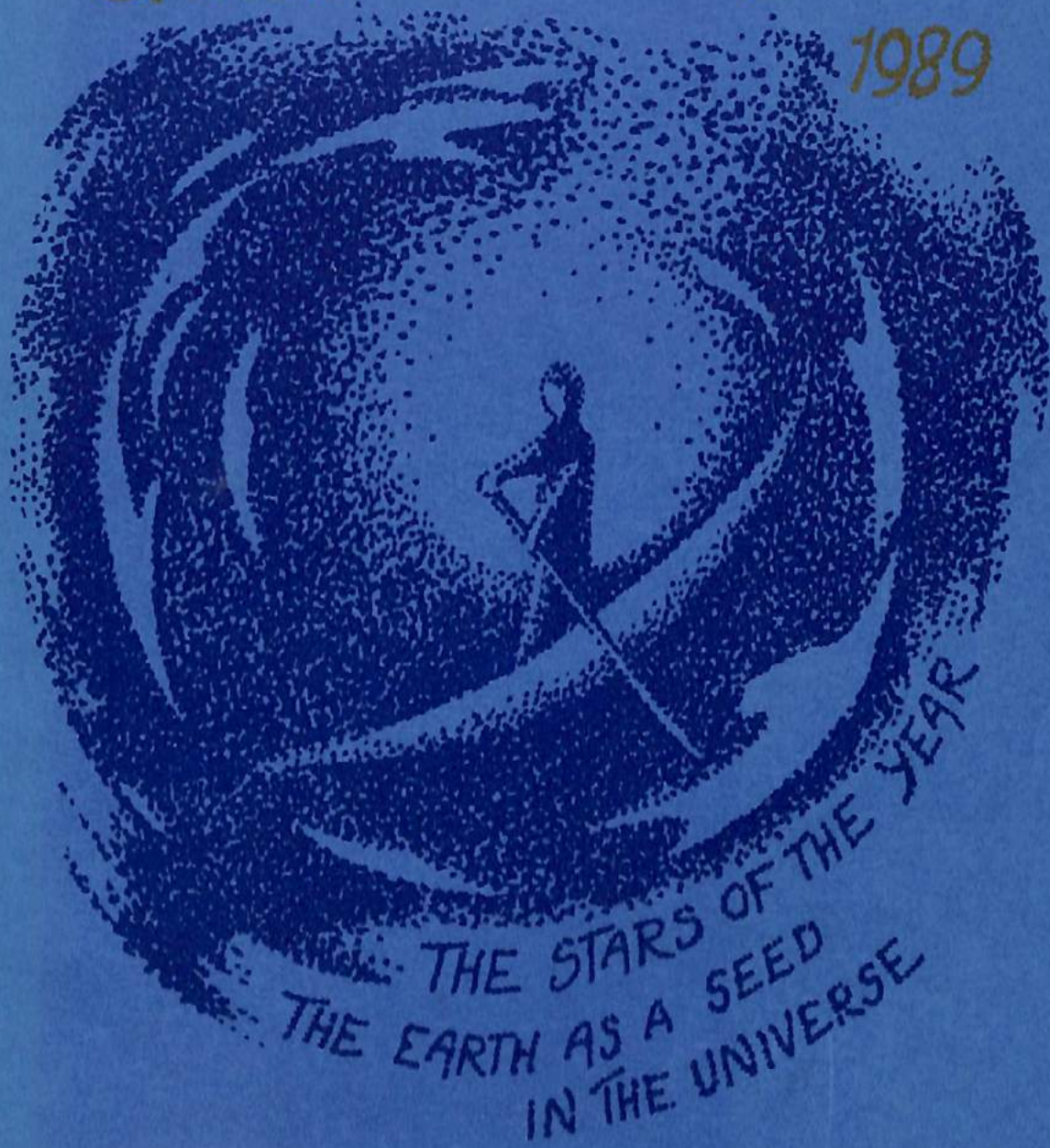


THE

GOLDEN BLADE

1989



THE STARS OF THE YEAR
THE EARTH AS A SEED
IN THE UNIVERSE

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IN THE UNIVERSE*

THE GOLDEN BLADE

FORTY-FIRST (1989) ISSUE

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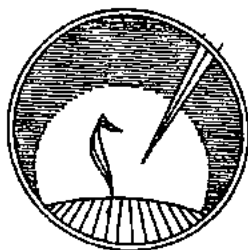
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Edited by Adam Bittleston, John Meeks and William Forward

Printed by Imprint Publicity Service
Crawley Down • Sussex

Published by

Hawthorn Press



The aim of this Annual, now over forty years old, is to bring an anthroposophical outlook to bear on questions of evident contemporary interest, in a way which can have enduring value. It was founded by Charles Davy and Arnold Freeman, its original editors. Arnold Freeman was the founder and leader of the Sheffield Educational Settlement, a bold innovator in adult education. Charles Davy was an outstanding journalist and writer.

Anthroposophy springs from the work and teaching of Rudolf Steiner (1861 – 1925). It is not a collection of information on spiritual subjects, but a *path* "to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe".

The editors of the 1989 Golden Blade have encountered particular difficulties in its preparation; John Meeks, through the illness of his wife, which has made considerable periods of absence from Britain necessary for him, and Adam Bittleston through his own ill health. They were very happy to be able to co-opt, in the summer of 1988, William Forward as third editor. His help has been invaluable, as has that of our printers, Mrs. McNicol and Miss Steed, whose patience, judgement and enthusiasm have been invaluable.

It is appropriate in this issue to express our warm congratulations and deep respect to Owen Barfield, on reaching the age of ninety in November 1988. Quite early in his life he began to make outstanding contributions to the study of language, to the understanding of the history of England, and to knowledge in English-speaking countries of the work of Rudolf Steiner and of Coleridge. Even through the years when he was working as a busy solicitor his writing has never faltered or grown heavy; it has always been with grace as well as precision that he has led us in such difficult realms as the philosophy of language and the development of human consciousness.

He has himself chosen, out of the abundance of his writings, the address on "The Light of the World" which appears in this issue.

An old friend and generous patron of The Golden Blade, whose support has been particularly directed to the cost of coloured illustrations, enabled us to begin a policy of publishing reproductions of paintings by established painters, whose life-work could be surveyed as a whole. This year we have adopted a different plan; to illustrate something of the work of a relatively young English painter, who is still experimenting — David Newbatt. His work is a remarkably clear example of how the three great ideals described in Rudolf Steiner's Dornach lecture printed here — religion, art, and science — can be brought together into the service of the good powers of the spiritual world. In David Newbatt's pictures the deeply religious mood of the festivals of the year, as they are celebrated in Camphill Communities, the joy of an artist, and the Goethean science of colour, flow together harmoniously.

The two passages from Rudolf Steiner, both from the last years of his life, are easily accessible in their full context in English. But for the special aims of this Golden Blade it seemed appropriate that their message of hope for the future should stand out separately, and to put David Newbatt's pictures, culminating in his painting of the destiny of the First Goetheanum, between them together with the biographical note by his colleague at Camphill Blair-Drummond, Mrs. Kindle. Both to Carola Kindle and to David Newbatt himself, and to all our contributors — including Helene Aurell, who again made the cover drawing — we owe our warm thanks for work done under difficult circumstances.

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE PRAISE OF THE EARTH

The Earth is a living organism, in a living universe. The stars sing with her; but she does not only rejoice. For thousands of years she has suffered, and her life has been threatened. These things have been known, and have been forgotten, and are now being understood afresh, by a growing part of humanity.

Long ago it seemed entirely natural to regard the Earth as a living and sentient being, as the generous Mother of all creatures. What is living and sentient can suffer; and human beings were aware that they could cause her pain, whether with or without the intention to do this. Both the Earth and the human being have grown harder; our tread is heavier, and the Earth nearer to death. We have cut down too many trees, and have extended the deserts, for a long time.

But most human beings, until the last three centuries, were limited in their experience, during the life between birth and death, to quite a small region. They were villagers, little concerned with anything more than a day's journey away — and even the stars did not seem very far off. Sages, princes, merchants, soldiers and slaves went on long and sometimes painful journeys, and gained some impression of the vastness of plains and oceans.

Only in this century have towns grown so rapidly. In most of them, the majority of people have very little space indeed in which to live. But at the same time, people of all classes have become travellers on a great scale, and even in the poorest villages television screens show what is happening in distant places. Human beings become aware that their personal lives may be influenced by events in any continent. More and more people speak of "one world" and feel a deep affection for the Earth as a whole. But in general the consciousness of Earth as Mother has been forgotten, and needs to be rediscovered, not without difficulty; though in some regions a little of this consciousness has lingered, until lately or even into the present, for example in Russia. If it is to be rediscovered, it must be in a new way; not just as an inborn capacity, but through conscious spiritual development. What sleeps or

dreams in us must be awakened to clarity and certainty. While in the past the bodily senses developed without our conscious effort, the senses in our souls now need our conscious attention and patient care. And they will reveal that the great Mother has in her kingdom many subjects our physical eyes do not see, nor our physical ears hear. The fate of our planet is not the concern only of humanity, but of the elemental beings too.

Of these elemental beings our present civilization knows hardly anything, connecting their traditional names with very unreal and trivial conceptions: gnomes, elves, sylphs, undines, Puck, and so on, for example. But to many cultures they have been real and familiar, often until quite lately, and to some outstanding people of the present; for example the wonderfully gifted Oregon poetess, Opal Whiteley, and the blind, deeply conscientious writer Ursula Burkhardt, author of "Karlik". Some children are very much aware of them, though their vision may fade later. Shakespeare gives two wonderful dramatic pictures of them. In "A Midsummer Night's Dream" they tease and bewilder human beings; in "The Tempest" they serve Prospero's good magic, and make music.

They too suffer when the Earth is polluted or exploited; and this is immediately understandable, since it is part of their task to bring to plants and animals air and water in a way that is healthy for them. We can harm the elemental household of the Earth in other ways too; for example by our conflicts, by allowing so much poverty and famine, by injustice, and by allowing national rivalries to intrude into realms where they do not belong. One day we shall learn to ask for the guidance of the elemental beings before building a reservoir or going in for monoculture, as our ancestors asked before building a house, or setting out to fish.

In our terrible presumption, we are now engaging in a form of engineering which can be unimaginably cruel to animals. Ever since the world grew hard, animals have suffered, in ways not directly caused or intended by human beings. They have not known the reason for their pain; they were innocent. In their dim, dreaming consciousness they were capable of love, but the wisdom shown in their actions was not their own; it belonged to the group-spirits standing behind them. When human beings also grew hard, they came to inflict pain on animals out of their own wishes and often failed to love them. Now "genetic engineering" claims to produce new strains of animal, whose existence is suffering from beginning to end; and this is defended by promising commercial or medical advantages for human beings. But these abilities threaten great dangers for all living things on Earth.

Animals are so diverse from one another, not by the Earth's doing, but because they reflect the measureless diversity of the stars. Not for nothing was the girdle of constellations through which the Sun and the planets move called the "Zodiac", the animal circle. Human beings shared in the hardening process later than the animals, and show this in many ways; their hands and feet, for example, do not take on such specialized forms; and here we come to a mystery, something calling for comprehension by our whole hearts and minds.

If the Earth had alone formed the physical bodies of human beings they would have all been beautiful, and would have resembled each other much more closely; and it would have been natural to them to love each other, and all the children of Earth.

Here and there on the Earth places have existed, where something of this mood, the mood of Paradise before the Fall, has been preserved. In this Golden Blade we bring a long poem from the age of the Vedas, in an English version based on the wonderful German translation by Professor Hermann Beckh from the ancient Sanskrit. No one can say how long this poem was passed down orally. Its author was filled with gratitude to Mother Earth, giver of life and truth to human beings — but also needing for her own sustenance their prayers, their praise, their devotion, expressed in holy rites of sacrifice. He asks that he may in no way harm her; and he knows that evil powers, the tempters, also exist, though the good spirits of the Universe far outweigh them. The Earth herself has been tempted by the demons, and has had to make something like a great decision to serve the good spirits, who are the guardians of her heart.

"She whose heart, the Earth's
immortal heart,
Is in the highest heaven —" (verse 8)
"While thou hast honoured Indra,
not the Dragon,
Thou Earth, faithful
to Indra ..." (verses 37 — 40)

Indra was for the ancient Indian, according to Dr. Ita Wegman, their vision of the being called in the Jewish and Christian traditions the Archangel Michael. In the high, heavenly realm the Earth's heart is guarded also by Vishvakarma, the World-Carpenter, who in ancient times brought sacrifice for the good of the Earth, when she was endangered.

"The heavenly builder of worlds
 once sought thee with his sacrifice,
 He, Vishvakarma, when the Earth was still
 Hidden in moving waters and in winds,
 Like a most precious cup, hidden, enclosed
 And then revealed, a joy to every creature
 Born of a mother" (verses 60 — 61).

Vishvakarma is the name given to the Sun-Spirit, called in our time the Christ.

When the Earth as a whole was clearly felt as the great Mother, human beings recognized in one another the goodness and greatness she had given them. Only when the hardening process developed further did over-attachment to a territory bring mutual enmity, particularly among those in masculine incarnations. (The story of Ruth in the Old Testament is a wonderful example of such feelings being overcome among women). At first, through long ages, the over-attachment of men to their territories did harm only to limited regions of the Earth. But in the last five thousand years it has turned men into tyrants, for example in Babylonia or among the Romans, capable not only of hostility to their neighbours, but of subjecting and enslaving them. Relatively small groups of people became the masters of great Empires. The natural inclination towards loving-kindness ebbed away. Unaided, human beings would not have been able to re-ignite it. And so the spirit of a healing planet came in the East as the great teacher of compassion, preparing for the coming of the Sun-Spirit at the meeting-place of continents, bringing the impulse of a world-wide and creative love, described from four aspects by his Evangelists. He brought aid for the other children of Earth as well, purifying and strengthening the realm of the elementals, renewing in the Earth the powers of youth. Often the human followers of Christ misunderstood his purpose, thinking only of their own reconciliation with Heaven, and not of the fate of the Earth. They were often willing to go into alliance with the masters of Empire and the servants of Mammon, the worshippers of money and the machine. Side by side, as in the Gospel parable, the wheat and the weeds grew up towards harvest. The sorrow and the danger of the Earth grew — but as human beings slowly matured, towards a more conscious, more spiritually active kind of love — of which St. Paul wrote "The first Adam was made a living soul, the second Adam a creating spirit". This selfless love, for which the writer of the fourth Gospel used the Greek word "Agape", unites with the world-embracing Will of Christ.

A great step in conscious understanding of all this has been made possible for many in our time by the work of Rudolf Steiner, which draws together the wisdom of East and West — not in an intellectual synthesis, but through the conscious and deeply conscientious development of his own powers of spiritual perception. He constantly made clear how such powers are present, though in a sleeping or dreaming condition, in every human being, and can be awakened by inner exercises of a spiritual and moral kind — with patience! His own writing and lectures were formed to be exercises in spiritual activity, often seeming to contradict each other, resisting any impulse on the part of the reader or hearer to make what he gave into a consistent theory. If it *was* made into a theory, he said, it would not be a better, but a worse theory than others. Thus in treating the Gospels he did not offer a new systematic theology, but deepened immeasurably the hearer's comprehension of the particular aspect of the deed of Christ chosen by each Evangelist. He showed, for instance, how the teaching of Buddha lives again, and is rejuvenated, in the Gospel of St. Luke, while St. Matthew's Gospel is more akin to the ancient Persian religion.

Those who study Rudolf Steiner's work do not only need to wrestle with his own seeming contradictions, but to confront it as well with what they find, so far as they can, in the work of others on the same subject. This is a deeply significant task in our time. Again, it is not a question of filling up our shelves with further piles of information, but of *experiencing*, beginning to *see*, what others have thought, and felt, and done. (The English language has the wonderful expression "I see what you mean"). If the other exasperates us at first, well and good; to disagree has little value in the world, to understand, a great deal. What is said to us by another human being we are called to feel as if it was said to us by Christ.

Why at some particular moment of our lives do we meet this or that person? Both the Hindu and the Buddhist have always answered "Because it is your Karma to do so. By such meetings you are given the opportunity to make good again wrongs you have done that person, in a previous existence". Very often, Karma has been understood as a stern judge, sentencing us to punishment for what we have done. But it is possible to think of it in a different way. Certainly there must be justice in the world, which is not manifest within the confines of a single life. Do not I myself wish for this? Do I not then long for the opportunity to pay my Karmic debt? Is not Karma then no alien judge, but a great artist, as Sri Aurobindo taught, weaving the threads of life in a noble pattern?

In the last period of his life, Rudolf Steiner was much concerned with a right understanding of Karma. Some years earlier, he had taught that many souls encounter, soon after death, the spirit form of Moses, who sums up for them the debts incurred in the life that it past. It is then their own desire to form their coming life, with the help of the heavenly Hierarchies, so that they can make good what they owe. Moses himself should not be thought of as a vengeful judge, but as one of the greater servants of Christ. When now the Christ-Spirit takes over the task of Moses directly, what is added? Already in 1913, in the Carlsruhe cycle "From Jesus to Christ" Rudolf Steiner had described how it is made possible for the soul not only to work for the repayment of its own individual debts, but to do so in the way that can best serve the tasks of humanity as a whole. And in 1924 he gave his pupils a great picture of what history really is: the interweaving of individual Karma with World-Karma. The personalities he then described were in the main people whose names have come down to us in external history; most of them in earlier incarnations had been connected in some way with the Mysteries, and therefore with the Christ-Spirit, though they may have incarnated in a later life as an opponent of traditional Christianity.

These individualities were often connected by friendship, or as teacher and pupil, or in a family relationship with another person or group of people, with so deep a love that it would transcend death and rebirth, bringing them together perhaps across the limits of nations and people, for positive, constructive work.

Towards the autumn of 1924 Rudolf Steiner begins to include in the description of these individualities the period spent in the spiritual world between death and a new birth, and the influence upon them of beings belong to the sphere of this or that planet. Such descriptions help us to see how complex a human being is. In each of us terrestrial and celestial elements are interwoven. And the great question is: can we bring these diverse elements into harmony?

Christ does not work in human beings only when they are fully conscious of his influence. He is active where different elements meet — particularly in the encounter between thinking and feeling or, in terms of the etheric formative forces, in the interplay between Light-Ether and Sound-Ether. Since the event described as the Fall, man has been master in earth, water, air and light, while the Sound-Ether and the Life-Ether are withheld from humanity's immediate experience and control. According to the picture given in Genesis, when Eve and Adam have taken of the Tree of Knowledge, they

have no access to the Tree of Life. And the music of the spheres is no longer heard by them.

But what was denied after the Fall is brought again to mankind by Christ; the heavenly music and the divine Word. And the renewal of Life, where Death was prevailing.

The people of our time begin to long for one world-language, and for one living community all over the world. These hopes begin to show themselves in the way young people, in particular, take hold of music. Before, music had been very much a local thing; now, the diversity of folk-music flows into the music of continents and increasingly into music sung and played all over the world. But a great deal of the music of the world today manifests acute tension and disharmony; and though this is necessarily there, we need too that music should manifest the Resurrection and continued presence of Christ. He has brought again to the souls of humanity the songs of the planets, which interweave with the song of the Earth. Through him the heavenly and the earthly parts of our being can be reconciled; without him, they can come into grave conflicts. At different stages of our lives, these can tear us apart, or deeply bewilder us; above all, between the ages of about seventeen and twenty-five. It is a great work of the Christ, all over the earth, whether or not there is belief in him, to help those at this age to bring about peace within themselves.

If older people are to make their contribution to this work, they need life in their thinking. For as we go from childhood to old age, our thinking tends to die. A symptom of this is when we criticize more and more. A criticism is not always a dead thought, but usually it is. Where it is coloured by hope and enthusiasm, it can revive. Most of our economic theory consists of dead thought; and there hope and enthusiasm for affluence and a growing gross national product are not enough to enliven it. Both the economic theory of Adam Smith, which is the ultimate source of Western capitalist views, and that of Marxism-Leninism, consist of dead thinking. Is there any way of bringing these to life?

At this moment the benefits of a free market economy, Adam Smith's basic concept, are being vigorously proclaimed in the West — and, within limits, Soviet Russia and Communist China seem to be moving in this direction. But the Soviet leadership appears to be much more conscious than the dominant figures in the West of some of the deeper needs of those young people who do not feel at home with the world as it is. Their inner tension is often concerned with competitiveness — the part of their soul which comes

from the spiritual world would rather co-operate than compete. Even children who are victorious in competitive games are sometimes bitterly sad that they have had to defeat their friends.

Individually, musicians can be intensely competitive. And yet music is at its greatest where there is co-operation. In two lines of "Faust" Goethe brings these qualities together:

"Die Sonne tönt nach alte Weise
In Brudersphären Wettgesang".

The Sun's ancient song sounds forth both in competition and in harmony with its brother planets. But in the end, both on the Earth and in the heights, competitiveness can learn to serve co-operation. This is to be seen even among the nearest earthly disciples of Christ, who can dispute among themselves who is the greatest not long before the Passion, but by Whitsun have learned how to join in a community practising the deepest kind of mutual service.

By the time of Christ, many individualities had already passed through a number of incarnations as a man and as a woman; the lives as a man filled with much action, the lives as a woman with much suffering. The male brains were in general harder than those of the women. Thus on the morning of the first Easter it was women who saw and understood the Risen Christ before men did — most of the Eleven could do this only in the evening, when they had most of them lived all day with the message the women brought. But in the afternoon, on the way to Emmaus, two disciples had been joined by a traveller who spoke long with them, whom they persuaded to come in and eat with them when evening was near. "In the breaking of the bread" they recognized him as the Christ. When they saw him no longer, they remembered how their hearts had "burned within them" as they had listened to his words on the road.

The Resurrection is not comprehensible to the human intellect unless it receives into its cold shadow-pictures the element of spiritual warmth, objective warmth of heart. The present age is far from recognizing that this warmth, which burns again in the "tongues of flame" at Whitsun, need not take anything away from the clarity and accuracy of thinking. It does not simply repeat the warmth community felt in the past, but heralds a future, completely conscious kind of community, ready to serve Mother Earth in her entirety, selflessly.

The mood of aggression, based on territories, is a great hindrance to the development of spiritual organs by humanity. And yet there are parts of the Earth where peoples are predisposed to this soul-development; the countries between Middle Europe and Russia, Russia itself, and perhaps parts of Latin America. Always the aggressiveness and militarism of men have brought women much sorrow. But the sorrows of the twentieth century have reached in these countries a culmination of depth and intensity which should not be forgotten. It is one of the remarkable things about the utterances of Mr. Gorbachov that he speaks with several voices, which he welds into a certain unity. And through one of these millions try to speak, particularly women and young people who have suffered and are suffering almost entirely in silence up to now. Their longing is for peace and truth.

From the regions between Middle Europe and Russia we bring a very person voice, a complete contrast to the long, ancient, happy "Hymn to the Earth" — a short, recent passage of prose by Georg Kühlewind, "The Power of Sorrow". The very condensed, paradoxical style of this makes considerable demands on the reader. Is he undervaluing the significance of sorrow, when he says that the "reasons" for it are not always "apparent"? His words can set us off on a search, backwards through the history of humanity; what have the great sorrows of human beings and of Gods been about? Have they any relation to the hardening in humanity which has been described? What was the grief of Isis, of Demeter?

The great sorrows seem always to have been concerned with death. In Paradise, and in the spiritual world in general, there was and is no death. Nevertheless, there is grief in the spiritual world over the dying of the Earth. Through the ages, endlessly much that is good has been given — and now the great adversaries of the Good can take possession of it. The Word which could save it has been lost. The stars cease to speak with humanity on earth. It becomes possible for human beings on Earth to feel themselves as terrestrial creatures — and as nothing else. But the souls which have felt in this way, which have become utterly and completely absorbed in their physical attachments, may have great difficulty in finding their way back to the spiritual worlds where they belong. They may come to serve evil powers, instead of the good powers in whom they had their origin. Instead of finding their way towards the heavenly regions, from which the spiritual hierarchies send their influence to the Earth, these souls may turn back all too soon towards the Earth, carrying unchanged the obsession with anger, or greed, or power which governed them up to their last death. These are "the spirits in prison" of whom

St. Peter writes in his First Epistle. Their condition is a great sorrow to the Earth, uniting with all the sorrows concerned with the hardening of her body. But since the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ speaks to the imprisoned spirits, as Peter says, and tells them of their lost Godhead. The early Christian tradition speaks of this as the Descent into Hell; and it is summed up in the Revelation of St. John, in the words of Christ: "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Death and of Hades".

All the etheric robes of Earth glow with fresh splendour through the coming of Christ. We can think of these robes as fourfold: Warmth-Ether, Light-Ether, Sound-Ether, Life-Ether. From the Fall onwards humanity has been accustomed to reach only as far as the Light-Ether; since the time of the Mystery of Golgotha direct, conscious access to Sound-Ether and Life-Ether is granted more and more through the presence of Christ with us, in us.

True-spirited knowledge, reconciling fallen Earth with the heavens, has always begun with inner warmth, in the form of active reverence and devotion (as these are described at the beginning of "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds"). It is natural and right to seek the origin of this warmth in the love of the Father for the Son, through whom all things came into being. But were we to find in warmth *only* the desire for the past it would lead to the fallen Angels, and not to Michael; it would not be strong enough to heal the sickness of the Earth. We must find inner warmth in the free experience of the present, and in confident purpose for the future. It can then serve Michael and Christ.

Inner light can mislead us too, if it is not selfless. The Light through which Christ works does not assert its own splendour, but is filled with compassion for humanity as it actually is, and for all the needs of the Earth as they are in their immediate reality. A community or an individual with compassion cannot avoid sorrow; and this cannot simply be mixed with joy (as K hlew nd points out), but has its independent right to existence. Joy and sorrow have to meet on another level, where they can form a new community.

The Earth and the stars sing together, joy and sorrow in their tones; and at first human beings cannot understand them, or see their forms. But the Christ comes to meet us, in the form of an Angel; though our earthly picturing capacity may translate his form into the likeness of one of the great pictures we may know — by Fra Angelico or Rembrandt, for example, or a modern Chinese artist. Or the Light may not be contained, but flooding, as in one of

Rembrandt's versions of the Disciples at Emmaus. In dreams at night, in meditation and prayer by day, our faculty of picturing may grow and live, on its way towards full spiritual vision. Our inner hearing too, nurtured by silence and every kind of daily listening, may be prepared to receive the creative, healing Word.

The wind in the trees, to which we have listened with our bodily ears as children, has behind it a music to which the ears of our soul listen in deep sleep each night, where the memories of our own lives, all the way back into childhood, unite with the pure soul-nature of the plants, on their way out towards the stars. The music of the spheres, which the Christ is bringing back to us, can work on from sleep into the day, holding within it the ever-changing movements of the stars, the Moon, and the Sun, from whose realms he came. To the beings whose homes these are, we are to learn to speak.

A.B.

THE STARS OF 1989

KEY TO SYMBOLS USED IN THE DRAWINGS

<i>Planets</i>		<i>Constellations of the Zodiac</i>	
☿	Mercury	♈	Ram (Aries)
♀	Venus	♉	Bull (Taurus)
♂	Mars	♊	Twins (Gemini)
♃	Jupiter	♋	Crab (Cancer)
♄	Saturn	♌	Lion (Leo)
♅	Uranus	♍	Virgin (Virgo)
♆	Neptune	♎	Scales (Libra)
		♏	Scorpion (Scorpio)
		♐	Archer (Sagittarius)
		♑	Goatfish (Capricorn)
		♒	Waterman (Aquarius)
		♓	Fishes (Pisces)

The symbols (or more properly "sigils") for the signs of the Zodiac are always used to represent the beginning or 0° of the signs as they were established by Ptolemy in the second century AD. These are the signs used in traditional astrology, and do not correspond with the visible constellations. According to this system, the 0° of Aries coincides exactly with the point of the Spring Equinox, that of Cancer with the Summer Solstice, that of Libra with the Autumn Equinox, and that of Capricorn with the Winter Solstice*. This relationship is not affected by the so-called precession of the equinoxes. In other words, while the visible constellations slowly change their position with respect to the seasons of the year, the signs do not. It will be noticed that the constellations have shifted by nearly 30° since the time of Ptolemy. Thus, in the January picture, the sigil for Aries (the Spring Point) stands in the Fishes, while that of Pisces stands in the Waterman.

* For the Southern Hemisphere the opposite seasons prevail.

THE STARS OF 1989

Twelve Monthly Observations

by John Meeks
Illustrations by Michael Brinch

The Earth as a Seed in the Universe

In his *Philosophy of Natural Science* Hegel defines the planets as "bodies of individuality". They are not able, like the stars, to send forth their own light and warmth, engendering life and stimulating evolution around them. Nor can they be compared to the moons which encircle them like fossilized relics of a once living process. Unlike those arid satellites, they are enveloped by a delicate membrane of air which mediates the cosmic influences and at the same time protects from their direct, unmitigated working. Thus a sphere of life can arise — today we would say a biosphere — in which development and metamorphosis to ever-higher forms can take place.

The axis around which the planetary body turns in its daily motion Hegel compared to the vertical axis of the human being as an expression of his higher individuality. The speed of rotation governs the rhythm of day and night, the alternation of sleeping and waking.

In our own times we would have to qualify Hegel's brilliant philosophical generalizations — unencumbered as they were by the findings of modern planetary research — by saying that among the planets known to us, only the Earth appears to fulfil these conditions perfectly. This fact need not deter us from taking seriously his ideas, which seek to interpret all natural phenomena in the light of inner human experience. The Earth, after all, is our home in the universe, and so from a human perspective is the truest representative of the "planetary" condition.

Certainly one spirit who would have understood and applauded Hegel's intentions was his contemporary, the philosopher-poet Novalis. "Metaphysics and astronomy," according to Novalis, "are a single science. Freedom and immortality are light and warmth. God, freedom and immortality will once form the basis for a spiritual science of physics, just as the Sun, light and warmth are the basis of earthly physics".¹ And as though commenting directly

on Hegel's astronomical speculations, Novalis describes sleep as a state "peculiar to those beings who dwell on planets. — In the future, human beings will continually wake and sleep at one and the same time."² With these words, Novalis points to an evolutionary enhancement of consciousness, and to a future when the Earth will no longer be a "planet", but will have advanced to become something like a star or a sun in the universe. He looked forward to this solar age as to a time of "world judgment" in which the present *prosaic* nature of heaven and earth will pass over into a new *poetical* age³.

Seen in this light, we could describe the Earth in its present stage as a macrocosmic seed planted in the womb of the cosmos, and destined to become a source of light and warmth for a new evolutionary phase. And each human being on the Earth, in striving to embody his or her own higher being, is like a microcosmic seed, in the sense of the Rosicrucian verse:

Homo angelus, sum qui sum.
Granum pectoris Christi insitum.
 Homo angelus, I am who I am.
 A seed planted in the breast of Christ.

In contemplating the celestial events of 1989, we shall try to pursue this theme under various aspects. The myths of the planets and constellations will be considered in the light of the development from an ancient, instinctive consciousness towards the awakening of the spiritual individuality. Just as the Greeks' conception of their gods changed and evolved with their culture, we can learn to search for those parts of our own inner life which correspond to the planetary beings, and are capable of development and evolution — of a spiritual unfolding comparable to the physical unfolding of a plant from a seed.

Similarly, in trying to stimulate the reader to new, and probably unaccustomed observations of the night sky, we shall point to certain inner experiences which can have a character of awakening. Perhaps the best known and most exhilarating of these is the unforeseen moment when a brilliant meteor flashes across the sky, briefly shattering the crystalline stillness of the constellations. Less familiar and far more demanding are the contemplative exercises in observing the apparent light-fluctuations of dim stars on a moonless night, or experiencing the subtle moment of awakening when the eye succeeds in pinpointing a gently-shining planet in the brighter twilight. Learning to become attentive to such delicate and elusive experiences requires intense inner activity. It also means developing the willingness to

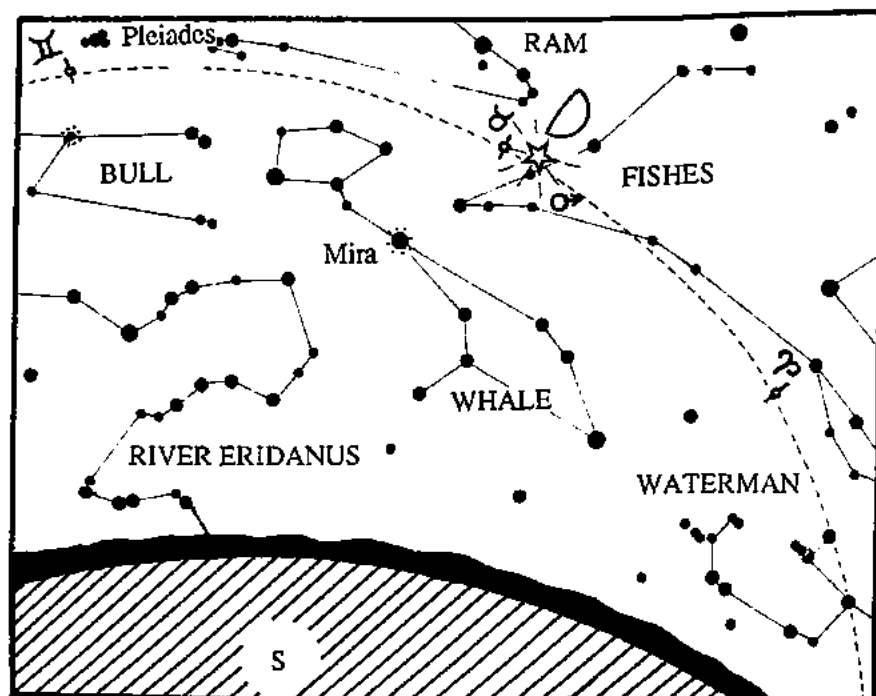
foster the experience, not to withdraw from it into the security of a ready-made explanation.

