ego-consciousness which has slowly been developing in Western history is for him a state of delusion, an error that has infiltrated experience itself. The outer, material world that this consciousness sees is a world of death, and the man himself is reduced to a "Spectre" of true humanity.

Blake's aspirations are therefore those of the ancient schools of initiation. He does not want to develop the ego to the point of clairvoyance, but to cast it aside; he envisages not an arduous path of development, but an inner release. Indeed, he makes man's imprisonment in selfhood merely a piece of perversity on his part:

... himself pass out what time he please; but he will not,
For stolen joys are sweet and bread eaten in secret pleasant.¹²

For him the enemy to be overcome consists in those powers in the soul which tend to give man a separate consciousness, and make the world appear a dead husk or, as Blake says, "Incrustation". In those spiritual streams, however, which accept the ego as a higher form, and

struggle to attain spiritual vision in a suitably new way, a second enemy has also to be acknowledged. For there is now the additional possibility of man's becoming absorbed in his own inwardness, of creating an infinite inner realm in which he himself rules like a God. Rudolf Steiner gave the name "Luciferic" to the forces tending in this direction: it is Lucifer who tempts man with the hope that he will equal God in knowledge and power.

Now in Blake's atavistic vision, clearly, there is no place for a Luciferic figure. So long as we aim for the ancient type of vision, these forces simply co-operate with the rest of the soul. It is only when we demand a vision based upon ego-consciousness that we run up against those aspects of their activity which constitute a new danger to our development. And it is actually true that there is no Lucifer in Blake's mythology—except in one work, the *Book of Ahania*. For although he never explored the theme of the struggle against Luciferic temptation directly, he was able to do so by a sort of sideways look at that other mode of consciousness which did. From the standpoint of ancient clairvoyance he examined, and rejected, that mode of consciousness which struggled to counterbalance the Luciferic powers and attain to the spiritual.

The *Book of Ahania* is a study of Judaism—in fact, because of its unique one-sidedness, one of the most fascinating studies of it ever produced. For it is in the religion of the Jews that the myth of Lucifer and his tempting offer first appears, and among them that we can observe the historical emergence of the more modern mode of consciousness. The God of this new consciousness in its religious aspect is regarded as the creator of the external world, and for the first time this is experienced merely as something created, and in itself devoid of active spiritual powers. The main enemy of this God is then the Lucifer who instils man with secret pride and ambition. But from Blake's position, all this is topsy-turvy. The God of the inner self and the inert outer world is to him a sheer Satan, the enemy of the primitive unity he hoped to revive, while the Luciferic powers that the cosmic creator so strenuously opposes seem to him beneficent allies in the attempt to cast out the selfhood. Hence it is that throughout his work, Jahveh is presented as the monstrous tyrant of the material world and abstract science, the tormented and lonely Demiurge, Urizen.

We digress a little from the Akasha Chronicle. The visions of the

past that are embodied in this second volume of Blake's own "Bible of Hell", however, can only be understood when we bear in mind his rather different evaluation of the Luciferic powers. So it is that Lucifer—or rather, Fuzon—is basically the hero of the *Book of Ahania*. He is a being of fiery, flickering and amorphous energy, splendidly archangelic with

His beautiful visage, his tresses
That gave light to the mornings of heaven.

He exults in the flaming energies that are his essence, harnessing them to his chariot, and frowning defiance on Urizen:

"Shall we worship this Demon of smoke."
Said Fuzon, "this abstract non-entity,
"This cloudy God seated on waters,
"Now seen, now obscur'd, King of sorrow?"
So he spoke in a fiery flame . . .

Under Luciferic influence the sould turns away from the material world of Urizen's creation, and rejoices in its own inward powers.

So long as it worked harmoniously together with the soul-forces of man's archaic spiritual vision, the Luciferic tendency played a useful part. But since that time, with the development of ego-consciousness, it has been isolated from its useful context, and now works by itself, out of step with psychic activities that have taken a new form. Thus left to itself, the Luciferic inwardness is raised to the rank of a pure absolute—it becomes a mystical inner experience that seems to do away with external reality altogether, to absorb everything into itself. Fuzon soon believes that he has destroyed Urizen and made all the world merely an expression of his power:

While Fuzon, his tygers unloosing,
Thought Urizen slain by his wrath.
"I am God!" said he, "eldest of things."

But this state of happy solipsism is short-lived.

The course of events that follows may be better understood if we fill in one or two of the historical allusions, which I have purposely omitted from my account so far. It soon emerges that Fuzon is none other than the figure known to exoteric learning as Moses, the supreme representative of Judaic culture. For it was he who led his

people out of Egypt—which is to say, out of a condition of consciousness that was becoming rapidly acclimatised to the physical world.

Blake's meaning is clear. Judaism began with Moses introducing a new spirituality, a turning away from the material world that was thus initially similar to the aims of archaic higher knowledge, and indeed of Blake himself. Only in this case the development was not sufficiently radical. Instead of so transforming the soul as to abolish and overcome the duality of self and the world, the Jews withdrew into an intense experience of the inner side of the dichotomy, isolating the Luciferic forces so magnificently incarnated in Blake's Fuzon-Moses. But they left the underlying roots of the dualism untouched, and so failed to escape the backlash of the outer, material world. For pure inwardness is simply correlative to the experience of a purely external world. To cultivate it is therefore simply to take that world, all unwittingly, for granted. Fuzon's apparent absoluteness is only a parody of clairvoyant participation, a Luciferic illusion that is blind to its own nature.

The external world (as is its way with such illusions) is not long in striking back. Its god, Urizen, hurls an all-too-solid rock that shatters and deforms Fuzon, taking him unawares. A compromise with external order is forced upon him, and the inner energies of Lucifer are limited by the conditions of the outer world. The ego devises moral laws, to govern action and guard against temptation:

But the rock fell upon the Earth,
Mount Sinai in Arabia.

Thus curtailed, Fuzon has become the familiar legalist Moses of the orthodox history, who beheld on that mountain "forms of dark delusion".¹³ Any spiritual reality now seems a "Mystery" of faith beyond human attainment. Such is the end of Blake's tragic version of the Exodus, his study of the path of ego-conscious development in its wrestlings with Lucifer: instead of leading back into the spiritual, Judaism establishes the very antithesis of inner and outer that most effectively cuts man off from vision:

And all the Spectres of the Dead, calling themselves Sons of God,
In his Synagogues worship Satan under the Unutterable Name.¹⁴

Rudolf Steiner, of course, has shown us that this stage of

consciousness is a necessary preparation, after which spiritual knowledge can be reattained on a higher level and without sacrificing our moral freedom. For him there is no question of man's ability to interpose himself as a moral agent between the inner and outer worlds being a mere decline, or sign of his lapse from primitive union with the spirit behind nature. There is a certain fascination, however, in seeing this mode of consciousness from Blake's vantage-point—and I have tried to show that Blake sees what is involved quite accurately; it is only his evaluation that differs drastically from ours.

That was not my only purpose in isolating the theme of the intervention of the Luciferic powers as a separate influence. For while that intervention first finds expression in human consciousness in emergent Judaism, this stage was naturally long preceded by a foundation being laid in man's organic nature; and this in turn was connected with events in the cosmic environment to which man was adapted. Rudolf Steiner has in fact confirmed directly that the inner events of the Exodus were an expression of more primordial cosmic events, when the Earth was recapitulating under material conditions the stages it had passed through as the Old Moon.¹⁵ For it was on the Old Moon embodiment that the Luciferic tendency first began to work at variance with the other powers, and this interruption was repeated on the level of organic change in the pre-Atlantean epoch generally referred to as that of Lemuria. Furthermore, these changes figure remarkably in Blake's poem.

Among the more striking transformations with which the Luciferic intervention was connected, as the biblical myth itself clearly reflects, was the division of the sexes. Before Lemurian times, assert both Blake and Rudolf Steiner, man formed a sexual whole, complete in himself, an androgyne. Blake regarded sexual union as an approximation to that undivided wholeness, and was led to consider all sexuality as intrinsically inadequate to man because it fell short of actually restoring that primal condition. The evolution of the separate sexes was to be seen as the "fall" of man, and the reasons for this concern the workings of the Luciferic principle. We can easily see how this is so. For in man's original androgynous form, there could be no such thing as sexual desire—or to put it another way, all desire was immediately gratified within the same organism, and so ceased as soon as it was generated. But with the separation of the sexes, the familiar gap between desire and attainment yawns open: desire, no

longer immediately assuaged, becomes Luciferic, cut off from objective fulfilment; human sexuality is no longer complete in each individual, but becomes a source of inward yearning. And like all that is Luciferic, it demands by its nature to be complemented from without—unless, as Blake often feared, it falls into narcissistic phantasy.

At any rate, the nature of Fuzon's fiery power now becomes obvious: it is the awakening energy of sexual desire, the Luciferic aspect of sexuality, that he turns against Urizen. And the result of this influence, of course, is to bring about his sexual division, his female aspect emerging as Ahania, his "parted soul". Once again, though, the delicate balance between outer and inner that sustains ego-consciousness demands a strict control, and to this end Urizen originates the idea of "Sin" that dominated sexual attitudes in Judaism; indeed, for better or worse (to Blake, obviously, worse) it has continued to influence modern feeling on the subject down to our own day. Possessively, Urizen hides his female aspect away in the darkness of his inner being:

Kissing her and weeping over her;
Then hid her in darkness, in silence,
Jealous, tho' she was invisible.

The duality of the sexes passes into the dualism of consciousness.

For with the dissolution of man's androgynous form, the female aspect of the male is left without external expression. And in the female, the inner masculine nature is cut off from outward manifestation to become the first stirrings of the inward life. Unable to embody itself in an androgynous body, the soul is compelled to retain part of its forces in itself—this is what lies behind Urizen's tight control on the outward expression of man's sexual being. Once again Blake has included these processes quite accurately, but from his own point of view, hostile to the ego and separate consciousness: his poem ends with Ahania's deep lament as she is forced to wander in the insubstantial void of inner consciousness, the "World of Loneliness" where she weeps "on the verge of Non-entity".

Here we reach the end of the recapitulation process: events of the Old Moon have been repeated, and man's single-sexed form, together with his incipient earthly consciousness, is established. The end of this phase was marked by transitional upheavals on a cosmic scale, and

notably by the occurrence which has given the Old Moon stage its name. Everything that has run its course, and is no longer needed for Earth-evolution, is separated off into another sphere, and thus originates the present-day moon. It was this separation, Rudolf Steiner tells us, that was paralleled by the Exodus from Egypt. And here we meet again those cosmic catastrophes we examined earlier in connection with the extrusion of the moon. On this level we recognise the Old Moon-comet syndrome in Fuzon's fiery "Globe":

Burning it flew
Length'ning into a hungry beam . . .

As a pillar of fire, this comet was seen spiritually (perhaps even physically?) at the time of Exodus, until after five hundred years, according to Blake, it was absorbed into the body of the Sun. But these portents were no more than an intimation of the upheavals that had attended the departure of the moon in Lemurian times.

With that departure, man's external androgyny came to an end. Hence, says Steiner, "the moon is regarded by the initiates as a symbol of the force of reproduction".¹⁶ Its origin is therefore rightly described by Blake in the context of the fate of Urizen's outward female nature:

She fell down a faint shadow wand'ring
In chaos and circling dark Urizen,
As the moon anguish'd circles the earth,
Hopeless! abhor'd! death-shadow . . .

(Elsewhere, Blake affirms this simile as more literal truth.) The cold and lifeless moon circling above us is now our only reminder of man's previously androgynous nature—of what in man himself has undergone an inner transformation.

There are also further indictations of the havoc following these cosmic changes. Blake's Imagination is transported back to a ravaged, primaevial landscape, of an Earth as it must indeed have looked soon after the separation of the moon:

A white Lake on the dark blue air
In perturb'd pain and dismal torment
Now stretching out, now swift conglobing,
Effluvia vapor'd above
In noxious clouds; these hover'd thick
Over the disorganiz'd Immortal,

Till petrific pain scurf'd o'er the Lakes
As the bones of man, solid and dark.

We have reached the stage where man takes on a bony structure for the first time. Before the moon's departure, the Earth had been densifying rapidly: but now Los, a creative Sun-spirit, is able to counter this tendency, and produces life around the hard skeletons. We see outlandish, prehistoric animals being caught in the nets of organic form:

The shapes screaming flutter'd vain:
Some combin'd into muscles and glands,
Some organs for craving and lust . . .

This generation of monsters—"Urizen's army of horrors"—belongs, in truth, many millenia before the Exodus! Indeed, so long as we regard Blake's poem as just an elaboration of the biblical story, their presence (along with the extrusion of the moon and the division of the sexes) must remain the oddest of enigmas. It is only when we understand that Blake's Imagination has allowed him to read in the Akasha of distant Lemurian times, when these creatures did actually "reptilize upon the Earth", that all becomes clear.

We can then begin to understand, too, that man's descent into a more earthly form of consciousness, which the poet is exploring, is also an expression of the same forces, working at a radically different level. All in all, it must be said, Blake's version of *Exodus* is a quite startling achievement. Beginning as a poetic, profound exploration of the roots of consciousness and of our sexual nature, it not only shows a historical insight that is as perceptive as it is biased: it also manages to be a fascinating account of remoter vistas of evolution, which we are only just discovering through anthroposophy to be all a part of becoming human.

Notes

¹ Blake, *Milton* 22, 18ff; see also *Jerusalem* 16, 6 1ff. References to Blake are to the edition by Sir Geoffrey Keynes (Oxford 1972).

² Steiner, *Cosmic Memory* (New York 1971 edition) p.47.

³ op. cit. p.54.

⁴ op. cit. p.50.

⁵ W. Scott-Elliott, *The Story of Atlantis and the Lost Lemuria* (London 1925) pp.19-21. For external matters Rudolf Steiner approves this work (*Cosmic Memory* pp.40-1), though in practice he often contradicts it, possibly for the reason given in *Theosophy of the Rosicrucian* (London 1966) p.41.

⁶ *Cosmic Memory* p.51.

⁷ *Jerusalem* 36, 39-40.

- ⁸ Steiner, *The Spiritual Hierarchies and their Reflection in the Physical World* (New York 1970 edition) p.64.
⁹ Steiner, *Manifestations of Karma* (London 1969) p.27.
¹⁰ *Spiritual Hierarchies* loc. cit.
¹¹ op. cit. pp. 65-6.
¹² Blake, *Europe, A Prophecy* iii, 5-6.
¹³ Blake, *The Song of Los* 3, 17.
¹⁴ *Milton* 11, 13-14.
¹⁵ Steiner, *Gospel of St. Matthew*—a rather diffuse discussion spread through lectures 2 and 3. It is interesting in this connection to consider the much-discussed evidence put forward by I. Velikovsky in his *Worlds in Collision* (London 1950), which brought him to the absurd conclusion, however, that cosmic disasters and changes occurred physically at the period of the Exodus itself.
¹⁶ *Cosmic Memory* p.137.



Charles Davy with his elder son John, 1928



Clara and Henry Ford c. 1920

CHARLES DAVY

AFTER the publication of *the Golden Blade* for 1978, the thirtieth issue, Charles Davy decided to retire as joint editor. Except for a few years, he edited it since it began. He and his friend Arnold Freeman shared the ideas which originated and developed it. Perhaps he will resume the editorship; but this is an opportunity to pay a small tribute to a long, very unassuming work.

Charles Davy is one of the most experienced journalists you could meet anywhere; for years he divided his week between a Sussex home and the Observer office near Fleet Street. Arnold Freeman was very rich in experience of adult education; as Warden of the Sheffield Educational Settlement, he was known to many people in the city as an exceptionally public-spirited and original man. In the modest premises of the Settlement he directed outstanding amateur productions, including Greek tragedies, Goethe's *Faust*, and Shakespeare plays very faithfully and honestly done.

Charles Davy and Arnold Freeman became friends when Charles was working at the head office of the *Yorkshire Post* at Leeds, during the Second World War. Both had already gone far in their study of Anthroposophy. The friendship remained strong when both had left Yorkshire: Arnold wrote to Charles from the place of his retirement in Cornwall on the day he died. Arnold was a fiery enthusiast, sweeping in many of his statements, interested in everyone. He very much respected the careful, judicious approach to any problem shown by Charles.

He was one of those who asked Charles to write his first book, *The Three Spheres of Society*, published by Faber and Faber in 1946. It is astonishing in retrospect that this work could have been completed so soon after the ending of the war. For a tremendous amount of thought and research went into it. Charles examines the economic organization, the condition of human rights, and the spiritual life of Britain, and how they could be benefited if Rudolf Steiner's ideas of a healthy social order were taken seriously. It is a book that succeeds in being both monumental and lively. It is

appropriate that it was published under the pseudonym Charles Waterman; for Aquarius is the constellation which inspires a harmonious balance between thinking, feeling and willing. Most people writing of the three spheres of society could not have helped revealing a special interest in one or the other; but from Charles each gets its due.