Hence the reader is asked to bear with us if more emphasis is placed on the phenomena themselves: on the what and how, rather than the why. And finally, we would like to ask our readers — wherever they may be located on the globe — for their forbearance when our illustrations make global leaps — from hemisphere to hemisphere. The awakening of a global consciousness — and this is inseparable from our theme — can be fostered and encouraged by developing an understanding of how the cosmos appears from different parts of our planet. In this sense, it is hoped that these twelve monthly observations can become a meaningful guide through the starry events of the year, and a key to seeing many other phenomena in life afresh.

References:

- 1 Novalis, *Das allgemeine Brouillon*, No. 38.
- 2 Ibid, No. 409
- 3 Ibid, No. 392

JANUARY 1989



Conjunction of Mars and the Moon in the Fishes. Northern Hemisphere, London (Latitude $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N), on Saturday 14th January at 19.19 local time. Jupiter can be seen some distance to the left (east) near the Pleiades. The conjunction takes place some six hours after the first quarter moon (exact "half moon" form).

Last autumn Mars traced a bright loop near the Spring Point in the Fishes, briefly outshining Jupiter at its closest approach to the Earth. Since this time, Mars has been steadily retreating on the further reaches of its orbit, and will continue to do so until it finally disappears in the evening twilight early in August. During this period it will be moving across the northern part of the zodiac, from the Fishes through the Ram, Bull, Twins, Crab and into the Lion. Already now, at the beginning of 1989, its brightness has diminished dramatically, and by the end of January it will be the dimmest of all planets visible to the naked eye.

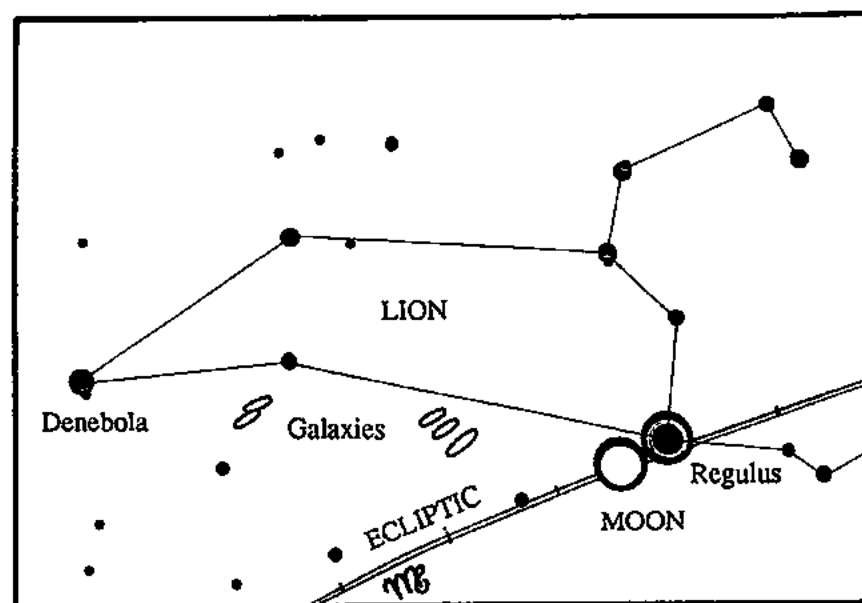
In a similar way, each planet approaches the Earth from the remote parts of its orbit, reaches its closest proximity, or *perigee*, and then withdraws once more into the cosmic depths — each in its own rhythm and with its individual signature. This movement is always accompanied by variations in brightness, but with no other planet are they so extreme as with Mars.

The meeting between two celestial bodies could be thought of in analogy to the encounter between two human beings. They come together from different spatial directions, and each one brings something of the experiences and gifts gathered there. Exchanges take place on various levels and — ideally, at least — the two go apart enriched and stimulated on their separate paths. The fruits of their meeting are carried to different parts of the world, seeds are sown. Further meetings take place in which the qualities of the previous one continue to reverberate. We could think of this process in connection with the alchemical principle: *solve et coagula* — dissolving and binding, expanding and contracting.

Since their closest approach on 22nd September 1988, Mars and the Earth have been moving apart — they are on the path of *solve*, of sowing the seeds of their meeting into the widths of the cosmos. From our earthly perspective we will see Mars fading and its visibility being restricted more and more to the evening sky, until at last it "dissolves" into the evening twilight in July/August. At the same time, we can observe a series of meetings between Mars and other planets. The first great encounter will be in March, when Mars will pass between Jupiter and the Pleiades in the Bull. In July it is overtaken by the slightly faster Venus between the Crab and the Lion, and in August it will appear to merge into a single point of light with Mercury in one of the closest conjunctions between two planets this century. Each of these meetings is illustrated and described as part of an inner journey which involves the transformation and ennoblement of the forces of Mars.

The Moon punctuates this process with a series of conjunctions which take place regularly each month. Not every one of these can be described, but those who would like to follow them are encouraged to observe how the lunar phase gradually becomes a little earlier each time the Moon overtakes Mars, moving from the "half Moon" form this month to the two-day old crescent in July and August.

FEBRUARY 1989



The constellation of the Lion, showing the occultation of Regulus by the Moon, followed by a total lunar eclipse about five hours later. Both events are visible in Japan, Hawaii and New Zealand.

Occultations and Eclipses

During its movement across the night sky, it occasionally happens that the Moon passes directly in front of a planet or star, briefly obscuring it from view. Such events are known as *occultations*, from the word "occult" or "hidden". If the star passes behind the centre of the lunar disc, it will remain invisible for roughly an hour. This corresponds to the Moon's average speed of about 12° each day (thus: 360° per month and $1\frac{1}{2}^\circ$, or its own diameter, per hour).

Because the Moon is quite close to the Earth in astronomical terms, the visibility of an occultation is strongly subject to the observer's geographical position. Any change of latitude to the north would naturally make the Moon appear to shift southwards against the background of the constellations. Positional changes of this kind, which follow the familiar laws of spatial perspective, are referred to in astronomy as effects of *parallax*. This, combined with the obvious fact that the Moon must be over the horizon at the time of the event, will explain the restricted area of visibility given above.

Lunar eclipses are not subject to the same geographical restriction as

occultations. The Moon is eclipsed when, in passing opposite the Sun as Full Moon, it enters partially or completely into the shadow of the Earth. It is remarkable to reflect that this shadow is continuously present as an invisible cone of darkness which extends to a considerable distance beyond the lunar orbit. We only notice its existence when the Moon, or some other brightly illuminated object, like an artificial satellite, plunges into it, more or less disappearing from view. The experience of an eclipse can thus reveal one of the deepest mysteries of light: that it is invisible. We could also say that light, in its true essence, is completely selfless. Like thinking, which does not exist for its own sake, but to illuminate the inner and outer realities of the world, light only appears when substance enters its sphere of influence. The dark spaces of the night sky are permeated by sunlight, which appears to us only where the Moon or a planet are present to reflect it.

Observers of this and other lunar eclipses¹ will notice that the Moon does not completely disappear from view in the Earth's shadow, but appears in a dismal, grey to reddish illumination. The explanation for this can be found if we place ourselves imaginatively on the eclipsed Moon, and look back towards the darkened disc of the Earth, behind which the Sun would be completely obscured. Along the Earth's circumference we would see the reddish colours of twilight. Their intensity would depend on the momentary meteorological conditions of the Earth. This reddish light falls on the darkened surface of the Moon and illuminates it dimly with what has sometimes been described as a "coppery glow". It is difficult to avoid the impression of a ghostly quality, of an unhealthy pallor, which stands in the greatest contrast to the beauty of the twilight colours when we experience them from the Earth, weaving freely in the atmosphere. This phenomenon calls to mind Goethe's observation that the quality of a colour — its sensible-moral character — is not an absolute, but depends to a remarkable extent on the nature of the material on which it appears. The dark-grey ashen surface of the Moon, with its poor reflectivity, receives the twilight of the Earth, but the small part of it which is reflected seems robbed of its delicate ethereal quality, so that it appears sullied, even sanguinary. We can understand the images of ancient myths, which saw the eclipsed Moon as being threatened or devoured by a red demon.

The eclipse begins at 13.43 GMT when the Moon first enters the core of the Earth's shadow. It is total from 14.56 to 16.15, and the end of the partiality is 17.27. The final partial phase can be observed from much of Europe.

¹ The total lunar eclipse on the night of August 16/17 (mid-point around 3.00 GMT) will be favourable for viewing in Europe and along the east coast of the Americas.

MARCH 1989

Mars in conjunction with Jupiter near the Pleiades. Northern Hemisphere, London (Latitude $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N) on Saturday, 11th March at 18.30 GMT. On Monday the 27th Mars will be near the orange star Aldebaran in the Bull, while Jupiter will hardly have moved from his original position.

The Redemption of Mars: A Mythological Perspective

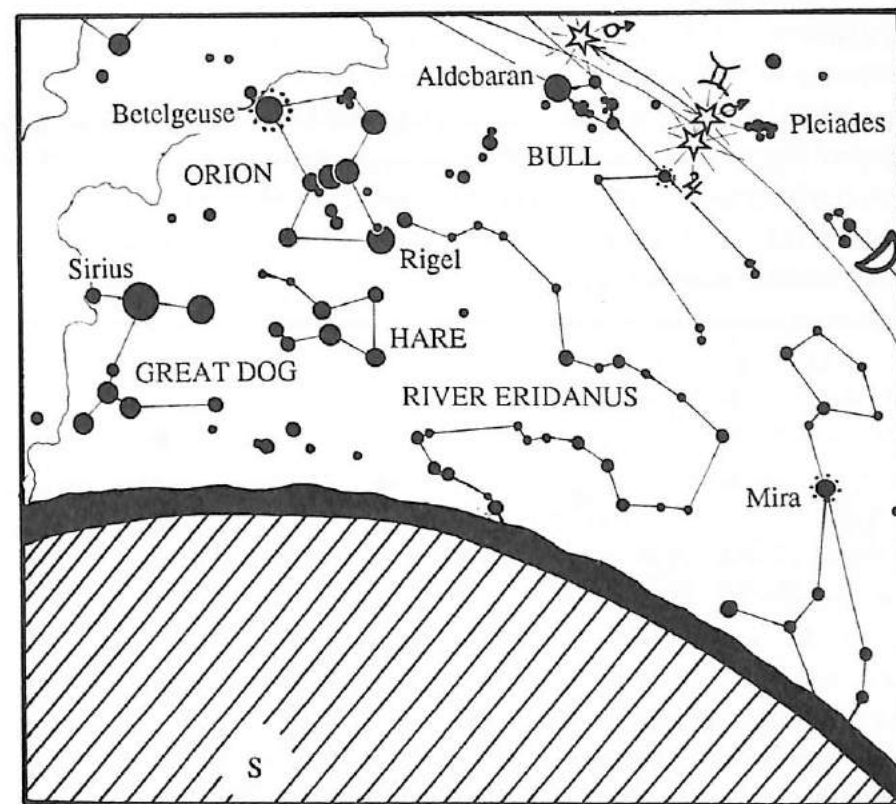
In this first of three planetary conjunctions during Mars' retreat from the Earth, a particularly beautiful configuration is formed, as the planets meet between the Pleiades and the V-shaped Hyades with Aldebaran, two of the most impressive star clusters in the sky. At the time shown in the drawing, about an hour after sunset, the crescent Moon will appear to embrace the delicate blue "earth-light" — the portion of the lunar surface which is not directly illuminated by the Sun, but by the light reflected from the Earth.¹

Although the reddish colour of Mars lends it a certain power, it is only about 1/16th as bright as Jupiter, and is even slightly outshone by Aldebaran. Indeed, we could be reminded of the moment in Homer's *Iliad* when Ares-Mars, wounded and humiliated in battle by Pallas Athene, throws himself before the throne of Zeus-Jupiter, only to be rebuffed with the words: "You are the most hateful to me of all the Olympian gods." And he continues: "But to be sure, I can no longer endure that you should suffer pain, for you are my son, and your mother bore you for me. Were another god your father, by now you would be cast deeper than the Titans into the abyss." (5,890 ff.). With these words Zeus charges the divine physician Paieon with the healing of Ares' wounds, which is soon accomplished.

Today we would ask whether something more than the reluctant loyalty of a "blood relationship" comes to expression in this healing. It is possible that Mars, whose nature seems a strange mixture of crude Titanic and noble Olympian qualities, must undergo a kind of inner development, leading to a redemption of his lower nature?

To be sure, there is only limited evidence for this in Greek mythology, where Mars almost invariably acts impulsively, without forethought, and

¹ It is a remarkable fact that the blue light of the Earth does not appear tainted when reflected by the dull surface of the Moon, but seems to retain its ethereal quality (see the description of lunar eclipse colours in the text for February).



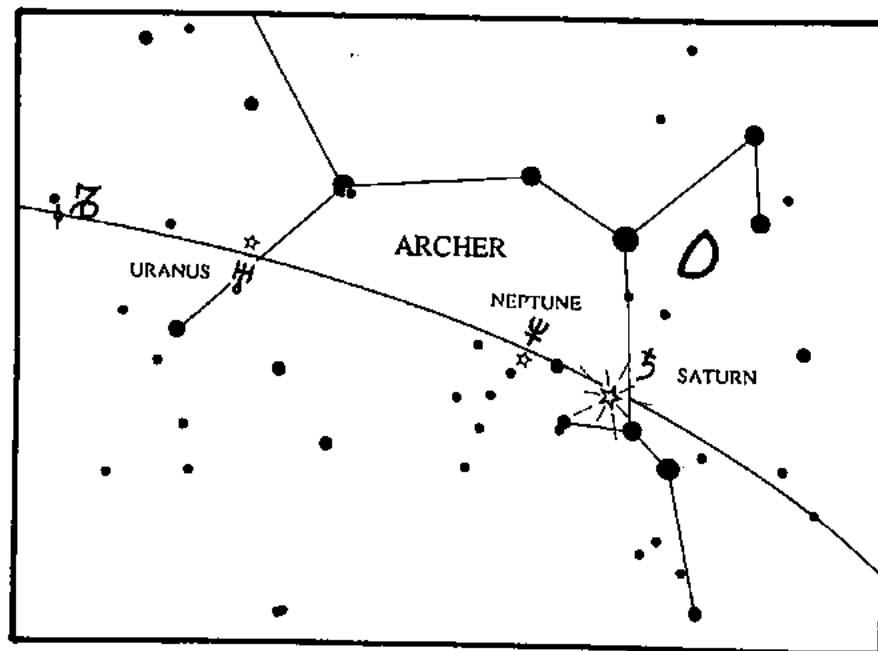
seems motivated by passion, rather than by higher ideals. He cannot yet directly meet Zeus, the god of wisdom and providence, without irritation. He is irresistibly drawn, however, to Venus-Aphrodite, who alone among the Olympians seems able to exercise an ennobling influence on him.

Out of their union are born two sons, the war demons Phobos and Deimos ("Fear" and "Terror"), and a daughter, "Harmonia". The two tiny moons which encircle the red planet in close, swift orbits, and which were first discovered telescopically in 1877 (although strangely foretold by Jonathan Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* 150 years earlier) are named after the sons.

The beautiful Harmonia seems to unite and reconcile the extremes of her parents. She becomes the wife of Cadmos, the founder of Thebes, a city in which the cults of Ares as well as Aphrodite played a central rôle. To win her hand, Cadmos has to slay a dragon, who is a child of Ares from an earlier union. This myth could well suggest that the task of overcoming Mars' lower nature and uniting with his higher potential, is a special domain of the human hero as a founder and guide of civilization.

APRIL 1989

The constellation of the Archer (Sagittarius) with the outer planets Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, as seen from the Southern Hemisphere. The Moon is shown in conjunction with Saturn on Thursday, 27th March at midnight GMT. Observers in the Northern Hemisphere should turn the drawing upside down to find the correct orientation.



The Southern Hemisphere has been chosen because of the difficulty of observing these southernmost stars of the zodiac in the north. In England the Archer can best be seen a little before or after midsummer (avoiding the brightest nights) in the extreme south.

The Outermost Great Planets, Uranus and Neptune

Since time immemorial Saturn was regarded as the outermost planet of the solar system, guarding the threshold between the rhythmic world of the planets and the eternal realm of the fixed stars. In ancient Greece he was Chronos, the regent of an earlier, pre-Olympian generation of gods, whose name brings to expression that his cosmic domain was on the boundary between space and time.

Chronos was the father of Zeus, and the son of Uranus, the earliest sovereign of the heavens. In Greek cosmology, Uranus was connected not to a particular planet, but rather to the whole sphere of fixed stars which embraced the planetary system.

The discovery of the distant planet Uranus was made in the year 1784 by the German composer and astronomer William Herschel, then living in England.¹ Herschel made the discovery as part of a systematic telescopic survey of the whole sky. At the time, Uranus was in the constellation of the Twins, almost exactly opposite its present position. Since then it has made two and a half revolutions through the zodiac, its period being 84 years.

With a visual magnitude of +6, Uranus is in fact barely within the range of naked-eye visibility. On an exceptionally clear night a sharp-eyed observer, equipped with an exact map, can usually succeed in locating the pale green planet at its brightest, near opposition to the Sun.

Unlike Uranus, Neptune was not discovered by chance, but with the help of methodical calculations. Disturbances in the orbital movements of Uranus led John Couch Adams in England and Urbain Leverrier in France to calculate the position of a hypothetical trans-Uranian planet. Completely independently of each other, the two scientists arrived at predictions which proved to be only one degree away from the actual position of the planet when it was discovered by J. G. Galle in Berlin in 1846. At this time Neptune was situated between the Goatfish and the Waterman. In the year 2010 it will return to the same part of the sky, having completed one revolution through the zodiac since its discovery 164 years earlier.

The gathering of Saturn, Uranus and Neptune in a single constellation is indeed a rare event. Readers of the 1988 *Golden Blade* may remember the triple conjunction of Saturn and Uranus, as the first of three such meetings during the coming years. This year Saturn and Neptune trace out their loops simultaneously, and meet in conjunction three times: on the 3rd March, 24th June and 12th November. In 1993 Uranus will at last overtake Neptune in a similar triple meeting.

The discovery of planets beyond the range of the naked eye poses a tremendous challenge to human consciousness. Astronomers, supported by

¹ Observers who find star-gazing in England beset with difficulties may well take encouragement from Herschel's shining example. We hope they will not be disappointed to learn that the 1780's were among the most unusual years in the recorded history of weather in Europe, the British Isles having been blessed by exceptionally clear skies and a dearth of the usually prevailing moist westerlies! (See H. H. Lamb, *Climate History and the Modern World*, Methuen, London, 1982).

the recent findings of the Voyager 2 Spacecraft, which passed Uranus in January, 1986, and is now on its way to Neptune, have gathered an overwhelming amount of physical data. We could well ask what spiritual steps humanity must take in order to counterbalance the weight of this knowledge, gained through a "sub-natural" technology of its own making? The great heavenly council of the three planets in the Archer as our millenium draws to a close comes directly in the wake of the physical discoveries. Is it an admonition to step across the spiritual threshold which Saturn has so long guarded?

MAY

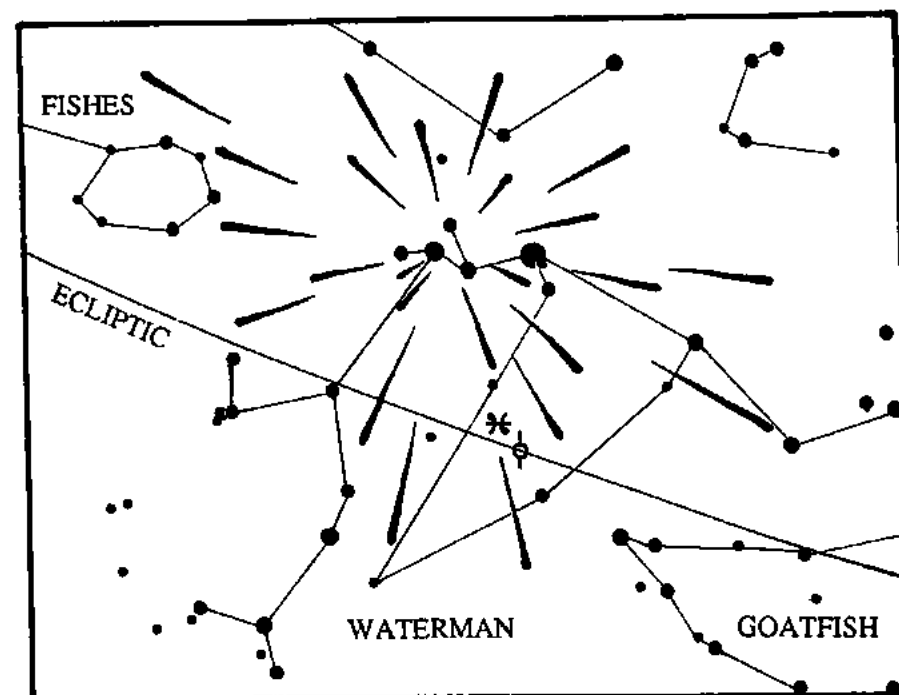
The May Meteor Stream of Aquarius

The constellation of the Waterman (Aquarius) is shown with the paths of several meteors belonging to the Aquarid Stream. Traced back to their direction of origin, they all lead nearly to a single point, called the *radiant*, which is located near the top of Aquarius' water vessel.

The ideal time for observing the Aquarids is in the early morning, say around 4 a.m. from the 1st to 8th May. Be sure to observe before the beginning of morning twilight, and above all, do not expect as spectacular a sight as the drawing would suggest. Even so, during the maximum on the 5th May an average of around 50 meteors can be seen each hour.

The Experience of Meteors and the Creative Faculty of Thinking

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote: "I can no more control my thoughts than I could control thunderbolts". He was referring, of course, not to any step-by-step process in logic, but to the thoughts which come to us unexpectedly, as though by a kind of grace. It is no more possible to predict when a real idea will occur to us than to anticipate in advance its direction or content. And we can make the seemingly paradoxical discovery that only those thoughts are truly our own which thus come to us as though from without. To receive them we must carefully prepare a vessel of selfless receptivity. Because our own higher individuality — the "I am" — is a cosmic being, it can enter in such moments of readiness, bearing thoughts which themselves have a cosmic character. They briefly illumine the inner firmament of the mind, streaking



across its breadths like a brilliant meteor, and leaving behind a luminous trail which slowly fades from view.

The sense of awakening, the joy and exuberance which usually accompany such thoughts, seem to correspond closely to the experience of outer meteors against the resting background of the fixed constellations. A certain selfless receptivity is usually quite naturally present when we look at the stars. The vastness and splendour of the star-studded sky, which so far transcends all that our senses have received during the day, tends to open the soul, and bring to rest many of the turbulences which have stirred it. Anyone who has frequently taken groups of people out under the stars at night, and pointed out the constellations, knows how futile it is to try to continue a train of thought when a sudden joyful gasp on all sides — an enlivening "inspiration" — announces the appearance of a meteor (usually in quite a different direction!). It is an event which can no more be predicted, or willed for that matter, than a new idea which is truly one's own. It seizes the imagination and often quite literally takes the breath away. For a time it is more important and more luminous — even in the memory — than the whole eternal ordered cosmos of resting stars. Similarly, a new and original idea temporarily outshines the whole inner cosmos of concepts and ideas which has been painstakingly built up over the whole course of one's life.

The Earth, in its unending journey through the cosmos, is continually receiving substance from without. We could think of the meteors as a kind of cosmic nourishment, streaming into the atmosphere from different directions of space, bringing renewal and fructification. We might even venture to suggest that the Earth — as a “seed in the universe” — is fertilized by the cosmic iron of the shooting stars; just as the individual human being — as a micro-cosmic seed — is fertilized by the living cosmic thoughts he is able to receive.

The meteors do not enter the atmosphere in a haphazard way; many belong to the regular annual “streams” which recur each year at certain predictable times, seeming to radiate from particular constellations. The Aquarid Stream is one of these. Its meteors are thought to be the debris formed by the gradual disintegration of Halley’s Comet, and they follow roughly the path of its orbit. The common direction from which they radiate is an effect of perspective, and results from the interplay of the Earth’s own movement and that of the meteoric substance, as it moves along its orbit.

JUNE

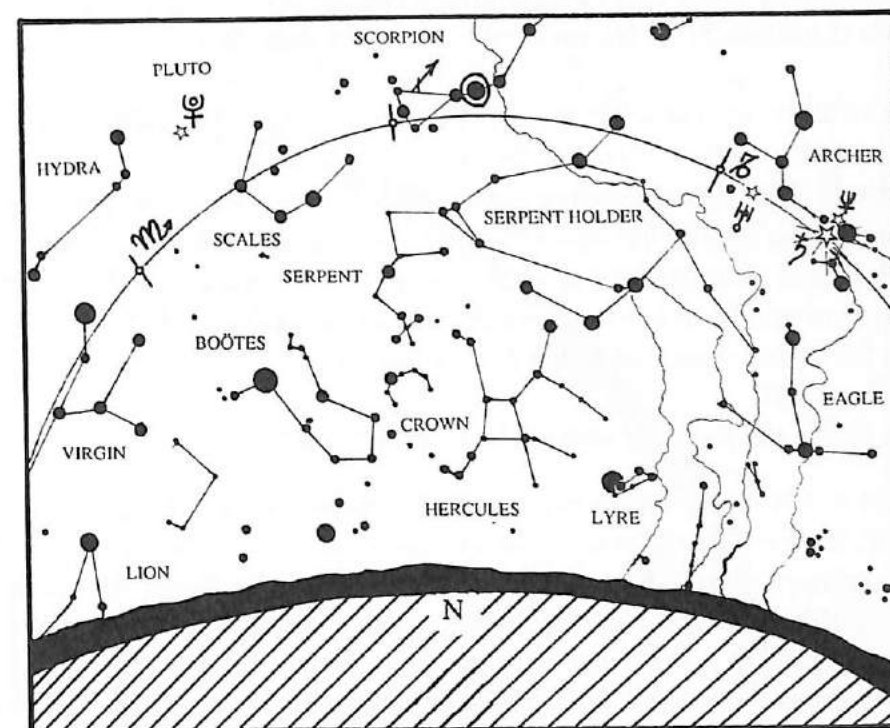
The Midwinter Sky of the Southern Hemisphere. Johannesburg, South Africa (Latitude 26°S), Saturday the 17th June at 22.30 local time. The waxing Moon, two days before Full, is occulting the reddish star Antares in the heart of the Scorpion. Saturn can be seen in the Archer, on the edge of the Milky Way. The positions of the invisible distant planets Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are indicated.

The southernmost constellations of the zodiac, which appear low in the summer sky of the Northern Hemisphere, are arched high over the north in the Southern Hemisphere. The direction of daily motion is from right to left, while the movement of the Moon and planets against the background of the stars is from left to right, opposite to the Northern Hemisphere.

Around the 14th, a few days before the occultation of Antares, observers in southern latitudes should be attentive to meteors. It is the peak of the Scorpis-Sagittarid Stream, the radiant being a few degrees above the summer point. In contrast to the May Aquarids, the August Perseids and the October Orionids, which all tend to have short, fast trails, these meteors are among the slowest, with long paths, and are occasionally very bright.

The reader is encouraged to try to discover through experience what

kinds of thoughts correspond to each of these meteor streams with their particular qualities of light and movement (see text for May).



The Discovery of Pluto

Pluto, the smallest and normally the most distant planet of the solar system, was discovered in 1930 by Clyde Tombaugh, in his systematic survey of photographic plates of the sky. At the time Pluto was in the Twins, about 90° away from where Uranus was discovered. Since that time it has traversed about a quarter of the zodiac, its period being about 248 years. This is almost exactly one and a half times Neptune’s orbital period, suggesting that it is locked into a resonance with that planet. According to modern estimates, Pluto is a little smaller than the Earth’s Moon, and there are voices in the world of astronomy which question its status as a planet. Its orbit is highly eccentric; at present and until about the end of the millenium, it is actually a little closer to the Sun than Neptune, although at its furthest separation from the Sun in the Ram it will be more than half again as far from the Sun as Neptune.

JULY 1989

Conjunction of Mars and Venus in the Evening Sky. Northern Hemisphere, London (Latitude $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N), on Wednesday 12th July, around 21.30 Summer Time.

The drawing shows the two planets about $\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ apart (1 lunar diameter) half an hour after sunset. At this time the rather dim Mars would normally be quite difficult to spot in the bright evening twilight, but its close proximity to brilliant Venus greatly increases the chances. A low, unobstructed horizon is essential, and binoculars are recommended. Observers in the Southern Hemisphere will be able to observe the planets against a darker sky, and thus have a far better chance of being able to see Mars.

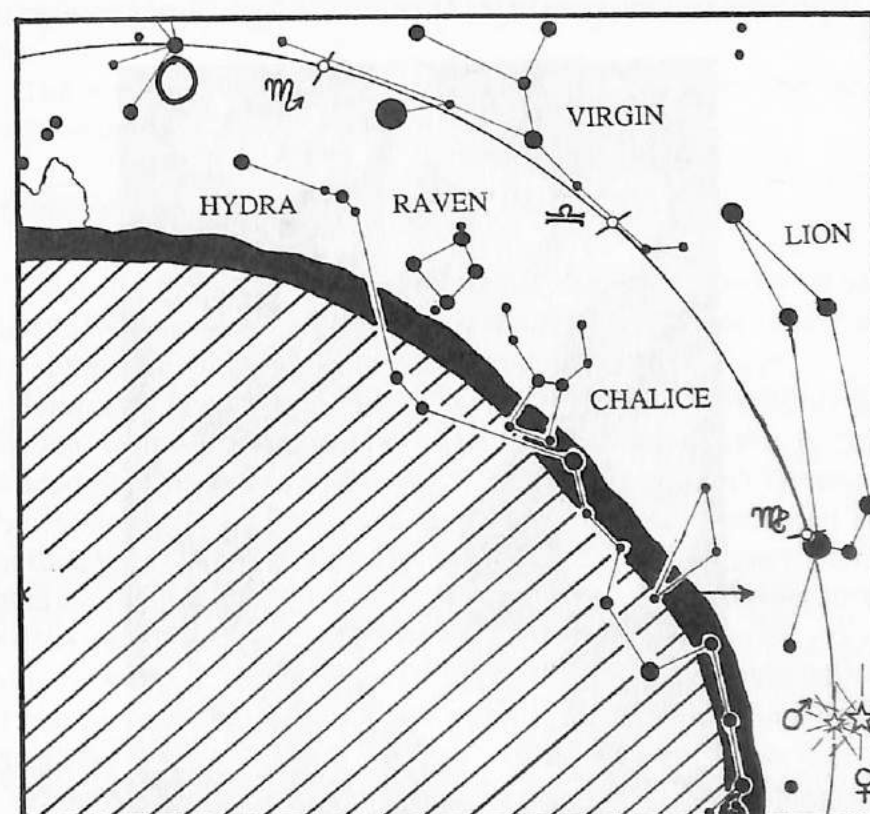
Observing in the Twilight and in the Depth of Night

Let us not be too easily daunted by the difficulty of finding Mars in the twilight! If we regard the search as a true quest, we will not be discouraged by the adversities. Just when a star or planet is at the verge of becoming imperceptible it, can lead us to a threshold of consciousness which shows us how our organism is attuned to subtle differences of brightness.

It is usually quite difficult at first to pick out a star or planet against the bright twilight sky. Once found, however, and held in clear, sharp focus, it seems hard to believe that it eluded us so long. If we now look slightly away, the star may well seem to disappear from view, showing us that the eye, when flooded with light, is most sensitive to differences in brightness at the focal point. Hence, the gaze must chance to fall almost directly on a star in order to find it. Once lost, it is difficult to retrieve without a clear point of reference on the land or in the sky. In this case, Venus, which is bright enough to appear clearly in peripheral vision, renders us this service.

After allowing the gaze to wander freely among the delicate colours of the twilight, and the soul to breathe in their grace and beauty, the discovery of such a fine, pure point of light can come as an experience of awakening. If this can take place without losing the slight dreaming quality inspired by the twilight, it is possible to have a gentle intimation of what Novalis may have meant in speaking of a future when human beings would sleep and wake at once.

The opposite experience can be made in searching for dim stars against a dark sky. They appear most vividly in peripheral vision. The attempt to fix



a dim star with the gaze often leads to its disappearance. Looking slightly away, it re-emerges. This phenomenon is particularly striking with the small cluster of the Pleiades or Seven Sisters in the constellation of the Bull (now visible in the morning sky before sunrise). They appear distinctly brighter when the gaze is directed a little distance away. When allowed to move freely towards them and then away again, a gentle play of light results which has doubtless led to numerous myths about the dancing Pleiades.

On a larger scale, similar fluctuations can be observed over the entire sky on dark, moonless nights. If we allow our gaze to wander freely among the constellations, myriad dim stars appear and disappear, eluding all attempts to make them the centre of attention. This delicate light-weaving takes place almost unnoticed against the clear structure of the brighter planets, stars and constellations, which can be seen as easily with direct as with peripheral vision. It adds a dimension to our perception of the stars which leads beyond a sober, geometrical clarity to a kind of wakeful dreaming. It also gives the impression that the spaces between the stars are vibrantly alive. Perhaps one



could even venture to say that it offers a kind of inner confirmation of Novalis' words:

"The *cosmic spaces* are the soul of the star system, and the stars themselves its body."

Mars and Venus: A Mythological Perspective

The marriage of Ares and Aphrodite has long been a favourite subject, not only in literature, but also in the visual arts. It has occasionally been treated with a slight tone of disapproval, but seldom without humour.

Botticelli's famous rendering of the theme, now in the National Gallery in London, seems to embody a new idea about the relationship of the pair. Mars has doffed his armour, and is reclining asleep on the grass. His unclothed limbs are youthfully delicate, and his fine features of Apollonian beauty. Aphrodite, fully clothed and awake, looks upon him with a gaze which seems devoted and loving, yet clear and almost sober. So profound is Ares' sleep that he is oblivious of the din made by the satyr-putti, who are romping playfully with his armour and weapons. One of them is blowing loudly through a triton-shell trumpet into his ear, and around his head wasps are buzzing, the "bees" of Mars.

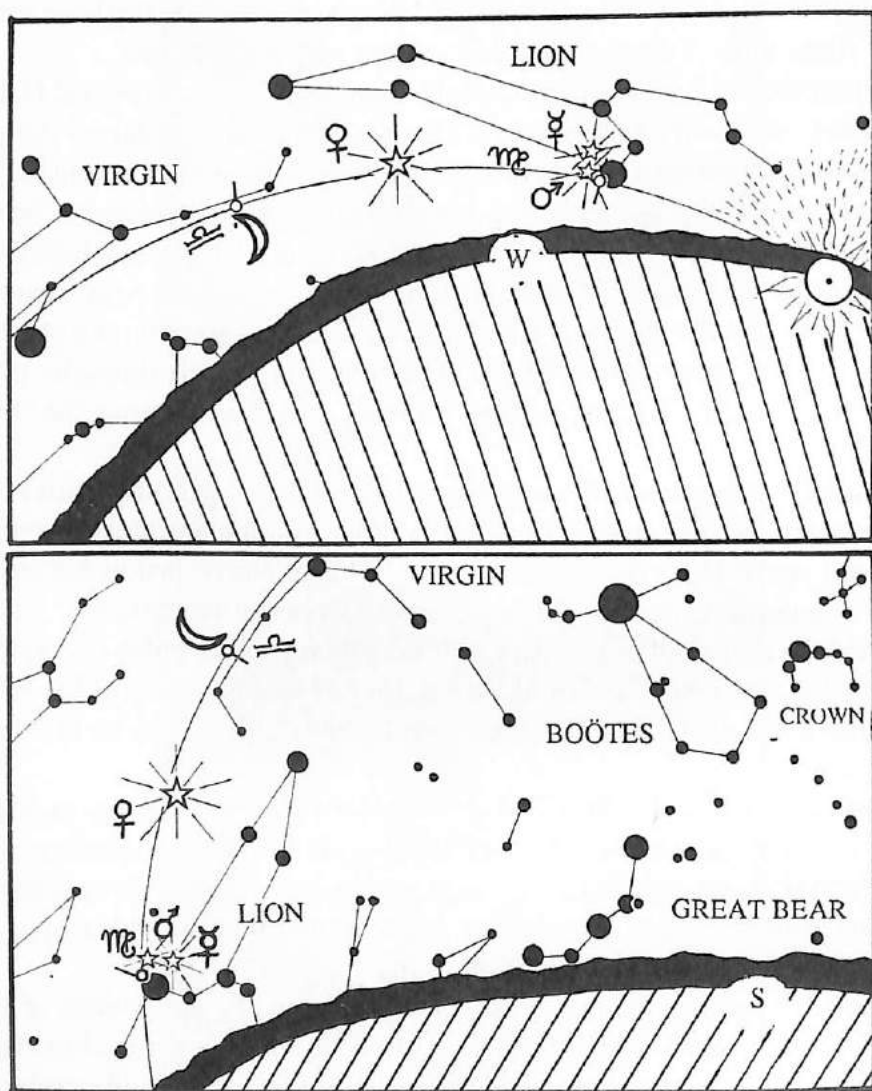
Under Aphrodite's harmonizing influence, his belligerent qualities seem to have fallen away from him, revealing a noble youth in his blossoming, but unformed years. He is quite in the power of his mistress, just as his ancient Greek counterpart, despite all his supposed masculine prowess, seldom remained the master of any situation. It is as though an impulse of equanimity, of peace, had taken hold of his being. He has as yet nothing of his own to put in the place of the war-like attributes he has shed, and so he loses consciousness.

Other artists of the Renaissance portrayed the same theme in a more allegorical, and less artistically satisfying way. In the astrological frescoes of Cossa in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara, for instance, Mars is shown kneeling in chains before Venus as her prisoner, while the two are triumphantly paraded on a kind of float drawn by a pair of swans.

It seems clear that a certain theme was in the air: the powers of love, harmony and art prevailing over those of violence and thoughtless bloodshed. The gentle tone of melancholy, so characteristic of Botticelli, adds an element of inwardness which is no longer Greek. Human consciousness has evolved, and so too the humanized image of the gods.

AUGUST 1989

View towards the western horizon on the early evening of Saturday, 5th August. An exceptionally close conjunction of Mars and Mercury near Regulus in the Lion. At 21.53 GMT the two planets will be separated by only 54 seconds of arc, or the equivalent of about 1/30th of a lunar diameter. For the naked eye they will seem to merge into a single point of light.



Upper drawing: Northern Hemisphere. London (Latitude $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N) at about 8 p.m. summer time (or about 25 minutes after sunset). Because of the low

angle of the zodiac to the horizon, the conditions of visibility for the two planets are far from ideal. Northern Hemisphere viewers should find a vantage point with a low horizon, unobstructed by trees, hills and buildings, and well away from street lighting. Binoculars are recommended, but probably not essential if the sky is clear and not too hazy. In the bright evening twilight the stars of the Lion and the Virgin will not yet be clearly visible, but the waxing crescent Moon and Venus will provide a helpful orientation. The closest approach of the two planets will take place about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours after they set, but at the time shown in the drawing they will only be separated by about 3 minutes of arc, less than a tenth of the lunar diameter.

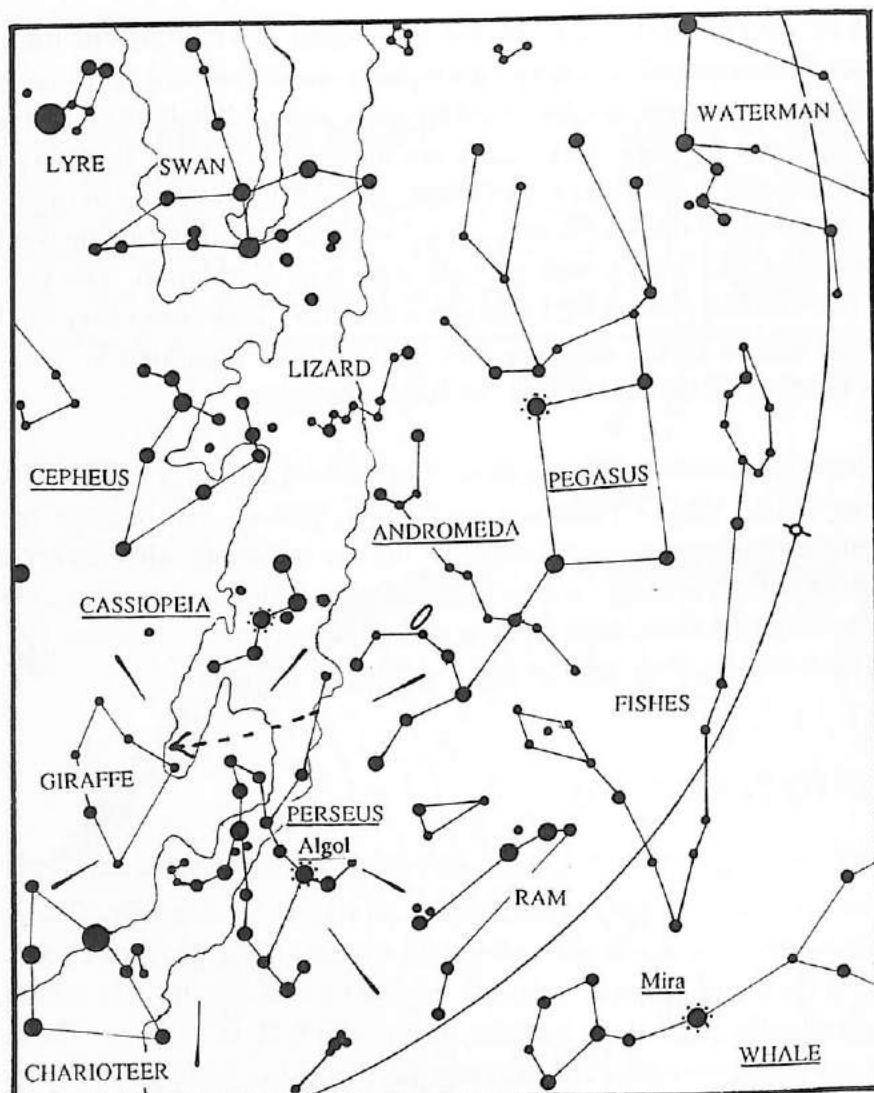
Lower drawing: Southern Hemisphere. Sao Paulo (Latitude $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ S) at 18.15 local time (21.15 GMT). Here too the Sun has just set, but because of the steeper angle of the zodiac to the horizon, the sky is considerably darker, and the conditions for viewing the two planets are excellent. With clear skies it should be easy to follow them in their descent nearly to the horizon. By the time of their setting, they will be just 1 minute of arc apart.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1989

The Constellations of the Perseus Myth. Northern Hemisphere. The map shows the view to the northeast, as it would appear on Michaelmas Day (29th September) at about 10 p.m., or at the beginning of September at midnight. Perseus is already clear of the horizon. The position of the *zenith* — the point directly overhead — varies for different latitudes. For London ($51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N) it would be a little below Deneb in the Swan.

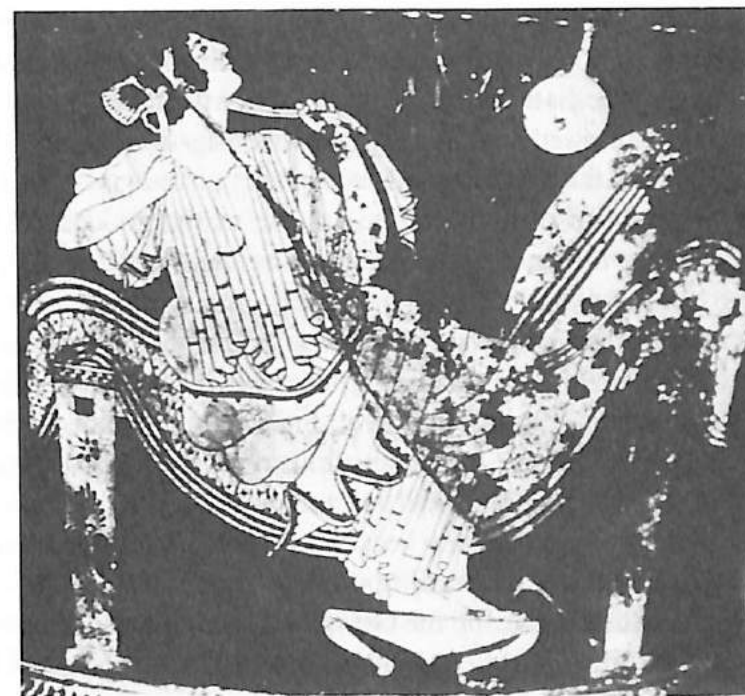
The names of the constellations and stars connected with the myth of Perseus are underlined. Cepheus, the father of Andromeda, plays little direct rôle in the story, and is not mentioned here further. The movement of the radiant of the Perseid Meteor Stream is indicated, from late July until mid-August, by a broken line.

The position of the Andromeda Galaxy is indicated by an oval. It is the only full galaxy outside our own Milky Way which is visible to the naked eye. It can be seen on clear, moonless nights as a dim, nebulous cloud. It is estimated to be over 2 million light years away, making it by far the most remote object visible to the unaided eye.



The Perseus Myth and the Perseus Meteor Stream

Many Greek heroes were regarded as sons of the supreme god Zeus, who often appeared to their earthly mothers in strange guises. None of these seems more miraculous than that through which he found access to Danae, jealously guarded by her father Akrisios. As a golden rain he poured through the narrow window of her brazen prison — for Akrisios had been warned by an oracle that his own grandchild would one day be the cause of his death, and he was resolved to make it impossible for his only daughter ever to bear children.



Danae and the Golden Rain of Zeus
Chalice from Attica, ca. 480 B.C. Hermitage, Leningrad

The birth of Perseus could not long be kept a secret, and Akrisios, fearful to put the child to death, lest Danae's story of his divine parentage might be true, nailed mother and child into a wooden coffin, and set them out to sea. These pictures — a child conceived by a rain of golden light, penetrating into the deepest darkness of matter; and the exposure of mother and child to a "trial by water" — are clearly pictures of an initiation process, and point to the nature of Perseus' mission.

Hearing Danae's supplications, Zeus guides their vessel safely to a remote island, where Perseus grows up under the care of a tyrannical foster-father, Polydektes. Desiring Danae for himself, Polydektes sees her son as an obstacle, and devises a plan to get him out of the way. Taking advantage of the youth's fearlessness and thirst for adventure, he suggests to him a task which he is sure is beyond his powers: to bring back the head of the Gorgon Medusa. Perseus at once accepts the challenge.

The Medusa was the youngest of three sisters who housed in the far west, beyond the shores of the divine sea Okeanos, near the Garden of the

Hesperides. Originally graced with wondrous beauty, they now appeared as hideous monsters, whose heads were covered with serpents instead of hair, and whose sight immediately turned the beholder to stone.

Perseus is instructed and guided on his way by Pallas Athene and Hermes. Hermes, as the swift-footed messenger of the gods, lends him his winged sandals and cap of invisibility. Athene, as the goddess of reflective thinking, gives him a mirror to protect him against the direct sight of the Medusa.

On his way to the Gorgons, Perseus must first visit two other triads of sisters who endow him with gifts he requires for his task. The first are the gracious and friendly Nymphs, who dwell in an ocean grotto; the second the mysterious Graiae, the "Grey Ones", who house in the sunless depths of a cave in the "Land of the Rock Roses". Between them they have but one tooth and one eye, which they use in turn. Perseus must use his intelligence to win this eye from the sisters before proceeding on his way.

The Nymphs, the Graiae and the Gorgons appear like stages on a journey backwards through time. They could be seen as transformation of the Three Graces, who represented the soul forces of the human being. In the Nymphs, Perseus meets the faculties which — in a bold over-simplification we could call those of thinking, feeling and willing — as guides to the elemental world. Although already somewhat remote and strange, these beings were beautiful to behold, and they could still be called to the aid of human beings whose intentions were pure. The Graiae are the guardians of a form of clairvoyance which belonged to an earlier age. Their eye — the "third eye" of ancient tradition — was once a mighty and luminous organ. It did not perceive the clear outlines of the physical world, and could not be "focussed" — it apprehended soul and spiritual realities in a dream-like panorama of colours, images and warmth. Perseus, on his initiation journey, must attain to a vision which corresponds to this ancient state, but no longer in the old, dreamlike form. This comes to expression in the fact that he wins this eye by cunning, waiting to snatch it as it is being passed on between the sisters, and all of them are temporarily blind. He thus uses his modern wakeful consciousness — a Mercureal mobility of thought and of limb — to pass the test confronting him here. The strangeness of the Graiae — Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*, as a respectable nordic devil touring Greece, has to admit that they are more hideous than anything in his own hell — is an expression of their retarded nature. They have not advanced with human evolution, but have remained

behind, unwilling to relinquish what now appears but a pitiable relic of the past grandeur of human vision: a single eye and tooth.

The three Gorgons represent a still earlier stage. Their great organ of perception, the "Thousand Petalled Lotus", or crown chakra, appears in its retarded form as a seething mass of serpents. These could be described as the broken rays of the "serpent fire" or *Kundalini* — those dynamic musical forces of the human being which, when awakened from their slumber in initiation, stream upwards in a double spiralling path, nourishing and stimulating the different organs of spiritual perception. The two great streams — the *Ida* and *Pingala* of yoga terminology — appear to imaginative perception in the picture of two serpents twining upwards along a central staff or axis: the *Caduceus* of Mercury. If their ascent takes place in a healthy way, their energies are also raised and enhanced. Thus the Caduceus, as a symbol of the physician, shows how the venom of the serpent can be ennobled and "potentized" to a healing force. In his *Fairy Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*, Goethe expressed this enhancement as a sacrificial deed, in which the Snake offers up its own life and substance, falling apart into a ring of precious stones.

In the Gorgons we are shown the activated, but untransformed, unrefined Kundalini forces, a caricature of the supreme, crown-like organ of spiritual vision. They possess the dark magical power to turn the beholder to stone — not to awaken within him the clarity and purity of the crystal with its cosmic form, colour and virtue; but to freeze him into the fossilized coarseness of a boulder, paralysing all development and evolution. Their domain — the Land of the Rock Roses — is a land where all the forces of blossoming, every gesture of delicate opening to the cosmic forces, is stifled, congealed, hardened.

At the same time, the Gorgons represent an image of seeing which is not pure, but seizes its object, greedily devouring it. It is the bizarre caricature of the will-nature of thinking, for even today we are able inwardly to "grasp" an idea, or "digest" what we have learned, transforming it to wisdom. Utterly lacking is the selfless, reflecting quality of thinking, represented by the mirror of Pallas Athene.

It is with the help of this very mirror that Perseus is able to sever the head of the Medusa, thus taking a decisive step for the whole of humanity. From now on the new thinking shall be able to unfold in its purity, unhampered by lingering remains of a past consciousness.



*Perseus slaying the Gorgon Medusa, Athene at his side
Ivory Relief from Samos, ca. 625 B.C. National Museum, Athens*

In this moment of her death, two children spring forth from the body of Medusa, for she was pregnant by Poseidon: *Chrysaor*, the Hero of the Golden Sword, and *Pegasus*, the winged horse. Chrysaor can be seen as the image of a golden, Sun-like quality of thinking which can appear in the mirror of Athene, just as the Moon in the outer cosmos reflects the light of the Sun. Pegasus was seen as the winged intelligence of the arts — his first deed was to stamp the fountain of the Muses out of the rocks of Parnassos. Thus, humanity was given philosophy and art as heavenly compensation for the sacrifice of ancient clairvoyance.

So much for the description of Perseus' initiation. The second part of the myth tells how, on his earthward descent, he is able to save *Andromeda* from the sea monster *Cetus*. This story is told in the 1988 *Golden Blade* in connection with the variable stars Algol and Mira. *Cassiopeia*, queen of Ethiopia and mother of Andromeda, boasts that her daughter is more lovely than the Nereids, the nymphs of the ocean. The offended Nereids beg

Poseidon to avenge this slight, which he does by sending a fearsome monster from the depths to scourge the Ethiopian coast, bringing epidemics, droughts and other calamities. An oracle warns that the disharmony between the human and elemental worlds can only be overcome if Andromeda herself is sacrificed to the monster.

In his flight through the air along the African coast, Perseus sees Andromeda chained to a rock. Her plight is not at all unlike that of his own mother when she was made prisoner by a fearful parent obeying an oracle. Using the same crescent-shaped sword with which he had slain the Medusa — a gift of Hermes — Perseus does battle with the sea monster, and frees the virgin from danger. To claim his right to Andromeda as his wife, he must still deal with a jealous suitor, who is supported by a large company of armed friends. Outnumbered, and on the verge of being overpowered, Perseus resorts to his most terrible weapon. Drawing the head of the Medusa from a pouch, he holds it up before his enemies, who are turned at once to stone.

Looking back over this part of the myth, we could venture a preliminary interpretation. The human being slowly loses touch with the manifold beings which inhabit the etheric and astral worlds. This loss of vision is accompanied by pride in his own gifts and abilities. A disharmony with the beings of nature ensues, and the human soul becomes all the more deeply enmeshed in matter, the more it tries to raise itself over its limitations. In the language of mythology, it is chained to a rock, and a prey to the forces and passions which rise up from the very depths it would like to deny. Those realms of the outer and inner world which can no longer be illuminated by the light of consciousness become threatening lairs of beings who are no longer seen, but whose forces and activities are still strongly felt. Perseus offers the gift of a new kind of spiritual activity to replace the fading light of clairvoyance. It is the light of thinking, which is at once a source of strength and initiative, and a wellspring of inner calm. It is thus as much the sweeping sword of the crescent Moon in its earthward descent (the gift of Hermes), as the bright mirror of the Full Moon, shining calmly from the summit of the heavens (the gift of Athene). The invisible power which unites these opposites is the "I am", which in moments of inspired thought can enter the human being like a "golden rain". With the help of this power, Perseus can bring to rest the turbulent waters of the unconscious. The beings which populate them are banished into the depths, while the surface becomes a pure mirror for the conscious life.

The August Meteors of Perseus

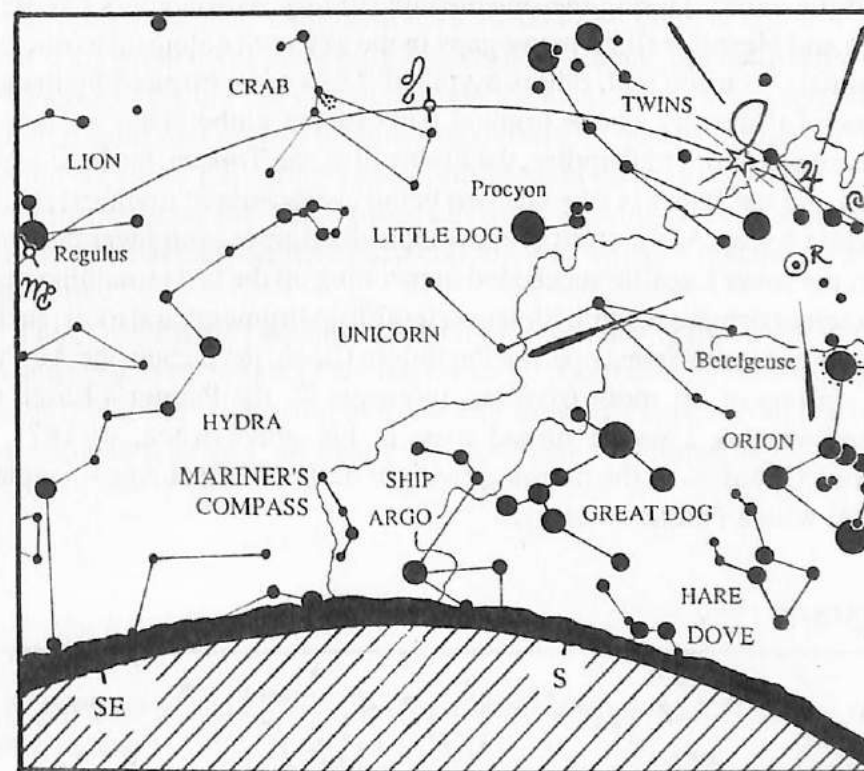
The constellation of Perseus is traditionally shown as a standing figure in the northern reaches of the Milky Way. At the beginning of the Greek cultural epoch, when the vernal point was moving from the Bull to the Ram (Aries), Perseus was situated directly above it, while below loomed the head of the sea monster Cetus, whose body extended down to the southwest. In his raised right hand Perseus holds his crescent-sword, and in his lowered left the severed head of the Medusa, its gaze represented by the variable star Algol (Arabic for "the demon's head").

In the 1988 *Golden Blade* we considered the remarkable fact that the two constellations representing the demonic beings whom Perseus has to slay — the Medusa and the sea monster — are each marked by a variable star. Mira and Algol are without question the two most notable variables in the whole sky. They seem to be a memory of an ancient time when even the crystalline world of the fixed stars was pulsating and breathing with life and movement.

Equally remarkable is the fact that the brightest and best-known meteor stream of the year, the August Perseids, has its radiant — the point from which the meteors seem to originate — in the region of Perseus' sword. In his great Michael Imagination, Rudolf Steiner speaks of the meteors of the late summer and autumn in connection with the sword of Michael. They infuse the atmosphere with a homoeopathic dose of iron, inspiring human beings with courage and clarity of thought. In the contribution for May we have tried to show that the experience of a meteor in the night sky bears an exact correspondence to a certain archetypal experience of thinking. It could now be added that this correspondence is exact and relevant for a thinking which is truly Michaelic in character, which bears the impulse of freedom through individual spiritual activity.

The Perseid meteors can be observed over a period of around a month, from 20th July to 19th August, but they are most notable for a few days around the 11th August, when some 300 meteors can often be observed each hour. During the month of their visibility, the radiant slowly wanders by about 20° from right to left across Perseus' head. It is as though Perseus — the great Michael — initiate of Greece — were slowly and solemnly swinging his light-sword across the sky.

OCTOBER 1989



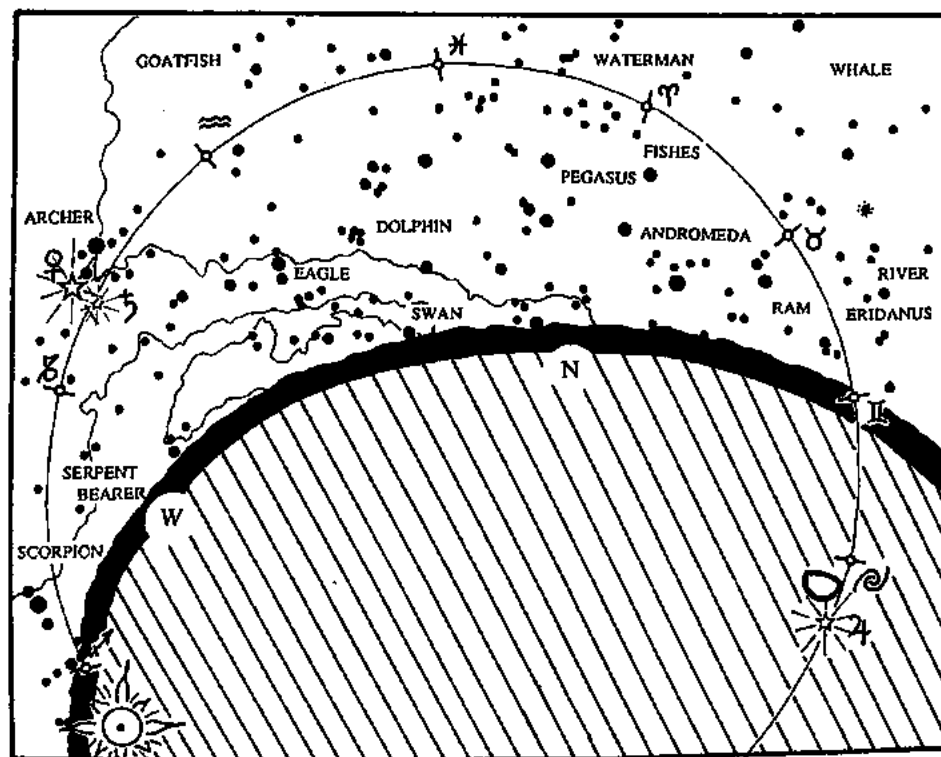
Conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter in the morning sky, accompanied by the meteors of the Orionid Stream. Northern Hemisphere, Zürich (Latitude 47° N), 20th October at about 5.30 a.m. The radiant is indicated with "R" between the reddish star Betelgeuse and the feet of the Twins.

The Orionid meteors, like the Aquarids in May, are thought to originate from the debris of Halley's Comet. The existence of two streams rather than one is a result of the fact that the Earth passes through the plane of the orbit of Halley's Comet twice each year, at nearly opposite seasons. The Orionids can be seen from about the 11th to 30th October, their peak falling on the 19th, very near the time and place of the conjunction of the Moon with Jupiter. Unfortunately, the brightness of the moonlight will diminish the visibility of the meteors.

Of the constellations shown, the Dove and the Unicorn date from the seventeenth century, and the Mariner's Compass from the mid-eighteenth. In

a curious way, we are confronted here with yet another period in human history when the power of imagination was giving way to a more intellectual view of the world. During the seventeenth century, astronomers like Bayer, Bartsch and Hevelius filled many gaps in the sky with colourful exotic birds and animals — some real, others mythical. Most were inspired by the great voyages of discovery in the tropical parts of the globe. They include the Chameleon, the Bird of Paradise, the Flying Fish, the Toucan, the Peacock, the Unicorn and the Phoenix (the last two being characteristic mythical relics of the Middle Ages). As the spirit of encyclopaedism arose in eighteenth-century France, the sober Lacaille succeeded in patching up the last remaining cracks in the ancient firmament with lifeless scientific instruments and tools, such as: the Microscope, the Telescope, the Pendulum Clock, the Octant, the Air Pump and — in one of his more frivolous moments — the Painter's Easel. One wonders whether Lacaille turned over in his grave when, in 1877, the audacious Gould — in the morning twilight of the Michael Age — replaced his Easel with a Painter (Pictor)?

NOVEMBER 1989



Conjunction of Venus and Saturn in the Archer. Southern Hemisphere, Mid-New Zealand, shortly after sunset on 16th November.

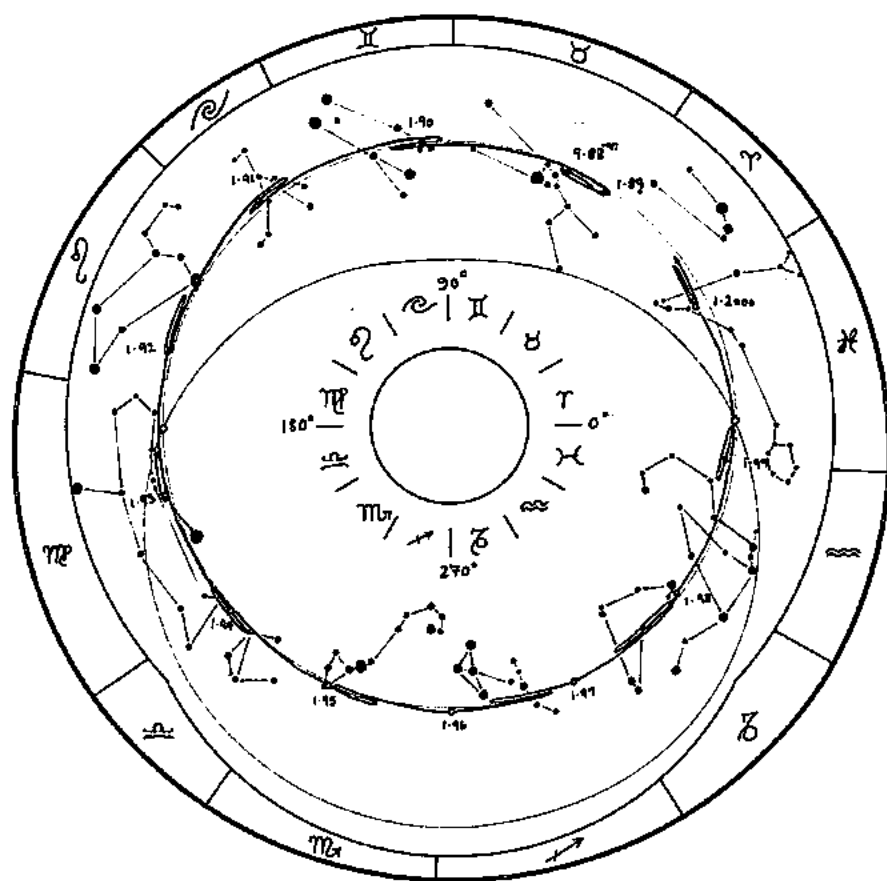
At the moment of conjunction (3.56 GMT) Venus is about 4° above Saturn. This event takes place only 7 hours after Venus' opposition to Jupiter. The Moon and Jupiter are shown beneath the north-eastern horizon. The sky is rotating from east to west (counter-clockwise). Thus, as Venus and Saturn set in the course of the early evening, Jupiter and the waning Moon will rise. During the night, as the Moon moves in a low arc across the northern sky, it is visibly approaching Jupiter. Their conjunction will take place soon after the break of day.

The constellations are indicated without connecting lines, and the reader is encouraged to try to recognize the forms by comparing them with the other maps in this issue — bearing in mind that they will appear roughly upside-down compared to their orientation in the Northern Hemisphere.

DECEMBER 1989

The Movement of Jupiter through the Zodiac during the last twelve years of the millenium.

Jupiter requires 11.86 years to travel through the twelve constellations of the zodiac. This means that it moves as far in a year as the Sun does in a month. In the course of each year, the Sun sends its light to the Earth from all twelve constellations. Jupiter gathers this light in an area equal to an average constellation of the zodiac. At the same time, it describes a series of loops, roughly one each year, the middle of its retrograde (or "backwards") movement coinciding closely with opposition to the Sun. At this time Jupiter is also nearest to the Earth. In the twelve years of its orbit, the eleven loops of Jupiter divide the zodiac into eleven nearly equal segments. The small circles on the orbit show the planet's position on the first of January each year. It will be seen that for the year 1990 this position is near the middle of the retrograde movement. Jupiter's opposition to the Sun takes place on 26th December 1989 in the foot of Castor (one of the Twins).



Northern Hemisphere observers should rotate the picture so that the constellation of interest is always at the top of the circle — it will then appear as it would when culminating over the south point of the horizon. Conversely, southern observers should turn it to the bottom of the circle, and it will appear as it would when culminating over the north point.

The sigils, or symbolic signs for the constellations on the outer circumference, correspond to the visible constellations of unequal size handed down to us by the Alexandrian astronomer-astrologer Claudius Ptolemy (2nd century A.D.). The rays proceeding from the inner circle are marked with exact 30° divisions, corresponding to the "signs" used by astrologers. The 0° point always coincides with the Spring Point, and follows it in its slow precession through the star sphere. At present the equinox is still in the Fishes, but is very near the transition to the Waterman.