Charles had austere realistic expectations about the effect his book would have; and the event proved him right. It aroused little comment; and many of the problems with which it deals, for example the need for industrial democracy and a change in the wage system, are with us in a still more acute form today, nearly thirty-three years later.

Soon afterwards, Arnold and Charles began to think about an annual publication dealing with contemporary questions in the light of Anthroposophy. The idea received warm support, and they became the founders and first editors of the *Golden Blade*. Its first issue was for the year 1949.

The general structure of this issue has been kept ever since. There was a lecture by Rudolf Steiner, "The Threshold in Nature and in Man"; two articles on the three spheres of society, "Tendencies to a Threefold Social Order in English History" by A. C. Harwood, and Charles himself on "What is a Healthy Society?"; and three contributions for the Goethe bi-centenary by Owen Barfield, Hermann Poppelbaum and George Adams. There was an article by Dr. Ehsenfried Pfeiffer on a contemporary question which has remained very much with us. "Are there too many People in the World?"; three other articles very varied in theme, and two beautiful country poems by Harold Edwin Brading, who might well have become a widely loved poet had he been granted a longer life-span.

It is striking from the vantage-point of today that the majority of the contributors then had known Rudolf Steiner personally, and had already published substantial works of their own related to Anthroposophy. And of all the themes it could be hoped that they would be found interesting well beyond anthroposophical circles. The hope of reaching a wider public was strong in the editors; but over the years this has been very little fulfilled. Instead, the *Golden Blade* found a very faithful band of readers who valued its particular tone and character, most of them anthroposophists or already enquirers into anthroposophy. There are substantial reasons for this. To write for a

wide public in a way that has lasting value is a difficult craft; and we have never had many English writers in the anthroposophical movement with wide experience in this field. The *Golden Blade* has always faced a shortage not of appropriate subjects but of writers who could deal with them effectively, and of good translators into English.

During all his editorial years — 1949–1968 inclusive, and from 1974–1978 — Charles struggled with this problem like a Hercules (though this is a comparison that would never occur to him). It is not generally realised that someone who can give a wonderful lecture, or is a real expert on his subject, may produce almost unreadable articles, or articles that need a great deal of further work before they are published. Again and again, Charles has worked with a contributor over months, patiently and tactfully re-shaping and revising, aided by the frank counsel of his wife, Doris, herself an experienced writer and editor — until an article was ready for the printer. There can be few writers who have given closer attention to the work of others than Charles.

He possesses, much more than most of us, a responsive ear for teachers and thinkers belonging to other spiritual streams. This he has often put to use in the book reviews at the end of the *Golden Blade*. Nevertheless it came as something of a surprise when one of his later books, *Words in the Mind* (Chatto and Windus, 1965), proved to contain penetrating studies of certain French poets in relation to English poetry and its action on modern consciousness. In general, he has the essential virtue for a reviewer, willingness to let the book reviewed reveal its own qualities. From time to time also he wrote articles for the *Golden Blade*, notably his biographical studies of Beethoven (1970) and Wittgenstein (1972). For many years now, Charles has been engaged in revising translations into English of Rudolf Steiner's books and lecture cycles. His fellow-worker in this was often the late Dorothy Osmond. I wonder how many readers observe the note so often to be found, "Translation revised by C.D. and D.S.O."; I am sure that very few appreciate the mountains of work involved. Translation from German into English is a perilous art; I have heard of a translator who was said to look up in a dictionary the English equivalents given for a German word, and choose the longest! But even a good translation can be improved almost indefinitely, and the work is worth doing. It has been one of the greatest hindrances to the recognition of Rudolf Steiner's significance

that sentences of his which are quite simple and clear in the original become in English clumsy and opaque. He himself wished translators to be much bolder than they generally are. The experience Charles has gathered in revising whole books has regularly been put to use on the lectures by Rudolf Steiner chosen to begin each *Golden Blade*.

For 1958 Charles and Arnold brought out a special issue of the *Golden Blade*, which was the translation of an entire book. It consisted of accounts of Rudolf Steiner by some of his closest pupils, particularly those who had worked with him during the last years of his life, and had received guidance from him in carrying out their vocations. Many remarkable personal glimpses of him are contained in this book; and through all the accounts there shines steadily his common sense, his patience, and his kindness. It is now twenty-one years since this translation appeared; should it not be reprinted? And as we look at other issues of the *Golden Blade*, now long unobtainable, a number of other things may well strike us as of lasting value. Charles has been a good fisherman, casting his nets in many rewarding waters.

The present editors face many difficulties in trying to continue the *Golden Blade* in these times. But we receive much encouragement and help from those who have valued the *Golden Blade* in the past. And we know that we can continue to rely on the kindly judgement and patience of Charles and Doris Davy themselves. We all live in the same village; and they at the very middle of it.

A.B.

HENRY FORD, Objective Idealist

JONATHAN WESTPHAL

"In the deep, unwritten wisdom of life there are many things to be learned that cannot be taught. We never know them by hearing them spoken, but we grow into them by experience and recognise them through understanding. Understanding is a great experience in itself, but it does not come through instruction. Nothing ripens that is not first planted, and the very desire, the dream, with ambitions of youth are by way of a planting which will come to fruition some time after these desires are abandoned and forgotten. For the sown seed goes on growing whether we remember it or not. The wisdom of life is to keep on planting."

Henry Ford

HENRY Ford possessed the highest spiritual ideals and the greatest personal insight and magic. What he was "on a grander scale—truly, on the grandest possible scale—is after all only representative of many, many people of our time." He was "indescribably intelligent."¹ How could such magnificent qualities yield results which are now (and were in Ford's lifetime) seen to contain much that is directly anti-human? There is a similar gulf between the personality and work of the younger Ford, and the character which the Ford Motor Company later assumed, which matches one of the most striking phenomena of the twentieth century—the contrast between high human aims and simple inhuman brutality and failure, a contrast which is sharper now and more dangerous than at any other time in human history. To understand this fully would demand a study of many past and present issues in a way that cannot be attempted here. Let us look instead at the facts of Henry Ford's life and thought, and perhaps his time and his relation to it may gradually become clearer. This is in any case worth doing, because the nature of Ford's personality has been obscured and his thought buried.² Inaccurate pictures of Ford persist, and they need challenging.

First memories can be significant indicators of the meaning a life will take, because they register the inner disposition of a soul in a simple and sometimes beautiful way. The earliest event which Henry Ford could later recall took place on his father's farm. William Ford,

carrying his infant son John, showed Henry a song sparrow's nest, holding four speckled eggs. Henry's life long love of bird song dates from this occasion, when he first consciously heard the song of a bird. He also remembered his father turning the plough aside, in order not to disturb a nest in the furrow.

Henry Ford had been born on his father's farm four years earlier, on July 30, 1863. He grew up in the rural environment of Dearborn, Michigan, and walked to school every day through the fields. Two of his teachers made a particularly strong impression on him. F.R. Ward, who taught arithmetic, singled out Henry and encouraged him to do his sums in his head. Of another teacher he later said,

"I well remember the best teacher I ever had. He walked three and three-quarter miles every school day from his forty-acre farm to the schoolhouse. He got forty dollars a month during winter. On Saturdays he worked in a cooper shop, and in the summer he looked after his farm. That man, by the very nature of his life, could not teach what is useless."³

The mind which was later to perform the most startling but mystifyingly simple feats of imagination—for example, "Don't bring the man to the work, bring the work to the man, because pedestrianism is not a highly paid line"—was nurtured by simple people in unluxurious surroundings. His sister remembers that during his schooldays he quite naturally told the other children what to do, frequently withdrawing, perhaps to sit on a wall, and watching the sometimes disastrous results of the work which he had initiated. An early experiment with a turbine and boiler blew up part of the school. He and his friends built a water wheel out of an old coffee mill. They fed gravel into the mill, and watched the large flame which resulted from the friction. But their dam flooded the surrounding potato crop. Henry seemed to be particularly interested in geography. He stood his big picture geography book on his desk, but behind it he would tinker with old watches. His mechanical interest developed early.

Many of the most distinctive traits in his later personality and thought did not contrast with his rural early background. His hatred of the intellect (although not of intelligence), of bankers, profiteers, lawyers and big government, his criticism of books and academic education, his love of machines, in particular farm machines, his belief in a dynamic currency based on wheat, his suspicion of numbers and the written word, his love of flowers and birds, his belief that we have little thinking and that people are now beginning to *wake up* in their

thinking, his demand for people who understand the laws of personality, "artists in industrial relationship," his Masonry, his grasp of reincarnation, his ideals of service and their ultimate distortion, all these magnified, rather than added to, his early life and experience.

Ford had seen very young the dawn of what he took to be a new age, into the service of which he consciously placed himself. "Men have sensed their freedom," he said, and added that this would mean a big change in educational methods. In *My Philosophy of Industry* he said (p. 13) that we are entering a new era, and that our "new thinking and new willing" will bring a new world, a new heaven and a new earth, for which prophets have been looking from time immemorial. "Much of it is here already. But I wonder if we see it."

"Our discovery of Truth will be one of the great surprises of human experience. When the truth comes everywhere, it will be a great surprise to see how near we have been to it all the time without recognizing it, and to see how little are the changes to be made to our exterior mode of doing things."⁴

Henry Ford's twelfth year was a sad one. His mother died and the household, he later said with a characteristic image, was like a watch without a mainspring. The boy suffered, and later said that he had "thought a great wrong had been done to me." But he also felt that his mother had been called away to other work. He carried her memory deep within himself. Years later, the corners of the rooms in Ford factories were still painted white. Nevins and Hill⁵ report that Ford made "Highland Park and later the Rouge almost model plants in brightness, cleanliness, good air, and safety." Ford had learned from his mother the virtue of cleanness—he had also absorbed her ability to get a job done "quickly and well"—which showed as much in his engineering design as in his view of life: "clear thinking, clean living, square dealing."

In the same year Ford underwent another massive experience. Travelling with his father along the road to Detroit just three months after his mother's death, he saw, for the first time, a road engine. It was an enormous steam driven contraption. Ford jumped off the cart and demanded the answers to numbers of questions from the driver. "In that moment," said Ford, "I knew I was by instinct an engineer." Some forty years later he was still able to recall the exact characteristics (such as RPM and h.p.) of the first self-propelled vehicle which he had seen.

It has been suggested that these two events in Ford's twelfth year

are connected. David Nye says⁶ that "it was not his first view of a steam engine, nor was he ignorant of road engines." (But Nye doesn't seem to think it important that he had not seen a road engine). He suggests that the engine would hardly have produced the dramatic response it did had "Ford's mind not been seeking an outlet for the feelings he had for his so recently departed mother." Nye says that Ford was "redirecting his emotional life," that he transferred a near psychic link with his mother to the machines which were to become his life work. This terminology of emotional transfer and psychic outlets may not be the most appropriate one. There is another form of explanation, no less plausible and more consonant with Ford's own thought.

The following extract is from Emerson's celebrated essay "Compensation," which was Ford's favorite written work.⁷

"The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or a style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men."

It was probably Edison who introduced Ford to Emerson's writings. In 1879 Edison produced the first individual commercial incandescent lighting, which burned for about twelve hours on October 21. This achievement brought him to the attention of the American public, and to the sixteen year old Ford he appeared as a hero and an ideal. The two did not meet until 1896, although when they did they formed an instant friendship. The meeting took place at a dinner during an electrical convention. Somehow Ford, then a quite junior engineer in the Edison Illuminating Company, found himself sitting next to the great man, outlining his plans for a petrol powered automobile. Edison might have been expected to advise the young man to investigate the possibility of an electric car. But his fist smashed down onto the table, rattling the plates and glasses. "That's it, young man—you've got it," he cried.

But in the late summer of 1879 Henry left his father's farm, turned his back resolutely on his heredity, and walked from Dearborn into

Detroit for his first job. The harmony of life with his mother had been lost, and was to be replaced by the beat of machinery and the rhythms of production. Had Henry's mother not died, he might have remained a "sunny garden flower," unable to shake off the psychic spell which his beautiful maternal heredity threatened to cast upon him.

Ford held several jobs between 1879 and the turn of the century. He repaired watches, worked in a ship-building yard, for a foundry and shop, for Westinghouse repairing and running steam engines, for a railway car company, and finally for Detroit Edison, where he became chief engineer. His father encouraged him to return to the farm which, for a short time following his marriage to Clara Bryant in 1886, he did. Ford's activities during this period have seemed to some commentators aimless and unmotivated. He was supposedly unable to stick at any job or make any sustained effort in one direction. His jobs, like the jottings in his notebooks and his conversation, were epigrammatic and characterized by unusual strange juxtapositions. "... one finds leaps from one topic to the next with no transition or discernible connection."⁸ Yet these were the outer shells of the sort of inside-out thinking which was the source of Ford's great practical success. (He liked picture books for the curious reason that they can show the *inside* as well as the outside of things.)

Throughout his aimless twenties and thirties Ford was in fact picking up experience and ideas which were to count heavily in his subsequent career as an automobile manufacturer. All his aimless energies seemed to converge on this profession.

"I was forty when I went into business, forty when I began to evolve the Ford plant. But all the time I was getting ready. There is one thing the larger view does for you, it enables you to take time to get ready. Most of my life has been spent in preparation."⁹

Nye finds these words puzzling. "Ironically, of course," he says, "Ford had not possessed this 'larger view' during his time of preparation."¹⁰ (The larger view is of course reincarnation.) How could Ford have been taking the longer and larger view of life, how could it have enabled him to "take time to get ready," when during his time of preparation (that is, before 1901) he did not take this view at all? For Ford only acquired the belief in reincarnation at the turn of the century. Nye assumes that Ford was preparing for automobile manufacture. What sense then does the tense of the last sentence above make? "Most of my life *has been spent* . . ."

But looking back, Henry could see the long view (or what it revealed—to an objective idealist these two were fused) at work. Although he had not yet acquired this view, it was there, as he said of ideas in general, “waiting to be received,” an open secret, to use Goethe’s favorite phrase, *actually at work in the form of his own life*. “... the idea you want will come through. It was there all the time.” Retrospectively he could see how the long view worked in his own life, how it had prepared him and given him time. He had not consciously possessed reincarnation or the idea of it. Yet he seemed to see it “all around” him in his own life. Was not just this union of himself and his life *the essence of his belief in reincarnation*? Nye notices the underlying coherence of Ford’s first forty years, but does not draw any significant conclusion from the fact that it was *actually there*.

Nye continues, “... and rather than lengthening his period of ‘getting ready,’ the belief in reincarnation came at the decisive moment, giving him the confidence and self-assurance he would need to succeed.” But perhaps his life up to 1901 had been preparing for *this* moment too. Ford believed that intuition and genius were the result of work and experience in former lives, a belief articulated in countless interviews and public statements. “It seems to be an intuitive gift. It is really hard won experience.” Could this also be Ford’s view of his own intuitive gift, in particular what he regarded as the gift of his knowledge of reincarnation?¹¹

Later in life Ford was to keep a stack of copies of Ralph Waldo Trine’s *In Tune With The Infinite* on his desk, because he found in it ideas similar to his own, which he wanted to share with his friends and business associates. The key to this book, which can be found following the table of contents, reads:

“Within yourself lies the cause of whatever enters your life. To come into the full realization of your own awakened powers is to be able to condition your life in exact accord with what you would have it.”

By 1902 Ford had two automobile manufacturing failures behind him. It is in question whether the cause of these failures was his insistence, against the prevailing wisdom of the time, on a cheap, light, versatile universal car, whether his restless disposition made him unsuited to work in a company in which he did not have a controlling interest, or whether his own ideas about himself were simply not yet ready. At any rate, he was fast becoming, what Edison never did, a

supremely canny and resourceful businessman,¹² which he surely must have been from early on in the century, keeping ahead in what was fast becoming the toughest and most competitive industry in the country. By 1903, the Ford Motor Company had started with a capitalization of just a few thousand dollars, and Ford was on his way. He had, it seems, already begun to conceive the idea which was to become the magnificent controlling interest of his life: “I will build a car for the great multitude,” a great idea which, as Garet Garrett points out, *was not the idea of a mechanic*.¹³ But behind it stood an even greater idea: “The true function of business is service.” Ford had learned from his mother that “service is the highest duty there is,” and he had attempted to build this idea into the Ford Motor Company. How had he transformed himself from an apparently aimless failure into a supremely confident genius with the courage and daring to push these and other ideas through to such complete success?