THE HYMN TO THE EARTH from the Atharvaveda

Based on the German translation by Hermann Beckh

(I)

1. The Truth of worlds, in all their greatness,
The noble order of Time
In Nature and in our devotion,
The sacred calling of priesthood, and
The earnest inner labour of him
Who deepens his own soul in spirit,
The sacred prayer and word, the sacrifice,
Preserve the Earth upright upon her way.
She, who rules for us over all
Which has been, and is still to be,
May she create for our existence ample space,
2. So that humanity may not press upon us
Making our room among people too narrow.
To her the heights belong, the steep abyss,
and the wide plain as well.
The Earth, bearing the manifold power
and virtues of the plants
Spread wide around us, be gracious to us.
3. Sea is upon her and the mighty stream
Into whose course the waters pour themselves,
And the sown field where grows the nourishment
For us, the seed of all humanity.
Earth, upon whom live breathing, stirring beings,
Grant us to drink of her pure untouched freshness.
5. Over the Earth spread out the ancient peoples
Of distant early times when Gods were fighting
With hostile demons, when in their many kinds
Cattle, wild horses, birds, rejoiced to live —
On us too, Earth, bestow thy joy and splendour.

6. She who bears all and hides within her
All treasures, bears us up and is our strong sustainer,
Has in her breasts pure gold, and is the home of all —
Hidden in her the secret fire glows,
Made fertile by the ether's power
Coming from Indra's Godhead.
Well-being from the Earth be given us.
7. She, the Earth our home, watched over always
By the unsleeping Gods, bring us the gift of honey
Yes, may she endue us with her splendour.
8. She who in creation's first beginning
Moved in the waves of the primeval waters
Where worked exalted seers,
Their magic powers passing
Over the surface, calling forth new life —
She whose heart, the Earth's immortal heart,
Is in the highest heaven,
Wrapped all around with universal Truth —
May she, our Earth, among us share
The spirit of true inner mastery.
9. Upon whom the waters ever circling stream
Without ceasing day and night,
She, our Earth, may she pour out upon us
Milk in many streams,
Yes, may she endue us with her splendour.
10. She who once measured out the twofold
godhead of the morning star,
And upon whom there strode all-permeating Vishnu —
She, who is freed from enemies by Indra, Lord of power
May she, our Earth, as mother to her son,
stream forth to me her milk.
11. As joy and healing be thy giant mountains,
Thy peaks, snowcovered, and thy woods for me O Earth;
Upon the brown and black and red
and many-coloured earthly ground
Upon this steady earth, guarded by Indra,
Unconquerable, suffering no blows, unwounded,
Upon this Earth, I myself will stand.

12. What in thy midst there is, O Earth,
And what thy navel stands,
What in our body flows as juices from our food,
In all, may each of us be blessed;
With each stream in dear rivers, Mother Earth —
I am thy son, the son of Earth;
Pardschanja, God of rain bestow on us thy fullness.

(II)

13. Where stands the holy altar, where the priests,
With manifold tasks, care for the consecration,
And extend its hidden threads, the threads of sacrifice, —
And where the staves of sacrifice are raised,
Guarding in purity pure sacrificial gifts upon her,
this, our Earth, who grows and changes,
help our growing.
14. Our enemy, who hates us and gives battle,
Willing to harm us with thoughts, powers
or with lethal missile
Put him beneath our power,
and prevent him, Earth.
15. Upon thee wander mortals born of thee;
Thou barest up two-footed men, four-footed beasts;
The five great peoples of the world descend from thee;
For their mortality immortal light in the sun's rising
Spreads its rays' abundance.
17. Giving birth to all things, mother of the plants,
Thou ever faithful, ever steady Earth,
Born up thyself by universal order
Thou with good purpose, kindly being,
May we always tread thee with gentle steps.
18. Thou far extended homeland, great is thy power,
Thy shaking, shivering, quaking rough and mighty
Be guarded always by the noble Indra.
In golden splendour ever shine for us, O Earth,
let no one hate us.

- 19 — 20. Fire is within the Earth, fire in plants,
The waters in the clouds are bearing fire,
Fire is within the stones.
So inward fire is in man as well
In cattle and in horses too is fire.
And human beings kindle fire on earth.
God who bears their offering aloft
Look kindly on the melted fat they
 bring as sacrifice.
Like to a smith with red-brown sooty knees,
21. Wrapped all about with fire, may Earth
 grant shining fire
To me, to be a sharp and shining sword.

(III)

22. Upon the earth men bring unto the Gods
Their offering by the ritual's holy law,
And from this draw their life as mortal men,
As from the offerings brought to the great dead
For nourishment, from which the Earth as well
Gives as our portion strength and length of life.
Earth, make for me a long life here.
23. From thy good fragrance, which mounts up from thee
Carried as well by plants and blossoms, and the waters,
Which beings of air and water happily enjoy —
Let me be fragrant too, let no one be our enemy.
24. With thy aroma, Earth, as it once entered
In the blue lotus blossom, that pure aroma
Which long ago, at the Sun's wedding feast,
The deathless Gods prepared when time began —
Grant me this pure aroma too, let no one be our enemy.
25. So with thy fragrance, as in human beings,
In men and women, dear and happy for us,
Which is in horses and in knights,
In wild gazelles and elephants,
And in a maiden's fresh clear blossoming,
With this bedew us, let no one be our enemy.

(IV)

26. Earth is a rock, a stone and dust,
Firmly the Earth is formed of these.
To her who hides pure gold within her breasts,
To her I bring my reverence.
27. She upon whom in the high forest trees
Stand through long ages firmly rooted,
She who feeds us all, sustains us all,
She, O firm Earth, we greet.
28. Whether we rise or set, or stand and go,
Moving our right foot forward, or our left,
 we will not stumble here upon this earth.
29. I greet her, she who purifies, the patient Earth,
Who grows through holy prayer.
Upon thee, Earth, who brings us food and streaming life,
Our share of nourishment, and butter,
We will build huts for dwelling.
30. Pure may thy waters flow to serve our body's use;
The adversary have what is impure;
Through water's cleansing, Earth, shall I be cleaned.
31. The ways of heavenly space, O Earth,
Thy East and North and South and West
May each of them be gentle and be gracious as I go;
Let me not come to fall
Being so firmly grounded in the Universe.
32. Let us not lose our balance, Earth,
Press us not forwards, backwards, upwards, downwards.
Be healing and wellbeing for us, Earth;
No robber fall upon us on our way,
Protect us from his deathly javelin.
33. As long as with the Sun as my companion
I am allowed to look on thee, O Earth,
May there not dim the seeing of my eyes
As I go older through the years.

34. When I am lying on thee, Earth, and turn
Over from my right side to my left,
With thy back turned towards us and we lie
Upon thee with our ribs, dear Earth,
 then hurt us not.
Thou upon whom all things have their rest.
35. What from thy womb, dear Earth, I have to dig,
May it grow up afresh, and quickly, Earth;
I would not, pure one, harm thy life;
I will not pierce thy heart.
36. Thy summer, and thy rainy season,
Thy winter, spring, thy time of cold,
Just before spring begins, all times of year,
In their good order, upon thee —
All changes that there are, as in the year,
And as in day and night —
May all refresh us.
- (V)
- 37 — 40. Pure one, who chased away the serpent,
And above whom the firs were kindled,
Which dwell within the waters of the clouds;
These weapons thou has used to bring defeat
Upon the barbarous peoples, God-despisers,
While thou hast honoured Indra, not the Dragon —
Thou Earth, faithful to Indra,
The mighty Bull, our lord
Where space is made for sacrifice, a roof is spread,
And measured posts are standing,
Where wise in rites of sacrifice the Brahmins
Fulfil the offering with hymns and chants
Where most attentively the ministers of holy rites
Prepare the Soma draught for Indra,
And where in ancient time wise seers,
in their creative hymn to the earthwork,

- Made manifest through song the Cows of Light —
The seers who sat together, sevenfold assembled,
Who through their sacrifice, their depths of spirit-power,
The holy Rishis —
May she, this Earth, bring to us ever
The treasure which we long for,
Indra, the lord of bread, remain with us,
And come to us, and be our leader.
41. The Earth, where here the human beings sing and dance,
Rejoicing unrestrained in changing patterns,
And where they fight, the songs of battle sounding,
And trumpets call up conflicts —
May she, this Earth, drive off our rivals,
And make me free from the grim enemy.
42. Onto the Earth, where in the harvest fields
Of rice and barley grows our nourishment,
 where human beings in their fivefold kinds
 till in the fields the fivefold seed,
Onto Pardschanja's bride the Lord of rain —
To her who through the rain grows fat and fertile,
To her be brought our reverence.
43. She upon whom rise up the highlands' holy mountains,
And upon whom in valleys human beings wrangle,
The Earth who is the mother womb of everything,
May the creator make her always kindly to us.
44. The treasures she holds hidden here and there,
The unseen treasure, gold and mountain crystal,
May Earth present me this as gift.
The giver of all goodness grant us these,
The goddess Earth, in gentle kindly mood.
45. The Earth who bears so many varied peoples,
Speaking with varied tongues according to their homes,
Obeying varied laws in varied realms, she grants
Rich goodness in a thousand streams to me
As does the faithful unresistant milk cow.

(VI)

46. What in the winter creeps away, like snakes and scorpions,
the stinging biting creatures,
Lying there hidden, dull and stiff, which then
in summer's rainy time begins to stir,
Grows lively and comes forth, O Earth,
Thy crawling wormlike creatures,
may they not creep to us.
Let harmless friendly things encounter us.
47. Along thy twisting roads and streets,
where human beings make their ways,
Where pleasure carriages and loaded wagons roll along,
Where good and evil both are journeying,
There may we find our way, our way unhindered,
Meeting no enemies, no robbers;
Let harmless friendly things encounter us.
48. The dull fool's feet are born up on the Earth
Just as she bears the wise and noble teacher
With the like steady calm she takes the passing
Of what is good and what is evil.
The wild boar she lets wander at his will
And gladly grants she space to the gazelle.
49. Wild creatures of thy woods live out their lives
passing among the ancient forest trees
The lions and tigers which attack us men
Jackals and wolves, demonic werewolf sinister
All these, O Earth, drive far away from us.
50. The evil spirits in the airs and waters,
Nightmares and devilish dreams,
Demons and evil species all,
Hold far from us, O Earth.
- 51 — 52. When in alarm the flying creatures flock
wild geese and eagles, vultures and all birds,
And when the storm, the bride of wind
sweeps wildly onwards,
raises thick clouds of dust and bends the trees,

And on the roaring of the storm there follow
the bright flames,
Where light and darkness in swift sequence marry,
the accustomed parting lost of day from night,
And when the rain soaks all the earth
May she then lead us kindly, each to our own home.

(VII)

53. The heavens and the earth and air
They gave me understanding that grasps all there is,
Fire, and the Sun, and Water, —
Every God has given wisdom's insight to me.
54. Yes, I, the human being, it is I
Who can do all things, am the Lord of Earth,
With strength and power and vigour more than great
In all the regions of the Universe.
55. In the first dawning of the early world
Goddess, receiving praise from all the Gods,
Thy splendour hast poured out, and hast received
A sense of great well-being
With which to fill all four of heaven's realms.
56. In every village and in all the woods,
In every place where human beings meet,
And where they hold their councils,
may thy praise be spoken.
May we for ever sound thy praise.
57. Just like a horse that shakes off dust,
She shakes off every generation of mankind,
Which from their first beginning dwelt upon her.
She went before us always, noble guardian of the worlds,
Preserver of the trees, the plants, the flowers.
59. Gentle and tender, with her good aroma,
Filled with sweet drink her udders,
All swollen with sweet milk —
Thus may she offer me her drink,
with loving whispered words.

- 60 — 61. The heavenly builder of worlds once sought thee
with his sacrifice,
He, Vishvakarma, when the earth was still
Hidden in moving waters and in winds
Like a most precious cup, hidden, enclosed,
And then revealed, a joy to every creature
Born of a mother.
62. Thou art the cup, the heavenly mother of men
Praised everywhere, fulfiller of each wish,
What needs thou mayest have, may the Creator
Make good, the first-born of the Universe.
May we be free, as children of thy womb,
From wasting illness, and all sickness, Earth;
In healthy bloom may we live out long lives, O Earth;
And bring in full the thanks we owe to thee.
63. O Mother Earth, may I be always
Sustained in thy warm grace;
With thy wise vision and in harmony
With highest heaven, give me health and joy.

WHAT IS THE EARTH IN REALITY WITHIN THE MACROCOSM?

by Rudolf Steiner

In these studies we have contemplated the evolution of the Cosmos and Humanity from the most varied points of view. We have seen how man derives from the extra-earthly Cosmos the forces of his being, with the exception of those that give him self-consciousness. These come to him from the Earth.

The significance of the earthly realm for man is thus explained. But in this connection the question must arise: What is the significance of the earthly realm for the macrocosm?

In order to approach the answer to this question, we must turn our attention once more to what has already been described in these letters.

The consciousness of the seer finds the macrocosm increasingly alive, the more his vision penetrates into the past. In the far distant past, the macrocosm so lives that there ceases to be any question of 'calculating' the manifestations of its life. Out of this living condition man is then brought forth as a separate being, while the macrocosm enters more and more into the 'calculable' sphere.

But in this it undergoes a slow process of death. In the same measure in which man — the microcosm — arises as an independent being from the macrocosm, the macrocosm dies.

In the present cosmic time, a dead macrocosm is existing. But it was not only man who arose in the process of its evolution. The Earth too came forth out of the macrocosm.

Deriving from the Earth the forces for his self-consciousness, man is far too close to it in his inner life to perceive its nature clearly. In the age of the Spiritual Soul, with the full unfolding of self-consciousness, we have grown accustomed to focus our attention on the *spatial* magnitude of the Universe, and to look on the Earth as a speck of dust, insignificant compared to the great universe of physical space.

Hence it will seem strange, to begin with, when spiritual vision unfolds the true cosmic significance of this so-called 'speck of dust'.

In the mineral ground of the Earth the other kingdoms of Nature — the animal and plant kingdoms — are imbedded. In all this there live the forces which manifest themselves in varied forms of appearance through the seasons. Consider the world of plants. In this form of appearance, the consciousness of the seer perceives the nature of those forces which have brought about the gradual death of the macrocosm. In spring and summer, forces of growth, springing and sprouting forces, show themselves in plant life. In the growing, sprouting process, the seer's consciousness perceives not only what brings forth the abundant blessing of the plant life for the given year, but a surplus. It is a surplus of *germinating force*. The plants contain more germinating force than they expend upon the growth of foliage, flower and fruit. For the consciousness of the seer, this surplus of germinating force flows out into the extra-earthly macrocosm.

Now in the same manner a surplus of force streams out from the mineral kingdom to the extra-earthly Cosmos. *This* force has the task of carrying the forces from the plant-world to the right places in the macrocosm. Under the influence of the mineral forces, the plant-forces become a newly-fashioned picture of a macrocosm.

Likewise there are forces proceeding from the animal nature. These however do not work, like the plant and mineral forces, radiating from the Earth. They work in such a way that the plant-nature, which the mineral forces carry in clear formation into the great Universe, is gathered into a sphere, so that the picture arises of a macrocosm compact and self-contained on all sides.

It is thus the spirit-seeing consciousness beholds the essence of the earthly realm, *which stands as a new, life-kindling element within the dead and dying macrocosm*.

As when the old plant has died and fallen away, the new plant, however large, is formed again from the seed in space so insignificant and small — so while the old dead macrocosm falls asunder a new macrocosm is coming forth from this 'speck of dust', the Earth.

It is a true contemplation of the Earth-nature which sees it on all hands a germinating universe. We only learn to understand the kingdoms of Nature around us when we feel in them the presence of this germinating life.

In the midst of it man fulfils his Earth-existence. He partakes in the germinating life as well as in the dead and dying. From the dead he derives the forces of his thought. In the past, when the forces of his thought were coming

forth from the still-living macrocosm, they did not provide the foundation for self-conscious humanity. They lived, as growth-forces, in a human being who did not yet possess self-consciousness. *For themselves*, the forces of thought must not have life of their own, if they are to provide a basis for the free self-consciousness of man. With the extinct macrocosm, they themselves must be the dead *shadows* of what once was living in the primeval Cosmos.

On the other side man shares in the germinating life of the Earth, from which he has the forces of his will. These forces are indeed life itself, but with his self-consciousness man does not take part in their real nature. Deep down within the human being they radiate into the shadows of his thought. The shadows of thought flow through them, and in the flowing of free thought as it unfolds within the germinating earthly nature, the full and free human self-consciousness enters into man during this age of the Spiritual Soul.

The past throwing its shadows, the future fraught with the germs of a new reality meet in the human being; and their meeting constitutes the human life of the present time.

That these things are so, is clearly revealed to the consciousness of the seer the moment he enters that spirit-region which immediately adjoins the physical and in which the active presence of Michael is found.

The life of all this earthly realm becomes clear and transparent when we feel at its foundation the germ of a new Universe. Every single plant and stone appears in a new light to the soul of man when he becomes aware that each of these beings is contributing by its life and by its form to this great fact: that the Earth in its unity is an embryo — the seed of a macrocosm newly rising into life.

One should but try to make the thought of these things fully living in oneself, and one will feel how much it may signify for the human heart and mind.

(January, 1925)

DAVID NEWBATT An Artist in Midstream

by Carola Kindle

When we look at the paintings of David Newbatt, whether we see the originals or reproductions, it is right to remember that we have here the work of an artist whose ultimate and most characteristic style may be considerably different. He is still in midstream; but his work has already given a great deal of joy to children and people of all kinds. How has he reached that stage of his life as an artist at which we now see him?

David Newbatt was born in Croydon, England, on January 13th, 1950.

During his time at school he spent three important years at Michael Hall, Forest Row. He lived in St. Anthony's Hostel under the care of the hostel-mother, Honor O'Morchoe. He relates that his experience of the hostel, set deep in a beechwood, made a strong impression on him: the powerful natural setting invited for play and adventure — for instance walking back from school through the dark winter wood. The meeting with the hostel-mother is still alive in him and the experience of such a big family was like a seed for his later community living.

A very serious motorbicycle accident at eighteen changed his life. During the long period of convalescence, and with time on his hands, he worked with a portrait painter in East Grinstead, Ron Deller. He also spent time with the various sitters. Before his accident David had been doing accountancy work in London, which had not been enjoyable for him, yet he had not found the courage to change. But in the year following his accident he went to Brighton Art College for three years. He had found his road to painting.

Whilst a student (and for a year after) David worked in a nursing home for terminally ill patients. Here he was brought very close to individual people at the threshold of death. A deep impression was made in his soul: a fertile seedbed for questions of karma and destiny.

At 22, meeting again with his former hostel-mother whilst considering what to do next, she gave him the impulse to go to a Camphill community. So later that year he went to the Sheiling Community, Ringwood, and began the

three-year curative education training in Camphill. Artistic work was a strong impulse for him during his seminar years. The seed of the hostel family life had grown to the "life-community" of Camphill with the children and their needs and the questions from the nursing home could be taken up again in the light of anthroposophy. After he completed the seminar, he moved in 1975 to The Sheiling Schools, Thornbury (Camphill), where he took a "therapeutic" class demanding of him very imaginative and artistic ways of teaching. Four years later he moved to Camphill Rudolf Steiner School (Aberdeen). Here he continued the direction he had begun, working now as a therapist with the children in need of special care. This opened up many questions of painting as a healing art. At 32 he decided to study at the Artistic Therapy College, Gloucester.

His next move was to a smaller Camphill at Blair Drummond, Scotland, a training school for adolescents, in 1983; here he is still living and working as artist and therapist, as house-father and teacher. In Blair Drummond David feels grateful to be able to paint in a community setting where the celebration of the festivals in the year's course lives strongly. In his painting work therapy is not separated from the artistic; in working with young people in need of special care he receives inspiration for his painting. He sees painting as a healing, religious task connected to the festivals. The living experience of "ever creating anew" a festival renews his artistic work. David has painted several series of paintings for Holy Week, displaying each morning, for all the community to see, a hardly-dry painting worked on feverishly since the previous day. And similarly paintings for Three Kings' Day. Out of a letter from David Newbatt: "I have always loved the 'story of the other wise man' and first painted it in 1975. Last year I rewrote the Henry van Dyke story as a community-play in the form of a speech-choir and mime which prompted me, last year in the autumn, to take up a completely new technique to me and retell the story in pictures.

This technique of lighting dark (the pictures are painted on a grey surface) is rather like blackboard drawing in the moods it creates. The initial stages are done as a wet on wet method of putting white onto the grey. The white becomes quite alive and gives a special mood light light suspended or emanating out of darkness, quite different from colour on white where you are always darkening".

Since 1984 he has been a free-lance artist, mainly for Camphill Communities, doing work on murals and altar pictures as well.

One Michaelmas Blair Drummond Community was fortunate to receive

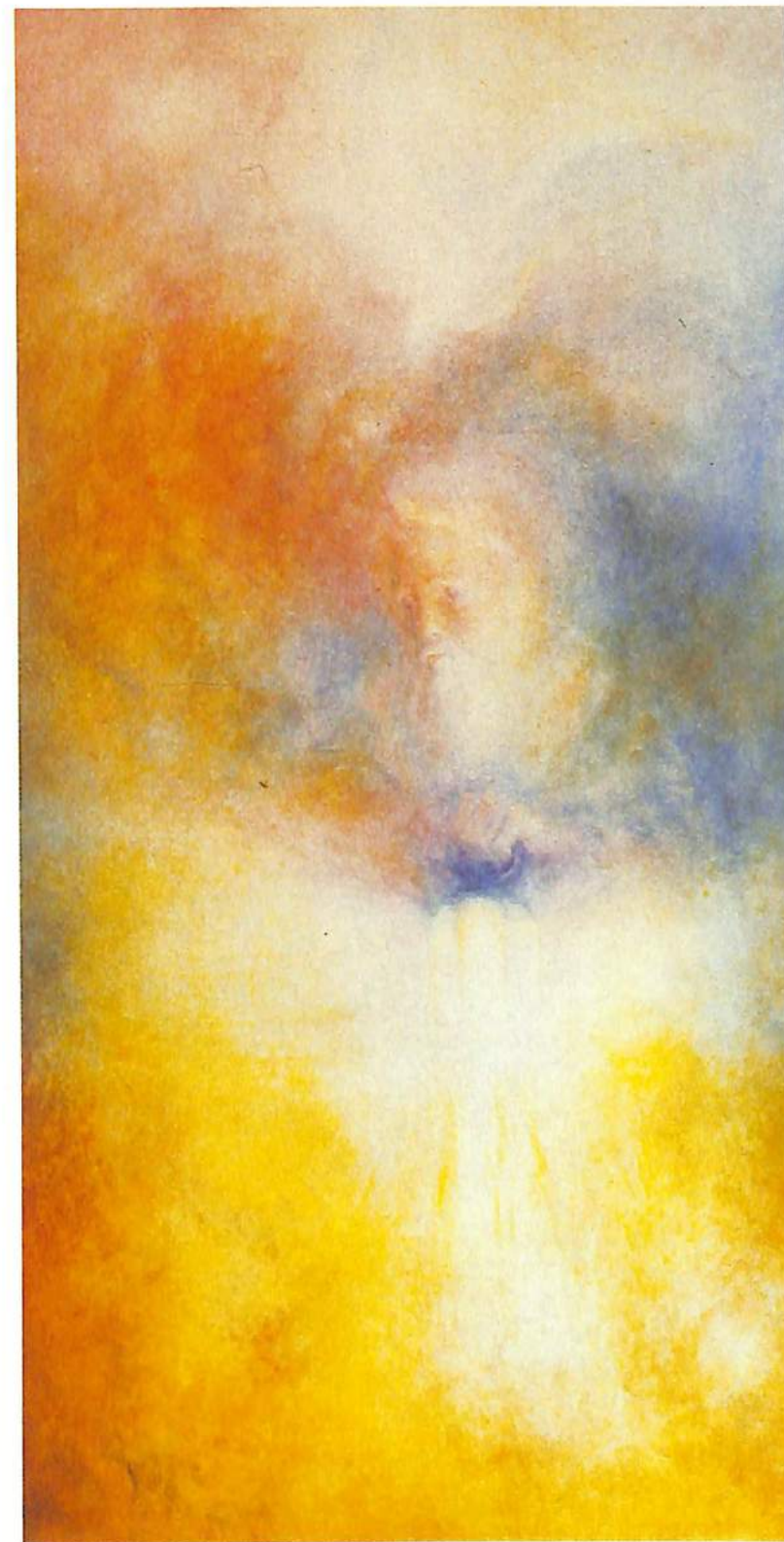
a series of fifteen paintings inspired by the lines of the Celtic poem "Michael the Victorious":

"O Michael the victorious,
My pride and my guide,
O Michael the victorious,
The glory of mine eye."

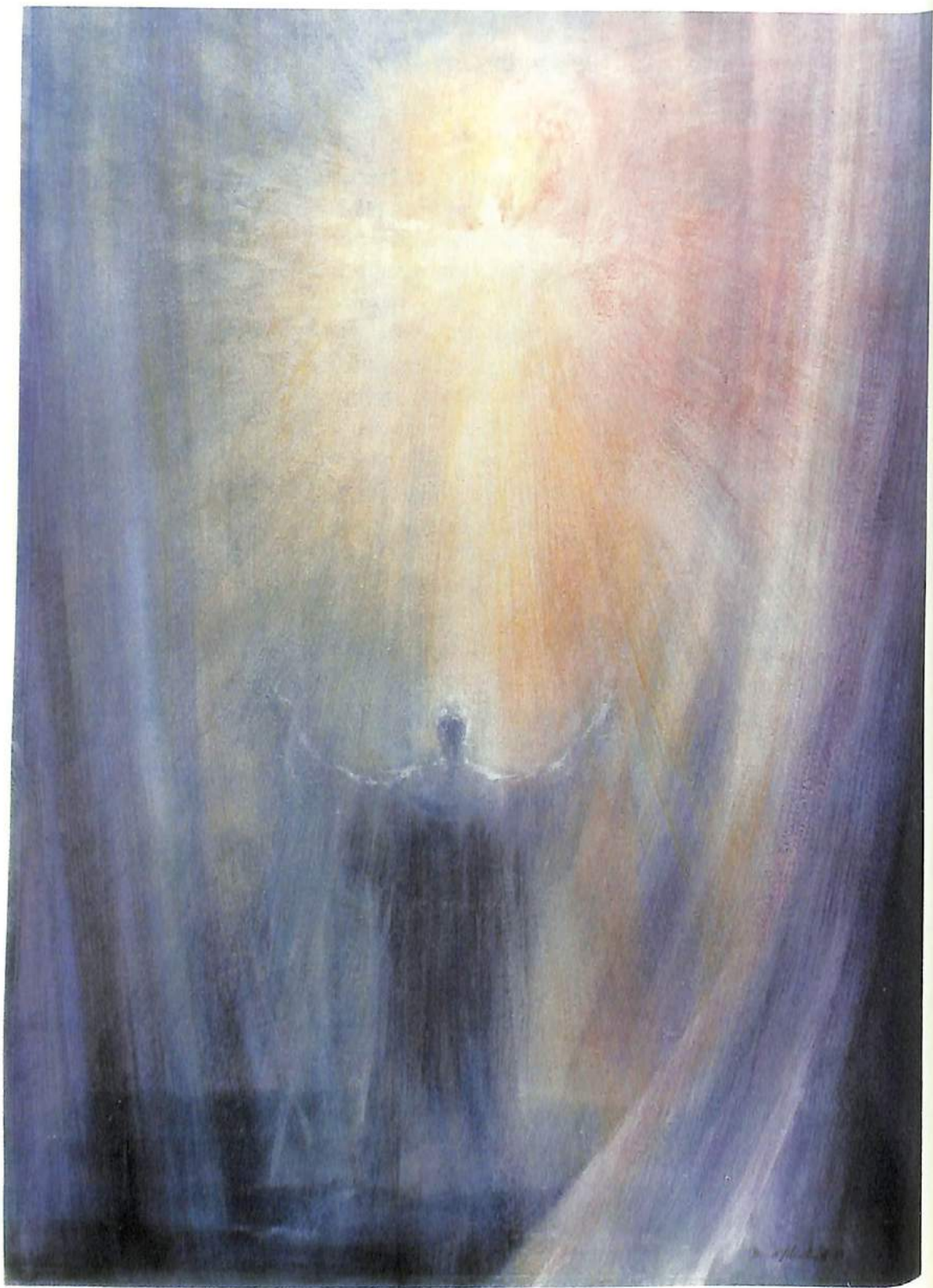
David Newbatt's style is often simple and direct; sometimes he is criticized for having a too conventional style, or being too traditional: too many rainbow colours, or too much fairy-tale atmosphere. Yet David wants to speak plainly and directly, so that his choice of theme and purpose are not missed but speak strongly to the heart. But David has by no means come to a final style or conclusion; he is still very evidently experimenting and developing: still searching for the healing of colour.

David, with his mercurial gift, seems able to make contact easily with people. He works in a wider circle around Blair Drummond Community; bridges are built to the local communities. He paints with the kindergarten group in the nearby village school and helps to develop artistic work in their class. And once a week interested local people come to his open workshops. Through David's painting being within a therapeutic community it is possible for art students to have practical experience under his guidance.

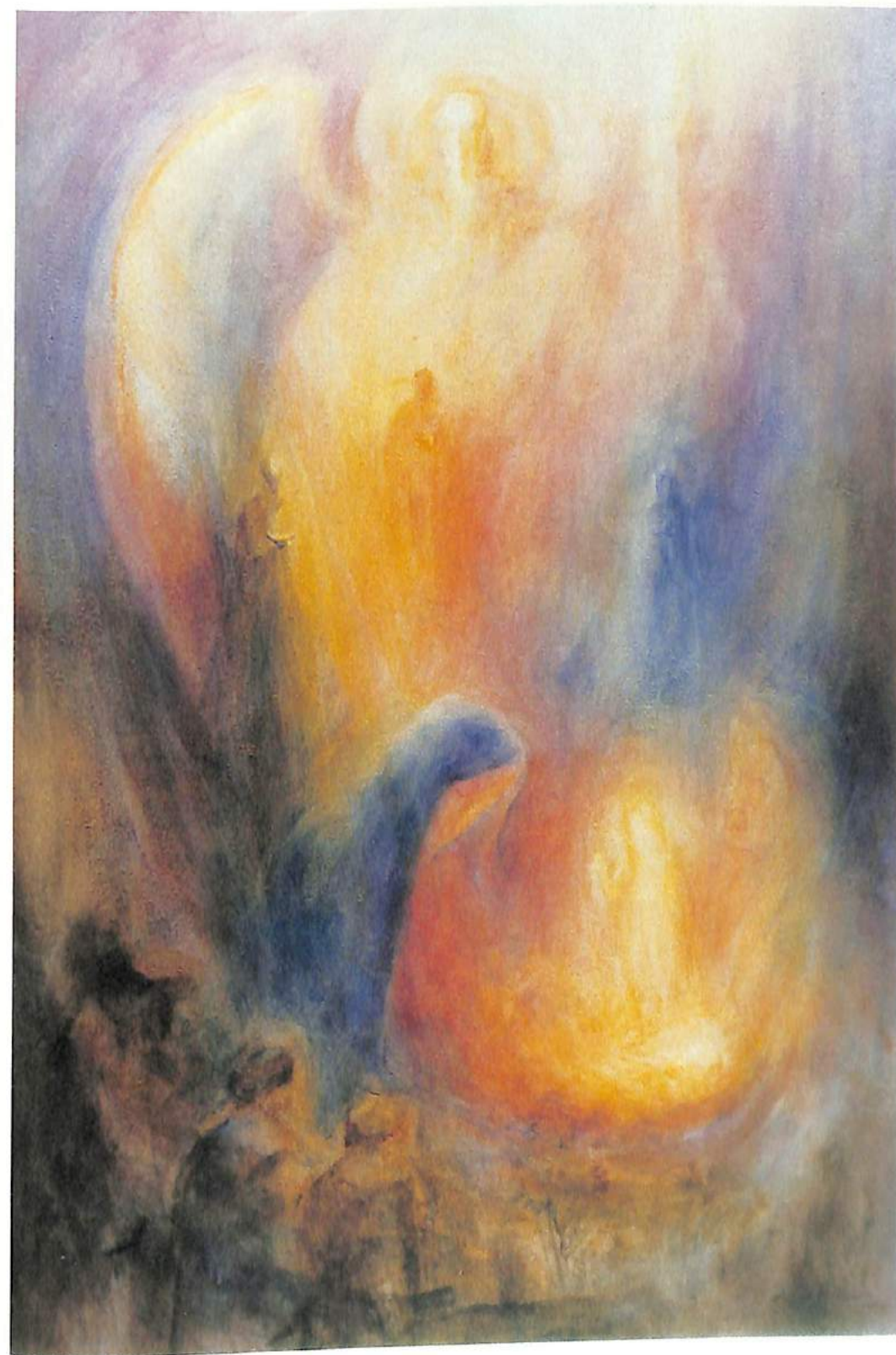
In recent years David has been approached to make paintings for chapels and recently he has painted a mural for Botton Village Chapel. David Newbatt is fully committed to what he does. His vigorous, whirlwind energy is given completely to the task in hand whether it be painting a mural, perched high up on a scaffold erected in the main entrance vestibule of Blair Drummond, or singing joyfully at a house-community birthday with one of his children upon his knee. Yet one senses in him beyond all this — the daily course of life — that eagerness, just as in his favourite story of the Fourth Wise Man, that eagerness to search for the star, and the Child that was born under it.



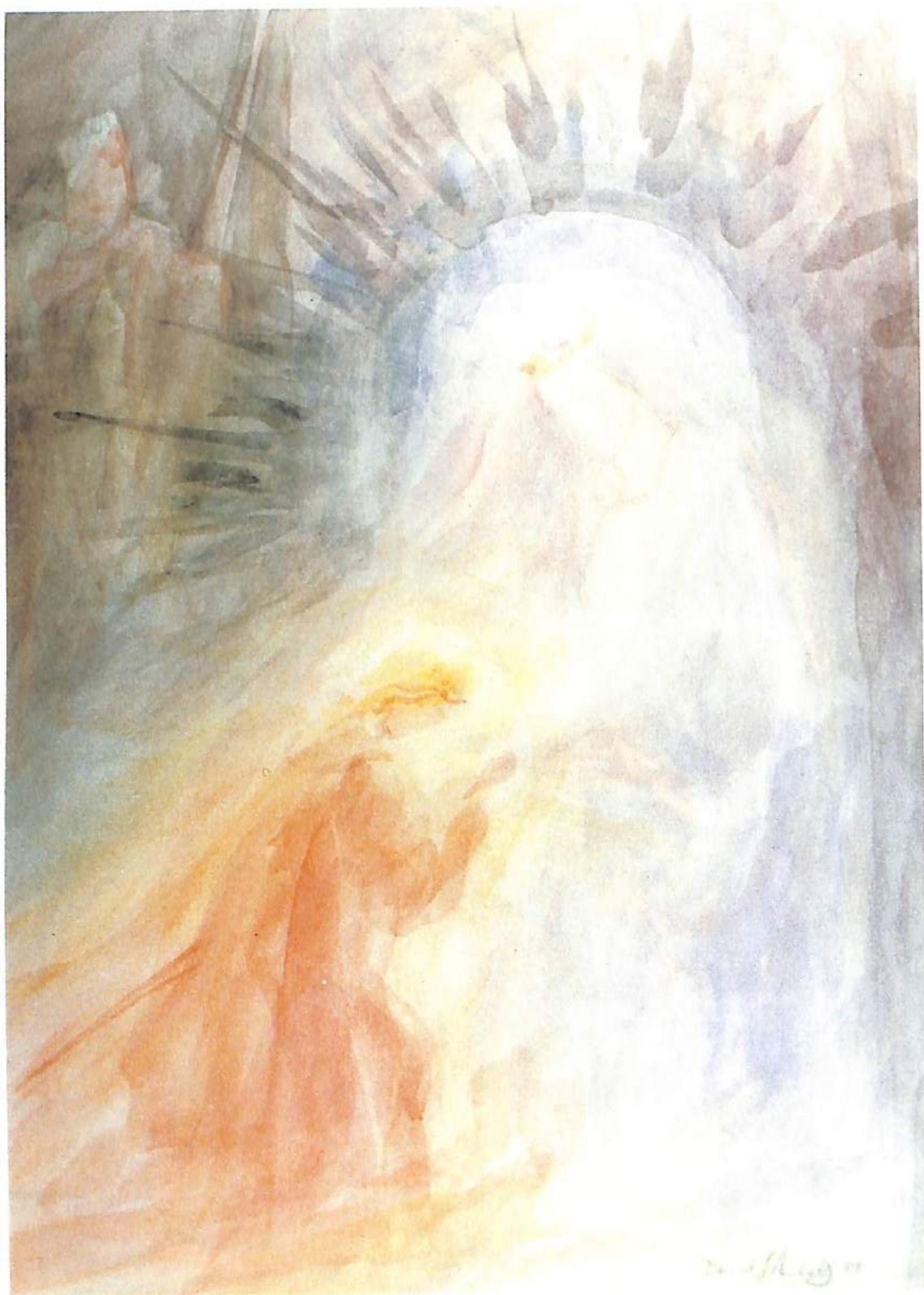
The Peace and Wisdom of Old Age
(*The Man with the Lamp from Goethe's fairy tale*
"The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily")



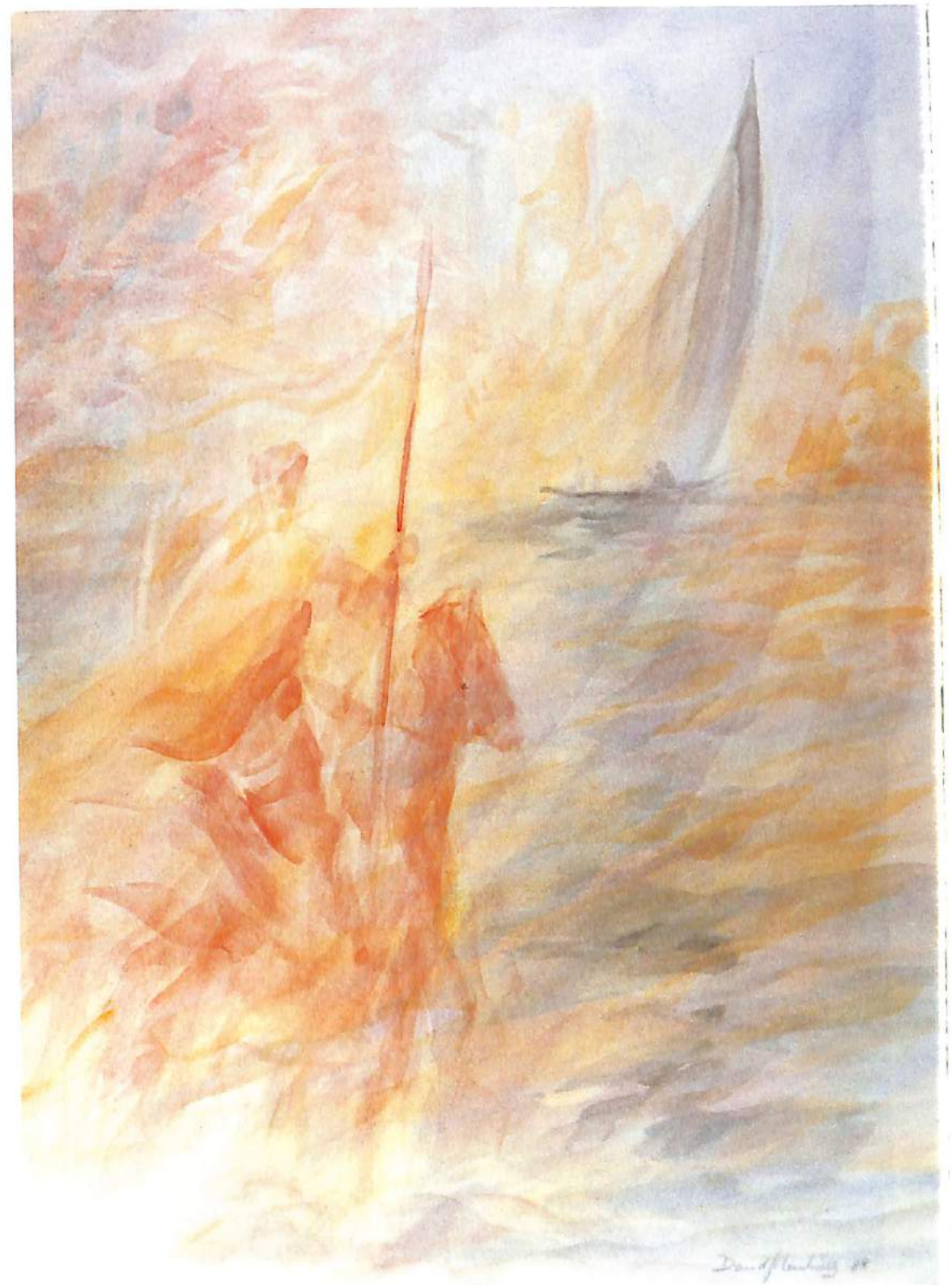
The Fourth Wise Man: Artaban beholding the Star



Nativity



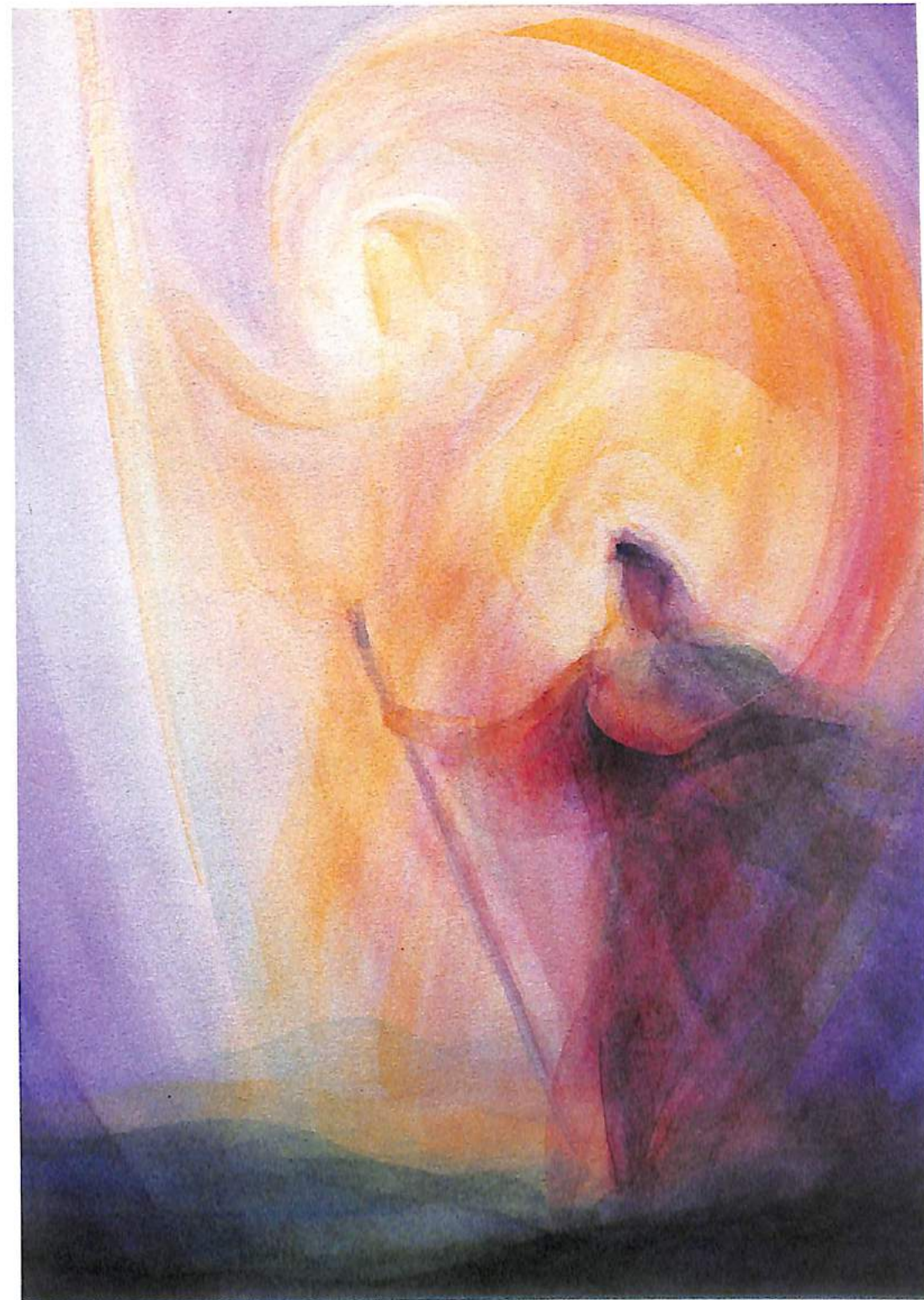
Parsifal: First meeting with Condwiramurs



Parsifal: Meeting with the Fisher King



Parsifal: The Three Drops of Blood



St. Michael with the Staff
(from the Gaelic poem "Michael the Victorious")

THREE GREAT IDEALS IN OUR TIME

by Rudolf Steiner

Abridged from a lecture given at 'Dornach, February 22, 1923

Today I want to point once again to an ideal associated with the Goetheanum. Whatever anthroposophy brings forth must be built on a firm foundation of enthusiasm, and we can create the right enthusiasm only by looking towards that ideal that every anthroposophical heart should be cherishing and that is great enough to unite all the Society's members in its warmth.

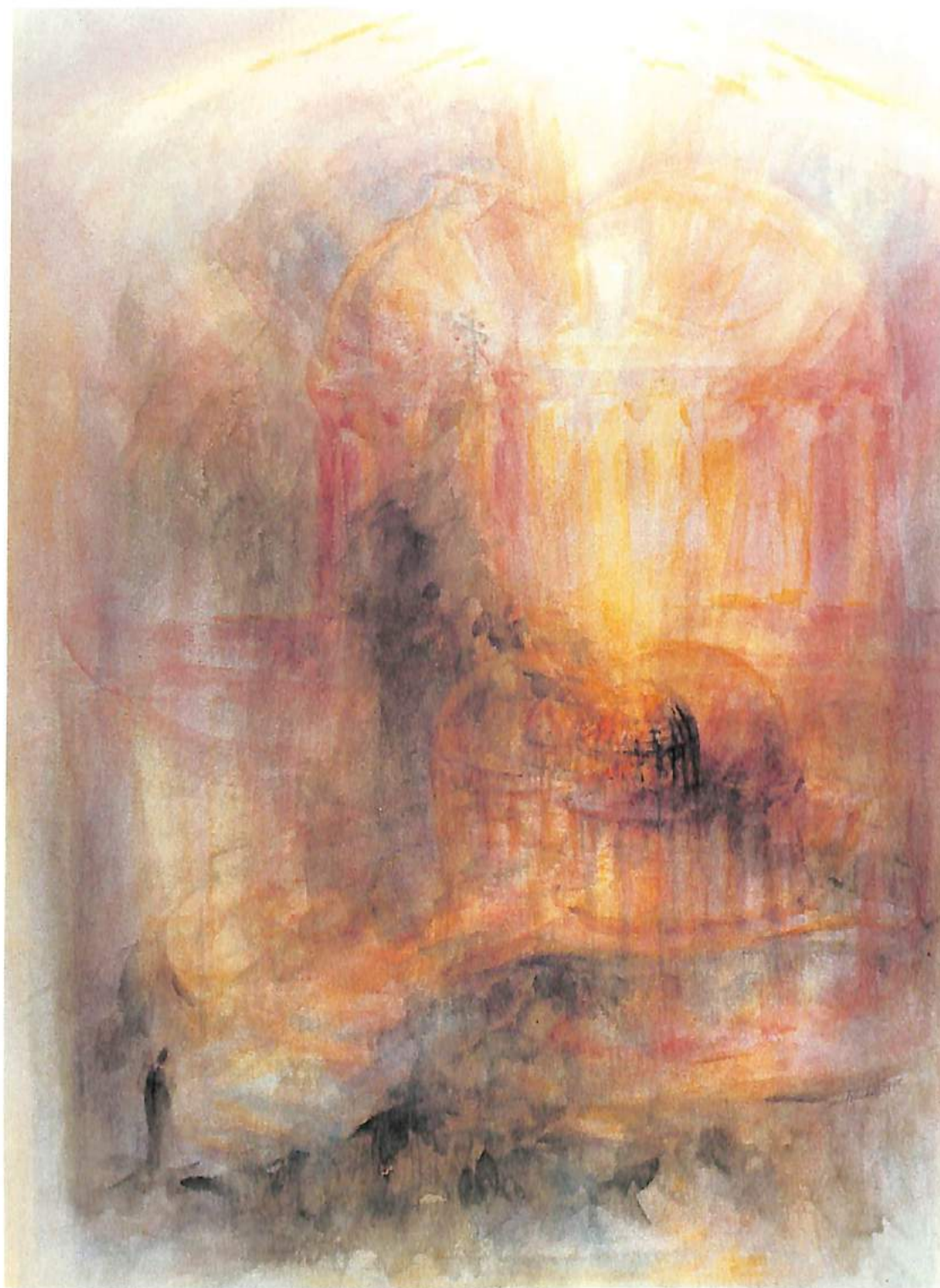
It cannot be denied that enthusiasm for this ideal of anthroposophical co-operation has dwindled during the three successive phases of anthroposophical development, though the ideal itself remains. For to hold common ideals enkindles the love that every single anthroposophist should be feeling for his fellow members and that can be relied on to dissipate any hard feelings that members of the Society could be harbouring against any others, even if only in their thoughts about them.

You may remember that when we started the first High School course at the Goetheanum, I gave a short introductory talk stressing the fact that what people were accomplishing there represented a new kind of endeavour whereby art, science and religion were to be united in a truly universal sense.

What was being striven for at the Goetheanum, what its forms and colours were meant to convey, was an ideal, a scientific, artistic and religious ideal. It should be the more deeply graven on our hearts now that it can no longer speak to us through outer forms and colours.

If we look back at the tremendous, lofty spiritual life of the ancient Orient, we come to a time when the spiritual content of everything revered by these Oriental peoples was immediate revelation to them — a time when they had no doubt whatsoever that the things their senses perceived were mere tracings in matter of divine realities that had been revealed to a visionary capacity none the less real to them for its dreamlike quality.

That way of beholding, instinctive though it was, was at one time such that people in certain specific states of consciousness could perceive spiritual beings in the universe in all their immediate reality, just as with their bodily senses they perceived things and creatures of the three natural kingdoms. The



*The First Goetheanum:
The building, its destruction by fire, its rediscovery in the spirit*

Oriental of an older time was just as convinced by immediate perception of the existence of the divine-spiritual beings connected with the human race as he was of the existence of his fellow men.

This was the source of his inner religious certainty, which differed in no way from his certainty concerning things in nature round about him. He saw his god, and could therefore believe in his existence just as firmly as he believed in the existence of a stone, a plant, clouds or rivers. What modern science calls animism, picturing the ancients relying on poetic fantasy to endow nature with a living spiritual element, is an invention of childish dilettantism. The fact is that people beheld spiritual beings in the same way they beheld the world of nature and the senses.

This was, as I said, the source of the certainty in their religious life. But it was equally the source they drew on for artistic creation. The spiritual appeared to them in concrete form. They were familiar with the shapes and colours assumed by spiritual elements. They could bring their perception of the spiritual to material expression. They took such building materials as were available, the materials of sculpture and of the other arts, and applied such techniques as they had to express what was spiritually revealed to them.

The reverence they felt in inner soul relationships to their gods was the content of their religious life. When they imprinted on matter what they had beheld in the spirit, that was felt to be their art. But the techniques and the physical materials at their disposal for expressing what they thus beheld fell far short of their actual visions.

We come upon a period in the evolution of the ancient Orient when the divine-spiritual — or, as Goethe called it, the sensible-supersensible — that man beheld was exceedingly lofty and gloriously beautiful. People's feelings and fantasy were powerfully stirred by their perception of it. But because techniques for dealing with material media were still so rudimentary, artistic creations of the period were but primitive symbolical or allegorical expressions of the far greater beauty human beings perceived with spiritual eyes. An artist of those ancient times describing his work with the feeling-nuance we have today would have said, "What the spirit reveals to me is beautiful, but I can bring only a weak reflection of it to expression in my clay or wood or other media".

Artists in those days were people who beheld the spiritual in all its beauty and passed on their vision in sense perceptible form to others who could not behold it for themselves. These latter were convinced that when an artist embodied what he saw spiritually in his symbolical or allegorical forms, these forms enabled them, too, to find their way into the world beyond the earth, a

world that a person had to enter to experience his full dignity as a human being.

This relationship to the divine-spiritual was so immediate, so real, so concrete that people felt that the thoughts they had were a gift of the gods, who were as present to them as their fellow men. They expressed it thus, "When I talk with human beings, we speak words that sound on the air. When I talk with the gods, they tell me thoughts that I hear only inside me. Words expressed in sounds are human words. Words expressed in thoughts are communications from the gods".

When human beings had thoughts, they did not believe them to be products of their own soul activity. They believed that they were hearing thoughts whispered to them by divinities. When they perceived with their ears, they said they heard people. When they heard with their souls, when their perception was of thoughts, they said they heard spiritual beings. Knowledge that lived in the form of ideas was thus communication from divine sources in the experiencing of ancient peoples, perception of the Logos as it spoke directly through the gods to men.

We can say, then, that men's beholding of the gods became the inner life of the religious idea. Their symbolical-allegorical expression of divine forms through the various media was the life underlying the ideal of art. In their retelling of what the gods had told them lived the ideal of science. These three ideals merged into one in ancient Oriental times, for they were at bottom one and the same.

In the first ideal, men looked up to divine revelation. Their whole soul life was completely suffused with religious feeling. Science and art were the two realms in which the gods shared mankind's life on earth. The artist engaged in creative activity felt that his god was guiding his hand, poets felt their utterance being formed by gods. "Sing to me, Muse, of the anger of the great Peleus, Achilles". It was not the poet speaking; it was, he felt, the Muse speaking in him, and that was the fact. The abstract modern view, which attributes such statements to poetic licence, is a grotesque piece of the childish nonsense so rampant today. Those who adopt it do not know how truly Goethe spoke when he said, "What you call the spirit of the times is just your own spirit with the times reflected in it."

If we now turn our attention from the way the threefold ideal of religion, art and science lived in ancient Oriental man to consider how it was expressed by the Greeks and the Romans who were such a bare, prosaic copy of them, we find these three ideals in a further form of development. The divine-spiritual that had revealed itself to man from shining heights above was felt by the Greeks to be speaking directly through human beings. Religions life

attached itself much more closely to the human, in the sense that a Greek not only experienced his inner life, but his very form, as god-permeated, god-suffused. He no longer looked up to shining heights above him; he looked at the marvellous shape of man. He no longer had the ancient Oriental's direct contemplation of divinity; his beholding was only a weak shadow of it. But anyone who can really enter into Greek poetry, art and philosophy perceives the basic feeling the Greek had, which led him to say that earthly man was more than just a composite of the material elements that his senses perceived in the external world; he saw in him a proof of the existence of divinity. This man of earth whom the Greek could not regard as of earthly origin was for him living proof that Zeus, that Athene ruled in spiritual worlds.

So we see the Greeks looking upon the human form and man's developing inner life as sublime proof of the gods' governance. They could picture their gods as human because they still had such a profound experience of the divine in man.

It was one thing for the Greek to picture his gods as human beings under the influence of a degraded anthropomorphism. For to the Greek, man was still a living proof of his divine origin. The Greeks felt that no such thing as man could exist if the world were not permeated through and through by the divine.

Religion played a vital part in conceiving man. A person was revered not for what he had made of himself, but just because he was a human being. It was not his everyday achievements or an ambitious earthly striving to excel that inspired reverence; it was what had come with him as his humanness into life on earth. The reverence accorded him enlarged to reverence for the divine-spiritual world.

The artistic ideal entertained by the Greeks was, on the one hand, a product of their feeling for the divine-spiritual element they embodied and to which their presence on earth testified. On the other hand, they had a strong sense — unknown to the ancient Oriental — of the laws governing the physical world of nature, the laws of consonance and dissonance, of volume, of inertia or the supporting capacity of various earthly materials. Where the Oriental handled his media awkwardly and was unable to go beyond a crudely symbolical-allegorical treatment of the spiritual reality that overwhelmed and overflowed him, so that the spiritual fact he was trying to give expression to in some work of art was always far more glorious and grand than the awkward representation of it, the Greek's striving was to embody all the fullness of his spiritual experience in the physical medium he had by this time learned to handle.

The Greeks never allowed a column to be any thicker than it had to be to

carry the weight it was intended to support. They would not have permitted themselves to represent anything of a spiritual nature in the awkward manner characteristic of ancient Oriental art; the physical laws involved had to have been perfectly mastered. Spirit and matter had to be united in a balanced union. There is as much of spirit as of material lawfulness in a Greek temple, and a statue embodies as much of the spiritual element as the expressiveness of the material allows. Homer's verses flow in a way that directly manifests the flowing of divine speech in the human. The poet felt as he shaped his words that he had to let the laws of language itself be his guide to the achieving of perfect control over every aspect of his utterance. Nothing could be left in the awkward, stammering form typical of ancient Oriental hymns. It had to be expressed in a way that did full justice to the spirit. The goal, in other words, was so fully to master the physical laws inherent in the artistic medium employed that every last vestige of what the spirit had revealed was made manifest in sense perceptible form.

The Greek's feeling that man was evidence of divine creation was matched by their feeling that works of art, like temples and statues, also had to bear witness to divine governance, though that was now conceived as acting through the agency of human fantasy. Looking at a temple, one could see that its builder had so mastered all the laws of his medium that every least detail of their application reflected what he had experienced in his intercourse with the gods.

The earliest Greek tragedies were plays in which the *dramatis personae* represented spiritual beings such as Apollo and Dionysos, with the chorus an echo of sorts, an echo of the divine that ruled in nature. Tragedies were intended to bring to expression through human beings as an adequate medium events transpiring in the spiritual world. But this was not conceived as in ancient Oriental times, when man had, as it were, to look up into a higher realm than that where the work of art stood. Instead, it was thought of as taking place on the level on which the tragedy was being enacted, making it possible to experience in every gesture, every word, every recitative of the chorus how a spiritual element was pouring itself into sense perceptible forms beautifully adapted to it. This constituted the Greek ideal of art.

And the scientific ideal? The Greek no longer felt as livingly as the Oriental had that the gods were speaking to him in ideas and thoughts. He already had some inkling of the fact that effort was attached to thinking. But he still felt thoughts to be as real as sense perceptions, just as he felt earthly human beings with their human forms and inner life to be walking evidence of divinity. He perceived his thoughts in the same way that he perceived red

or blue, C# or G, and he perceived them in the outer world in the same way that eyes and ears receive sense impressions. This meant that he no longer experienced the speaking of the Logos quite as concretely as the Oriental did. The Greeks did not compose Vedas, of which the Orientals had felt that the gods gave them the ideas they expressed. The Greek knew that he had to work out his thoughts, just as someone knows that he has to use his eyes and look about him if he wants to see the surrounding world. But he still knew that the thoughts he developed were divine thoughts impressed into nature. A thought was therefore earthly proof of the gods' speaking. Whereas the Oriental still heard that speaking, the Greek discerned the human quality of language, but saw in it direct earthly proof of the existence of divine speech.

To the Greeks, science was thus also like a divine gift, something obviously despatched to earth by the spirit, exactly as man with his divine outer form and inner experiencing had been sent here. So we see how the religious, artistic and scientific ideal changed in the course of humanity's evolution from the Oriental to the Greek culture.

In our epoch, which, as I have often explained, began in the first third of the fifteenth century, Western man's development has again reached a point where he is confronted with the necessity of bringing forth new forms of the venerable, sacred ideals of religion, art and science. In our day we cannot say with the clairvoyant Oriental of an older time that the divine-spiritual confronts us in all its shining immediacy as do the creatures of the sense world, or that the deeds of the gods are as present to our soul perception as any sense-perceptible acts that may be performed in the external world in everyday living. But when we quicken our inquiry into man and nature with the living quality with which anthroposophical thinking and feeling endow such studies, we encounter the world, the cosmos, the universe, in a different form from that in which the Greek encountered them.

When a Greek made nature the object of his study or contemplated human beings moving about in the world of the senses, he had the feeling that where a spring welled up or a mountain thrust its cloud-crowned peak into the sky, when the sun came up in the rosy brilliance of the dawn or a rainbow spanned the heavens, there the spirit spoke in these phenomena. The Greeks beheld nature in away that enabled them to feel the presence of the spirit in it. Their contemplation of nature really satisfied them; what they saw there satisfied every element of their humanity.

I have often emphasized how justifiably people speak of an advance in natural science; anthroposophy is in a unique position to recognize the real significance of the scientific progress of recent centuries. I have often stressed

this. Anthroposophy is far from wanting to denigrate or to criticize science and scientific inquiry; it honours all truly sincere study. In the course of recent centuries, my dear friends, people have indeed learned an enormous amount about nature. If one goes more deeply into what has been learned, the study of nature leads to insight into man's repeated earth lives, insight into the transformation of nature. One gets a preview of the future, when man will bring to new forms of life what his senses and his soul and spirit are experiencing in the present moment.

If one undertakes a suitably deeper study of nature, one's total outlook on it becomes different from that that the Greeks had. It might be said that they saw nature as a fully-matured being from which the glory of the spiritual worlds shone out. Modern man is no longer able to look upon nature in this light. If we survey everything we have come to know and feel about nature's creations as a result of making use of our many excellent devices and instruments, we see nature rather as harbouring seed forces, as bearing in its womb something that can come to maturity only in a distant future.

The Greek saw every plant as an organism that had already reached a perfect stage for the reason that the god of the species lived in each single specimen. Nowadays we regard plants as something that nature has to bring to still higher stages. Everywhere we look we see seed elements. Every phenomenon we encounter in this unfinished nature, so pregnant with future possibilities, causes us to feel that a divine element reigns over nature and must continue to do so to ensure its progressing from an embryonic to an eventually perfect stage.

We have learned to look much more precisely at nature. The Greek saw the bird where we see the egg. He saw the finished stage of things; we, their beginnings. The person who feels his whole heart and soul thrill to the seed aspects, the seed possibilities in nature, is the man who has the right outlook on it.

That is the other side of modern natural science. Anyone who starts looking through microscopes and telescopes with a religious attitude will find seed stages everywhere. The exactness characteristic of the modern way of studying nature allows us to see it as everywhere creative, everywhere hastening toward the future. That creates the new religious idea.

Of course, only a person with a feeling for the seed potentialities that each individual will live out in other, quite different earthly and cosmic lives to come can develop the religious ideal I am describing.

The Greeks saw in man the composite of everything there was in the cosmos of his own period. The ancient Orientals saw in man the composite

of the whole cosmic past. Today, we sense seeds of the future in human beings. That gives the new religious ideal its modern colouring.

Now let us go on to consider the new ideal of art. What do we find when we subject nature and its forms to a deeper, life-attuned study, refusing to call a halt at externalities and abstract ideas? My dear friends, you saw what we find before your very eyes in the capitals of our Goetheanum pillars and in the architrave motifs that crowned them. None of this was the result of observing nature, it was the product of experiencing with it. Nature brings forth forms, but these could just as well be others. Nature is always challenging us to change, to metamorphose its forms. A person who merely observes nature from the outside copies its forms and falls into naturalism. A person who experiences nature, who doesn't just look at the shapes and colours of plants, who really has an inner experience of them, finds a different form slipping out of every plant and stone and animal for him to embody in his medium. The Greek method, which aimed a completely expressing the spirit through a material handling of the medium, is not our method. Our way is to enter so deeply into nature's forms that one can bring them to further, independent metamorphosis. We do not resort to the symbolical-allegorical Oriental treatment or strive for the Greek's technical mastery of a medium. Our method is so to handle every line and colour in the work of art that it strives towards the divine. The Oriental employed symbolism and allegory to express the divine, which rayed out like an aura from his works, rayed out and welled over and submerged them, speaking much more eloquently than the forms did. We moderns must create works where in the form element speaks more eloquently than nature itself does, yet speaks in a manner so akin to it that every line and colour becomes nature's prayer to the divine. In our coming to grips with nature we develop forms wherein nature itself worships divinity. We speak to nature in artistic terms.

In reality, every plant, every tree has the desire to look up in prayer to the divine. This can be seen in a plant's or a tree's physiognomy. But plants and trees do not dispose over a sufficient capacity to express this. It is there as a potential, however, and if we bring it out, if we embody in our architectural and sculptural media the inner life of trees and plants and clouds and stones as that life lives in their lines and colours, then nature speaks to the gods through our works of art. We discover the Logos in the world of nature. A higher nature than that surrounding us reveals itself in art, a higher nature that, in its own entirely natural way, releases the Logos to stream upward to divine-spiritual worlds.

In Oriental works of art the Logos streamed downward, finding only

stammering expression in human media. Our art forms must be true speech forms, voicing what nature itself would say if it could live out its potential. That is the new artistic ideal that comes to stand beside the religious ideal that looks at nature from the standpoint of its seed endowment.

The third is our scientific ideal. That is no longer based on the feeling the Orientals had that thoughts are something whispered straight into human souls by gods. Nor can it have kinship with the Greek ideal, which felt thoughts to be inner witnesses to the divine. Nowadays we have to exert purely human forces, work in a purely human way, to develop thoughts. But once we have made the effort and achieved thoughts free of any taint of egotism, self-seeking, subjective emotionality or partisan spirit such as colours thoughts with prejudiced opinions, once we have exerted ourselves as human beings to experience thoughts in the form they themselves want to assume, we no longer regard ourselves as the creators and shapers of our thoughts, but merely as the inner scene of action where they live out their own nature. Then we feel the largeness of these selfless and unprejudiced thoughts that seem to be our own creations, and are surprised to find that they are worthy of depicting the divine; we discover afterwards that thoughts that take shape in our own hearts are worthy of depicting the divine. First, we discover the thought, and afterwards we find that the thought is nothing less than the Logos! While you were selflessly letting the thought form itself in you, your selflessness made it possible for a god to be the creator of that thought. Where the Oriental felt thought to be revelation and where the Greek found it proof of divine reality, we feel it to be living discovery: we have the thought, and afterwards it tells us that it was permitted to express divinity. That is our scientific ideal.

Here we stand, then, in the ongoing evolution of the human race, realizing what point we have reached in it. We know, as we look at the human head with the ears at the side, at the larynx and the distorted shoulder blades, that we must be able to do more than just contemplate them. If we succeed in transforming these shapes of nature, a single form emerges from a further development of the shoulder blades and a growing-together of the ears and larynx: a Luciferic form, composed of chest and head, wings, larynx and ears.

We reach the point of perceiving the artistic element in nature, the element that endows its forms with life, allowing a higher life of form to emerge than that found in nature itself.

But this also puts us in the position of being able to trace nature's own activity in the metamorphoses whereby it transforms the human being, and we are able to apply this same artistry in the pedagogical-didactic field. We bring this same creative artistry to pedagogical work with children, who are

constantly changing. For we have learned it at hand of an art that we recognize to be the Logos-producing nature-beyond-nature. We learn it from springs that are more than springs, for they commune with the gods. We learn it from trees that are more than trees; for where the latter achieve only a stammering movement of their branches, the former disclose themselves to modern artistic fantasy in forms that point to the gods with gesturings of branch and crown. We learn it from the cosmos as we metamorphose its forms and re-shape them, as we tried to do in our Goetheanum. All these studies teach us how to work from day to day with children to help support the process that daily re-shapes, re-creates them. This enables us to bring artistry into the schooling of the human race, and the same holds true in other areas.