Different authorities have proposed different dates for the moment at which the seed of success was sowed at Ford. Historians with an eye on business cycles and technical developments suggest 1907, when the Model T idea jelled and after which the market was right. Anne Jardim, a psychologist, suggests 1905, the year in which Ford was finally released from his family, from the farm and the land, from his “guilt,” by the death of his father. Most recently, as we have seen, David Nye has suggested that the important year is 1901. It was in that year that Ford grasped, in his direct and original way, the idea of reincarnation.

On the day of President McKinley’s funeral, Ford was handed a small book by a friend of his, Oliver Barthel, whose life remains obscure. The book was a short version of Orlando J. Smith’s *Eternalism: A Theory of Infinite Justice*, a work which presents reincarnation in a straightforward and uncomplicated way. “It changed my whole life,” said Ford. “From emptiness and uselessness it changed my outlook upon life to meaning and purpose.” He had grasped a “universal plan.”

“The discovery of reincarnation put my mind at ease. I was settled. I felt that order and progress were present in the mystery of life. I no longer looked elsewhere for a solution to the riddles of life. If you preserve a record of this conversation, write it so that it puts men’s minds at ease. I would like to communicate to others the calmness that the long view of life gives.”¹⁴

Ford was now able to see himself, not as his father's son, *but as his own!*

"Little is known about our inheritance. Suppose we inherit it from our own past?"¹⁵

He was not the child of his civilization or his time, but self-created. His seed was himself in a previous life. He could therefore "still the hands of the clock," and take as much time as he needed. He was released from responsibility, except to himself and to the "higher lights" which he thought were active in his thinking. The assembly line represented an attempt to do the same for society as a whole. It was "the ultimate expression of Ford's will as it strove to overcome time."¹⁶

He came to believe in the existence of ancient civilizations "more highly developed than our own." But he thought they had not possessed a moral development sufficient to balance their greatness, and they had gone down. It seems likely that Ford received some support in this sort of idea from Edison, who had joined the Theosophical Society in 1876, the year following its foundation by Blavatsky and Olcott in New York.

"What we call 'belief' now was once knowledge. That is one of my beliefs . . . Something has happened to the race; it has fallen under a cloud, and things that were once clear as day and of common knowledge are now so misty that we must hold them by faith."¹⁷

Ford thought that the securing of the economic and technological base of modern life, with a proper moral development, was the means of preventing our civilization from going under as Atlantis had done. His business methods would yield products like the Model T which would last forever. These products would begin to prevent the endless rise and fall of civilizations. With ideas coming faster and faster, with the acceleration of the experiences of American life, Ford thought he saw his civilization beginning to surge out of time. As experiences came closer together, the period between civilizations, and possibly lives as well, would vanish. "The mind is travelling faster than it did," thought Ford, and with it the events which it attracts. For Ford, as Nye says, "events were but the accretion of experience. They were ordered towards an inevitable perfection—events were, in fact, ideas made manifest"—an obviously Emersonian idea. "Ideally, the assembly line would reduce the time to implement perfection to zero, or instantaneous creation."¹⁸ Our present world is the creation of our

own ideas in past lives. Orlando Smith had said that we make our own world, our own heaven and our own hell—literally. And Ford believed it. Our own present world is the literal creation of our own past thoughts and actions. Could our *present* thoughts be made to create our *present* world? Ford thought so. Heaven could come to Earth. Was this so impossible for a man who genuinely made "no difference between matter and spirit. They are different degrees of fineness of the same thing. The one is becoming the other, through ascent and descent, and both benefit by the process."¹⁹

Ford planned an enduring base of things, like the Model T, which would last forever and repair easily—the ultimate opposite of planned obsolescence. This base was intended to neutralize time, to prevent the rise and fall of civilizations and of individuals in repeated incarnations. The "instantaneous creation" of the assembly line would help bring to earthly society Mircea Eliade's "sacred time," which differs in quality from the historical present and the events in it. "By recapitulating in ritual the acts which led to the world's formation, such societies renew the cosmos."²⁰ For sacred time, says Nye (here he follows Eliade) is identical to creation. Sacred time does not pass; it has no duration, but it is recoverable with each periodic festival. Americans realized that Ford's creation of a new world had a millennial and eschatological significance. They compared him, of all people, considering the anti-Semitic ideas which he acquired during the First War, to Moses.

Ford envisioned a historical dialectic from farm to factory, and then, with improved skills and techniques and the sophisticated hand power tools which were to be gained in the factory, back to the farm. His idea was that large industrial concentrations would again become unnecessary, and men could spend a part of their time in small village factories, and a part on the farm. Ford went some considerable way towards implementing this vision, setting up a string of small village factories along the River Rouge. The city, he hoped, would disappear, and with it time, at least as it had been experienced in the West (the young Ford had decided not to start manufacturing watches because, he decided, they were not "a universal necessity".) There would be a new harmony between head and hand, matter and spirit. But the project was frustrated by the demise of the Model T and the onset of the Depression.

The Ford Motor Company during the early days had no "executive

structure" or form. Like Ford's own thinking, it was without set form. Ford himself, with his "persistent intuitive practicality," as Nevins and Hill call it, was rarely if ever in his office. He was wandering about the plant investigating, suggesting, advising, discovering and often initiating apparently impossible schemes—which were often successfully carried out. "I refuse to recognize that there are impossibilities. I cannot discover that any one knows enough about anything on this earth definitely to say what is and what is not impossible."²¹

There were no positions or titles in the Company. Ford encouraged each man to go in the direction he chose, and pursue what he chose as far as possible. His great production expert Charles Sorenson recalled that "a set policy was impossible." Ford might say to one of his most inexperienced men, a man on the shop floor, "Go and build a factory in California." The man would say nervously, "But I've never built a factory before." "Good," Ford would reply, "That way you won't know what you can't do."

"None of our men are experts. We have most unfortunately found it necessary to get rid of a man as soon as he thinks himself an expert—because no one ever considers himself an expert if he knows his job. A man who knows his job sees so much more to be done than he has done that he is always pressing forward and never gives up an instant of thought to how good and how efficient he is. Thinking always ahead, thinking always of trying to do more, brings a state of mind in which nothing is impossible. The moment one gets in an expert state of mind a great number of things become impossible."²²

Ford had a hatred of the fixed form, of fixed ways of doing things. He completely distrusted books, business statistics, and records of any kind. Did they make more motor cars? If not, they were useless. "The Statistics Department was abolished because never yet had statistics produced an automobile." "Too many figures," said Ford, "make your head swell up like a drum."

"We go forward," he used to say, "without the facts." And "the only kind of facts worth having are the facts we find as we move forward." His associate Cameron, in his *Reminiscences*, said of the books co-authored by Ford and Samuel Crowther, "He never let his thinking crystallize into fixed form. His associates thought the Crowther books misleading in this respect; the ideas were Ford's all right, but they were frozen into a pattern."²³

It is curious that Ford's rejection of facts and of history have never been connected with his belief in reincarnation. His comments on

history are well known. "History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's dam is the history we make today."²⁴ "Records of old wars mean nothing to me." "What difference does it make how many times the ancient Greeks flew kites?" "It is meaningless to talk of a future life. It is always the present life."

At the moment when he grasped reincarnation, Ford saw, or seemed to see, that his culture and traditions, everything which came to meet him in life, above all his heredity and personal lineage, all these were—himself. It was not only history itself that was bunk (it is always the present) but history *just as* history, the written history of historians, history which did not live on into the present. "I don't try to recollect anything I want to forget. I only try to touch the high spots."

The newspapers jeered at these ideas. They did not jeer at Emerson, whose luxurious language was more acceptable. In "Quotation and Originality" he writes,

"The profound apprehension of the Present is Genius, which makes the past forgotten. Genius believes its faintest presentiment against the testimony of all history: for it knows that facts are not ultimates, but that a state of mind is the ancestor of everything. And what is Originality? It is being, being ones self, and reporting accurately what we see and are."

By 1905 the Model F priced at \$1000.00 was selling well. The following year, Ford acquired a majority of the company stock, victorious over those who favoured, as most auto makers did at the time, a luxury car. (How could one make money if one didn't charge a lot?) Ford was still completely relaxed about his affairs. Attending a motor race in Florida, in his usual childlike way he idly picked a piece of metal out of one of the wrecked cars, and put it in his pocket. He had noticed that it was very light. Back in Detroit it was discovered that the tiny engine part which he had picked up was made of vanadium steel, an extraordinary light material. Soon afterwards, all the Ford cars were being made out of vanadium. What Ford had discovered and incorporated into the design of the Model T was not only a metal. It was also an idea. As Ford saw it, *there is no relation between weight and strength*. The Model T was enormously light, versatile and strong; it could grind corn, pump water—and it was the cheapest car in history. And Ford's idea expressed a new 20th century attitude not only to automobile design, but also to music, science, philosophy, history—and business.

Behind Ford's disagreement with other Ford Motor Company stockholders over design and policy there lay a deeper difference of views. Ford really was very unusual in acting upon his belief that "the only foundation of real business is service." His fellow businessmen took him for a gambler, but he believed that he had discovered the only secure principle of business. "It has been thought that business exists for profit. That is wrong. Business exists for service." Many would easily assent to such principles, but would not actively believe or understand them. Ford thought that his principles were not altruistic. They were just good business. And he proved it. A man who followed them would have only one kind of trouble with his profits—they would be embarrassingly large. These great ideas radiated out from Detroit with the Model T.

The stock market, thought Ford, was an irrelevant side show. What really mattered was the job, the product.

"The principal part of a chisel is the cutting edge. It makes no difference how finely made a chisel is or what splendid steel it is made of or how well it is forged. If it has no cutting edge it is not a chisel. . . . The cutting edge of merchandising is the point where the product touches the consumer."²⁵

Ford felt weighed down by prevailing methods of business. He despised advertising, and he had no time for market research or for the so-called business office. He loathed financiers, shareholders and bankers ("parasites") because he wanted to put as much as he could back into the business. Financing, he thought, was a secondary affair. It had to do with book-keeping, or else with profiteering. It was unchecked profiteering which caused the First War. Financing was an unreality, a reflection of the real sources of wealth, which were: making things, growing things, moving things. The relation of money to these activities was the relation of Sun to Moon. "The money comes out of the shop, not the bank." Money, thought Ford, was simple. "It is part of our transportation system." Many observers noted that he dealt with it just as another commodity, another element in production, like coal or steel.

The Bolsheviks, thought Ford, would fail. They were not thinking in essentials. "It does not matter whether industry is privately managed or socially controlled; it does not matter whether you call the workers' share "wages" or "dividends" . . . Those are mere matters of detail. The incapacity of the Bolshevik leaders is indicated by the fuss they made over such details . . . The economic fundamental is labour."²⁶

But Ford meant *actual* labour, not political activity or talk about labour. The only labour question is, how to do it better?

When Ford was in apparent financial difficulty after the First War, several banks eagerly approached him, hoping to lend him money; he was easily the greatest profit maker of all time. Ford declined. "You will note," he remarked sarcastically, "that the financiers proposed to cure by lending money, and not by bettering methods. They did not suggest putting in an engineer; they wanted to put in a treasurer."²⁷ And the Bolsheviks wanted to put in a politician.

Business is there to do a job, to provide a service. It has only one purpose.

"A business is a collection of people who are brought together to do work together and not to write letters to one another. It is not necessary to have meetings to establish good feelings between individuals or departments. It is not necessary for people to love one another in order to work together."²⁸

Politics, like so-called business cycles, didn't matter. They didn't really exist.

"The welfare of the country is squarely up to us as individuals. That is where it should be and that is where it is safest. Governments can promise something for nothing, but they cannot deliver. They can juggle the currencies as they did in Europe with a patter of solemn nonsense. But it is work, and work alone that can continue to produce the goods—and that, down in his heart, is what every man knows."²⁹

By 1909 the Model T was selling well (18,664), and the pressure to produce more was strong. Under the conditions prevailing in the factory it was, as Sorenson later pointed out, inevitable that mass production and the assembly line should develop. The exact role played by Ford in these developments is unclear. But he had created the conditions. He had assembled the most creative and daring group of industrialists in the country, and he ran the factories in such a way that good ideas, no matter whose they were, were swiftly and energetically followed up.

Mass production, Ford wrote in the famous *Encycopaedia Britannica* article which appears above his name, is not to be confused with quantity production, which is "large scale production by the use of uniform interchangeable parts." Quantity production is only one of the elements of mass production, which is the focussing upon a manufacturing operation of seven different principles: power, accuracy, economy, continuity, system, speed and repetition.

There is today profound criticism of the methods which Ford

introduced, and of the two sided benefits and values which flow from them. Of mass production, however, we only need to say (and E. F. Schumacher agreed) that it is surely a great idea. If it has drawbacks or disadvantages, the answer is simply to change it or get rid of it. But for this, ideas are required. If we have no ideas, we are not in a position to offer intelligent criticism or propose effective changes. There is nothing to fear here.

The good ideas which made the Model T suggested mass production, although they did not positively require it. Ford's hope was that the design could be perfected, and that no changes in the car would be required. There were to be no different models, and the Ford Motor Company, until 1927, produced only one standardized version of the car. Ford took very seriously his own idea that a car is only a means of transportation (the "cutting edge"); and naturally the price of the Model T went down.

Throughout his early career, Ford had been working under an enormous pressure, which however he characteristically ignored. Already in 1879 a New York state patent attorney called George B. Selden had taken out a combination patent on the use of the petrol engine in automobiles. By the turn of the century, an organization called the Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers (A.L.A.M.) had come to hold the patent, and was demanding royalties on every car produced. All of the big car producers, with the single exception of Ford, capitulated. We know of Ford's contempt for the patent system (an invention of the parasites) and we may surmise his reluctance to allow the universal car to come under the control of the monopolists and producers of luxury vehicles for the rich ("monopolies are bad for business.")

The A.L.A.M. sued Ford, and took out newspaper advertisements indicating the extent to which a purchaser of a Ford car would be liable. Ford was not frightened. He took space in the newspapers to offer a bond to any purchaser who wanted it, backed by the entire assets of the Ford Motor Company. On September 15, 1909, Ford lost the case and his company and thousands of employees were in jeopardy. But, as Sorensen saw it, "Fords' ability to sense signs of the times and to counteract forces that showed danger signals were almost uncanny . . . Nothing appeared to frighten him." And why should it? Ford, sensing the signs of the times, knew that he was going to win, and in an Appeal Court on January 9, 1911, he did. He became a

national hero, the champion of individual freedom, the giant killer, symbol of the common man and a revolt against the monopolies. (But by the 1920's Ford had come to manufacture 60% of the nation's automobiles, not however by monopolistic practices, but by building good cars.) Ford has remained calm because he believed that for human progress to go on, the job is the main thing. If he attended to it (and he did) nothing could harm him.

"The two great hindrances to success are fear and pride. It is easy to tell a man to get rid of his fears, and another thing to tell him how. A careful analysis of his fears and a study of their causes will many times reveal a solution and show him how really futile they are."²⁹

"Fear is the offspring of a reliance placed on something outside oneself. That is just another way of saying that fear is the portion of the man who acknowledges his career to be in the keeping of earthly circumstances. Fear is the result of the body assuming ascendancy over the soul."³⁰

By 1914, Ford was a world figure. His methods and achievements had made him the symbol of what was best (or depending on the point of view worst) in the American way. So when in 1914 Ford announced that the average wage, at that time nationally around \$2.50 a day, would be immediately doubled at Ford, the impact was enormous. He was a communist, he had gone mad, he would wreck the economy, screamed the editorial writers. But he had seen further. If you pay higher wages people in general will be better off and work harder and you will produce more cars. And if you lower the cost of the product (the Model T in 1915 sold for an incredible \$390.00, at just under twenty cents a pound) people will be more inclined to buy it. By 1916 Ford had doubled his sales yet again, to 472,350 for the year, and Lenin had given it as his opinion that as long as Henry Ford was alive, communism would never come to America. The economic heresy was sound. How had he done it?

"It happened one day in the Detroit Club that three members of the famous Ford alumni, men who had worked with him through stress and frenzy, sat for several hours exchanging recollections of him. One was William S. Knudsen, who had been his production manager before Sorensen, and who was, next to Sorensen, perhaps the best production man in the world. They had no reason to love him. All three of them had been thought indispensable; all three had gone down the same spillway, pushed from behind. Yet they bore him no animosity. At last one of them said slowly, "Bill, how d-i-d h-e d-o-i-t?" They all knew what it meant. A pronoun for something that has no name, no shape, no reason to be, and nevertheless acts. It was the kind of thing Ford did from which afterwards you deduce the existence of an nth faculty, a mysterious gadget that worked

without ticking, and produced the unexpected answer. Knudsen said: "Even in little things. Say we are going to buy a certain part for the automobile instead of making it ourselves, maybe the distributor head, an assembled part made up of many pieces. The samples come in. The production men, the engineers and the technicians spend days going over them, taking them apart, testing one against another, making notes and tying labels to them. Then they are all spread out on a table, maybe thirty of them, ready for Ford. He comes in, looks at them for two or three minutes with his squinted eyes, says, "That one," and walks out. It's that one, sure enough. But how does he do it?"³¹

Stating the question, as Ford would say, gives the answer.

"How do we think? What makes us think? Where do our thoughts come from? These are all interesting questions to me, questions that I sometimes ponder. As with a properly tuned antenna, thoughts seem to come to one attuned to receive them. That seems to be the way we get ideas, but it takes a conscious effort on our part to be ready to receive them. Call this universal source of ideas anything you wish, the fact remains that the thoughts are all around us, ready for acceptance. They come from outside of us, from a source that we may not know, but they are nevertheless available when we put ourselves into the right mental condition to receive them.

But the job of thinking is a real one—probably the hardest work there is to do. Yet I believe that all the world's secrets are open to thinkers, and that whenever a problem comes to us it can always be solved—otherwise it would not present itself. I believe that we have always lived, moved and had our being in this ocean of thought, and that we shall always continue to live in it, even though our form and the form of the universe and things in it may change as we do."³²

This was by no means an isolated utterance. Significantly, Ford wanted to be remembered not as a great mechanic or industrialist, but as an original *thinker*.³³ He saw in thinking, which he also called "reading the signs of the times" or "reading what is not yet written," the source of all human progress. Here lies a part of the reason Ford so definitely opposed the First War so early, in particular any form of American "preparedness" or participation. "War," he pointed out with the innocence of the first seeing, "is murder." (He was echoing a section in his school book, the McGuffey reader, called "Calling Things by Their Right Names.") Every soldier was to have embroidered across the front of his uniform the single word "Murderer." Flags, nations and the like, Ford was heard to say, are just plain silly—but also dangerous, because they obstruct "universal" thinking and brotherhood. Behind his car there lay by contrast a cosmopolitan thought, one of the most powerful thoughts of the century. His belief was that a thought is not worth anything unless it can equally be thought by all men.

"The motor car has done for the United States what the aeroplane and wireless may do for the world. A wider circulation of right ideas always breaks down prejudices and helps to secure universal understanding."³⁴

Ford saw little difference between an international problem and a

local one. The difference was that people generally thought in local terms instead of universal conceptions. But when in 1915 he organized the famous Peace Ship expedition, which sailed to Europe with the aim of ending the war by Christmas, he was crucified in the American press. The newspapers found his naive pacifism inexplicable. "Ho for the food ship flivver, propelled by heated air!" When the United States did enter the war, Ford abruptly changed his mind and swung round behind President Wilson, whom he had earlier characterized as "a small man." The ridicule to which Ford was exposed as a result of the Peace Ship episode ("the undying shame of American journalism") probably helped to reinforce his gradually developing sense of isolation and his increasing autocracy, which led to terrible caricatures of his own ideas toward the end of his life.

He was further shaken by an editorial which appeared in the Chicago Tribune of June 23, 1916, headed "Ford Is An Anarchist." The essential passage was,

"If Ford allows this rule of his shop to stand, he will reveal himself not merely as an ignorant idealist, but as an anarchist enemy in a nation which protects him in his wealth."

The day before an editorial had appeared called "Flivver Politics," which had Ford saying that those of his employees who had volunteered to fight against the Villa raids along the Texas border would not find their jobs waiting when they returned home. The *Tribune* attributed to Ford, falsely as it turned out, the statement that eighty-nine employees who had joined the National Guard would lose their jobs.

Colonel McCormick of the *Tribune* refused to apologise or retract the comment, and Ford sued the paper for one million dollars. The trial began on May 21, 1919. The strategy of the defendants was to call Ford to the witness box and prove that what they had printed was true. Ford was to be exposed as the ignorant idealist and dangerous anarchist that he really was. He seemed to admit at one point that he was an anarchist, but as one Ford witness pointed out, interrupting a cross-examination in which Ford's views were damagingly compared to those of self-confessed anarchists, "You would have less trouble showing that Mr. Ford and George Washington were alike." Ford admitted that he was an idealist, if that meant one who wanted to help others. He was irritated by the questions designed to show his ignorance. "When was the American Revolution?" "1812, I guess."

Or "Are you ignorant of the fundamental principles of government?" "I don't understand it, Mr. Stevenson." But brilliantly, "What were the United States originally?" "Land, I guess." In response to one particularly puzzling question, Ford snapped, "I could find a man in five minutes who could tell me about it." Ford finally won the case, but was awarded only six cents in damages. The general opinion of the newspapers seemed to be that

"Mr. Ford has been submitted to a severe examination of his intellectual qualities. He has not received a pass degree."³⁵

The average American thought otherwise. (Ford was the 2:1 favourite for the American Presidency in 1923-24.) So much the worse, he reckoned, for "intellectual qualities" and "pass degrees." What was the point of knowing something useless? He agreed with Ford, who seemed to have "passed" his life pretty well, that "great piles of facts lying around in your head" were not knowledge. Knowledge to no purpose is not knowledge. But there was something more. Ford thought that ignorance was positively a virtue, because ignorance, although it might be learned, was the condition in which you were receptive to the influence of objective ideas. Great piles of fact and theory would block the entry of these ideas. Ford's ignorant idealism was in fact objective idealism. Ideas, he thought, like atmospheric pressure, are around us, unnoticed, all the time.

"You don't have to think about it too much. You only have to know what you want. Just suspend in your mind the thought of what it is you want. If you do that, then you can forget it. You can go about your business thinking and talking other things, and suddenly the idea you want will come through. It was there all the time."³⁶

If the idea didn't come through, that might be a sign that what you wanted was not yet right. The same idea obviously dominated Ford's business ideas. He wrote in one of his notebooks, "If you truly ask to be (Guided) you will be led in every move you make."

For example,

"My idea was then and still is that if a man did his work well, the price he would get for that work, the profits and all financial matters, would care for themselves, and that a business ought to start small and build itself up out of its earnings. If there are no earnings, then that is a signal to the owner that he is wasting his time and does not belong in that business."³⁷

By 1927 Ford had produced well over fifteen million of his fabulous Model Ts. But now the public wanted something a little smarter and

less practical, a little more expensive. For many, the Model T had been their first car, the only one they could afford, but now, educated by Ford, they aspired to higher things. The Model T was suddenly finished—it didn't sell so well partly because it lasted so long—and the Ford factories, geared to producing only Model Ts to eternity, closed down for over a year. The depression, strikes, unionization and severe competition were coming. Ford was already sixty-three years old. His anti-Semitism had done him enormous damage, his contempt for the intellect had made him a laughing stock. Some of his workers would be shot dead in the bitter union disputes which were to come. Pay at Ford would lag slightly behind some other automobile manufacturers, although it remained true that Ford was responsible for the fact that the industry as a whole was a high wage one. His early delicate spiritual ideas had coalesced into strange forms; the universal ocean of thought became the "World Brain." The search for the true Eternal, the overcoming of time, became the ruthless exploitation of time. The great ideal of service was transformed into the more concrete aim of maximum production. Ford surrounded himself with increasingly unreliable people, although Sorenson stayed with him until nearly the end. He found fewer supporters, and the Ford Service Department developed extensive contacts in the underworld, providing a new kind of service in the factories, whose ostensible purpose was to pre-empt kidnap attempts against the Ford grandchildren. Ford believed himself to be one of the principal targets of a great conspiracy—and in this he was not altogether wrong. The unions carefully left him alone until they had conquered the other automobile companies. His bitter opposition to the closed shop was well known. The only one who could persuade him to give in was his gentle wife Clara. She simply threatened to leave him.

"Throughout all of his career the conservative grimsires of the American free enterprise system regarded him with alarm; he was a dangerous maverick, almost a revolutionary, at least a menace, an anti-capitalist capitalist—certainly the last man you could trust to defend the premises with his life. And yet, when the New Deal came, he was the one who had the will and courage to stand against it, and he stood alone."³⁸

He had started as a man who was "capable of great incisiveness and firmness, but was usually pleasant in manner and likely to issue orders in the form of suggestions."³⁹ He had not lost these qualities, but he had also become a rigid and intractable autocrat, in sole

command of the vast company, a prisoner in his own ideas, locked behind a wall of advisers.

He had effective control of the great enterprise from 1906 until 1945, just two years before his death on April 7, 1947.

"That night," reports Sorenson, "an emergency power plant short-circuited and all electric light went out in the house. A short time later, the man who had done so much to mechanize the world's work died as he had entered the world eighty-four years earlier, by the light of an oil lamp and a few candles."

Speaking on January 18, 1924, ⁴¹ Rudolf Steiner gave the following description of Ford's book *My Life and Work*, which had first appeared two years earlier, and was a best seller in Germany:

"We are living in a time when Anthroposophy would become a burning question for countless human beings on the Earth—if only the Anthroposophical Society succeeded in working in such a way that the real needs of men could 'catch fire' by what is presented to them as Anthroposophy.

The point is this . . . let me put a concrete instance before you. A wonderful 'book of life', if I may so describe it, has once again been published. It is a kind of autobiography—a description of his own life—by Henry Ford. What this 'Automobile King' places before the world as a description of his own life is highly characteristic. There is something delightful and truly great about it and what he says about the spiritual and material longings of all his life, makes this impression on me: Imagine someone standing before a door. He is full of urgent needs—not exactly spiritual needs, in this instance. But what he desires is not only urgent, but justified; his voice however is quite inadequate to express his legitimate and urgent desires. He would fain cry out aloud to all the world what he desires, but his voice does not seem loud enough. So he knocks at the door, knocks urgently—invents all manner of devices to thunder out what he desires.

When I read Ford's book, I feel almost as though I myself were the door. Nevertheless, it is delightful. You feel yourself beaten black and blue in your soul, but you cherish these bruises, for the book is indescribably intelligent. And there behind that door is Anthroposophy. Hitherto, however, it has been so constituted in a Society as to make it quite impossible for that which stands before the door to come near to that which is behind it. To this end we need something quite different.

Ford, after all, is a representative man. What he is on a grander scale—truly on the grandest possible scale—is after all only representative of many, many people of our time— . . .

"There is a knocking and hammering at the door. Behind the door is Anthroposophy, but—however loud the knocking—the door has not been opened. Now at last, however, we may find the possibility for Anthroposophy herself to open the door from within. To this end, however, it *must* be made possible for anthroposophical matters to come before the world in such a way that men who grow out of the civilization of our time with the type of mind possessed by Henry Ford, the Automobile King, will say to themselves: 'Here I have written that modern science itself is, after all, something that points to the past. Man cannot only live in the past. There must also be something that guarantees life for the future. We cannot merely absorb so much information; we must also have something that is alive. All this I have written'—(you may read this in the highly interesting book by Ford, especially in the penultimate chapter)—all this I have written, and yet . . . something is lacking."

And that is just where Anthroposophy belongs!"

NOTES.

¹ Rudolf Steiner, speaking on 18 January 1924, *The Constitution of the School of Spiritual Science*, London (1964), p.14. Rudolf Steiner's description is not easy to reconcile with the vicious profiteer or the emotional and uneducated child of the standard mythologies. One aim of the present work is to show what Steiner might have seen and meant.

² See David Nye, "Henry Ford and Time," Doctoral Dissertation in Modern History, University of Minnesota (1974), pp. 262-263. Nye describes how Ford's views were muffled and distorted by his own (reasonably) well-meaning associates. "His ideas were so much at odds with those of his audience that they quite simply were unable to follow him." Some misleading accounts of Ford: Keith Sward, *The Legend of Henry Ford*, Toronto (1948), "written with the aid of labour union files, the book is sadly biased against (Ford)" (Nye, *op cit.*, x), J. K. Galbraith, "Was Ford A Fraud?" in *The Liberal Hour*, London (1963), is short, speculative and factually inaccurate. It is also obviously biased. Equally unsatisfactory and one-sided are David L. Lewis, *The Public Image of Henry Ford*, Detroit (1976), and Gordon W. Davidson, "Henry Ford: the Formation and Course of a Public Figure," (1966).

David Nye's important work will, I understand, shortly be published in America under the title *Henry Ford, Ignorant Idealist*. It is the most imaginative and up-to-date work on Ford. Nye demonstrates that the utterances and activities for which Ford may justly be criticized were only accidentally related to their ostensible objects. Nye is the first analytical writer to take Ford's spiritual ideas seriously. He is able to show that Ford's life forms a surprisingly systematic whole, of which business and manufacturing were only one outlet. Of the scores of books written about Ford since the 1920's, Nye's is the only one which discusses Ford's ideas systematically, and is astonishingly the only one which does more than mention reincarnation.

Nye treats this conception as "a logical extension of previous Western cultural development, (which) is taken to be symptomatic of an attitude towards time which found expression both in the Ford car and the assembly line." His book proceeds from a succession of public images to Ford's system of ideas, and finally to his psychology. Nye "moves from the outermost shell of cultural values through Ford's ideas toward the structure of his consciousness, finally confronting the medium of consciousness itself, or time, to discover what the consequences of his belief in reincarnation may be for the larger culture." (Nye, *op. cit.*, xii-xiv)

³ Samuel Crowther, "The Only Real Security," Interview with Henry Ford, New York (1936), p. 12.

⁴ Henry Ford, *My Philosophy of Industry*, (1929), p. 12

⁵ Allan Nevins and Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford: Decline and Rebirth: 1933-1962*, New York (1962), pp. 270-271.

⁶ Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

⁷ The Henry Ford Archives in Dearborn, Michigan, contain Ford's copy of Emerson's *Essays*, Accession One, Box 14. This is obviously not Ford's original copy, although many of the essays are marked. For a beautiful account of Emerson's concept of the self, and some of the dangers latent in such selves which became actual in Ford's life, see James McIntosh, "Emerson's Unmoored Self," *The Yale Review*, Winter (1976), pp. 232-240.

⁸ Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

⁹ London *Express*, November 4, (1928).

¹⁰ Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 240

¹¹ Of a slightly different subject Rudolf Steiner says, "These things do not by any means come to one if one approaches them with the deliberate intention to investigate. In a certain way researches on karma must themselves result from karma." Rudolf Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, Vol. IV, London (1957), p.26.

¹² Much later Ford reported that before every important business venture he had a dream. But atypically he would say no more about it.

¹³ Garet Garrett, *The Wild Wheel*, London (1952), p. 79.

¹⁴ Detroit *Times*, August 6, (1928).

- ¹⁵ S.J. Woolf, quoting Ford, *New York Times Magazine*, July 24, (1938).
¹⁶ Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 304.
¹⁷ Ralph Waldo Trine with Henry Ford, *The Power That Wins*, Indianapolis (1929), p. 76.
¹⁸ Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 291.
¹⁹ Ford, *My Philosophy of Industry*, pp. 16-17.
²⁰ Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 293.
²¹ Henry Ford, *My Life and Work*, London (1923), pp. 86-87.
²² *Ibid.*, p. 86.
²³ Allan Nevins with Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford. The Times, The Man, The Company*, New York (1954), p. 575.
²⁴ *New York Times*, May 20, (1920).
²⁵ Ford, *My Life and Work*, pp. 18-19.
²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 176.
²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
²⁹ Ford, *My Philosophy of Industry*, p. 71.
³⁰ Ford, *My Life and Work*, pp. 219-220.
³¹ Garrett, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.
³² Ford, *My Philosophy of Industry*, pp. 46-47.
³³ S. Marquis, *Henry Ford: An Interpretation*, Boston (1952), p. 8.
³⁴ Ford, *My Philosophy of Industry*, pp. 25-26.
³⁵ From a *New York Times* editorial, quoted in Sward, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
³⁶ Garrett, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
³⁷ Ford, *My Life and Work*, pp. 38-39.
³⁸ Garrett, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
³⁹ Allan Nevins and Frank Ernest Hill, *Ford: Expansion and Challenge: 1915 - 1933*, New York (1957), p. 11.
⁴⁰ Charles E. Sorenson, *My Forty Years With Ford*, New York (1956), p. 10.
⁴¹ Steiner, *op. cit.*, n.1, pp. 14-17.

MICHAEL'S SONG

Because I set no snare
 But leave them flying free
 All the birds of the air
 Belong to me,

From the blue-tit on the sloe,
 To the eagle on the height,
 Uncaged they come and go
 For my delight

And so the sunward way
 I soar on the eagle's wings
 And in my heart all day
 The blue-tit sings.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM

BRIAN STOCKWELL

IN the past 100 years western parliamentary democracy seems to have reached and passed its zenith. It has failed to solve the underlying social conflict between capitalism and socialism and it is increasingly under strain. Amid the many complex factors at work, it is possible to argue that its origin, the demand for freedom and equality, is also the cause of its decline.