That is the light in which the three great ideals of humanity — the religions ideal, the artistic ideal, the scientific ideal — appear, re-enlivened, to the contemplating soul of the anthroposophist. The forms of the Goetheanum were intended to fill him with enthusiasm for experiencing these lofty ideals in their new aspect. Now we must quietly engrave them on our hearts. But they must be made a source of enthusiasm in us. As we acquire that enthusiasm and are lifted toward the divine in our experiencing of the three ideals, earth's highest ideal develops in us. The Gospel says, "Love thy neighbour as thyself, and God above all". Another way of putting it is, "If one looks upon the divine in the light of the present-day aspect of the three ideals, as a modern human being must, one learns to love the divine". For one feels that one's humanness depends on devoting oneself with all the love at one's command to the three ideals. But then one feels oneself united with every other individual who is able to do likewise and offer up the same love. One learns to love the divine above all else, and, in loving God, to love one's neighbour as oneself. That keeps bitter feelings about others from developing.

That is what can unite and make a single entity of the separate members of the Society. That is the present need. We have had the experience of going through a phase in the Society in which anthroposophy was poured into separate channels, such as pedagogy and other practical concerns, into artistic activities, and so on. Now we need to unite. We have excellent Waldorf teachers, and people who do excellent work in other realms. We need today among all the people, who are giving of their best in their particular positions, that they should find their way to let the fountainheads of anthroposophical life flow anew. That is what is needed now.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

by Owen Barfield

Lecture delivered in Rudolf Steiner House, 1953

(The subject, together with a request for a lecture on it, as one of a series on "Rudolf Steiner and Christianity", was suggested to me by Cecil Harwood)

When man, in the exercise of his mechanical function, puts together a structure, he does it by adding one part to another, so that they lie side-by-side in space, and the whole is made up of all the parts added together. But when nature constructs, she follows a different principle — one which man also, when he is functioning not as mechanic but as artist or poet, must strive to follow. In an *organic* structure it will be found that the parts interpenetrate and, as it were, express each other in a characteristic way, and that often a single part will seem at the same time to be the whole, or to be potentially the whole. And this is the structural principle which, at all levels from the highest to the lowest, Anthroposophy reveals to us as present in the universe itself.

We know, for instance, that the substance even of the physical world consists primarily, not of some extrapolated system of atoms or nuclei or quanta or probabilities, but of a vast number of spiritual beings and the relations between them. And this is equally true of the inner world of consciousness. Anthroposophy adopts the Dionysian nomenclature and speaks of three Hierarchies of such Beings: of a First Hierarchy, consisting of Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim; of a Second Hierarchy, consisting also of three different Orders or Ranks of Beings, for whom we usually employ the Greek names, Kyriotetes, Dynameis, Exusiai, and of the third and lowest Hierarchy of Archai, Archangeloi and Angeloi. And already, at this exalted level, we find it higher still at the level of the Divine Trinity itself; where, as is so precisely stated in the Athanasian Creed, "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods, but one God." For, on the one hand, we think of the whole of the First or highest Hierarchy — that is, of the whole trinity of Orders which it contains — as being the Hierarchy in which the Father principle is especially manifested; of the Second Hierarchy as the Hierarchy of the Son and of the Third Hierarchy as the Hierarchy of the Holy Spirit. But, on the other hand, we also find Father,

Son and Spirit manifest *within* each Hierarchy. For instance, within the First Hierarchy the Order of the Thrones carries the will of the Father, while the Seraphim express the Son and the Cherubim the Holy Spirit. And so it is with the Second, and also with the Third Hierarchy, whose field of action is more the inner world of man's consciousness. Here it is the Archai, or Time-Spirits, who are the representatives of the Father.

One can put it that way; but one can also say that through the Archai the whole of the First Hierarchy enters into and works within the Third. Or rather that it *may* do so; for when it comes to the Third Hierarchy, a good deal depends on the activity and the free choices of man himself.

It follows also that in each Hierarchy you get one Order of Beings which not only expresses a Person of the Trinity, but expresses it in a special emphasized way. The Thrones are not only Father-Beings, but are Father-Beings within the Hierarchy of the Father. So also, the Exusiai express the Son within the Hierarchy of the Son; and the Angels the Spirit within the Hierarchy of the Spirit.

If we now descend, from this brief glimpse at the structure of the Spiritual World itself, to man as he lives on earth, we find the like hierarchical, or organic, relation between the four principles of which he is composed — and one which needs the like mobility of thought or imagination for its comprehension. We speak of man as consisting of the four principles, Physical, Etheric, Astral and Ego. And here, too, we find that we not only have these four principles, as it were, primarily and in their own right; but also, if we confine our attention to only one of them, we shall find all four in a secondary way, manifested, reflected, aspected — how you will — in that one. In the physical body, for instance, we find the Ego principle represented — where? In the blood. And in the same way we detect the astral, the etheric and the physical as present in a special way in the nerves and senses, in the glandular system, and in the bones.

And so it is with the Etheric. Here I say "Etheric" rather than "Etheric Body", because, although man certainly has an etheric body, yet this body is not insulated from the rest of the etheric — and elemental — world in the same way that the physical body is from the physical world around it. In the Four Ethers of which Rudolf Steiner has said so much, we find again the four principles of which man is composed. We find physical etheric, astral and ego in the Warmth Ether, the Light Ether, the Chemical or Sound Ether and the Life Ether respectively.

Here again, in the case of the Light Ether, we get that special emphasis

— of the principle within its own principle. Light Ether is the etheric *in* the etheric. Without going into the question how far it is possible to call any part of light "physical", I suppose, then, we are not far astray, if we think of this light from the sun that comes flooding in on us through our eyes, when we wake in the morning, as a sort of gateway through which our consciousness can enter into an experience of the etheric world — if we think of light as, shall I say, the etheric *par excellence*. And that is why I begin by considering our experience of light from this point of view, by considering our experience of the etheric cosmos.

We must, however, distinguish *experience* of the etheric from *ideas* we may form about the etheric before we have any experience. These ideas are likely to be — in my case they certainly were — not truly ideas about the etheric at all, but only ideas about the effects of the etheric in the physical. I well remember reading about the etheric body in Rudolf Steiner's book *Theosophy*, and getting from there the idea of the "formative forces" of which it is composed, and which keep the living physical bodies of plants and animals and men from collapsing like dead bodies. I thought of growing plants and, insensibly, there formed itself in my mind the picture of a kind of swelling, an expanding or inflating force — something like what happens when you blow up a bicycle tyre! This really remained with me for years, and I was often much troubled by various allusions to the etheric in other contexts — lectures and so forth — which did not seem to square with it. Particularly, when I was told that the etheric forces work *inward* from the periphery. This seemed to suggest that my previous imagination contained the opposite of the truth, and that I ought really to be thinking, not of expansion from within, but rather a kind of *suction* from without. But of course that was no nearer the truth; because I was really thinking all the time, not of etheric forces but of physical forces.

It is indeed very difficult for minds — trained, as ours have mostly been, to assume that there is nothing between a physical force, at one extreme, and an abstract idea at the other — to learn to imagine, or to realize in experience, something which is a force, and yet not a physical force; something whose influence is inward from the periphery, not outward from the centre; and yet which works upon that centre expansively and not contractingly. But when one *has* overcome this obstacle, at least in some degree; when one has begun, in some dim way, to realize the etheric as etheric, then one begins to move forward into a kind of new and more intimate relationship with the world of plants. One begins, for instance, to feel, like a sort of tenderness in one's own

heart, the infinite delicacy and tenderness that hovers about the growing point of the commonest weed. And at the same time — or it may well be later — it may come about that one will begin to feel a new, and again an intimate, relation with the light itself. One begins to perceive, or rather to feel, that the light itself — this light from the sun that comes to us through the senses — is ethereal and that the etheric is a kind of light.

And this is a very deeply moving experience. Much deeper than mere observation. It goes to the roots of one's being, like the breath of life itself. One will begin to feel that the light is not only outside in space, but also within oneself. Indeed there are sure to be occasions when, for brief periods, one is aware, not only of seeing or feeling the light, but also of breathing it. Breathing it in and out, but especially in. Only a much more intimate kind of breathing — so that one will feel at times that one is *in* the light, not only as our bodies are in water when they swim, not only as they are in the air we breathe, but rather as we speak, in that significant English idiom, of people being *in* love. If one had to find a single word in which to sum up the more subjective aspect of the experience I am speaking of, there is only one word that could be used; and that is — *joy*. The sort of joy that we see made manifest in the sunlight dancing on the water. Deep draughts of pure joy, which obliterate, while they last, all anxiety, all sorrow, all considerations of karma, and even all memory of such things. A joy so uplifting and, if I may use the word, so thoroughgoing, that, however short a time it lasts, it will leave some enduring effects behind it. It may indeed somewhat affect the whole personality — with reverberations even into the sphere of physical health. It may bring a new and more intimate contact with the forces of growth and adolescence in us, so that we find ourselves developing a new strength to support our burdens, and a new energy for devising our tasks and carrying them through. In a word, it may lead to something which could perhaps be described, without altogether overstating it, as — *Rejuvenation*.

Let us suppose that, with the effects of this new and joyous light of perception in us, we choose to turn our attention to some of the great writings of the past; it may be to one or more of the Mystics — or it may be to the New Testament itself. What sort of experience shall we have? We shall have read Rudolf Steiner's description, in the Cassel lectures on the Gospel of St. John, of how, when the blood flowed from the Cross on Golgotha, it was much more than a merely physical event. How there was then a change in the aura of the Earth itself, so that, from being a mere planet, a mere receiver of light from the sun, it began itself to emit light. "Earth began to glow," he says, "first

astrally and visible only to the seer, but in future ages the astral light will become physical light and the earth will be a luminous body — a Sun-body". And now we may well feel that something has happened, like the cracking of the hard rind of a seed by the new life stirring within it; as if a stone had been rolled away, not only from the tomb of our own sense-bound thinking, but from the whole historical development of Christianity. And we shall feel a sort of astonishment, when we reflect on the sombre and gloomy thing which has been made of Christianity — perhaps by the Protestant confession as a whole, but certainly by all manner of narrow, evangelical sects, which have sprung up in the West in the last two or three centuries. We shall feel this astonishment, when we read, for instance, in St. John's Gospel, certain utterances of the Son of Man, such as: "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly," or: "These words have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Above all, we may feel that we now understand in a new and triumphant way those solemn words of the Christ: "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD".

Those five pregnant words "the light of the world" were uttered by Christ Jesus on three occasions, two of them recorded in St. John and one in St. Matthew. Rudolf Steiner often pointed out that the Gospels were not composed or arranged in any haphazard way. If we wish to deepen our understanding of any particular event or utterance, we must always also observe exactly whereabouts in the narrative it is recorded: what came before and what followed after.

The Eighth Chapter of St. John's Gospel opens with the coming of Christ to the Temple in the early morning — after the Feast of Tabernacles, which was celebrated with lighted candles. It describes how, while He was teaching the multitude, the Pharisees brought to Him a woman who had just been taken in adultery — "in the very act", as her accusers eagerly emphasized. The narrative of this encounter is too often quoted to need repeating here. At the moment I only want to draw attention to the fact that, directly after this incident has been described — immediately after Jesus' final words to the woman (those words which are quoted rather less often than the others): "Go, and sin no more" — in the very next verse the tremendous phrase occurs:

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 'I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life'".

Now in the ensuing dispute with the Pharisees the Christ alludes very frequently to the Father. He refers, for instance, all moral judgments to the Father:

"I judge no man. And yet, if I judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me".

And He elaborates this argument in what at first sight seems a strange — even a far-fetched way. According to the Mosaic Law, the testimony of *two* witnesses is true; therefore His, the Christ's, judgment is true — it is true because it is the judgment, not of one, but of two — of Himself and the Father.

If we bear these words in mind, and the many, many other passages in St. John's Gospel where the Christ continually distinguishes Himself from the Father, refers all power and authority to the Father, emphasizes His obedience to the Father, as to one distinct from Himself; and if we set beside them other very different utterances such as "I and the Father are one", or His answer in Chapter 14, to Philip, when Philip says to Him, "Lord, show us the Father!" and if we meditate much and deeply upon them, we may hope to approach a little nearer to one of the great mysteries which St. John's Gospel seeks to reveal to us. The other mystery is the mystery of light — and the two are most intimately connected. That is why, before I return to the light, I want to say a little more about the Father-being, as we read of Him in St. John's Gospel.

I have said that there were many, many other passages; and indeed the words "the Father" recur so frequently throughout the Gospel that they positively seem to ring through its pages, like the note of a gong struck over and over again and coming clear upon our ears through all the other sounds. In the early part of the gospel Jesus speaks more of His having come *down* from the Father, having been sent by the Father, doing the works of the Father, and so forth. Towards the end, however, He begins to speak of going *to* the Father; and it is then that His disciples fail to understand Him.

Rudolf Steiner has spoken of this failure and has pointed out that they failed to understand that, when the Christ spoke of the Father, He was really speaking of what? Of *death*. When He said: "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world", it was really as if He said: "I came forth from death, that is from death in its true form, from the Life-Father". Only afterwards did it flash upon His disciples "that the world, as it surrounds them, is the outer expression of the Father and that the most significant feature in the outer world, its greatest *maya* or illusion, is equally the expression of the Father; that death is the name of the Father."

These are startling words; but I believe there is a road along which we can try to penetrate somewhat into their meaning. The ordinary conscious experience of a living being, that is, of a being in this world of *maya*, always has two sides to it, an inner and an outer. No matter what it may be of which I am

conscious — whether it is of houses and trees, or whether it is only of memories, or whether it is of the light itself, the physical or etheric light, there is always the duality, the subjective-objective duality, which is signified by the word "of". There is, on the outer side, that *of* which I am conscious, and, on the inner side, that in me which *is* conscious. I can never at any moment be conscious of that innermost in me which is actually "doing the business of being conscious". If I say I am conscious of it, I am deceiving myself — for I necessarily presuppose a yet more inner innermost, namely the "I" which is saying so. We get, in fact, what the philosophers call "an infinite regress".

But where the philosophers speak of an infinite regress, we speak of astral and ego; of the divine Hierarchies; and of the Father in us. For we assume that, besides the ordinary experience of human beings today, a different kind of experience is possible. We think that the part of us which *is* conscious — as distinct from the parts *of* which we are conscious — is not just a sort of phantom subject of the grammatical sentence "I am conscious of...", but a Being in a world of Beings. And it is that world which we call the astral world, and, at a further stage, the spiritual world. Thus, the difficulty still remains; but it has ceased to be merely logical and has become — awful. For it follows from what I have said, that to penetrate into the astral is to turn what by its very nature is an *inner* — what for ordinary experience is indeed inwardness itself — into an *outer*; into something like an environment. It involves — to use a very crude and perhaps rather offensive expression — a sort of turning inside out.

Now those who have read much of what Rudolf Steiner has written and spoken about man's life between death and a new birth, will know that it is precisely in such terms that he often describes the experience of the dead. He says that, whereas on earth we feel ourselves as looking out from a centre to a periphery, after death it is the other way. We feel the periphery as ourselves, and we look inwards to a centre. It is the centre which is now the "environment". This is very nearly unimaginable; and it is unimaginable, because it is the experience, not of the living but of the dead.

This break between the experience characteristic of the living and the experience characteristic of the dead — with the abruptness, the sharpness, the bitterness which it involves — does not lie between the physical and the etheric. It lies between the etheric and the astral. Physical and etheric are, both together, our outer world. Astral and ego are the inner.

If, therefore, a man who had penetrated to some extent into the etheric world, that soundless realm of interweaving, ever-changing forms — a world

of joyous light, but a soundless world (and a colourless one) — wished to go further and penetrate into the realm where the Divine Word is not only seen, but also *heard* — namely, into the astral world — he would have to do — what? He would first have to die! Either he would have to die in the ordinary physical sense, or he would have to go through an experience very near to death, on the way of initiation. In one way or another he would have to take the great leap in the dark. He would have to cross the Threshold.

It is important to realize this. Not that penetration to etheric vision or experience is unimportant. On the contrary it represents, in our age above all, a real victory over Ahriman and, as such, is a matter for unqualified rejoicing. It may well be that the whole future of Science depends on it. But it is also very important to realize its limitation. Because, if things *should* have happened in the order I have been supposing (and it is by no means inevitable that they should); if we have first acquired, or perhaps have been granted by that “natural clairvoyance” which Rudolf Steiner foretold for many in the second half of this century, some measure of etheric vision, and if we then seek to progress beyond it, *without* making this abrupt break, this reversal of our whole attitude to life, we shall merely deceive ourselves. We shall never actually know the astral world. We shall at best know the *effects* of the astral in the etheric — that is, the Chemical or Sound Ether; just as we may formerly have recognized the effects of the etheric in the physical, without really *knowing* the etheric itself; that is, without actually experiencing it in our own etheric hearts — or glands.

Now this duality I have been speaking of, this awful contrast between an inner and an outer world, besides concealing the mystery of the Father, and of death — has very much to do with the mystery of light and the mystery of the sun. For it was through the sun that it was gradually brought about. Read the first few lectures of the other Course on the Gospel of St. John, and you will realize how the opening words: “In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... In it was life and the life was the light of men” — take us back to the remote past, before the separation of the sun from the earth, before “Lemuria”. There was then *only* what, from our point of view, if we could be suddenly be transported back into it, we should feel to be an “inner” world; and the “life”, which was in the Word, was not the organic, physical and etheric, life, which we contemplate as life today (contemplate rather than experience) — but the “life which we only know as death, or (to use Rudolf Steiner’s phrase which I recently quoted) “the Life-Father”. And when *light* first began to shine forth as a manifestation of this

life, this spirit-life, it was not the outer sunlight we know. That is why the Book of Genesis records the creation of light as having taken place before the creation of the sun and moon — which, if it is taken superficially — is nonsense.

The Lectures last referred to contain a description of how light, as we see it, only began long after the separation of the Sun, when the sunlight, as an outer phenomenon, began to be dimly perceived by man through the fogs of Atlantis. This, then, was how the inner first became outer; how the *life* became the *light* of men. This was also the beginning of sense-perception in anything like the mode of today. But even then, it was not until a long time after this that the perceptions of the senses, and that contrast between outer and inner which they mediate, grew sharp and clear, as they are now. Elsewhere Dr. Steiner has described how, in the long course of our own Post-Atlantean cycle of ages, man’s experience of the sun has undergone further changes. First, as we have seen, it was changed from an inner experience to an experience received through the senses. But since then it has gradually altered from a direct experience of the Divine *in* sense-perception into an experience of *mere* sense-perception. The Ancient Persians, he said, beheld the sun as the divine Bearer of light; the Ancient Egyptians as the divine Bearer of life; the Greeks received the sun — I say the sun, but in their case it was rather the whole surrounding sphere of the sun-filled ether — as a *soul* experience; they felt it as the divine Bearer of love. That is, of course, of that aphrodisian love, which is the potency of organic life on its way through the soul. The Greeks, he said, felt the sun as the divine Bearer of Eros. It has been left for the man of our time to feel it as the physical begetter of physical, organic life.

Now let us turn to the second occasion in St. John’s Gospel, where those words “The light of the world” occur. It is at the beginning of the Ninth Chapter. Jesus sees the man who was born blind. His disciples ask Him whether this is a retribution for the man’s own sins or the sins of his parents, and Jesus answers: “Neither — it was in order that the works of God should be made manifest in him”. And now, once more there come those five brief amazing words. For He continues: “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world”. And then He makes clay by mixing His spittle with the earth and anoints the blind man’s eyes with the clay; and He tells him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam; and the man goes and washes, and thereupon his sight is restored.

I cannot go fully into the account of this miracle; but anyone who studies it carefully — with the events and utterances which follow it — will notice

several things. He will notice, for instance, that the first words which the blind man himself is recorded as saying after he is healed are the words "I am". He will observe that the writer goes out of his way to translate the Hebrew name SILOAM which he says means "sent forth" — it was clearly a spring of water sent forth from the earth; and he will mark the Christ's words to the Pharisees, when they are disputing with Him afterwards about the miracle:

"For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind".

And then he will perhaps ask himself: What did the Christ really mean by those words: "That the works of God should be made manifest *in him*"? Remembering that one of the first "works of God" was the creation of light; remembering that *krima*, the word used for the English "judgment" has rather more the meaning of "distinguishing" or "discriminating" than of condemning. I think myself that both the miracle itself and the Evangelist's account of it are meant, with the words which follow, above all to emphasize the distinction between the outer light of the world and the inner: between the outer light from the sun and the inner light, which is sent forth from a source or spring within man itself, as it was sent forth in the beginning from the Father — who also spoke the words I AM, and, in doing so, revealed His holiest name.

I suppose the real question is, how seriously one intends to take these things. Only, our truest and inmost intentions are not always the ones that are best known to us. It may even happen that we first learn of our own intentions, not from within, but from without, from the things which happen to us. For light is not the only thing which has been mysteriously externalized — changed from subject into object. If we really accept the doctrine of Karma, we must also believe that the things which happen to us, apparently by accident, are not just accidents — are not even really external to us — but are actually a part of us, in something the same way that the visiting insects are part of the blossom they fertilize. And this belief may become rather more than a belief: it may begin to be realized as a *positive* experience, precisely then, when that other experience which contains the bitterness of death — the experience of the Threshold — I will not say, approaches us, but at least comes into view on the horizon. And this intimate relation between the inner life and the outer event is something which we shall find we can decidedly foster and cherish by meditation.

There are today hundreds of thousands — perhaps I should say millions — of people all over the world, to whom things are happening, which are very,

very bitter. I am not thinking only of the violence and physical privation, which are as yet outside the experience of most of us here. There are other ways in which the consciousness soul has to meet the assaults of the world. It is, for instance, within my knowledge that there are people within this Movement who feel that they have just about reached the end of their tether; who really do not know which way to turn; to whom life appears to be one long series of seemingly meaningless frustrations; people for whom, in their inmost souls — or what they as yet feel to be such — life really does, in one way or another, wear the mask of something like a living death. To such people it is not the province of a lecturer, and I am not qualified, to speak emotional words of comfort in tribulation. I do, however, feel impelled to quote one short, dry — perhaps even harsh — sentence of Rudolf Steiner's. It is this: "It is an indispensable condition of initiation that we should not wish things were otherwise". It is a short sentence, but it will bear long reflection.

I do not mean, by quoting it, to encourage anyone who feels despair to infer from that that he is a very important person, for whom initiation is only just around the corner. But all tribulation involves a kind of dying; and what matters is, not whether the next one, or the next three or four or five, of our many deaths is to be a physical death or an initiation death experienced in the body — but the inner attitude we gradually learn to adopt towards death. Christ, in accomplishing the Mystery of Golgotha, opened the way of initiation to all who truly seek Him. Physical death also is a crossing of the threshold, if we are prepared for it; and indeed we cross it every night when we go to sleep. And yet it depends on our attitude to it, on the strength we have, or have not, developed, whether we really do cross it, or whether we merely — sleep.

In the old conflict between those who represent Christianity as a religion of sorrow and gloom, which tells us only that this world is a Vale of Tears, and that it is absolutely necessary to be miserable now, because that is the only way of being happy later on — and those who represent it as being primarily a religion of comfort and joy — my own sympathies are all with the latter. But it has to be admitted that there are a good many passages in the Gospels which it is pretty difficult for us to get round. Take, for instance, the parable of Dives and Lazarus. It ends with Dives in Hell and Lazarus in Heaven. Yet it is nowhere even hinted that Lazarus was in any way a better, or a more loving, man than Dives — only, as Abraham expressly states, that he was more wretched. Or take the Beatitudes, as we find them recorded in St. Matthew and St. Luke. The overall impression is pretty uncompromising. Blessed are they

that mourn! Blessed are ye that hunger now ... Blessed are ye when men shall hate you ... Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh! And so on, up to the final climax of the terrible Ninth Beatitude: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for My sake: for great is your reward in Heaven!"

What are we to do with these very plain words? Are we just to pretend they are not there? To ignore them, and select others which we like better? Let us rather reflect that it is immediately after these very Beatitudes, as they are given in St. Matthew, that we come upon the Third of the three utterances of the Christ concerning the Light of the World. And then perhaps we shall understand to whom, and in what crisis, they are addressed.

Firstly, let me briefly recall the other two. The first followed immediately after the incident of the accused woman. She had just committed adultery. In her soul, therefore, she knew something — and, at that time, in Palestine, there must certainly have been among the bystanders many Hellenizing Jews, who knew something — of the power of the Eros content of the joy-bringing light. And here it is necessary to pause for a moment and ask a question which, in our particular phase of society, has become rather uncomfortably esoteric. Why is adultery prohibited by the Seventh Commandment? For the Decalogue is not, as the man of our time has been adroitly diverted into believing, an accidentally preserved list of primitive tribal taboos. It is, on the contrary, the framework, the scantlings — rather the blueprint — for man's own voluntary co-operation with the First, Second and Third Hierarchies in their age-long labour of constructing a human Ego out of divine materials.

When we commit adultery, in an effort to snatch the glory of the Eros-bearing light for ourselves, we surrender the conscious ego, which normally controls our actions, to the unconscious Father-forces of procreation in the physical body. We relapse, as it were, into the First Hierarchy, rather as — according to Solovyev — the individual animal rejoins the group-soul in the act of copulation. When we consummate a marriage — I mean a true marriage — we make indeed the same surrender; but now the Father mitigates and balances the surrender — humanizes it, if you prefer by — tentatively asserting His more recent sovereignty in the astral and ego organization — in the conscious ego itself; whether, as at first, from Sinai, with thunder and the threat of savage penalties; or whether, as now, from His throne in the free will of each individual who determines, and in course of time effects, that the mutual consequence of the act shall be at least life-long. Through the First Hierarchy the Father reigns in the outer world, which includes our own

physical bodies and their processes. Through the Time-spirits, who are His representatives in the Third Hierarchy, He will reign in the inner world of man's consciousness. Therefore these Time-spirits — the Archai — are also called Spirits of Personality.

In placing immediately after this incident the naming of Himself by the Christ as the light of the world, it is clear to me that the Evangelist* intended to underline the distinction between the false light of the world and the true. He is indicating that, for Ego-men, the way to the Father is not the backward way through Eros and orgasm, but the journey on, which leads through death. In recording it again, during the healing of the man born blind, we have seen that he brought out the contrast between the outer light and the inner. The *third* of the three occasions on which these words occur — this time in the Gospel of St. Matthew — is during the Sermon on the Mount, immediately after the Beatitudes. But this time the setting is different. This time Jesus is no longer addressing the multitude. He is alone with His own — with His disciples, who need no such instruction in discrimination. They have been "so long time with Him", as He once reminded Philip, and have so often seen the true Light of the world — the light from the source *within* — shining from His countenance, that they need no education in distinguishing that Light from any other light. Instead, therefore, He first prepares them by endeavouring to build up in them, through those uncompromising Beatitudes, the kind of attitude to the deathly bitterness of tribulation, which I have already mentioned — the attitude which can detach itself from strong feelings and treat them as a means to an end; which does not wish disaster away; which can even accept it as a blessing. And then, after He has prepared them in this way, He speaks the Five Words. But this time He speaks them a little differently. This time He does not say "*I am* the light of the world." This time He makes the terrifying, or the sublimely exalting, revelation. This time He says "*Ye are* the light of the world." And again "*Ye are* the salt of the earth!" And immediately afterwards He instructs them in the *Our Father*, the Lord's Prayer — the prayer which — except, perhaps, for one half-sentence — He could Himself join them in saying.

What did he mean by such words? He, who also said: "The Kingdom of

* I mean, of course — as anyone without clairvoyant knowledge must mean — the actual compiler or compilers of the gospel as we have it in the Canon. It was Rudolf Steiner who first convinced me that the gospels yield their deepest secrets to those who ponder the familiar text, rather than to those who lose themselves in the mazes of textual criticism; which, in the case of the *Pericope adulterae* (John VII, 53 — VIII, 11), has a long history stretching back to Jerome and Augustine.

God is within you". He, who also said: "The Father in Me, and I in you?" The "salt" of the earth is its essence, its true being; and it is this essence, which in future is to be the light of the cosmos — gradually taking the place of the sun. When, therefore, He told His disciples that they were the light of the world, He was, in effect, saying to them: Once the Word was spoken by the Father, and the Word was the source of the true, the Father-Life, and the Life was the source of Light. And henceforth that Light, that Life, that Word and that Father are *in you*! "The Father in Me, and I in you!"

And what is He saying to us? He is saying the same thing; but He is also saying: The change in the earth's aura, which took place at the time of Golgotha, depends, if it is to grow and brighten, or even if it is to continue at all, on a change in *man's* aura. It depends on whether there will be enough souls of men struggling somehow on towards a time when they will not merely *enjoy* the light of the world, but will actually *be* it.

There are many of Rudolf Steiner's writings, which will take us on from here, and which will carry our thoughts into that astral region, where the light is experienced from within. We may take, for instance, the four printed Lectures, *Mysteries of the East and of Christianity*, particularly the description of the Sun at Midnight, and the account there given of the soul at night, looking down upon its own etheric and physical bodies and feeling itself as the sun which is warming and illumining them. Or *The Inner Nature of Man and Life Between Death and Rebirth*; where the emphasis is rather on the relationship which it is possible for us to have with the dead, precisely in that inner world. Or one may seek to study the relationship of this astral light to speech. Although we do not yet *shine* from within, we do already speak the word from within ourselves; and if we could really follow language back to its source, back to what is called the "Lost Word", we should come also to the source of light.

If, after penetrating to the source of light and uniting ourselves with it, we then return, and open our eyes, like the man born blind, to the outer etheric light, then above all is there a true rejoicing in the light. For I do well to rejoice in the etheric light, if I am so related to it as to be aware all the time that "I", that is, the Father in me, am the true source of it; and not the blazing sun out there in space, which is now no more than a hollow reflector. When we absorb the light from without, we absorb also the fallen Bearer of the Light. We take Lucifer into our souls, and he gives us his strength and his enthusiasm, in exchange for a seat on the Father's throne in us. When we ourselves go *out* into the light from within the light — that is, from beneath the Father's throne in

us — then, too, Lucifer gives us his strength and his joy; but now it is as a free gift, as a thank-offering for his redemption. And just as he brought *Eros* to the Greeks, so he brings us *Agapé* — namely, the love whose well-spring is rather compassion, but whose intensity is desire. And, with that, he brings also — not so much that *rejuvenation*, of which mention was made earlier, but rather something, which is very like rejuvenation, but also very unlike it — the first, faint beginnings of something which could more properly be described as — *resurrection*. All this he can do, because he himself has fulfilled, in us, his old longing to rise again as the Holy Spirit.

The source of the light cannot experience the light objectively. It *is* the light. That is why, to one on the very verge, the very threshold, of union with it, the true spiritual world — the Supreme Identity, the Inwardness itself — looks, not like light, but like a darkness and a death. This is also the secret of the link between the many references to the light in St. John's Gospel and the still more numerous references to the Father. For the Father is the *source*. Indeed, that is what we mean by calling Him Father.

And in those references we can find, if we seek it, a sure touchstone for detecting the presence of Lucifer, there, where he has his last, and perhaps his best chance for concealing it from us. That is, when he chooses to hide himself, like a maggot in an apple, in the very core of the high impulse of Johannine Christianity. Seated on the Father's throne in us, Lucifer will glibly and readily say: "I and the Father are one," hoping thereby to deceive us into mistaking him for the Christ. For those are the very words of the Christ. But Lucifer will never say the other thing. Lucifer will never say — as the true Christ said over and over again, according to the testimony of St. John: "I and the Father are *two*". Because his pride will not allow it; and because in any case he prefers to keep mum about the Father.

Rudolf Steiner often spoke of the time, from about 1930 onward, as a period in which the faculty of etheric vision would become more and more widespread. He pointed also to the middle of this century as a time in which there would be "violent breakings in of the new" from many directions. Perhaps therefore, just at this juncture in the life of the Twentieth Century and of this Movement, it may not be unimportant that we should come to distinguish more and more clearly between the outer light and the inner; between the etheric light and the astral light; between the conquest of Ahriman and the redemption of Lucifer; between the light in and for itself and the Source of the light in the Alpha and Omega, in the Word of the Father.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE EARTH

by Nick Thomas

What future can we picture for our Earth? Is it "our" Earth anyway? The last two decades are one of the encouraging signs of our time. When we come to a modest realisation of the true dignity of mankind and of the basis of having stewardship of the Earth this will gain its true perspective. In short, the reason for this is that we have evolved to our present level of development *with* the Earth, not despite it. The now fairly widespread Gaia hypothesis has reached the point of wondering whether the Earth is in some sense "alive", but there is little scientific credibility given to the possibility that consciousness plays a part too. The danger posed by our technological exploitation of the Earth and its resources is notorious, but we must ask nevertheless what legitimate place technology has, assuming that humanity is not merely a boil or pestilence on the surface of the globe, but is as much part of the Earth — of Gaia — as are the molten core, the rocks, the atmosphere, the plants and the animals. For we have produced this technology, and however alien some find it we use it extensively and in many ways it arises as an outward caricature of our own being. In this sense it will not "go away" unless a catastrophe renders it economically impossible to sustain. As we shall see, even then its deeper sources would remain.