In Britain and the United States a century ago full male suffrage was established in principle, and the movement which was to give the vote to women 40 years later was already active. In western Europe generally universal suffrage was on its way. Much of the rest of the world was to follow suit. Today democracy is seen to have been short-lived outside its home-lands.

Around the world many countries, some of them newly independent after the defeat or withdrawal of western colonial powers, adopted parliamentary democracy, only to find it did not work for them. Some replaced it by military rule, hoping that this would be only temporary. Some established political dictatorships of right or left. There are important exceptions, such as India, Japan and Kenya. But even in western Europe parliamentary democracy is coming under threat. In Spain and Portugal it has been newly restored, but in several countries the growth of strong Communist parties has posed a threat, although some of these have recently modified their anti-democratic stance. Throughout the west symptoms of decay appear, in the militant minorities which resort to violence, and in the atomisation of family and community life.

These are generalisations. But if one compares this picture with the enormous progress of the past century in so many areas, especially in the sciences, the impression of impending political crisis is overwhelming. Why has an era of such apparent progress and promise led to this situation? Many partial answers have been given, most dealing with symptoms rather than causes; but one possible answer, an answer which springs from a fundamental characteristic of this century has been almost entirely neglected. The sort of approach I

would like to discuss here arises from a deeper appreciation of the nature and meaning of freedom.

Since the 18th century freedom has in the West increasingly become one of man's strongest desires, and has played a foremost part in wars and revolutions. In the social life it has gradually found expression as a demand for individual rights protected by the political apparatus of the State. But it has been working too as a ferment in men's minds, in their spiritual aspirations. The struggle for freedom has turned inwards as well as outwards. In religion it broke down the universal authority of the Church and in science it led to an age of discovery in the world of nature. In modern western civilisation it has been at its best in a steady striving after truth through meticulous observation and thought. There is a sharp distinction between the inward freedom of the human spirit and the outward freedom, the political liberty, that in practice becomes a balance between rights and obligations.

One aspect of a paradox which finds expression in many different ways, is that while we want political freedom and feel it to be part of our human goal, it can at the same time threaten the community basis which is also part of our humanity. It may be that examination of the inner struggle can throw light on the problems facing democracy.

The evolution of political freedom followed closely the development of individual thinking. Democracy arose in comparatively modern times alongside the growing self-consciousness of the ordinary man. First one social class then another asserted its claims. Certainly in Britain it grew up not through any conscious intention but slowly, over generations. That the turmoil of the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries finally led to modern democracy is one of the surprises of history, evidence that the spirit of man is greater than the behaviour and limited understanding of individuals would lead us to believe.

Democracy gives only the possibility of freedom not freedom itself. It is a mechanism which allows us to take decisions by majority rule while debate about what is the right decision still goes on. Law, even in a democracy, is backed by force; the force itself may appear to be based on the will of the majority; but really it is founded on something far wider, the best term for which is common consent. It is the common consent of the community that laws made by the shifting majorities of the democratic mechanism shall be enforced, on condition that any minority is free by peaceful means to convert the

majority. Thus common consent must not be confused with majority decision. Democracy is a political method, not an end in itself; it provides the ground rules for seeking solutions to political and economic problems. Inevitably it will be discredited if the experiments going on beneath its protective covering do not show results.

Common consent allows the whole of a community to live together in cooperation even when they disagree on important matters. It tolerates wide differences of individual opinion and behavior. In short, it allows the maximum of freedom in society possible without loss of cohesion. We are in danger of losing democracy, without noticing the loss, once we begin to take the kind of majority decision which breaks down the area of common consent.

Northern Ireland is a terrifying example of what can happen to democracy when common consent either breaks down or was never genuinely established. It is arguable that what led to the present situation there was the failure long ago to understand the nature of common consent. If majority rule means in effect the permanent domination by one identifiable group of another, the basis of common consent becomes too fragile to take the slightest strain. Now there are groups rejecting membership of the democratic community who are strong enough to wage violent war upon it.

The claim of many dictatorships, whether fascist or communist, to be democratic because they have been elected or supported by majorities (leaving aside the question whether such elections were freely contested) demonstrates the difference between majority rule and common consent. The most notorious and fateful illustration of this difference was the victory of the Nazis in Germany on a minority vote in 1933, followed by a large majority vote in their favour in the plebiscite of 1934. This was acclaimed as a democratic decision and used to justify the most brutal destruction of individual liberty.

In this light, debates about whether a democracy should tolerate totalitarian parties can be a sign that democracy is already in decline. The area of common consent has dwindled when totalitarian parties gain significant numbers of adherents. It means that a group is publicly contracting out of the underlying agreement. It is argued that to deny anti-democrats the right to full political activity would in itself be undemocratic. We should consider whether it is the attack on common consent, which usually comes before attack on majority rule, that violates democracy. It is not only the most crass forms of

opposition to democracy that threaten to undermine it. The general failure to protect, or even to recognise, common consent can lead to legislation which proves unenforceable, and hence to the weakening of respect for the rule of law. This may happen either when majority rule is abused to impose decisions unacceptable to a large majority; or because common consent has already been so far eroded that peaceful compromises are no longer generally acceptable.

The latter situation has certainly not been reached in the major western democracies, but Britain came dangerously near to the former after the Industrial Relations Act of 1971. A Government elected with wide support in principle for certain controls over trade unions, formulated the Act in such a way that it was unable in practice to enforce some of its provisions. These included resort to a special Industrial Court in such matters as the closed shop, union membership, and a wide range of precisely defined "unfair industrial practices". Whatever the wisdom or unwisdom of the intentions, the legislation proved too great a strain on common consent. The Act was repealed by the succeeding Government and many of its ideas have since been abandoned by all the major political parties.

The need for this tacit underlying agreement is one of the reasons, perhaps the chief reason, that democratic government is so difficult. Ends have to be achieved with the most scrupulous care for the means. Persuasion has to precede legislation. National moods and attitudes, particularly in human relations, have to be watched and nurtured.

The inward and the outward struggle for freedom have both been intensified by the ego-development characteristic of our time. Democracy grew as the way of dealing with the outward struggle. The prime reason it has not yet succeeded is that the struggle has continued unabated in economic life. On the one hand, individuals want to keep the profits they make if they own capital and turn it into means of production. On the other hand, those without control of capital find their human dignity affronted and their material welfare threatened by the inequalities of the capitalist system; in particular by its treatment of human labour as a commodity in the market-place. Political freedom in fact finds its strongest expression as a demand for equality. Democracy so far has conferred equality before the law for the protection of rights covered by the law. But it has not yet provided the framework of rights within which the economic life can satisfy the

demands of the individual. Industry will have to take such rights for granted, like the natural and technical resources it has available. In the meantime the clash of interests tends constantly to grow more bitter.

The inward struggle adds to the already explosive strain on common consent. Quite apart from the economic crisis, society is being slowly torn apart in ways that are widely recognised in theory but which continue to resist solutions. Crime, drugs, unemployment, violence, family-breakdown, excessive bureaucracy, intolerance and more mundanely the grasping after more material goods than we can at present afford are eating away the social fabric. The wonder is not that society is constantly in crisis but that it has not yet broken down. Its underlying strength is unbelievably great. Sir Harold Macmillan, in a 1976 broadcast which appealed for a government of national unity, remarked that all great countries take a long time dying. But the time left for western civilisation to find solutions is perhaps getting perilously short. A characteristic of human affairs, social and individual, is that when once the undermining influences are at work, their effects accelerate of themselves. If we can make small moves in the right direction these too will develop their own momentum and of themselves build up the hidden forces of cohesion.

How do we change course? How can analysis of the nature and meaning of freedom as it has developed over the past 100 years help us?

Since personal freedom inseparable from egoism leads politically to chaos if it is not limited by respect for the freedom of others, it is reasonable to ask whether decision by voting has been too indiscriminately applied. Its purpose is both to establish a framework of law protecting legitimate rights and imposing corresponding obligations; and to create a space within which agreed social institutions of all kinds can be established. But it has extended its scope beyond this. Parliaments and Governments elected to establish and maintain rights and obligations have found themselves directing the economy, even down to taking decisions about single industries and companies. To some extent they have also become involved in direct administration of spiritual and cultural affairs, such as education, medicine and science. In effect this is to apply decision by voting, not only to the broad framework of rights within which the economic and spiritual life should work, but to matters in which, within that framework, expert knowledge and opinion should be the

main factors. As a result, economic interests have moved into political life, and in turn questions of rights are influenced or determined by economic criteria. The pressure for political freedom has turned full circle and egoism, not only uncurbed but positively demanded if men are to earn their living, is in danger of destroying the democracy it created.

Throughout the century there has been no lack of blue-prints for the ideal society, and no lack of moral exhortation. What seems to be missing is the collective and individual will-power necessary to put good ideas and intentions into effect. This statement leads directly to the problem of the nature of freedom, and to the inward aspect of the struggle referred to above.

Political freedom is in a certain sense negative freedom. It gives an opportunity to develop something; it creates a space we must fill with the quality of life we individually and collectively will. One of President Roosevelt's great statements of allied war aims in 1941 was "the four freedoms"—freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech, freedom of worship. These are vital areas of political economic freedom but they are in restraint of interference rather than themselves creative. This suggests again the need to bring strength to democracy from the inner resources of the individual. Can inner freedom, which at a superficial level is simply the ability to think and believe what we wish, bring anything positive into the space we create by political liberty, and provide the collective will-power we seem to lack? Here, as proposed above, it becomes necessary to examine the nature of inner freedom more deeply.

We must go back to the question of the philosophers: is freedom, in a positive and personal sense, an illusion? We can be free socially to carry out what we will, if we act within our recognised rights in society. But are we free to will what our essential "I" really wants? To answer this, we would need to consider where, in our consciousness, our "I" is to be found, and whether it in fact exists independently of our faculty of will.

Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*, published in 1894, summed up the philosophical discussion of freedom up to that time, and pointed a new way ahead which has not yet been followed and remains a challenge. His initial argument runs that man may be driven to apparently free actions by motives arising from inner compulsions or external moral authority; he believes he can act freely only because

he is unaware of these. By unremitting self-observation in thinking he can bring them into consciousness and once aware of them can sometimes act against them; so that freedom becomes a possibility to be striven for. He can then go further. He can turn his thinking observation upon itself and there find the central point of his consciousness. With constant effort he will recognise that in this central point, he has discovered his "I". Continued exercise of this faculty of pure thinking can bring about an extension of consciousness which is a new potential in this century.

Man had pressed successfully for political liberties and in doing so has let loose a powerful adversary force by the over-indulgence of freedom. This in turn has forced him either to restrain voluntarily his exercise of liberty or to learn from the behaviour of others that he must do so if the civilised community is to survive. If we ask whether there is a parallel experience in his inner development, the history of human thought shows that there is. Inner freedom became possible as thinking came to be experienced as an individual possession, and as ideas became abstractions which did not of themselves compel acceptance. The adversary force in inner development, as with the outer, is raised by over-indulgence, in this case in the abstractions which lead to a loss of inner certainty in face of the physical world.

The answer to both crises, the inner and the outer, is pointed to in Steiner's work. What he points to is not another blue-print but a path of knowledge which the humanity of this century has the inner power to tread if it so chooses. The possibility of a strengthened thinking which then makes itself a fulcrum for an extension of consciousness is a practical challenge which we are free to take up. From that point onwards freedom can lose its illusory aspect.

To take Steiner's argument further in a single article would be impossible. Here it is enough to suggest that the way to inner freedom, positive freedom, lies through an intensive development of our faculty of thought. That this cannot be done without intensive effort of the will also is evident from what has been said. We know too, from everyday experience, that feeling is closely linked with, and can be directly activated by, thinking; and that strong feelings can directly actuate the will. Perhaps it is only from greater inner strength achieved by development of these three soul faculties that we shall find the ideas for social advance and the enthusiasm and will to carry them into practice.

This brings us to the relation between the individual and the community, which is the key-note of democracy, and to the fundamental paradox of freedom. Each of us must find his own way; we struggle in isolation in our thinking; but the world of thoughts we move into is common to all men. So we are condemned to a lonely path—to find a world in which all can join. On the other hand to achieve our individual goals in the external world we must work in cooperation with others. We have two apparently contradictory goals: we seek universal truths along a path of loneliness, and we seek to express our individuality in the world in cooperation with others.

Freedom would lead to chaos but for two facts: we must cooperate in a community if our physical lives are to be possible at all; and the path we follow in our individual thinking leads in the end to a shared world of ideas. In the outward struggle we should be lost if the community broke down. In the outward struggle leads to discoveries that are common to all.

We can only conclude that the ordinary conception of freedom as a release from restraints, as an indulgence in any action we please, is an illusion. Outwardly, it destroys the community and in the long run is incompatible with human life itself. Inwardly, it is not willed by our "I" but imposed by our unconscious desires. But the illusion of freedom was active over the past few centuries in the shaping of our present social order. The evolution of democracy has shown that bad can lead to good. Under the influence of a false idea of freedom men broke up the mediaeval community, fought civil wars, and finally realised that if a community is to exist at all there must be a balance between individual self-assertion and the common good. The growth of overweening egoism led to a common consent to control it by the democratic method.

Within the democratic sheath thus created, in which individual rights are balanced by obligations to others, which we have called negative freedom, arises a space which we ourselves can fill by realising the potential we can discover within us in this present epoch. That is where we make a beginning in taking responsibility for our own evolution, a goal which Sir Julian Huxley and many others, both materialist and Christian, have urged.

The objection can be made that all this will take a long time, and that if the inner battle has to be won before the outer can be fought, the social fabric may dissolve entirely and our present civilization

collapse. This may be so. But there is also another paradoxical process, a helpful one, at work in the world. It may give us the necessary time.

We have become bemused by the multitude of programmes and plans for political and economic salvation. We have become used to and tend not to listen to moral and political exhortations. But our evolution and our environment have already given us qualities which need simply to be recognised for what they are.

Centuries of religious teaching and experience, together with the increasing modern awareness of the harsh realities of human suffering, have developed in most people an instinctive compassion. Growing ego-consciousness and the quest for freedom have brought us forcefully to the realisation that the justice and fair play we crave for ourselves can be best obtained by doing as we would be done by. The division of labour necessary in modern industry enforces mutual dependence and team-work, and in so working an instinctive brotherhood arises among people.

These qualities, emerging comparatively slowly over a very long period, have not only helped to build up our civilization. They have enabled it so far to survive the attacks upon it. Yet the speeding up of every kind of technical and social development that is characteristic of our time is reaching nightmare proportions. We are possibly even now not fully aware of the rocket-like acceleration of the changes affecting our outward lives. The point of greatest danger for our society, the final erosion which could tip the balance between civilization and disintegration, may be close. And yet, our century has brought the antidote as well as the poison.

If we can clarify the confusion between the democratic assertion of rights, the free development of individual talents, and the involvement together of experts in various aspects of the economic process, the good qualities which a harsh world does in fact foster could play their part in the social order. If we were to allow the democratic process to set up a total framework of rights, subject to which individual creativity and economic association could operate unhindered, we would have taken a long step towards repairing and extending common consent. On this firm ground the search for inner freedom, with the new spiritual insight to which it would lead, could make its essential contribution to society.

GOLD, GEMS, RIDDLES AND SPICE

ISABEL WYATT

AN aura of sanctified glamour surrounds Balkis, Queen of Sheba. She is a queen in her own right—queen of a land flowing not only with milk and honey but also with gold, precious stones and so much spice, especially myrrh and incense, that these are thriving exports.

She is called the Queen of the Land of the Midday Sun; it is in this hot, rich land of Arabia, steeped in ancient culture, that the phoenix burns itself in its nest of spice and is born anew.

Queen Balkis is herself an Initiate of the Phoenix Mysteries, the Mysteries of Death and Rebirth; it was from Sheba that these Mysteries spread to Phoenicia, giving that land its name.

Through her emerald dish from Tyre, de Borron's *Li Romanz de l'histoire du Graal* connects her also with the Mysteries of the Grail.

We are told in the Old Testament:

"When the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove him with hard questions.

"And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bore spices and very much gold; and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

"And Solomon told her all her questions. There was not anything hid from the king, that he told her not.

"And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and of precious stones. There came no more such abundance of spices as these which the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon." (*Kings, 1-3, 10*)

Why, at this momentous meeting between these two Initiates, does Queen Balkis bring to King Solomon these four specific offerings—hard questions, spices, gold and precious stones?

In a lecture given at Leipzig on October 13th., 1906, Rudolf Steiner describes how, "when the Sun went forth from the Earth, it left behind

it traces of its own finer substance which condensed in the cooling planet into veins of gold."

Thus gold was born directly of the Sun-forces themselves, and was therefore in ancient times a symbol of Sun-wisdom.