Rudolf Steiner predicted that our ever-increasing mastery of more hidden (occult) forces would lead to a direct connection between human beings and machines and to the sending of immense effects out into the cosmos⁽¹⁾. Characterising this as a kind of "demon magic" he nevertheless pointed out that it is in fact fully justified and must come, strange as that may seem. The challenge to us is to develop higher forces of the human spirit in equal measure to form a counterbalance. For these forces are connected with our own being and our own evolution, and have to be mastered and redeemed. Electricity and magnetism are a metamorphosis of an old moral world order⁽²⁾ existing objectively in the Earth. A naive view likes to see the Earth as wholly "good" and supposes that turning our backs on technology could lead to a better world. Yet spiritual scientific research shows that forces exist in the Earth which, if we fall prey to them, lead to disharmony and evil⁽³⁾. Our evolution has now progressed so far that we are able to use such forces

practically, and to appreciate their nature and tendencies. If we cease to use them in an outwardly technical way they will nevertheless remain and work further on our inner life. This we have no alternative but to reckon with. The greatest danger lies in passively treating them as natural in such a way that we blindly follow where they lead, as if we were to say that because gravity is natural therefore we must fall down and be injured. Instead we are challenged to stand up and find a true balance.

We are not physically immortal, and neither is the Earth. Just as the body serves us in one of our lives, and only does so *because* it contains death amongst its processes, so does the Earth serve humanity, and in a similar sense also because it contains destructive forces. We would have no individual consciousness without the forces of death, and our further evolution likewise depends on a spiritual development which masters the forces of destruction we are learning to use technically. (It should go without saying that this justifies neither excess nor apathy). Whether we are alone in this spiritual struggle is an anxious question facing us.

What, then, is the real nature of these forces? Physics has striven to penetrate behind the phenomena of the world we ordinarily perceive, and for this uses increasingly powerful apparatus. Technology and physics form an impressive symbiosis in the building of ever-greater machines designed to investigate the sub-atomic realm. The smaller and more fleeting the particles and processes, the bigger the experimental apparatus. The Stanford Linear Collider in California is over two miles long, while the LEP collider at Switzerland is over 16 miles in diameter containing vast tubular rings round which particles are accelerated to enormous speeds before being brought into collision with other particles, or else a target, where the experiment is set up. Why so big? Why do we need apparatus at all? Apart from the more obvious answers to these questions, we shall be concerned with more subtle ones. It has already been said that we depend upon death processes for our consciousness. If we confront Nature unaided as Goethe did, then without spiritual development to strengthen our inner forces we find that in a subtle way Nature puts us to sleep; not so that we start snoring however! Rather we find that the forces of imagination fail us. Now experimental apparatus provides a means of staying awake, or rather it obviates the need for a higher awakensness that Goethe was able to sustain. From a spiritual view such apparatus introduces death processes to aid us in our scientific work⁽⁴⁾. The deeper we penetrate the more powerful the apparatus needed. Make no mistake, we there by enter "occult" realms which otherwise are only open to spiritual scientific methods

based on the training which Rudolf Steiner has so lucidly explained⁽⁵⁾. He quite clearly warned that the penetration of these realms without moral and spiritual development leads only to acquaintance with the most destructive forces⁽⁶⁾. However, it is not enough to say "forces". We encounter here beings of a definite character. As long as we cling to a materialistic paradigm we can speak of forces and particles. As long as we remain dependent on apparatus produced by technology we can evade the truth that we are bringing beings into our service, and use instead a subtle nominalism to describe what we find. The phenomenon is that we have uncovered highly destructive agencies which we use in the nuclear industry and which many understandably despair of our ever mastering safely for peaceful purposes. To spiritual perception these agencies are not merely forces but beings with their own purposes.

To speak of beings may appear philosophically unsophisticated if not downright superstitious. It is not based either on philosophy or belief, however, but on the painstaking spiritual research of Rudolf Steiner. Most people have a workable concept of "being" based on the most important realities of our lives: other human beings! Whether we can articulate this concept clearly is not at first the most important issue, for we anyway use many concepts difficult to define as "consciousness", "matter", and so on. We treat our family, colleagues, friends and neighbours as beings, not as lumps of matter. Scientists do not differ from others in this respect! That some beings may have other conditions of life than ours is not preposterous, but it is only scientifically amenable to investigation by those suitably equipped by spiritual training. This is just where a wider understanding of spiritual science is so important because the deeper meaning of our technology and its rôle is not otherwise readily accessible. Instead of using the forces we are discovering blindly we can then grasp their significance for our further development and that of the Earth.

The Earth is a priceless gift to us, and it is clear that its riches will not last indefinitely. It *needs* to be able to sustain us until we have all evolved beyond the bodily needs it provides for. To husband rather than pollute and exploit its resources is obvious common sense. But we will also reach the stage where we can consciously create our own life conditions to a far greater degree than we do even today. That will involve us in technology in a more comprehensive sense. We will learn the secrets of life and consciousness and we will play a major part in the creation of a future world succeeding this one, where love will be as much a part of Nature as is wisdom today. To be beautiful, to be healthy, to accord with our true human dignity, this will need art as well as

science. Already artists use pipes, plates and girders to express themselves. The results are passive objects requiring an inner response to be understood. Beings descend into our art and live there⁽⁷⁾, the type of being depending upon the artist and the materials. When our evolution awakens the ability to control machines through our soul forces⁽¹⁾, this fact will only be comprehensible if we recognise that there too we are working with beings. These beings will however live in *dynamic* circumstances, in the *action* of machines rather than in a passive arrangement of materials. Through art we can be sensitive to the quality of these beings, and to work with those promoting our progress rather than our decline. But beauty depends on the existence of ugliness, and goodness on evil. A more penetrating knowledge of reality can neither escape such truths nor abdicate from their implications: to create beauty we must needs wrestle with ugliness and transform it. The ugliness and destructiveness of much of our technology is but one side of a much greater whole. The Earth provides us with spiritual as well as physical resources for our development, and these include powers of Cain and of evil⁽⁸⁾ which we will learn to overcome. Thereby we will transform the Earth itself. Fortunately we are not alone in this, for it is none other than the Christ who overcame death, and He is with us too in this enterprise.

References (by Rudolf Steiner):

1. "The Karma of Vocation" — Lecture 9.
2. "The Temple Legend" — Lecture 10.
3. "At the Gates of Spiritual Science" — Lecture 14.
4. "From Symptom to Reality in Modern History" — Lecture 3.
5. "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment".
6. "The Occult Movements in the 19th Century" — Lecture 9.
7. "The Influence of Spiritual Beings upon Man" — Lecture 10.

PUPPETS HELP IN A MIXED-UP WORLD

by Gisela Bittleston

It all started in 1945 in Forest Row, when some "well meaning" parents took my children (then 5 and 7 years old) without my knowledge to the cinema. They knew that I disapproved but they felt sorry for them. Both cinema and television (which then hardly existed) leave little room for the play of a child's imagination. The tiny dots of light, racing across the screen, deceive the children's senses, the pictures are not real.

When I complained to the teacher she said "Do something positive — give the children a fairy story puppet play". I knew nothing about puppetry, but when I took the teachers' training courses at Stuttgart and at Michael Hall, Forest Row, I learned that the authentic fairy tales of many lands contain an age-old wisdom. The Brothers Grimm expressed it like this: "All true fairy stories have in common the remainders of a faith which comes from ancient times and expresses in picture form convictions about spiritual realities. These tales are like small broken pieces of a precious stone, lying on the ground, all over-grown with the grass and flowers, so that they can only be discovered by a keen eye".

I returned home rather doubtful at my ability at such a venture but tried and experimented till I had made some simple puppets and an improvised stage. Soon I had to give two performances on Saturdays and Sundays as so many children came.

Slowly the puppets became more beautiful and the stage more compact, so that when we moved to Edinburgh I could give shows professionally for parties and other social events. There were birthday, Hallowe'en and Christmas parties, and outdoor shows in Princes Street gardens, which all helped to support our meagre income.

The next stage was from entertainment to healing when I was teaching in several Homes for children in need of special care, both in Britain and in Holland. It was soon discovered that the whole atmosphere of a darkened room, the little stage lit by many colours, and the glittering puppets, had a calming effect on the hyperactive or aggressive children — especially when

the same play was repeated once a week for three weeks. Some autistic children started even to talk to the puppets — a great delight to the doctors and nurses.

Back again in Forest Row I was asked to teach puppetry to the students of Emerson College. This was a new challenge. The students came from many different countries and soon we had to make puppets which the children of their countries would accept as belonging to them. I made Indian, African, Russian, American Indian, Gypsy and even ancient Egyptian puppets. Then we toured by car many of the Children's Homes all over England, Scotland and Wales and even gave six performances on Iona. The most exciting outcome of it all was the many uses of puppets the students discovered.

They gave shows to interest parents who were considering starting Kindergartens or small schools. By charging entrance fees to the performances, some monetary help could also be given. Puppets were used by teachers in the lower classes in language teaching or to quieten a noisy group. In the upper school the lethargic teenagers were roused to discussion by two puppets expressing different views on a given subject. Some students worked in psychiatric hospitals, teaching the adult patients and preparing puppet plays with them, which they then performed in the children's psychiatric or general wards..

Both in Black communities and in American Indian reservations my puppet scripts of their fairy tales were translated back to their original languages and accompanied by native instruments. Scripts were also translated into Dutch, French, German, Italian, Brazilian, Icelandic and other languages.

One student introduced puppetry to his parents, who were unhappily retired, and brought a new interest to them as they started giving shows to many lonely village schools.

Two students went on a horse-drawn caravan holiday in a neighbouring country, giving shows on the way. They solved one schoolteacher's problem; he was then able to give puppet shows in a local language which he was not legally permitted to teach.

The possibilities are many and in over twenty different countries students are using glove puppetry for healing. There are a number of cases of severely disturbed children who made no sound whatever — they neither laughed nor cried — but were brought "to life" again through their identifying with puppets, who slowly released their pent-up emotions and even brought back their ability to speak.

This method has been warmly approved by doctors in many lands and it is most unfortunate that there is still so much criticism by those who work differently.

In my long experience with child audiences I am convinced that glove puppet shows are for all ages — the children take what they can according to their mental ability. The little ones enjoy the colours, the glitter, the songs and the animals — in fact the whole atmosphere can induce complete absorption, even in a two-year old. This is very different from the act of story-telling, where much depends on the child's imagination and experience.

One of my pupils had great difficulty in convincing his colleagues and decided to write his dissertation on the therapeutic aspects of glove puppetry. Here are a few quotations from his thesis: "The glove puppet has a body consisting of a gown, a head and hands which are attached to it. When it lies unnoticed in a room it appears to be completely lifeless. But it is quite a different matter when once on the hand of the puppet player: in a flash it can stand up and become a living being. It moves silently, almost hovering over the Earth but never losing contact with it. The very thing which breathes life into the puppet always remains hidden from the observer — namely, the hand. The palm of the puppet player's hand always faces the observer. The sensitive side of the hand is therefore open and radiates warmth; it is the expression of the sun, it is the puppet's heart. Opposed to this, the manipulation of the string puppet, the Marionette, comes from pulling the strings from without, engaging the forces of the head. During the performance of a fairy story play, the children are able to recover from their over-stimulation by the environment".

In our age we have more and more children who would be greatly helped by puppetry.

Tiptap the Gnome

AND OTHER TALES
(IN COLOUR)

Lucia Grosse, the author and illustrator of these six stories, died in 1981 at the age of 81. The stories were written towards the end of her life, in the first place for her own grandchildren. They always wanted Grandmother to tell them a story — and there was nothing she liked to do better.

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Egypt

*Left to right: The ram-headed god Thoth; Pharaoh;
Young Prince; Princess Hatshepsut*



Africa

*Left to right: Sangoma the Witch; Mother and Baby;
Chieftain; Demazana, betrothed to the Chieftain.*



Europe — from Grimm and similar fairy stories

Left to right: Gnome; Lion; King; Princess; Prince



India

*Left to right: Seller of Bangles; Queen;
Snake; Princess Balna; the Fish Prince*



North America

Left to right: Medicine Man; Stravenis; Mother; Chieftain



*Facing page:
Ananda, favourite pupil
of the Buddha.
Seven-metre tall
sculpture cut out of solid
rock. Gal Vihara, near
Polonnaruwa, Sri Lanka.*

*Sri Lanka-elephant
female, drinking on the
bank of the Menik Ganga,
Yala National Park,
Southern Sri Lanka.
Like almost all elephants
on the island she has
no tusks.*



*Working elephant
in Ceylon.
The double-humped
forehead typical of this
species of elephant is
here very clearly visible.*





Asiatic elephant (Elephas maximum) in Yala National Park, Ceylon.

This one is tuskless and old.



*African elephants (Loxodonta africana), half-grown;
Lake Manyara, Tanzania.*

MAN AND NATURE IN DIFFERENT CULTURES AND CONTINENTS

by Andreas Suchantke

[Editorial Note: The intentions of this article would be seriously misunderstood if it were taken as a comprehensive study of two contrasting regions of the world — parts of Brazil on the one hand, and the island of Sri Lanka on the other. The article describes certain symptomatic facts about these regions, seen through the eyes of a well-informed and sympathetic visitor, which illustrate different possible relationships between Nature and humanity; symptoms which are to be found in many places in the world, and call urgently for our fuller understanding and concern.]

There is nowadays a widespread conviction that man has always taken the part of destroyer in his dealings with nature. He could not have acted otherwise, it is thought, destructiveness being inherent in him; and the facts render striking proof of it. Such convictions are most prevalent among the spokesmen of materialist, technological civilization, and are simply taken for granted by them when they come to make pronouncements about other cultures and epochs. The fact that in certain times and places nature has been treated in a more caring way, with an intuitive approach which has been ecologically sounder, is simply disregarded in such circles. Instead the achievements of other cultures are simply presumed to be "pre-scientific" and backward, and condemned as such. This attitude reveals the arrogance, indeed the chauvinism and cultural nihilism of those who hold it. It further fails to notice how closely analogous it is to that brand of — vehemently condemned — economic imperialism, which effectively denies and extinguishes the native structures of other cultures with which it comes into contact. And, no less fatal: where there are no alternatives to be seen the search for new ways proves pointless and all that remains is resignation, or justification for carrying on as before, since there is nothing else to be done, and one can persuade oneself that one will somehow be able to "get a grip" on things.

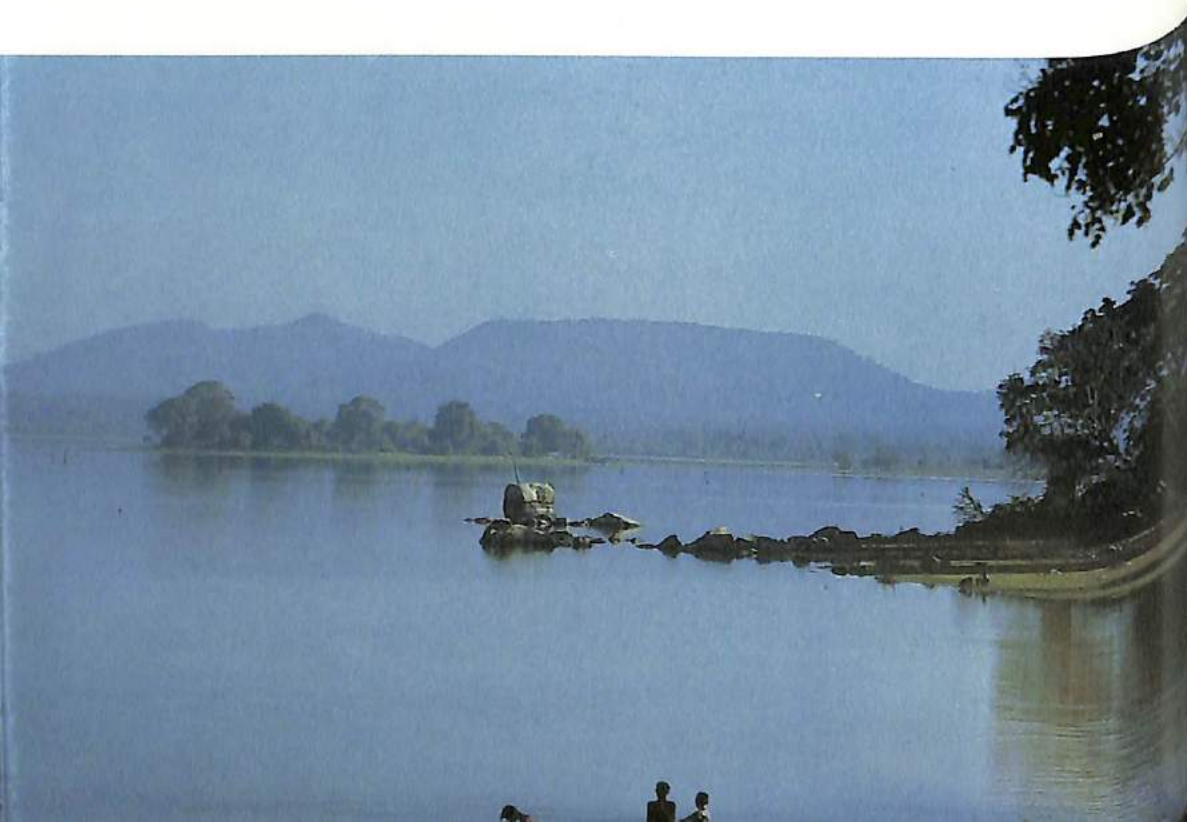
It is hoped, in what follows, to show just how much more complex and various the relationships are in reality, by means of contrasting examples from two regions, widely separated both culturally and geographically. How, for instance, in an area of Southern Asia cultural practices inherited from the



Farewell views of a fading paradise.

Above: evening light on the Dagoba of Mihintale.

Below: Lake Wirawila Wewa in Southern Sri Lanka.



ancient past are still very much alive and have a determining influence, such that relationships in no way hostile to nature prevail — nature here being experienced not as an “environment” in the sense of something lying outside the realm of normal cultural life, but rather as a sphere in which culture is enclosed, so that its separation from culture is unknown. In contrast to this we have a region of the earth which was never moulded by any higher culture before the representatives of the modern materialist civilization invaded it, and thus had nothing in the way of traditional, autochthonous cultural elements to set against the imported technology. The region referred to is South America or, more exactly, the extra-Andine, non-Inca part of this continent. Let us consider it first.

SOME PROBLEMS OF SOUTH AMERICA

Although they have been there for centuries, this continent's colonizers and immigrants have not yet fully made it their home. They have succeeded neither in creating a fully-independent culture (though varied and significant beginnings have been made), nor in developing a viable relationship to the natural habitat of the region. The caring and ecologically appropriate methods of cultivation and economic management that might be associated with such a relationship are similarly lacking.

This situation may well have to do with the fact that the very earliest settlers were people who had, to a large extent, already broken the ties of nature in their country of origin. At the beginning of the modern age the focal point of cultural development shifted from the country to the town. With that, human existence was no longer embedded in the necessities of natural processes as it had been, not only for the farmer and the peasant, but also for the largely agriculturally-organized monasteries of the Middle Ages. Trade, science and the beginnings of mechanical technology, being elements of city culture, are not subject to the dictates of natural processes, rather favouring the unfolding of the autonomous personality, free and independent, but also rootless and homeless. It is the birth of the discoverer and colonizer: no new place can provide a home for him, for he takes the spiritual guidelines of his existence, if at all, from his own inner life and not from interaction with the natural landscape of his homeland. Hence the striking element of alienation and incongruity South American cities bring to the natural landscapes in which they are set. These are either still in their original wild state,

or else already damaged, but scarcely ever permeated with human culture.

Such incongruity, not to speak of conflict, is of course just as evident in Europe. It is simply masked externally by the relics of a nature-related culture which persist in many places, and which further conceal the fact that the making of the landscape is a cultural achievement belonging indisputably to the past. Significantly enough, these observations are much less applicable to a certain group among the new citizens of South America, namely the (forced) immigrants from Black Africa. It seems that out of their basic religious reverence for nature they found it much easier to make a home of the familiar world of the tropics.

Lack of awareness subsists not only in relation to nature, however, but also in relation to the people who lived here before the arrival of the Europeans. In all southern continents — Australia and Tasmania, Africa, South America — the same picture is found. In all these places, still at a more youthful, child-like stage of culture, where often, as certainly in the hunter-gatherer communities, the step towards rearranging and transforming nature had still to be taken, there was a feeling of high expectation towards the newly-arrived Europeans. Laurens van der Post describes this feeling, as it appeared among the African peoples, in the following terms:

“The black man's original readiness to serve the white man probably arose out of his unconscious expectation that one day someone would come and bring him something that only the ‘White Man’ was capable of bringing. When he actually came, it was like an answer to a dream lying far back in the depths of the African soul, as if his secret hopes for the future of Africa had been heard. The appearance of the white man seemed to be the fulfilment of a promise preserved as a living reality within the African soul from *primaeval* times.”

Similar expectations were to be found in America — among the Central American cultures even actual prophecies, which seemed in the eyes of the *Indios* to have been fulfilled with the arrival of the white man. And in South America, in the inner reaches of Brazil, time and again throughout the centuries migratory waves of messianic enthusiasm set whole tribes upon pilgrimage to the coast seeking redemption. A pessimistic mythology foreseeing the imminent end of the world drove them to see the “land without evil” lying, so they believed, in the east, from where the Europeans came.

But the meeting, the exchange, the restorative enhancement, did not take place. The white man remained apart, so that what ultimately lay behind the great urge towards discovery and colonization was denied expression. The whole enterprise could be characterized as lust for power and material

possession, but that was only its outward side, and this succeeded very well in masking what was going on below the surface; to quote Laurens van der Post again, a passage relating to Africa but none the less of general validity: "The more I learn of so-called primitive man, the higher is my regard for him, and the more I become aware just how much we could learn from him and what profound insights he could impart to us. I believe he is just as necessary for us as we are for him. I regard us as two mutually enhancing halves, marked out by life to form a whole. The longer I contemplate the ever-darkening stage of contemporary events, the more I realize how vital our need of each other is".

Described here is what should have been the first steps towards a culture encompassing the whole of mankind; one which would lead neither to one culture suppressing and eliminating all the others, nor to a general levelling out with concomitant loss of individual identity, but rather to a world-wide diversity. Within this each culture could make its particular contribution and have its due place, and together they would not merely complement each other, but further development, mutual stimulation and continual learning would occur.

So far there are only a few modest attempts at this in evidence. The black African has been bitterly disappointed and left in the lurch by the white man. It may be, however, that events now taking shape in certain parts of Africa are a sign that the black man has not given up, and out of his own insight will force the unwilling whites towards brotherhood. The first beginnings of such an awakening are already detectable.

The case of the Indio is different. He is on the retreat: he is wiped out by contact with the modern immigrant civilization. He has no place in it, and its representatives pay no heed to him except as an obstacle in the way of the uninhibited expropriation of land. Between 1957 and 1975, 230 of the existing tribes became extinct. How many have gone since then?

Nature, for her part, and this is the other side of the story, does almost nothing to accommodate man. The rain forest, climax and most resplendent manifestation of plant life on earth, is rooted for the most part in completely infertile, agriculturally worthless soils. An apparent paradox: surely where plant life grows in such profuse abundance the soil should be exceptionally fertile? The answer is that the tropical flora, having extracted, during an epoch-long past, the life-essential minerals from the then fertile soil, now retain them in cycles which no longer include the soil, for they are taken up at the soil interface by the surface-creeping roots.

The conditions in a landscape to which the terms "bush" and "scrubland" are more appropriate than to the rainforest are even more extreme. These are found in the endless plains of the interior and east of Brazil, which are covered in Cerrado — sometimes in the form of thick, tangled scrubland (Cerradão), sometimes as open grassland with single small trees (Campo cerrado). The landscape looks exactly the same for hundreds of miles. It is grey or yellowish-brown, bleak. The flora give the impression of being stunted and impoverished. The twisted shapes of the small trees, with their tough bark and branches few but thick by virtue of their paucity, look as if they are having difficulty raising themselves above the ground. This impression is thoroughly accurate, for many of the species found here also occur in the forest regions, where they manage to grow to a considerable height. Here, however, they remain dwarfish and deformed. Palm-tree tops sit, seemingly trunkless on the ground. The trunk is actually growing below ground. Also many another plant species which remains small above the ground will be found to have thick, lignified and swollen tumour-like roots with offshoots of disproportionate size — strange structures serving no storage function. These are the so-called "Xylopodia". All these peculiarities reveal the operation of senescence, a process associated with life in ancient soils, which here makes for fitness to cope with an excess, due to the soil's largely demineralised condition, of growth-inhibiting aluminium. It is therefore also understandable that this bush-and-savannah landscape lacks higher animal life, except for many birds — humming birds, Toucans and, at least at one time, the great, colourful Macaws — but of mammals there is a shortage. Whereas in Africa, in landscapes physiographically very similar to this one, herds of grazing animals and the big predators determine the picture, rendering an atmosphere of such power that the onlooker finds himself deeply moved; in the open plains of South America he encounters at most the little, leaping Pampas Deer which are scarcely bigger than Roe Deer, and Duiker-sized Brocket Deer, and besides these foxes and small cats.

Man has as yet had little idea of what to do with these vast expanses of impoverished nature, which are as little suited to agriculture as the rain forests. Nevertheless in the course of his cultural expansion he has, albeit involuntarily, greatly enlarged them. But not the original Cerrado, rather a Cerrado-like secondary landscape which differs from the original by being even more barren. In many places in the east of Brazil, in areas near the sea and river basins where the tropical forests used to stand, the soils have been brought, by predatory agriculture and above all by coffee plantations, to such a state of

deterioration that today only expanses of extremely poor steppe are to be found, punctuated by stunted bushes and termite mounds, and where the grass is so tough that cattle reject it.

SRI LANKA: ORIGINAL ONENESS OF CULTURE AND NATURE

Quite different are the images one encounters in parts of Southern Asia, at any rate in those regions where, as in Sri Lanka, Buddhist culture still thrives.

Our first impression, and one that proves itself ever more justified, is that there is apparently no separation, certainly not a trace of hostility, between culture and nature. Where the one stops and the other begins is impossible to determine. The many pools and lakes, so characteristic of the Sri Lankan landscape, covered with floating tapestries of water-roses, out of which the snow-white or tender pink blossoms of the lotus flowers rise up on their tall stems, are every one of them artificial. Their laying out as reservoirs to serve the rice fields goes back partly to pre-Christian times. For animals they are a true paradise. There on the bank a two-metre long Indian Monitor sits sunning himself, looking like some prehistoric dragon. As we approach he shows no sign of clearing off, being well used to humans who value him as a killer of snakes. Another dragon, fully twice as long, dozes across the way on a mudbank, his mouth wide open. A Mugger, easily mistaken for one of his African cousins. Much more graceful than these are the inhabitants of the water meadows: slender, elegant, black and white Pheasant-tailed Jacanas, as these water fowl with their lightly-curved tail feathers are called, stalking carefully on their extra-long toes over the leaves of the water roses. An iridescent blue-violet Purple Gallinule, related to our Coot, but with red rather than white frontal shields, and as big as a domestic hen, has got a water-rose bud clamped between its coral-pink toes and pecks it away bit by bit. Small olive-brown Pond Herons stand around motionless, looking like wooden posts jutting out of the water — at least until they soar off revealing all at once their snow-white wings. Kingfishers flash like iridescent arrows over the water, and beside us a male Weaver bird proclaims with loud sparrow-like chirpings the completion of his elaborate, retort-shaped nest, which he now hopes will find approval with the best of the neighbouring females. Some children come tripping along and try to sell us bunches of water-hyacinths. Astonished, we ask why we should buy them when they are growing on the



The delicate grace of the "small white Water-princess" is somewhat diminished by her very large feet. But this makes it possible for her to spread her weight widely on the wavering blue carpet of the lotus meadows

bank beside our feet. The little girls laugh — and make us a present of them.

It is oppressively hot and close, and we are nearly perishing with thirst. So we turn to one of the little farmsteads that lie hidden beneath the fronds of the coconut and date palms behind the breakwater. We ask if we can buy a few coconuts and the obliging man at the house shows us there and then how you can top the green fruits in such a way that a little hole appears, through which the clear, cool liquid can be drunk with the aid of a straw — without one if you are very thirsty. The whole family, meanwhile, stands around us. One little daughter has on her arm a tame young Mongoose, which at once begins climbing all over her. He is both a playful pet and a useful weapon against snakes. The perilous Cobra is fond of human settlements for the abundance of hiding places and rats they provide. And the lady of the house shows us with evident pride the tame hind that is also a member of the family.

Between man and the creatures of nature there is a brotherly relationship

which is taken for granted. A brotherliness which proceeds from man, and which nature for her part answers with confidence and trust. When, for instance, you try to make a picnic of your mid-day rest in a forest clearing you very quickly have uninvited guests — Palm Squirrels, House Crows, Bonnet Macaques — who expect a share and make sure they get it. It is an atmosphere of peaceful tolerance and loving regard for life; it is the spirit of Buddhism become a basic habit of life, which here permeates the human sphere, but also that of nature. A happy realization: nature answers like for like, as she is approached, so she responds. She is manifestly receptive to the moral quality of the manner in which she is treated. It really works! Man, so this experience teaches, is not irrevocably destined to be a destroyer of nature. It is possible for him to act differently, as long as his action is based on a sound attitude, be it Buddhist or, related in essence, truly Christian.

The highest expression of this harmonious fusion of culture and nature is found here embodied in a landscape feature whose elements have been combined to form something unique, and to which the Occident has nothing remotely comparable: the shrine of the Buddha at Gal Vihara near Polonnaruwa in Sri Lanka. There, in a charming meadowland set with loosely-spaced trees and bushes and formed by rocks on both sides in a manner neither isolating nor confining into a natural amphitheatre, a group of colossal sculptures have been cut out of a vertical wall of rock on one side. Among the Buddha-figures one, through the sheer power and extraordinary vitality of its form, stands out. This is the figure of Ananda, the Buddha's favourite pupil. The perfection of this sculpture is due to its being in overall harmony with itself. The poised, suspended vigour of its animated surface evinces inner activity. Movement in rest. In the play of its facial expression this is intensified. The gaze is directed inwards in a state of active rest.

A young couple approach the shrine; the girl is swathed in a gorgeous sari and holds a little bowl of strongly-scented frangipani blossoms, which she lays before the statue of Ananda. For a long time the two kneel deep in prayer before the image. As still and silently as we can we withdraw, so as not to disturb. But our consideration turns out to have been unnecessary, for the pair are impervious to any disturbance, and show no sign of it even when a troop of boisterous children suddenly appear and deposit their offerings of blossoms rather more gaily than devoutly.

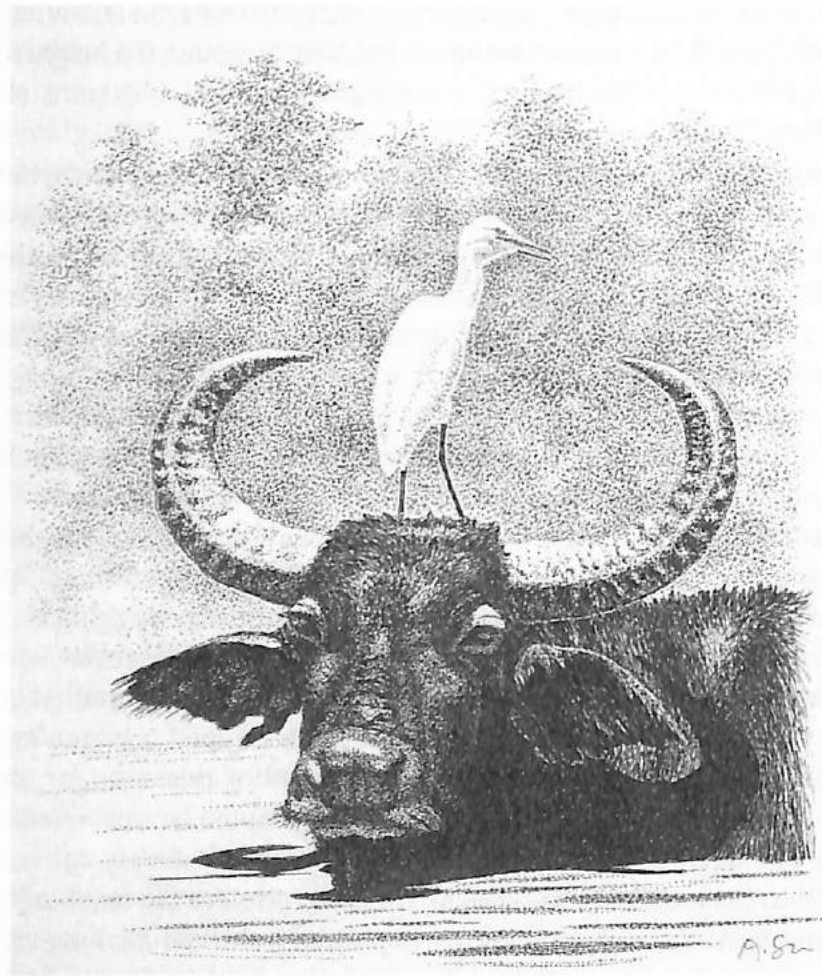
And all the while the air, bathed in bright sunlight, vibrates with bird-song, the measures of the sweetest of all singers, Shamas and Magpie-Robins. A flock of emerald-green, pink-headed Parakeets screeches past. Large,

long-limbed, elegant Langurs, the monkeys sacred to the God Hanuman, their black faces framed by hoods of white, sit indolently among the bright foliage. And from a pool a little distance away the white lotus-blossoms show in radiant glory.

Crowning glories of creation, of nature as of the human spirit, here join in celebratory union. The marriage of the two engenders perfection, for the one provides what the other lacks. Nature, glorious in light and fullness of sound, outwardly enchanting and beckoning towards the realm of dreams; her polar complement the wakeful soul, turned inwards in deep contemplation of its own inner worlds.