The genesis of the precious stones was even more primeval. "In a time still further back," we read in the same lecture, "when Man had not yet descended beyond an etheric body, precious stones had not yet condensed."

We learn that "the diamond formed itself with the beginning of the human physical body;" that "the emerald came into existence with the solar plexus;" and that "there is an intimate connection" between the chrysolith and human sight, the onyx and hearing, the cornelian and the sense of warmth, jasper and the sense of smell, the topaz and taste, the beryl and thought, the carbuncle and pictorial perception.

We begin to glimpse the cosmic relationships directing the use of precious stones in anthroposophical medicine.

That this esoteric knowledge was still alive at the close of the twelfth century is suggested by the detail and clarity of Albrecht's description of the Grail Temple in his continuation of the Grail story, given to the world in the year 1208. In this he speaks of Titurel, whose five descendants—Amfortas, Trevrezent, Schotsiane, Herzeleide and Reponse de Schoye—we have already met in other Grail scripts. He tells us how fifty angels bring to Titurel, now more than four hundred years old, the news that he has been chosen to build the Grail Temple on Monsalvasch.

It is to be built of aloes on a mountain-top of onyx so cut that it reflects the moon, surrounded by a cypress forest sixty leagues square. Its floor is to be a crystal sea, in which, as if below ice, fish and other sea-creatures may be seen. Its walls are to be of emerald, adorned with trees of gold. Its dome is to be an inverted vault of sapphires. Its windows are to be of beryl.

To every pair of its seventy-two choirs there is to be a bell-house, each bell-house crowned with a crystal cross, and on each cross an eagle of pure gold.

Shining high above all there is to be a great carbuncle whose light will guide the Grail knights home when night has fallen. We are reminded of how, in Conrad Fleck's thirteenth-century minstrel-song, *Flor and Blanchefleur*, Flor takes with him on his knightly adventures a miraculous cup fashioned by Vulcan, the lid of which is a carbuncle

which shines by night. Is spiritual sight perhaps the deeper meaning of "pictorial perception"?

This Grail Temple will take thirty years to build. After its consecration, angels will bear the Grail into "a little red house" prepared for it at the Temple's heart.

We can perhaps see the Queen of sheba's gold and precious stones, then, as preserving memories of early and unfallen stages of Man's evolution. What of her hard questions and her great store of spice?

The term translated as "hard questions" in the Authorised Version of the Bible has also been translated as "riddles"; and indeed the riddle is the most magical and the most archetypal form of the hard question. Its solution involves not only thought but also a conscious experiencing of thought. As long as a thought is obscure, we feel hampered, unfree; the moment it become clear we feel released. Steiner recalls to us a state of thankful joyousness we have all known in childhood when he tells us in *The Inner Realities of Evolution*:

"Sound knowledge is framed in wonder and the bliss of solved riddles."

We find riddles playing a part in the education and evolution of Man in remote eras, as Steiner indicates in *Summer and Winter Festivals in Ancient Times*:

"The Midsummer Festival was a festival of dance, song and poetry. Study and contemplation, all kinds of mental and spiritual activities, were relegated to the winter months, culminating at the time of Christmas.

"During these winter months riddles and enigmas were put before men, questions were asked in a veiled form, and the meaning of certain symbols was sought for.

"The pupils of the Mysteries would perhaps give a symbolic picture or image, and ask those who were to learn something from it to interpret it. Or they might give what we now call a riddle, which had to be solved. Or again, some magic sentence, the contents of which must now be related to Nature, and its meaning thereby discovered.

"Very careful preparations were made for a custom which has assumed many different forms among the peoples, and which survived in the Northern countries in the form of the throwing of 'runic wands' and interpreting the meaning of the forms in which the wands arranged themselves on the ground in falling. In our intellectual age

the last relic of this is the casting of lead on New Year's Eve."

Later, in the Nordic Eddas, we find the solving of riddles figuring in initiations; and so strong was the Anglo-Saxons' love of "riddling" that in Wessex it actually contributed to their conversion to Christianity. For St. Ealdhelm, the seventh-century Saxon prince who became the first Abbot of Malmesbury and the first Bishop of Sherborne, used riddles to attract them to him as he sat on Malmesbury's river-bridge in his gleeman's gown, his small Saxon harp on his knee, songs of his own making on his lips, and the bliss of solved riddles still with them as he preached the new faith to them.

The riddles which have come down to us from the Anglo-Saxon monasteries are lively and ingenious, touched with wonder and delight. Here are three samples:

"Wondrously is this warrior brought forth on Earth from two dumb creatures for the use of man, created gleaming. Women often bind it in its great strength; it serves them greatly if they feed it well. But cruelly it requites him who lets it grow to be proud."

(Fire)

"I am silent; my abode is not. The Lord shaped our course together, I the swifter, he the more laborious. Sometimes I rest, but he must ever needs run on. While I live, I ever dwell in him; if we are parted, death is my destiny."

(The Fish and the River)

"I am greater than the world, brighter than the moon, swifter than the sun. The bosom of this Earth, the floods of the sea, are all in my embraces. I plunge beneath hell and mount above the heavens. I fill the whole world far and wide with myself. Tell me my name."

(Creation)

The Anglo-Saxon riddle is touched with a quickening and clarification of thought, which becomes clearer and more emphatic in the riddles in our traditional English fairy tales and our old ballads. Sometimes in these, if the right answer is not given immediately, freedom or even life itself can be forfeit. Thus, in the old folk-ballad, *The Mysterious Knight*, not only does the maiden's freedom depend on her guessing correctly and instantaneously the first nine questions put to her by this mysterious knight, but her very life depends on her quickened thinking recognising and correctly naming him when answering the tenth—

What is higher than a tree?

(Heaven)

What is deeper than the sea?

(Hell)

What is heavier than lead?

(Sin)

What is better than the bread?

(The Blessing)

What is whiter than the milk?

(Snow)

What is softer than the silk?

(Down)

What is sharper than a thorn?

(Hunger)

What is louder than a horn?

(Shame)

What is greener than the grass?

(Hope)

What is worse than a woman was?

(The Devil)

As soon as she the fiend did name,
Away he flew in a blazing flame."

We can see this quickening of thought recurring in historical cycles, each drawing stronger nourishment from the last. In the Greek culture-epoch of the Intellectual Soul, for example, we find in Greek mythology the labyrinth appearing as a picture of the human brain when, at the passing of the Taurean epoch, Theseus, with the aid of Ariadne's thread of logical thought, slays the Minotaur and wins the Greek new clear-thinking for man.

This Greek picture we find revived in Western Europe in a christianised form when the medieval Schoolman, wrestling to bring to birth our modern metamorphosis of this faculty of clear thinking, paced in meditation married to movement the windings of a labyrinth incised or painted on the stone floor of their church or monastery. Tradition tells us that the labyrinth still faintly visible on the pavement of Chartres Cathedral was devised to be used in this way.

We are told that "the Scholastics applied themselves to the task of translating into clear concepts what had formerly existed in the sublime imagery of the Mysteries." This translation into concepts achieves astonishing clarity in some of the medieval monastic poems, while others, such as the Celtic *The Monk and his Pet Cat*, lay bare the struggle involved in this clarification:

"I and my white Pangur
Have each his special art.
His mind is set on hunting mice;
Mine is upon my special craft.

I love to rest—better than any fame!—
With close study at my little book.
White Pangur does not envy me;
He loves his childish play.

When in our house we two are all alone
—A tale without tedium!—
We have—sport never ending—
Something to exercise our wits.

At times, by feats of derring-do,
A mouse sticks in his net,
While into my net there drops
A difficult problem of hard meaning.

He points his full, shining eye
Against the fence of the wall;
I point my clear though feeble eye
Against the keenness of science.

He rejoices with quick leaps
When in his sharp claw sticks a mouse.
I, too, rejoice when I have grasped
A problem difficult and dearly loved.

Though we are thus at all times,
Neither hinders the other;
Each of us, pleased with his own art,
Amuses himself alone.

He is the master of the work
Which every day he does:
While I am at my own work
To bring difficulty to clearness."

(Translated from Irish by Kuno Meyer)

Riddles and spice—alongside the clarification of thought by the one we can perceive the quickening of the senses by the other.

When the youthful Alexander was marching against King Darius of Persia, the latter sent him a glove filled with oil-seeds—the smallest of all seeds, so minute that in one measure there were too many to be counted. With the glove came this scornful message:

"Behold, I send you oil-seeds, too many to be counted. Yet these are less in number than the army I lead against you."

Pouring some of the seeds into his palm, Alexander ate them. Then to Anepo, the king's envoy, he gave this message to take back to him:

"You liken your army to oil-seed. As I have devoured the one, so will I the other."

Then into a small leather pouch he poured a pinch of mustard-seed, and gave it to anepo to deliver to Darius with this message:

"The seeds I send you are few but very strong. As are these seeds, so are my men."

When Anepo returned to Darius with the pouch and the message and the news that Alexander had eaten of his oil-seeds, the king said:

"Then I will eat of *his* seeds, also."

But when he put a few of the mustard-seeds into his mouth, he found them so pungent that he could not swallow them, and the tears ran down his cheeks.

And his heart failed him, for now he knew that Alexander would defeat him.

There was a prophetic accuracy in his misgiving, for Greece was already experiencing an awakening consciousness, while Persia was still dreaming. Even the king's shedding of tears as he tasted the spice was as true a picture esoterically as it was gastronomically. For tears accompany and denote a deeper drawing into the physical body, which in its turn produces a sharpened consciousness—a condition which Darius, and Persia with him, could briefly reach but not maintain.

We can see, when musing on the past, how a spreading of a new alertness, necessary for dealing with the material world in the epoch then to come, was linked with a spreading of the use of spices. In Ancient Egypt their use had been confined to Initiates. In Solomon's time, as we have seen, they were offered as royal gifts; and as such they were still being exchanged by the great princes of Charlemagne's time.

But even when their use began to spread, they were still precious, and many were still rare. It took the stigmas of 75,000 crocuses to make one pound of saffron; and so hard to come by was cinnamon that it was believed to be found only in the nest of the phoenix, who was said to burn it in his death-pyre, set alight by the first rays of the rising sun.

In the old folk-ballad version of *King Lear*, Cordelia's reply to her father's demand as to how much she loved him was: "I love you as meat loves salt." Salt was originally included among the spices, along with borax, sugar, pepper, rhubarb, wood of aloes, and powdered elephant-tusks.

By the thirteenth century not only were the stewards of royal households and great castles keeping awesome Spice Accounts, but so were the monasteries. Pepper even took its place alongside gold as currency, so that the term "peppercorn rent", originally meant something quite different from the mere token-rent it means today. Such inherited nursery tongue-twisters as "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppercorns; a peck of pickled peppercorns Peter Piper

picked" take on a new significance in this context of a wider awakening of consciousness, for in carrying a speech-picture of their idea-content, tongue-twisters themselves act as spices in that they, too, sharpen wits.

When we review the dangers and difficulties involved in those days in bringing spices from the Orient to Western Europe—the slow accumulation of cargo from the spice-countries, Arabia, India, China, the Malabar Coast; the precarious piloting through the treacherous Red Sea; the unloading of the cargo and its re-loading on camels for its land-journey to the Nile; its further re-loading on rafts, to be floated down the river to Alexandria; its transference there to Venetian galleys for transport to Mediterranean ports, thence to journey overland again (in caravans much preyed upon by robbers) to be sold at Champagne's great Spice Fairs and dispersed to the courts and castles and monasteries of a dozen different countries—when we review all this we realise how great must have been the West's hunger for spice's awakening forces, how urgent the pricking of the Time-Spirit towards a new enhancement of consciousness to cope with the unfolding of the new epoch to come.

The gold and precious stones, the riddles and the spices—can we perhaps see these as archetypal examples of the heavenly help which each Time-Spirit in turn never fails to offer Man at each new stage of his evolution?

We recalled at the beginning of this study that Queen Balkis was an Initiate of the Phoenix Mysteries, the Mysteries of Death and Rebirth. When she comes to King Solomon with her gold and precious stones, her hard questions and her spice, can we perhaps see in her the Phoenix hierophant directing Israel's cultural impulses towards a transmutation beckoning to the future?

REVIEWS

ESOTERIC CHRISTIANITY

The Fifth Gospel by Rudolf Steiner. Seven lectures given in Oslo, 1–6 October, 1913 and Cologne, 17 and 18 December, 1913. Revised translation by C. Davy and D. S. Osmond. (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, £3.00.)

The Effect of Spiritual Development by Rudolf Steiner. A cycle of ten lectures given at the Hague from 20–29 March, 1913. Translated by A. H. Parker. (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, Hardback £4.95, paperback £2.50.)

FOR Rudolf Steiner, 1913 proved a year of many journeys and abundant work. During the year he visited Austria, Bohemia, Holland, England, France, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, and Denmark, and gave lectures in many German cities. In August the Fourth Mystery Play, the last to be written, was produced in Munich and there too the first public performance of eurythmy was given. On the evening of 20th September the Foundation Stone of the Goetheanum was laid at Dornach.

By this time the formal break with the Theosophical Society had been completed and on his journeys Rudolf Steiner was speaking in the main to people who had shown quite decisively that they regarded him as their spiritual teacher. The content of his lectures developed quite consistently the direction he had followed for twelve years: Christian esotericism, revealing itself as creative in the field of art.

The lectures now reprinted represent two great achievements in this development. The Hague lectures in the spring describe the changes that can come about in man's physical body, etheric body, astral body and I, as he follows the way of initiation. They reach to almost unimaginable heights of human achievement; but the early lectures touch upon practical problems which meet us very early on such a path. Rudolf Steiner points to some delicate changes which come about in the human being simply through the study of spiritual knowledge; increased sensitivity to changes of environment, to the times of year, and to the things he eats and drinks. We here find a fundamental and very important description of the effect of alcohol. Rudolf Steiner compares what happens in the grape itself, and in fermentation of the juice of the grape, to the work of the ego in the blood. When a human being consumes alcohol, he introduces a kind of rival to the work of his own ego.

When we consume alcohol we introduce a counter-Ego, an Ego which directly opposes the deeds of our spiritual Ego. Thus, alcohol acts upon the blood in the same way as the Ego acts upon the blood. Hence an inner war is unleashed; and we condemn to impotence everything that proceeds from the Ego when we consume alcohol which is the antagonist of the Ego. That is the situation from the occult point of view. He who abstains from alcohol ensures for himself the possibility to work freely upon his blood from out of his Ego; he who drinks

alcohol behaves like someone who wishes to demolish a wall and hammers on the one side, at the same time placing on the other side people who hammer in opposition to him. In the same way the consumption of alcohol eliminates the activity of the Ego on the blood.

Rudolf Steiner goes on to describe, in a very practical way, how the esoteric student is helped or hindered by his temperament—whether choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic or melancholic. (He is most encouraging to the phlegmatic.) This leads over into a wonderful description of the relationship between man's etheric body and the world ether, and of the mysteries of time. This was given on Easter Sunday, which fell very early in 1913, on March 23rd. The lectures then lead on to two great pictures, which have a central place in the whole course: the garden of Paradise and the castle of the Holy Grail. Here they are described as Imaginations which can arise through the contemplation of man's bodies. Gradually Rudolf Steiner passes on to the development of the astral body and of the I. In the last lecture he gives a magnificent conception of how the I is to be transformed, to become as it were manifold in its being, in order to encounter in the right way the spirits of the Hierarchies.

The whole course supplements, in a way both beautiful and practical, what is to be found in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, in the relevant chapter of *Occult Science*, and in the four Mystery Plays, as fundamental guidance on spiritual development.

The lectures entitled *The Fifth Gospel*, have a direct inner connection with the laying of the Foundation Stone eleven days earlier. At Dornach, only what is called the macrocosmic Lord's Prayer was given, without an account of its place in the life of Jesus. Now in Oslo Rudolf Steiner gave a detailed account of his readings in the Akashic chronicle about the origins of Christianity, and in particular about the life of Jesus between his twelfth year and the Baptism in Jordan. Then in November and December Rudolf Steiner gave lectures with a similar content in Berlin, Nürnberg (where they were attended by Friedrich Rittelmeyer), Hamburg, Stuttgart and Munich. There followed the two lectures at Cologne, published now in English with the Oslo lectures. Then at Leipzig, at the end of December and into the New Year, Rudolf Steiner turned again to the mysteries of the Holy Grail. He did not add anything more, after this time, to his account of the life of Jesus.

In Nürnberg he told Friedrich Rittelmeyer: "It is the will of the spiritual world that in this age men shall be told more about these things. Time will show why." Dr. Rittelmeyer has described the giving of these lectures.

Rudolf Steiner stood before us and spoke of the boyhood of Jesus. From my seat in the front row I was able to watch every expression. He seemed to be looking away from and beyond the audience, gazing intently at pictures before him. With the greatest delicacy of touch and a most striking alertness and caution, he proceeded to describe these pictures. Occasionally there would be an interpolation of such phrases as: "I cannot say precisely if the sequence here is correct, but this is how it seems to me." Or: "With all my efforts I have not been able to discover the name of the place. The fact that the name has been obliterated must have some significance." He spoke with a reverence in which

there was no suggestion of servility, and stood there resolute and firm in the presence of the miraculous. An atmosphere of pure spirituality pervaded the room. It was an atmosphere purged of all feelings not born directly of the spirit—which was there in its power. He told how the divine revelations contained in the Old Testament had dawned in all their greatness upon the soul of the boy Jesus during the years immediately following His return to Nazareth after the event in the Temple at Jerusalem, how his sorrow grew more and more intense as he realised that any true understanding of the greatness of this former revelation of the Divine was lacking among his contemporaries, how this sorrow lived within Him, unexpressed and not understood by those in His environment—"a sorrow in itself far greater than all other sorrows I have known among mankind."—But just because this sorrow was destined to dwell wholly in the inner being of the boy Jesus, He was able to ennoble it beyond all telling...

This is not the place to repeat what Rudolf Steiner told us evening after evening out of the "Fifth Gospel"—the Gospel which has remained imperishable in that delicate spiritual record of all the past which even to-day can still be deciphered by one who is fully awake in the spirit. Indelible in my memory are the eyes into which we were able to look on those occasions, and how they were gazing into the past (*Rudolf Steiner Enters My Life*. Translation by D. S. Osmond. (p.56 f.)

EVIL: ANCIENT AND MODERN

The Enigma of Evil. By Alfred Schütze. (Floris Books, Edinburgh, £3.75)

Should evil be regarded merely as an aberration of human behaviour which calls for treatment and might even be largely eliminated if its causes, social, psychological and genetic, were thoroughly explored? This view, held by a good many scientifically-minded humanists, has the merit of leading away from mere censure towards compassion and understanding; its weakness (which is also one of its attractions) is that it tends to relieve the individual of moral responsibility for his misdeeds. The Christian Churches strive to uphold moral standards, but their traditional doctrines of sin and redemption have lost credibility for many people, including some modern theologians, so that they seem to speak with an uncertain voice in face of the great evils in the world to-day.

I find it refreshing to turn to the much wider perspectives opened up by Alfred Schütze—a Christian Community priest who died in 1972—in this short but powerful book. After reviewing historically the various conceptions of evil that have prevailed in past epochs, he comes to our experience of evil to-day. First, he shows that if we think of good and evil as simple opposites, we run into confusion, for any virtue—courage, let us say—can be corrupted in two different ways. A courageous man has to stand firm not only against fear, which could make him a coward, but also against the temptation to

display his courage by taking foolhardy risks which could endanger the lives of others. So at one pole we have this fiery, expansive temptation, and at the other the cold, contracting temptation of fear. We fail to appreciate courage unless we see it standing between two opposite temptations, resisting and transcending both.

Alfred Schütze speaks of this "elucidation of the double nature of evil" as "one of the great deeds of understanding we owe to Rudolf Steiner." He then describes how Steiner associated the two temptations with two groups of spiritual beings whose leaders he called Lucifer and Ahriman. Lucifer (to put it briefly) plays on vanity, Ahriman on fear.

It seems to me that anyone can verify from everyday experience the existence of these two opposite temptations, and can come to see them and their variants widely at work in the world. But to attribute them to the activities and aims of spiritual beings—that is of course far removed now from ordinary thinking. However, anyone who can accept this idea, at least as a working hypothesis, will find it rewarding to read Schütze's treatment of evil not only as an element in human nature but as a power active in the universe.

In this perspective we have to associate evil with the permitted opposition of certain spiritual beings to the will and purposes of God. The opposition is permitted "for the sake of human freedom." Thus the Luciferic and Ahrimanic beings have a necessary role to play in human evolution. It is they, Schütze insists (again following Rudolf Steiner) who were responsible for the fall of man—that is, for his gradual alienation from the divine sources of his being and his gradually increasing immersion in the material world:

The Fall was not a Fall *because* of human sin, but a Fall *into* sin . . . If Lucifer had not existed, there would be no personal faults. It was through him that the possibility of aberration from the divine good came into the world. But thereby the gift of freedom was created. And because the Fall took place in a higher than human dimension, it could be overcome only by a comparable super-human deed. Each man is responsible for his individual, personal transgressions and has to struggle to overcome them by his own moral efforts; but the predisposition and potential for error extending over and above human measure—that is the "original sin" which Christ took upon himself and which he overcame.

Besides this difficult question of "permitted evil", helpfully treated here, there is another, closely related question, at least equally difficult, which can weigh heavily on anyone who looks back over the terrible course of human history. Why does God allow so much suffering to fall on harmless people, victims of appalling cruelties, massacres and tortures in most countries at various times down the centuries, up to and including our own? Any attempt to approach this question would have to encompass concepts of karma and repeated earth lives, and they are outside the scope of this book.

Schütze goes on to examine in some detail the particular manifestations of evil in our century, of which he has already drawn a graphic picture in his opening chapter. Everything he says is justified, but it should also be recognised that in Western countries during the last fifty years or so great advances have come about (of course leaving a vast amount still to do) in

social concern—in provision for the sick, the aged, the handicapped and the workless, and in the care of children. In these respects, limited in scope and place, our present time has shown itself to be more humane than any period we know of in the past.

However, we must recognise also that in this century evil is taking on new forms, the more dangerous for being seldom regarded as evil. They are mostly connected with the rise of modern science, but here we must distinguish carefully between good and bad. "The exactness, clarity and purity of selfless scientific research," Schütze writes, "are of the utmost importance to the maturing of human nature." And yet—"man becomes a tool of demonic forces if he fills his thinking *only* with the content of the world perceptible to the senses," the more so if he claims that the knowledge thus obtained is the only valid knowledge.

Schütze shows with various examples how this type of thinking, nearly always coupled with a view of man as no more than an intelligent animal, can and does lead on to the "treatment of millions of people as if they were animals or machines . . . In his struggle for humanity the man of to-day must not only be aware of the dangers from within himself, but must also encounter the organs of Ahrimanic activity in the impersonal arrangements of society."

But that is not all. This type of "fallen" thinking, divorced from the realities of the spirit, provides Ahrimanic beings with a foothold in human minds and so prepares the way for the coming of Antichrist, a brilliantly endowed leader who will be Ahriman in disguise.

That is the theme of Schütze's final chapter, and I will not try to summarise it. It is a sombre chapter, but he concludes on a hopeful note. "As the day of Antichrist is prepared by many influences, assaults and advances, so too the way is prepared for Christ's spiritual return through forerunners, helpers and gifts of the spirit . . . Man is not going to be spared the struggle for the right decision between Christ and Antichrist in difficult outer and inner battles, but all the spiritual help he may need during this cosmic hour will be given."

Schütze's book is rightly called *The Enigma of Evil*. For we have to think of the cosmic origin of evil under three different aspects—as an act of rebellious self-will by certain spiritual beings, as a "lagging behind" in evolution by these beings, or as "a kind of cosmic sacrifice so that the world may progress." These three apparently incompatible ways of describing the same event may be regarded as pointers towards a mystery that lies beyond the reach of the ordinary human mind. I could wish that Alfred Schütze had given more recognition to this unfathomable dimension of the enigma; but his book, clear and forcible throughout, and well translated by Eva Lauterbach, will be of very great help to students of this age-old but sadly topical subject.

WITTGENSTEIN AND GOETHE

Remarks on Colour, by Ludwig Wittgenstein, German text facing English translation, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe and trans. Linda McAlister and Margaret Schättle. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford £5.00).

For eighteen months before his death in 1951 Ludwig Wittgenstein was working at the manuscripts which are collected in this volume and edited by Elisabeth Anscombe. It was (with *On Certainty*) Wittgenstein's final work. In it we find him pondering among other things Goethe's phenomenological conception of colour. The physics of colour is hardly mentioned, and is in any case irrelevant to Wittgenstein's purposes. His style, ill adapted to the extended discussion which the ultimate pursuit of certain questions about colour requires, is as usual lapidary and aphoristic, in a way demanded by his conception of philosophy.

"Philosophy unties the knots in our thinking, which we have foolishly put there; but to do that it must make movements which are just as complicated as these knots. Although the result of philosophy is simple, its method cannot be if it is to arrive at that result.

The complexity of philosophy is not in its subject matter, but in our knotted understanding." (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, 2)

Wittgenstein is often hard to follow, not because of any surface unclarity in what he says, but because of the occasionally extreme difficulty in seeing why he should say it. The *Remarks on Colour* are no exception. Although the English text takes up only sixty-three half-filled pages, it cannot be read quickly or easily. Even so, someone without previous knowledge of Wittgenstein might understand it, provided he was able to pick his way along Wittgenstein's nervous, knife-edged style, and prepared to think and experiment as he read. The book is composed of 458 aphorisms (only eighteen mention Goethe by name) between some of which there is no obvious connection. What holds them together is the arresting interest of the landscape which they portray.

Wittgenstein had come to reject the view, previously held by himself, that propositions and concepts reflect the world. In the *Philosophical Investigations* he tried to destroy the notion that the essence of language is naming. Similarly, in *Remarks on Colour*, he wants to discredit the approach to colour made familiar by empiricists. The empiricist wants as his basic visual data patches of colour which he can conceive one by one, homogeneously; but Wittgenstein is able to show that the appearance of colour changes in significantly asymmetrical ways with its perceptual surround and with the conceptual system (a non-arbitrary one) in which it is embedded. He tries to dramatize, as the book jacket says, the failure of "the traditional idea that colour is a simple and logically uniform kind of thing." He firmly dissociates himself from the Gestalt psychologists in the process.

"Why is it that a dark yellow doesn't have to be perceived as 'blackish', even if we call it dark?

The logic of the concept of colour is just much more complicated than it might seem." (*Remarks on Colour*, III, 106)

There can be a bluish green but, Wittgenstein asks in Kantian tones, why can't there be a *reddish green*? Such questions do not seem to be empirical; nor are they overtly logical. What is it then that the answers to them reveal? And how is it that the necessity which they display is somehow a feature of the real world?

Wittgenstein tries to draw out of the various awkward colour phenomena which he discusses a loose system of colour concepts which he calls the "logic" or "geometry" of colour. We are invited by means of examples to notice how little of this geometry can be drawn from a logically straightforward inspection of what colour perception reveals. "I don't see that the colours of bodies reflect light into my eyes" (II, 20), and I don't see with my eyes that there can't be a white transparent sheet of glass. Wittgenstein has to explain these and similar results by showing their role in his colour logic. It is unclear whether he succeeds in doing so, partly perhaps because he does not make explicit (or has not quite decided) just what status this logic ought to have.

The logic of Goethe's explanation rested on the classical idea that some phenomena are more important than others, and that the task of theoretical science is to make manifest the unequal importance. These central or "primary phenomena" were the final destination of Goethe's theoretical efforts. In *Maxims and Reflections* (575) he advises "Search nothing beyond the phenomena, they themselves are the theory"—but they must be looked at aright. The primary phenomenon "finally exists as a result of all experience and experiments. It can never be isolated; rather it *shows itself* in a steady sequence of appearances." (Cf. Paul Klee, "I suspect that some law is involved, only I must not begin with hypotheses but with an example. And from a series of examples I shall automatically discover what is typical.") It is not only the verbal anticipation that makes Goethe attractive to Wittgenstein. They are at one in wanting to say,

"Psychology connects what is experienced with something physical, but we connect what is experienced with what is experienced." (*Remarks on Colour*, III, 241)

What then is the difference between them? Goethe had thought that he was making a contribution to science, whereas Wittgenstein was after something he calls "phenomenological analysis as e.g. Goethe would have it" which "can neither agree with nor contradict physics." (II, 16) Wittgenstein does not accept Goethe's "primary phenomenon"—it is a "preconceived idea which takes possession of us" (III, 230), exactly the opposite of what Goethe meant—but in the absence of some such possibility Wittgenstein's own explanations dangle.

What was for Goethe a practical affair becomes for Wittgenstein a theoretical obsession. From the Preface to the *Farbenlehre*:

"But in order to guard against the possible abuse of this abstract view, in order that the practical deductions we look to should be really useful, we should theorize without forgetting that we are so doing, we should theorize with mental self-possession, and, to use a bold word, with irony."

Wittgenstein does show convincingly that the hard questions about colour are in part questions about the conceptual (and linguistic) activities which coalesce into colour determinations and classifications. But for Goethe "real phenomena of the senses" (*Farbenlehre* 175), of which colour is but one, are what make intelligible and explain the classifications speakers make.

"Someone who agrees with Goethe believes that Goethe correctly recognized the nature of colour. And nature here is not what results from experiments, but it lies in the concept of colour." (*Remarks on Colour*, I, 71)

There is too little in Wittgenstein's book for the reader who thinks we do not have to choose between these two things. Goethe did of course make interesting experiments which were clearly connected with his theory. So when Wittgenstein denies that there can be an *experimentum crucis* for or against Goethe's theory of the constitution of the colours of the spectrum, he perhaps has in mind a particular kind of experiment with a particular kind of result.

Colour can be accounted for in terms of the wavelength of light and other factors, such as the nature of the medium through which the light passes, and described as an effect of these factors. (Colour, on this view, is a sensation.) We can say, for example, that a red surface is one which reflects light with a wavelength in air of approximately 6.5×10^{-5} cm. An important question which Wittgenstein relies on, although he doesn't actually ask it, is why just this quality or supposed sensation (red) should "arise" from light of this particular wavelength (6.5×10^{-5} cm.) The relation between the two is at best empirical, and the question remains why just this relation should hold. So there is a point at issue here about the relation between the physical and the conceptual.

"This much I can understand: that a physical theory (such as Newton's) cannot solve the problems that motivated Goethe, even if he himself didn't solve them either." (III, 206)

So Wittgenstein is looking for something he denies Goethe found, and which Schiller found in *play*, that stands midway between the concepts of formal logic and those of natural science. "Here the temptation to believe in a phenomenology, something midway between science and logic, is very great." (II, 3) He hopes to find it in the space occupied by language games, in the concept of colour itself. But when he touches it his almost hypochondriac mistrust of generality prevents him from holding onto it.

"There is no such thing as phenomenology, but there are indeed phenomenological problems." (I, 53)

Whatever the force of this remark, I think the delicacy of the Goethean approach has escaped Wittgenstein. In his restless hands the broad and balanced aims which informed it evaporate. And he is surely wrong to dismiss one of the most important parts of the *Farbenlehre* as an artistic dead letter.

"I cannot imagine that Goethe's remarks about the characters of the colours and colour combinations could be of any use to a painter..." (I, 73)

This remark proceeds in fact from sheer ignorance and prejudice. The ignorance first. Turner was prepared to demonstrate his interest in Goethe's

characterization of the colours on the walls of the Royal Academy. Two companion paintings which were exhibited in 1843 ("Shade and Darness—the Evening of the Deluge" and "Light and Colour (Goethe's Theory)—the Morning after the Deluge—Moses Writing the Book of Genesis") pay explicit tribute to the *Farbenlehre*. We still possess Turner's copy of the English translation, which he obviously read through carefully with pen in hand. There are extensive underlinings, marginalia and comments, some critical and some complimentary. Turner was like Wittgenstein naturally distrustful of theory. But he pretty obviously derived some benefit from Goethe's remarks on the characters of the colours and colour combinations. It was in fact Turner's friend, the distinguished painter Sir Charles Eastlake F.R.S., Director of the National Gallery and President for fifteen years of the Royal Academy, who made the first translation of the *Farbenlehre* into English. It appeared in 1840 with sixty-five pages of detailed notes by Eastlake, most of which concern painting. Kandinsky, who drew heavily on Goethe's characterizations of the colours and their combinations, was if anything more committed than Goethe to the idea that there is something called the character of a colour. In *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* Kandinsky's discussion of the emotional and spiritual characters of the colours is even less circumspect than anything Goethe said on the subject. And there are of course countless other less famous painters to whom Goethe's remarks have been of use. What a creative painter will find useful can hardly be settled *a priori*, by the inspection of one's own powers of imagination.

Second, the prejudice. The reason Wittgenstein gives for his inability to imagine such a thing has nothing in particular to do with Goethe. "Someone who speaks of the character of a colour is always thinking of just one particular way it is used." (I, 73) This lazy Wittgensteinian generality would be more convincing if it were a point specifically about colour, and not a recognisable part of his temperamental assault on characters and essences in general.

This liberating little book will be of interest not only to students of Wittgenstein and colour, but also to those like Goethe for whom the materialist metaphysics with which science has associated itself is both offensive and implausible. It will prompt a reappraisal of what is right and wrong in phenomenology and in the view that nothing can be hidden in our conceptual life. Wittgenstein has demonstrated the intellectual soundness of the move from physics to the concept. What he has not shown is the impossibility of a further passage from the concept back to the Idea.

JONATHAN WESTPHAL

A MEDICAL LANDMARK

Anthroposophical Medicine – an Extension of the Art of Healing, by Victor Bott M.D. Translated from the French by F.L. Wheaton M.B.B.S., D.T.M. & H., D.P.H. and G. Douch M.B.B.S., M.F. Hom. (Rudolf Steiner Press, £2.50).

THE publication of this book is a welcome and long awaited event. Its appearance meets the need for a systematic account of the basic premises upon which the anthroposophical approach to medicine is built, and at the same time provides examples of the practical applications of this impulse. Although it will undoubtedly be of great interest and value to the layman, it addresses itself primarily to the professional medical practitioner who wishes to explore the tenets of the anthroposophical approach to medicine. It will also be of considerable value to the practitioner who has already established a commitment to anthroposophy and is beginning to develop his practical clinical work on this foundation.

Behind the written text one can sense the striving of the author to awaken in himself an esoteric sense for substances and their therapeutic value. The fruits of this striving are freely given in many practical indications which are described in a way which allows the reader to develop his own understanding of them.

Implicit in the text are many principles fundamental to any form of anthroposophical therapeutic work, such as the non-reductionist approach to man and to nature; the need to develop imaginative cognition; the place of illness in individual biography, and the relationship of illness to healthy development. In the second part of the book, called "The Stages of Human Development," Dr. Bott emphasizes the close connection between educational and medical work. Part Three "The Four Cardinal Organs" relates the physiology and pathology based on the four-fold picture of man to the functioning of the four main internal organs. The book ends with three chapters which give a short anthroposophical orientation to some specialized branches of medicine, including oncology (the nature and treatment of cancer), gynaecology and dermatology.

The aims of Dr. Bott's book are wide, but there are certain topics which only receive cursory mention, and some have been omitted altogether. The book does not relate any of the aims of anthroposophical medicine to more recent developments in social psychology or community medicine. It does not take up the social implications of an anthroposophical medical impulse, nor does it stress the importance within a holistic approach to illness of therapeutic massage, artistic therapies, counselling and pastoral medicine. It does not help the reader to find an orientation towards the relationship between the anthroposophical approach to medicine and homeopathy, acupuncture, psychoanalysis, and other forms of medical and therapeutic practice.

Anthroposophical Medicine will probably find its fertile ground more amongst general physicians and general practitioners than with psychiatrists

or academics. Although the foundations laid in the book are internally consistent, their presentation appeals more to the response of the heart than to the desire for the sort of proof upon which academic medical science increasingly relies. Sometimes, through lack of space, foundations for statements are not as thoroughly laid as they might be. The danger of dogmatism is not always avoided, although the author himself is well aware of that danger. Phenomena are sometimes interpreted in a rather limited way.

It is hard to see how the author could have overcome all these difficulties without writing a completely different book, which would necessarily have been much longer. Such a book might well have lost much of the particular value and the appeal to doctors which the volume under review possesses—which will be felt and appreciated in the consulting room as much as in the armchair.

Although I should say that the book attempts to achieve too much in too short a space, the author is equally to be praised for the remarkable success and fluency with which he executes a difficult and exacting task. For the most part the style of his text is stimulating, and will encourage the questioning reader to turn to the next page. Dr. Wheaton and Dr. Douch deserve particular and positive mention at this point. They have translated the original French text into an idiomatic English which is equal to the professional standards demanded by the subject matter.

Let it be hoped that this book will be but the first of many more English publications in the field of Anthroposophical medicine. Although the book probably poses as many questions as it answers, it provides a most worthwhile point of departure for further anthroposophical medical writing. In itself *Anthroposophical Medicine* is a landmark which is likely to have positive and far-reaching influence on the development of anthroposophical medicine in the English-speaking world.

JAMES A. DYSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

COMMONSENSE SCHOOLING

KATE MCGILL

Commonsense Schooling, by Roy Wilkinson, (Henry Goulden, East Grinstead, £). This review is written from the point of view of a parent with almost no knowledge of Steiner education, the sort of person, I think, to whom Mr. Wilkinson addresses himself. There are three important points which strike me about what he says.

First, the book is governed throughout by a consideration of the aims of education. In this it is not unique, but it does draw significant and practical conclusions from an area in which discussion too frequently remains abstract or political.

Second, much is made of the relationship between pupil and teacher. It is startling to the lay reader to learn that the class teacher stays with the same class for so long.

Third, the curriculum is geared to the visible needs of the child at a certain age. The child is not geared to the curriculum. The discussion of the three main periods between childhood and maturity is intelligent and illuminating.

This little book marks out the solid ground on which, according to Mr. Wilkinson, Waldorf education is built. It seems to cover all the main points with no fuss. Perhaps it reads more like an instruction manual than a hymn to education, but its reappearance may indicate that there is a demand for the nuts and bolts approach which it exemplifies.

THE THIRD CULTURE

Towards A Third Culture by Charles Davy. (Floris Books, £2.25 Paperback).

A revised edition of *Towards A Third Culture* by Charles Davy has recently (1978) been published by Floris Books of Edinburgh. The book was first published by Faber and Faber in 1961. It takes its start from a discussion of C. P. Snow's famous Rede Lecture of 1959, "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution." Charles Davy's central theme is of continuing and increasing importance. In his new Foreword he describes it as "the rise of modern science in relation to the evolution of human consciousness."

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All editorial correspondence should be sent to Jonathan Westphal, Shepherds Corner, Tomsett's Bank, Forest Row, East Sussex, RH18 5LL.

The cover of this issue reproduces as closely as possible an unexecuted pencil sketch by Rudolf Steiner made around 1924. It is one of only a very few of his book motifs not designated for use on a particular publication, although it may well have been intended for one.

In the composition man is, it seems, confronted by two beings, the one related to light, and the other to darkness.

The original is to be found in the archives of the Rudolf Steiner-Nachlassverwaltung in Dornach, with whose kind permission the reproduction has been made.

The title lettering is by Peter Stebbing.

The drawings for "The Being of the Arts" are by Assya Turgeniev. They are reproduced here by kind permission of the Philosophisch-Anthroposophisch Verlag, Dornach.

"Orc in the Fires of the Elemental World" is Plate 10 of *America a Prophecy* by William Blake. By Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

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"Michael and the Dragon" consists of two articles written by Rudolf Steiner for *Das Goetheanum*, 30 Sept. and 7 Oct. 1923. A third article followed on 14 Oct. All three articles were published by the Verlag der Rudolf Steiner-Nachlassverwaltung in 1969 under the title *Der Streit Michaels mit dem Drachen*. They appear here by kind permission of the Nachlassverwaltung in a translation revised for this issue. The original English translation was published in *Anthroposophy*, Michaelmas 1927.

"Why Reincarnation?" is the text of a lecture given to the Cambridge Anthroposophical Study-Group.

Some parts of "The Grammar of Darkness" have previously appeared in *The Christian Community Journal* and in Paul Matthew's booklet *A Web of Birdsong Twisted*, Share Publications.

"The Being of the Arts", a lecture given by Rudolf Steiner on 28 Oct. 1909, was first published in English as *The Nature and Origin of the Arts* (undated). The new translation by A.B. and C. de B. appears by kind permission of the Philosophisch-Anthroposophisch Verlag, Dornach.

"Michael's Song" from *Collected Poems* by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, acknowledgements to Mr. Michael Gibson and Macmillan, London and Basingstoke.

A review by the same author somewhat similar to "Wittgenstein and Goethe" appeared under the title "The Logic of the Spectrum" in *The Times Literary Supplement*.

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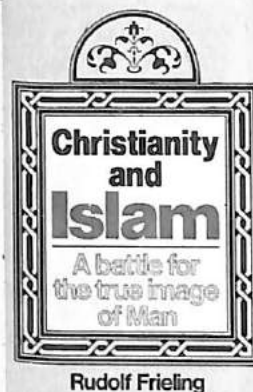
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Young People Want to Know About Energy without Pollution
Peter Clemm

COMMENT: Responsible School Government,
Responsible Sex Education
Rudi Lissau

with Reviews and the World List of Waldorf Schools, 48 pages, illustrated in colour. Annual Subscription £2.20 post paid from **Child and Man**, Freepost, Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5BR (no stamp required).



Christianity and Islam

A battle for the true image of man
Rudolf Frieling

The current resurgence of Islam and the attention it draws have prompted this book. It becomes a statement of the basis of Christianity without which Christians cannot confidently encounter any other religious outlook. Is the worship of God any different if one believes he has a son or not? Is the idea of the trinity an outworn doctrine? The author senses that many Christians tacitly ask themselves these questions in face of the straightforward monotheism of Islam. His thesis is that it makes a very great difference not only to man's relationship to God but to his whole evolution on earth. He examines the roots of the divergence of the religions through the different spiritual streams carried by Abraham's sons, Ishmael and Isaac. There follows an account of Muhammad's establishment of Islam with the Koran as its centre. Its statement that 'Allah has no son' constitutes the essential difference between Islam and Christianity. Frieling's clarification of what is meant by 'the



Son' forms the climax of the book. While writing of Islam with great respect for its basic sincerity and the spread of the great Arab culture it initiated, he can only regard it as tragic that through Muhammad's imperfect encounter with Christianity he did not understand its essential mysteries. The consequent inadequacy of a religion that overlooked 'the Son' was, he feels, no small factor in the emergence of the Shiah branches of Islam. There, perhaps, can be detected the unconscious but inevitable seeking for Christ who is eternally present for recognition by all men.

Tr. from German; first edition, October 1978; 22.5 x 14.5 cm; 144pp; hardback; £5.95; 0903540 118

The Healing Art of Glove Puppetry

Gisela Bittleston

This book describes all the basic problems of glove puppetry. It tells you how to make puppets and let them act, how to construct a puppet theatre with lighting and other additions, how to put on performances and write your own scripts. There follow four fairy-



tale plays and the author concludes the book with a note on the background to these fairy tales.

First edition October 1978; 25 x 18.5 cm; 68pp; illustrated; hardback; £3.75; 0903540 150

The King of Ireland's Son

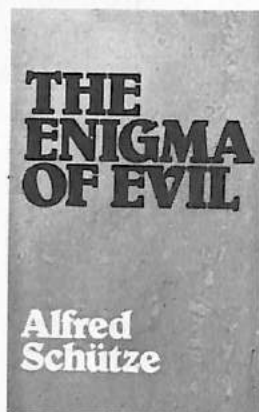
Padraic Colum
Illustrated by G & W Knapp

Padraic Colum's books for children have meant good reading to several generations and are as fresh today as when they were first published. The King of Ireland's Son sets out to find the Enchanter of the Black Back-Lands where he meets the Enchanter's daughter, Fedelma and marries her. He loses her and his adventures to find her again lead him to the Land of the Mist, the Town of the Red Castle and the worlds of Gilly of the Goatskin, the Hags of the Long Teeth, Princess Flame-of-Wine, the Giant Crom Duv.

Third edition October 1978; 22 x 14.5 cm; 260pp; 32 illustrations; hardback; £5.95; 0903540 169; Not for sale in North America

Floris Books





Why Ritual?

Michael Tapp

Is there a place for ritual in the modern world? Or is it simply a relic of a bygone age which we can now dispense with? An attempt is made here to show that far from being irrelevant, Christian ritual is an essential element in human life. Birth and death, for instance, are mysteries which we cannot penetrate with our consciousness. The rituals which are associated with birth and death (baptism, anointing, funeral) can open up these mysteries to reveal something to us of that deeper and hidden side of our nature which exists beyond birth and death.

First edition 1978; 18 x 11 cm; 42pp; paperback; £1.00; 0903540134

The Lord's Prayer

Heinrich Ogilvie

The object of this work is to offer some direction both to people who do not know the Lord's Prayer very well and to those who would like to find a modern approach. There is no intention of



providing ready-made examples for thinking about the Lord's Prayer. The author points to the *sphere* in which it lives and the region to which the soul must be raised, if this prayer is to be achieved. Only brief indications are given and nothing is treated at length. In this way perhaps these reflections may guide the reader for his own meditations.

Tr. from Dutch; first edition 1978; 18 x 11 cm; 48pp; paperback; £1.00; 0903540096

From Buddha to Christ

Hermann Beckh

This book describes how the disciples of Buddha were able to acquire a true knowledge of karma and reincarnation when in their meditative exercises they reached the control of *sanskara*, the formative forces of existence in the depths of their own consciousness. They strove to destroy the ego discovered in this process and so find release from the wheel of rebirth. Beckh shows how since Christ the ego that the Buddha rejected has received an opportunity for develop-



ment. Human karma can be taken up into the ego and can find the way which points forward to a deeper involvement with what is important in life.

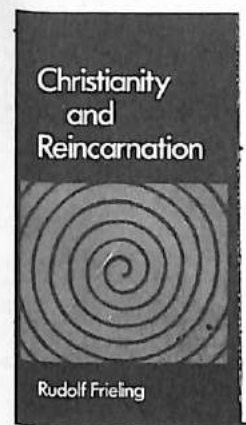
Tr. from German; first edition 1978; 18 x 11 cm; 36pp; paperback; £1.00; 0903540088

The Enigma of Evil

Alfred Schütze

In the twentieth century we face forms of evil which make the worst deviations of the past seem comparatively harmless. At the same time evil may appear in the guise of good and may be most active where there is an apparent and plausible striving for good. Alfred Schütze shows that we can only begin to find the remedy when we recognize evil in its many guises. He distinguishes two completely opposite categories of evil which produce imbalance in the human soul and he illustrates the enigma of their development in mythology, literature and scientific thought.

Tr. from German; first edition 1978; 21 x 13.5 cm; 98pp; softbound; £3.75; 090354010 X



Christ Legends and other stories

Selma Lagerlöf

Illustrated by G & W Knapp

Selma Lagerlöf, the well-known Swedish writer, has gathered the legends and stories of the childhood of Jesus and retells these with a wonderful warm feeling. This collection includes *The Holy Night*, *The Emperor's Vision*, *Saint Veronica*, *The Bird's Nest*, *The Christmas Rose*, *The Sacred Flame* and others.

Tr. from Swedish; first edition 1977; 21 x 17 cm; 204pp; 30 illustrations; hardback; £4.25; 0903540061

Christianity and Reincarnation

Rudolf Frieling

The question whether or not man returns to live on earth is a matter of concern to many people today. Little has been said on the subject by Christian thinkers and the recent theory of 'Total Death' excludes any possibility of reincarnation. Dr. Frieling shows how through Rudolf Steiner's Anthro-

Christ Legends and other stories



Selma Lagerlöf

sophy an esoteric Christianity has arisen. This esoteric Christianity is an organic development of the possibilities of western consciousness. It sheds light on reincarnation as well as on the metaphysical fact of Christianity. The author presents the essence of Christianity and shows how it harmonizes with the teaching of reincarnation and examines its relationship to the Bible.

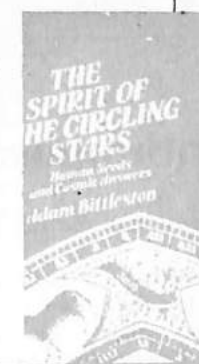
Tr. from German; first edition 1977; 21.5 x 13.5 cm; 118pp; softbound; £3.50; 0903540053

The Spirit of the Circling Stars

Human Needs and Cosmic Answers

Adam Bittleston

How can we begin to understand our own personal destinies — the illnesses that befall us, the friends we make, the difficulties that beset us? In human beings today there is a deep longing to understand such things, not trivially, or as matters of chance, but having some relation to the great universe. Many feel that there are relationships between the movement of the stars and the planets and the pattern of



The Sun Dances

Prayers and Blessings from the Gaelic



Alexander Carmichael

human destiny which are not just fanciful, but founded in a deeper reality than the conceptions of physical cosmology.

First edition 1975; 20.5 x 13.5 cm; 192pp; hardback; £3.75; 0900285257

The Sun Dances

Prayers and Blessings from the Gaelic

Collected and translated by Alexander Carmichael Chosen and with an introduction by Adam Bittleston

No one can say when, or by whom, the Gaelic originals were composed; they were handed down by oral tradition to the men and women from whom Alexander Carmichael received them during his long life (1832-1912).

Those who made and used these verses felt the presence of God and His messengers in all concerns of their lives — in their human relationships, in birth and death, in waking and sleeping, in their work at home and in the fields and on the sea.

Second edition 1977; 18 x 11 cm; 124 + xx pp; paperback; £1.25; 090354007 X



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Anthroposophical Medicine

An Extension of the Art of Healing — Victor Bott, M.D.

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