The sculptures of Polonnaruwa stem from the twelfth century. The Buddhist culture of Sri Lanka, however, is much older. Reaching back to the third century B.C., it was brought to the island by Mahinda, the son of the great Indian Emperor, Ashoka. There is a legend about this event, which contains, like a quintessence, all that still lives today in Sri Lanka. As Mahinda, after his arrival, wandered over the island in the saffron robe of a begging monk, he happened to meet in a forest clearing one day the ruler of the realm who, with a great train of followers, was out hunting. The king had just pulled back on his bow and aimed at a great stag when Mahinda stepped between and bade the king stay his hand. Angered at the brazenness of this stranger, the king demanded that Mahinda explain himself, whereupon he answered by expounding the teaching of the Buddha. The sovereign, deeply moved, took Mahinda into his court, and soon after was converted to the teachings of the Buddha and introduced them among his people. In Mihantale near the royal city of Anuradhapura, to which Mahinda withdrew in his old age, stand to this day, beside many treasures, two ancient, weathered, inscribed and re-inscribed stone tablets, on which are recorded the world's oldest nature conservation laws.

Nature, thus much we learn, responds to man in the same measure as he approaches her. She quite clearly reacts especially sensitively to the moral-ethical quality of man's treatment of her, perhaps because she herself knows no categories and is therefore predisposed to accept those provided by man, as if she had always expected them. Accordingly it is no coincidence that there are two domestic animals in the realm of Buddhist culture the like of which will not be found anywhere else. It is not quite accurate to designate them as domestic animals, for these creatures are both wild and domestic, without being entirely one or the other. One of them, the Asian elephant, is a wild animal perpetually capable of becoming domestic, while in the case of the



Wild water-buffalo and cow heron. Yala National Park, Southern Sri Lanka

buffalo the boundaries are completely fluid and both states easily alternate. It is not known whether the populations of wild buffaloes, the Arni, are actually pure-blooded or have been mixed with domestic buffalo from time immemorial. Domestic buffalo are forever running away and mixing with the wild herds; and having their buffalo cows served by wild bulls is a widespread practice among farmers. In southern Sri Lanka, according to the animal biologist Fred Kurt:

"the buffalo breeders only keep the animals temporarily in domesticity for the purposes of milk production. They are indeed forced to make the step into the human world, for shortly after calving has taken place, some daring young lads creep up on the new-born calf, where it is hidden in the undergrowth, and carry it off to the village. The mother tries to drive the abductors away, but she

is skilfully deflected from her purpose. She grows tired, and finally follows her tormentors for good or ill. She is then shackled and put in a shed, where she has to stay, giving milk both to her human companions and her calf. Once it is weaned she is set free. Mostly the calf rejoins the herd as well."

Elephants, too, keep being transferred one at a time from the wild to the domestic state. Their apparent ability to change, as it were, in one step from the natural to the cultural domain, seems to point to some essential kinship they have with man — we will come back to this point later. To breed them in captivity, what with their almost two-year gestation period and still longer immature phase, during which they are unfit for working, would be senseless and uneconomical (although there are mountain tribes in South East Asia who would breed elephants and use the growing young ones, with their speed and agility, for riding purposes).

Newly-captured elephants are tamed initially by extremely brutal treatment, through which their wildness and shyness are broken by force. But this is then appeased by the animal's master, the mahut, who soothes it with endearments and tender cajoling. From the very beginning its already tamed comrades assist in this process of habituation. Without their help it would be impossible. Certainly the highly developed and in many respects unique social life of these animals paves the way for the "acculturation". Indeed it shows inchoate signs of true culture. The life of the group is characterized by ingrained patterns of mutual aid and protection, as shown by the females acting as midwives and wet-nurses for each other, as well as by the life-long bond between female offspring and their mothers (the males keep more apart the older they get, eventually only putting in brief appearances among the groups). As in all animal communities there is a dominance hierarchy, but it is not fixed and determined by bodily size, as is usual, but rather it is the mothers with the new-born and the youngest calves which are automatically placed in the highest position, i.e. are "held in the highest esteem". Just how far the communal life of these animals extends is illustrated by the astonishing fact that the duration of pregnancy, flexible enough to be varied between seventeen and twenty-four months, can be regulated so that all the births in the herd occur almost simultaneously.

It is no coincidence that it is the Asian and not the African elephant that shows this closeness to man. The African elephant has never been domesticated by the black population there. The reason for this may lie with the people themselves. In black Africa, in spite of a vast abundance of animals, the breeding of domestic ones has never succeeded. But not only

that. Experiments done by Belgian investigators, in their former colony of the Congo, with the aid of experienced Indian mahuts, showed that older African elephants are not susceptible to taming. They therefore tried catching young ones, but they could not get anywhere near them, except by shooting their mothers.

If one compares the two — not very closely-related — species, the African one appears more fully formed and differentiated, morphologically much more perfect and therefore more "animal-like". This becomes very conspicuous if the two are placed side by side. The Asian one appears more immature in proportion: the skull, with its high "baby forehead", is rounder, more dome-like, and the head seems generally to be larger and set more apart from the rump, than that of his African cousin. The latter, with its receding forehead, whose contours flow without transition into those of the back, calls forth much more the impression of having been "moulded in one", and therefore to the observer is more aesthetically satisfying, more "adult". The more child-like impression made by the Asian species is reinforced by its plumper-looking body, a consequence of the arched back, and also by its smaller ears and shorter tusks which, in some cases — as in that of the Sri Lankan elephant — are completely lacking. The Asian elephant is therefore distinguishable from his African relations by means of features which are peculiar to human morphology. In the differentiation of its body all structural possibilities have not been exhausted; something is, as it were, held in reserve. In man this formative potential, which is not used up in the differentiating of the body, is carried over into another sphere of activity — out of the (determinate) natural, and into the cultural realm. It is evident that the Asian elephant bears similar distinguishing features. Although, of course, much more rudimentary, they are nevertheless much stronger than is usual in mammals and are in their nature closely akin to those of man. Close enough, indeed, to make possible the cultural convergence between man and elephant, under the former's motivation and leadership of course.

Sri Lanka — a paradise? No, only the pale reflection of it, a last glimmer. Indeed this account is already almost like an obituary. What appears as if it could be a model for how to treat nature in a caring and brotherly way in the future is actually only an echo from the past with no chance of standing up to the onslaught of the present. Of the original forests and wilderness there are only remnants, which daily become smaller. They have had to give place to the tea, rubber, cinnamon and clove plantations — sterile, artificial landscapes created by chemical- and technology-intensive agriculture. And the only

reason there are still any elephants is that certain dry-forest areas have been declared nature reserves, in which the grey giants can live undisturbed. Their days of free roaming are over. If it had been allowed to continue it would have led to an embittered war between settler and elephant, the former, understandably enough, being somewhat disinclined to tolerate the latter in his plantations. As human numbers increased settlement pressed more and more into hitherto thinly or even unpopulated areas, and man and elephant — wild elephant — cannot by any stretch of the imagination live together in the same place, sharing the same rice field! Driven into the forests the pachyderms are forced to put up with competing for food with the wild or semi-domestic buffaloes, which are considerably more fertile and multiply accordingly.

And not only in Sri Lanka is the elephant in a sorry state — in fact, comparatively speaking, its circumstances on this island are still very good. Its range, once extending from Syria, indeed from Antioch in what is now South East Turkey, to China, has dwindled to a few, small, island-like refuges in South and South-East Asia, a dwindling with which the decline in numbers has, of course, kept pace. Today the Asian elephant stands under threat, not the African, of which much larger numbers exist.

The final destruction of this paradise is inevitable. It may be, however, that not just the memory of it will remain to be passed on, but something else besides; namely the experience, the certainty that man is capable of altering his sensibility, and thus of working together with nature in a more brotherly and creative way. Perhaps the tropical island paradise is passing away because this precious attitude has been embedded in an unreflecting and passive mode of life, and may in the end have become mere habit and hollow tradition with nothing to offer by way of resistance to the modern machinery of exploitation, which gathers its energies from quite another source. This is the combination of unprecedented cleverness, dedicated solely to power over nature and material greed. Perhaps only when this process has been driven to its inexorable end, and the resulting total destruction is experienced as the insanity it is, will there be an awakening, a jolt of consciousness. The evening twilight into which the island paradise sinks betrays not a hint of this.

Yet whoever is open enough can see it clearly and prophetically expressed in the total, artistic synthesis of nature and culture, which is Polonnaruwa. The very fact that we experienced this place as a union of two separate spheres — Nature and Culture — shows our basic lack of a true understanding of the Spirit out of which the work arose, and exposes the structure of the modern consciousness we brought to bear upon it. The basic division of

experience into an outer sense-world and an inner mental sphere of thoughts and feelings is something that we simply take for granted, and we do not find it easy to see the two whole. Polonnaruwa is something absolutely different from this, and the harmonious perfection peculiar to it cannot really be expressed in words, for here this division does not figure, there are no separate inner and outer realms of experience, there is only the one undivided consciousness. Man and Nature and the whole cosmos are one; man does not experience himself as a being alone, self-centred, "alienated", but as part of a whole. Did not something of this come home to us as we observed how nature attunes herself to man's moral and ethical attitude towards her. Does the one evoke the other, or do they interpenetrate in both time and space, even though our "inner-centred" consciousness is not aware of the fact? Are not the world around and the world within in truth one and the same?

Polonnaruwa is the purest and highest expression of Hindu-Buddhist culture. It represents a state of oneness preceding our split western consciousness: the paradisaical state. In the Vedic creation story it is portrayed in the following words:

Death was not there, nor immortality;
No night, no day yet showed themselves to be;
Without a breath of wind primeval being
Is ending, and there is no existence else.

To this the orientalist Veltheim-Ostrau observed:

"From the point of view of human development, this refers to the state of man in paradise before the Fall. The eating of the forbidden fruit is the source of the cleaving of existence into good and evil, day and night, man and woman, fortune and misfortune, birth and death, this world and the next. I personally distinguish these two basically different states (of consciousness)...by means of two images; the one of *undivided, open life*, the past and future paradisaical state, the other of *divided, closed life*, by which our current existence is circumscribed. It is crucial for a deeper understanding of Nirvana...to realize that by it Buddha does not mean the Beyond, a word which in itself implies division, opposition, but rather a state transcending division, of perfectly reconciled oneness, achieved anew after passage through the divided state."

At this level there is also no difference between past and future; the one is contained in the other, indeed the one is the other. That means, however, that this state can be recovered at any time, and independent of any time, and that whether this actually occurs is entirely up to us, to me. The quotation further

implies something that leads beyond the Buddhist sensibility. It implies development in time. That which was once experienced by man in an unindividualized, participatory way — oneness with nature and with the nature and with the cosmos — must now, if it is to be experienced anew, be evoked consciously by the individual through the combined effort of thought and will. The old state of things, as we saw, is doomed. It can be reborn in inverted form, but it is in the nature of this inversion, this metamorphosis, that it will no longer come in the form of a revelation streaming into man from a surrounding spiritual atmosphere; rather it can only be found anew and realized out of the conscious inner striving of free individuals. And it is in the nature of this freedom, which by definition excludes all compulsion, that it can be wasted, neglected and misused.

Demétria — restoring life to depleted soil. A Model

It is fairly apparent that the countries of tropical Asia have not yet stepped into this phase of consciousness; they are still too close to paradise. In the tropics of South America, however, things are very different. It is astonishing, but none the less understandable, how, just in the places where destruction has been greatest — in the urban wastelands of Brazil and areas worked out by intensive agriculture — more and more people, including some from rural, small-town regions, are on the look-out for new ways of halting and preventing it. As when, for instance, the populations of Peruíbe, Itanhaen and Iguape in the south of São Paulo joined together in campaigning, with great courage, imagination and skilfully-designed publicity, to save the Serra da Juréa, a scenic jewel of the highest order, from the simultaneous construction of three nuclear power stations.

Most impressive, however, are the experiments seeking to restore life and fertility to worked-out, abandoned land. These are especially significant because the first energetic attempts in this direction have already met with distinct success, and thus point the way for others. Probably the most important of its kind is the bio-dynamic enterprise called Estancia Demétria. It lies in the interior, several hundred miles west of São Paulo, near the small town of Botucatu. Typically enough the plan for this venture was city-born and conceived more than ten years ago. The idea was to leave the over-populated city, the city gradually suffocating itself with its own social problems, and to oppose the catastrophic flight from the land with a

counter-movement based on new initiatives. As location for this initiative an area with particularly poor soil, destroyed by previous coffee cultivation, was purposely chosen. As the young people who began it were not dependent on vigorous enthusiasm alone, but also knew what they were doing and had the guaranteed support of a back-up organization, they managed to pull through the first terrible years when no glimmer of hope showed and setback followed setback. Gradually, however, they did succeed in recreating fertile arable land, and today the terrain is a blossoming paradise, and a new one at that — youthful, assured of its future — not a doomed remainder from the past. It has been fully self-supporting for quite some time now, and delivers its products as far as São Paulo.

This mixed style of farming, which ranges from fruit growing to medicinal and culinary herb cultivation, taking in horticulture and rice-growing on the way, and with dairying thrown in for good measure, is very labour-intensive. To meet these needs a large number of people would have to — or at least could — settle here, and would find themselves living in modest, but by no means poor, circumstances. Demétria is thus exemplary and forward-looking also from the social point of view. Ultimately the vast numbers of people who forsook the land (often under compulsion), only to end up vegetating under indescribable conditions in the slums and the shantytowns of the big cities, will have to return to the empty countryside — where else is their food to come from? The currently-existing giant monocultural concerns — much of whose products are exported anyway — offer no sustainable prospects for life and work.

The constellation of personnel represents another good omen. It is Brazil in miniature, as it were, a motley collection of people from all over the world. In one family the mother is Norwegian, the father Brazilian-German, the parents speak English to each other and Portuguese to the children. There are, of course, some Brazilians, young agro-scientists from the city as well as local peasants, but all are homeless in one way or another. And here they are beginning to establish a new home, and a community based not upon common descent, but upon common ideas and aims.

The health and dynamism of this new community shows in its capacity for change, its eagerness to rethink and redesign things, and in the multifarious alterations and extensions to the buildings. A workshop for agricultural research has recently been added and is in regular contact with Europe. It was also not long before the place was living with lively children, who needed a school locally. What else could they do, therefore, but found, in spite of all

official obstacles, a small Waldorf school? A children's hostel, an offshoot of the Favela initiative at Monte Azul in São Paulo, has settled in the neighbourhood, and more and more people from the city are buying plots of land, both large and small, all around. In this way they become joint owners and place their land at the disposal of Demétria. This represents no flight towards rural idyll (no longer attainable in any case); to an island certainly, but not the sort that seeks to isolate and screen itself off, rather one that radiates its influence to its surroundings and attracts in like measure. It is only a drop in a wide, extremely wide ocean, when viewed in comparison with the vastness of the whole country with its no less enormous problems. Quantitative greatness, however, is of far less significance than qualitative. What matters is its effectiveness as a shining example for others.

Wandering through the rich variety of Demétria's fields and orchards after a long journey through bleak and largely uninhabited land, one feels as if suddenly relieved of a great, pressing burden; one begins to feel at ease, as if one had just returned to a long-familiar homeland. And one is surprised and delighted to find that here not only culture is present, but that nature too has reinstated herself. Birdcalls sound on all sides; songs no longer heard in the surrounding landscape. Richly-coloured tropical butterflies (where could they have come from?) visit the many wild flowers and the welcome abundance of "weeds" thriving on the banks and verges beside the pathways. We even encounter a real beast of prey. Arriving at night we catch one in our headlights surrounded by its young. Just like a miniature leopard, its very slowness makes it all the more elegant and graceful: a Pampas Cat.

It's not too late, after all, it seems. It really works. Nature is still prepared to co-operate and meet man half-way if he makes the right advances to her. This indeed he must do. Nothing happens of itself any more.

Note: A most extraordinary phenomenon — which perhaps can be seen in connection with what was said on page 108, and with our pictures of elephants — is the loss with increasing age of pigment on the head, ears and trunk in the Asiatic but not in the African elephant. Dark grey is replaced by the characteristic pink of the full-blooded human complexion.

THE MANY FACES OF WATER

by Mark Riegner

Illustrations by Helene Aurell

"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water".

Loren Eiseley

As the brilliant dawn sun rises above the New Mexican desert, the terracotta hills appear ablaze in colour. A pilgrim solemnly continues his trek through the glowing landscape, following the customary route trodden by generations of his ancestors. When he reaches his destination, he deferentially comes forward, kneels to the earth, cups his hands, and extends them towards the sparkling, gurgling substance that will ensure a bountiful crop for his people.

The sacred springs of the Navajo were, and to some degree remain, a source of a crucial element for the Navajo rain ceremony and other rituals. Indeed, water both actually and symbolically plays a major rôle in Navajo religion and mythology. To the Navajo, as to many aboriginal peoples living in harmony with the earth, water is seen as a precious, life-sustaining fluid, itself permeated with vital qualities. Accordingly, water is venerated and treated respectfully by these cultures. In the technologically developed nations, however, we collectively tend to regard water in a utilitarian sense, as a commodity to satisfy the daily demands of our industrialized society. To the degree that fresh water has become readily accessible, we seem to have lost an appreciation for this flowing medium upon which our very existence depends. How many of us ever pause to consider the nature of the liquid running so generously from our faucets? Its source? Its destination?

In this article, I hope to examine water *as it is*, based on the work of Theodor Schwenk (1910 — 1986), particularly his book *Sensitive Chaos*, a volume as singular as the liquid it portrays. Schwenk, who was inspired by Rudolf Steiner's scientific work, was Director of the Institute for Flow Sciences at Herrischried, West Germany, where he investigated qualitative aspects of fluid dynamics. Underlying all Schwenk's research was a recognition of water's close affinity to living processes in that the existence of all life depends on water, and all organisms must go through a fluid phase during their development. The vertebrates, for example, pass through a fluid state during

their early embryological development, while many unicellular aquatic creatures never fully "solidify" out of their watery environment and often bear resemblances to fluid forms, such as the vortex.

Schwenk maintained that a dedicated, comprehensive study of water would itself provide a schooling of observation and thinking necessary to guide the researcher further in unravelling the secrets of the living world. "Through watching water...with unprejudiced eyes, our way of thinking becomes changed and more suited to the understanding of what is alive. This transformation of our way of thinking is...a decisive step that must be taken in the present day". Schwenk's approach provides a path whereby one can enter holistically into a thoughtful, dynamic relationship with nature. By reacquainting ourselves with water in the way initiated by Schwenk, we can begin to revive an appreciation for this fluid upon which all life depends.

A geothermal spring amidst a frozen winter landscape presents a striking panorama: a shell of ice draping adjacent rock formations; a clear, still, glassy-surfaced pool; and rising, metamorphosing clouds of steam. In such a place, water occurs simultaneously in all three of its earthly phases: solid, liquid, gas. In its liquid state, water stands between the formed and the formless: the crystallised, hardened, geometrical qualities of ice and snowflakes, and the expansive, dissipating properties of vapour. By existing between the polarities of ice and vapour, liquid water exhibits characteristics of each, though translated into dynamic qualities. Its formative capacity, for instance, is evident in the building up and moulding of landscapes, and in the growth and development of all living things. In contrast, water — the universal solvent — dissolves solid matter effortlessly into formlessness and, through abrasion, can level mountains. The river, as we shall explore later, expresses both forming and dissolving tendencies through deposition and erosion.

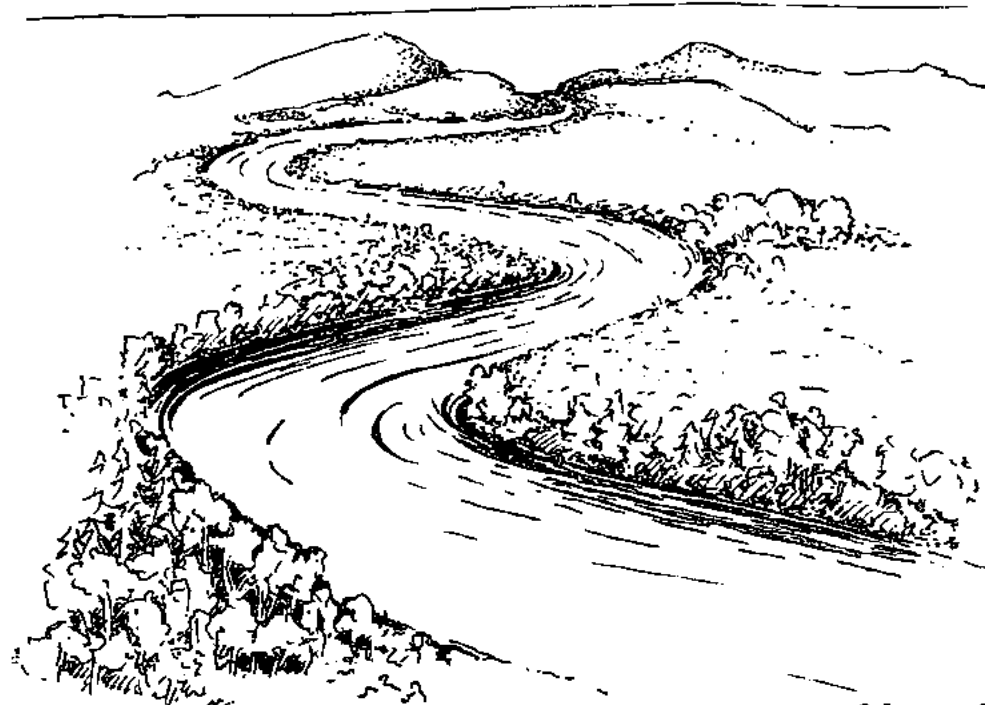
Water illustrates an intrinsic polarity in another way. In the droplet, it shows a strong affinity to itself, a coalescence, rounding off, self-enclosing gesture: a quality of formation. The sphere has long been a symbol of wholeness, of the universe, an independent, complete entity within itself. Copernicus described the sphere as "the most perfect shape of all, needing no joint, an integral whole". A droplet of dew reflects a mirror image of the surrounding landscape of earth and sky, makes visible the seven spectral colours, and is itself a tiny representation of the spherical, self-sustaining earth. On the other hand, water expresses a selflessness by surrendering its formative capacity and thereby adopting the shape of any vessel in which it

is contained. Its ability to enclose itself in the sphere, and its proclivity to unite with its surroundings, together bespeak the paradoxical nature of water.

Water also shows two distinct qualities of movement: linear and circular. The pull of gravity influences water to move linearly, as in falling raindrops, a cascading waterfall, and a steeply sloping stream cutting through a narrow valley. An inclination towards circular formation is most patent in swirling vortices, expanding concentric rings created by raindrops impacting a still surface, bubbles, and the curls of breaking waves. The circular, rounding tendency of water is evident not only in the droplet, whirlpool, and associated phenomena, but also in water's eroding activity. Flowing water, with the help of abrasive materials, rounds off sharp edges and corners, as in stones at the seashore, and carves bowl-shaped depressions — called potholes — in the bedrock of a riverbed. In its affinity to roundness — the sphere — water offers a metaphor for wholeness and unity, as exemplified in the inter-relationship of all earthly life, life whose very existence is made possible by this aqueous medium.

Apparently, flowing water, as Schwenk indicates, "continually strives to return to its spherical form", but due to the effect of the earth's gravitational field, this tendency towards circularity can only partly be realized. As mentioned earlier, the vortex is a circular phenomenon, which occurs within a body of water where, by the way, the influence of gravity is mitigated. In the landscape, flowing water, in its inherent striving towards roundness and external compulsion towards linearity, strikes a balance between these two tendencies in the meander. The meander, derived from the Greek *maiandros*, "a bend", shows a rhythmical swaying to and fro, which results in one of nature's most harmonious forms. Schwenk observes that, in the meander, water's "endeavour to complete the circle is here only partially successful, as it cannot flow uphill back to its starting point. Right at the beginning of its circulatory movement it is drawn downhill and in following this downward pull it swings alternately from side to side". On an almost level plain, a river's meandering may become so accentuated as it strives towards circularity that some bends actually "pinch off" from the main stream, each forming an isolated oxbow lake.

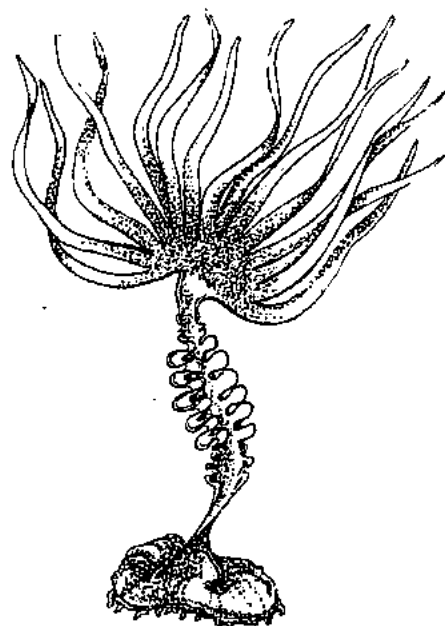
Besides its expression in water, the meander can be seen in the vertically undulating flight of some birds, in the rhythmic crawling motions of snakes and salamanders, in swimming fishes, in the winding burrows of marine worms, and even in human beings. Concerning the latter, the architect P. J. Grillo observed that when a rectilinear cement walkway was obliterated by



snow, pedestrians unwittingly forged a new path that had a graceful meandering quality; Grillo termed these naturally winding paths "slaloms" after the similar curves traced on snow by downhill skiers.

Thus, the meander can be considered as a form manifesting between linear and circular movements. We can support this idea with observations around our homes. During a rainstorm, water falls in a straight path towards the earth, and runs linearly down the sides of vertical surfaces. On level ground, rounded puddles form as water accumulates. And on sloping surfaces, such as automobile windshields, miniature, meandering rivulets are evident, although on this small scale, surface adhesion interferes with the formation of regularly repeating curves, and therefore the meanders are irregular.

A living embodiment of the circular, meandering, and linear qualities of water can be seen in the furbelows, a common seaweed of the Atlantic coast of Europe. Found in rocky subtidal habitats, it sways to and fro with the ebbing and flowing tides, anchored to the sea bed by a swollen, ovoid structure called a bell. At the opposite end of the plant are flat, elongate fronds, trailing in the current like streaming ribbons. And in the midsection, between the round bell and linear fronds, is an alternation of deep, wavy indentations, reminiscent of meanders. Thus, in the furbelows, the three gestures of water are made visible in a living plant whose form reflects the watery environment in which it lives.



Saccorhiza Polyschides
after the *Oxford Book*
of *Flowerless Plants*
F. H. Brightman
B. E. Nicholson

Another characteristic form coming to expression in water is the wave. In wave formation, too, water reveals inherent antithetical tendencies. As indicated by Schwenk, in a wave at the shore, just beyond the breaker zone, it is the form that travels while the substance remains stationary. A seagull floating on the ocean's surface bobs up and down as swells pass beneath it; its horizontal position, however, remains unchanged. In contrast, a standing wave created behind a stone in a shallow stream remains stationary while water flows through it. A drifting leaf passes through the form, which remains fixed in space. Here, water reveals how form can arise solely out of movement, with undifferentiated substance streaming through. A parallel exists in living organisms: substances are continually in transit, tissue cells arise and pass away, yet the organism's overall form remains stationary, that is, unchanged, save for gradual alterations due to aging. Many cells in your body have been replaced during the past several years (that is, have "flowed through" your form), but your overall appearance has probably changed little, considering the vast replacement of cells that has occurred. According to the biologist P. B. Medawar, "It is only the *form* of the body, the system of preferred stations for the inward-bound replacements, that achieves any kind of permanence at all". A study of fluid dynamics can illuminate much about the mystery of the genesis and maintenance of organic form; a discussion of this fascinating relationship, however, would fall outside the scope of this article. Rather, here

our concern will be the behaviour of surface water on land, especially the action of that most dynamic of water phenomena: the river.

Interweaving currents, ephemeral vortices, swinging meanders, and turbulent churnings are just several of the numerous fluid qualities given expression in rivers. No other bodies of water boast such vital, indefatigable activities. In a very real sense, a river is the lifeblood of a land, and not only affects local topography and biological communities, but also shapes the cultural life of the people along its embankments. Their names alone stir vivid and diverse images of the lands and peoples, past and present, associated with them: Nile, Mississippi, Congo, Ganges, Thames, Rhine, Amazon. Despite their occurrence in widely distant lands, these great rivers, and rivers in general, share certain fundamental features.

In an essay entitled "The River as an Organism" (translation), Reinhard Koehler, a physicist who studies fluid dynamics in relation to biological processes at the C. G. Carus Institute in Öschelbronn, West Germany, compares the unique qualities of each of the three anatomical parts of a typical river: headwaters, midstream, mouth. Here, too, opposite tendencies come to expression in water. For example, the precipitation-nourished headwaters are characterized by countless small, turbulent tributaries flowing at an accelerating pace over steep terrain, cascading over stones, vigorously eroding the land, and drawing together into a main stream in a gesture of confluence. There is little meandering in the headwaters; instead, the circular quality comes to expression in the creation of vortex trains downstream from innumerable stones. In contrast, water at the mouth of a river, on relatively level terrain, decelerates, deposits its sediment load, and forms a delta as it enters, and mixes with, the sea. Here, the river branches into distributaries, demonstrating a gesture of spreading, expansion. Between these two extremes — contraction and expansion — appears the harmonious meander, which not only shows a striving towards balance as it winds left then right through the landscape, but also exhibits an equilibrium between erosion and deposition, wearing away and up-building. Typically, while the deeper, outer bed of a meander is being eroded, sediment is being deposited on the shallower, inner curve, where the velocity is relatively lower; consequently, meanders are continually metamorphosing and translocating, reshaping the face of the land as they migrate across it.

In temperate latitudes, a seasonal rhythm is apparent in channel erosion and deposition. In spring and summer, the influx of meltwater washes over watersheds, picking up and transporting sediment. As it enters the river, water

level rises, velocity increases, and the stream, with a full load of abrasive materials, maximally undercuts its banks. In autumn and winter, with reduced water input, the river's level falls, and it gradually slows down. Hence, the stream's load comes to rest sequentially: stones and pebbles first, sand next, finer sediments last. One should bear in mind, however, that day-to-day variations, and even hourly changes in a stream's activity, are superimposed over these general seasonal trends. In addition, a stream's behaviour will alter along its course, reflecting variations in the nature of the bedrock, in the quality of the watershed's vegetation, and in general topography. Those who have the opportunity to observe even a small stretch of a stream through the year will be richly rewarded as one gets to know the "personality" of the flowing waters.

The downcutting, eroding action of a river provides a striking example of what I call simultaneous reciprocation, mutual interaction. As water carves a channel, and thereby sculpts the land, the channel, in turn, affects the stream by regulating its flow. Moving water thus shapes its own vessel, which reciprocally influences the quality of fluid movement. The work of the stream on its channel, and of the channel on its stream, can be viewed as a dynamic totality functioning in space and time. Here, again, there is a parallel in living organisms. During embryological development of the vertebrate circulatory system, blood begins to flow through the vessels when the heart has only just begun development. Can we consider that the heart, like a stream's channel, is formed by, and bears the imprint of, fluid movements and, in simultaneous reciprocation, regulates the flow of blood? According to Schwenk, "The fibres of the heart are a physical echo of the creative movements by which it was begotten. In spiralling paths they swing down to its apex and then rise again to its base. They make the same movements and emphasize the revolving vortical streaming of the fluids within the heart". Just as the developmental history of a stream and its channel can be seen as a dynamic unity, so can the blood and its "channel" — the heart and associated vessels.

We can extend further the above analogy to view the earth, in its entirety, as an organism. In the hydrologic cycle — the circulation of the earth — water may circulate from sea to atmosphere to land and then back to sea, exemplifying an endless, unbroken circle. On its journey, a hypothetical drop of water may be incorporated into a magnificent cumulonimbus cloud, then become a six-pointed snowflake, then form part of a glacier, and next a clear mountain brook; subsequently, it may pass through plants, animals, and people. It is astonishing to imagine the potential circuit such a drop may take, but it is

plausible that it could link together vast expanses of the earth and unify a multitude of life forms through each being a temporary residence for our imaginary drop.

But where lies the heart of the earth's circulatory system? Here, we can turn to the river for an answer. By examining its qualities in the way outlined in this essay, it seems that the heart of the earth's circulation is found in the river's meander. Just as the rhythmically beating heart resides in the middle region of an organism's body — in the chest — the meander occupies the middle section of a river. And the river itself lies between its ultimate source in the clouds above, and its final destination — the ocean — below at sea level, as expressed in Goethe's words:

A river from a cloud-wrapped chamber gone,
Of rock, and roaring to be one with ocean ...

Its form, winding left and right through the expanses of a landscape, and its hourly, daily, and seasonal alternation of rising and falling water level, and of erosion and deposition, indicate a strong rhythmicity apparent in the rhythmic qualities of the heart. And, as noted by Schwenk, every river generates its own individual rhythm: "The rhythm of its meanders is a part of the individual nature of a river. In a wide valley a river will swing in far-flung curves, whereas a narrow valley will cause it to wind to and fro in a 'faster' rhythm".

For millenia, the rhythm of the river played into the lives of the people along its floodplain: there were times designated for planting crops in the silt deposited by receding floodwaters, times for irrigating fields, times for bathing, for collecting cooking water and for frolicking, times for fishing, and times for paying homage to the mighty powers of the flowing waters. Today, to a considerable degree, we have emancipated ourselves from nature's rhythms epitomized by rivers. In fact, we control and modify the cycle of the river itself. We build dams, erect levees, dredge riverbeds, divert enormous volumes of water for massive irrigation projects, impound rivers, and even straighten channels to eliminate the inconvenience of lengthy, meandering shipping routes. Moreover, we all too often pump the refuse and chemical by-products of our civilization into these waters. We also neglect or deliberately deforest watersheds, resulting in inordinate volumes of surface run-off water and eroded soil entering streams, stressing them beyond their natural regulatory capabilities. As a consequence, many vessels of the earth's circulatory system are presently imperilled.

There are, however, efforts underway by governments and environmental groups worldwide to counter some of the damages suffered by rivers

and other freshwater bodies. The waters of the River Thames and of the Hudson River, for example, are steadily returning to a condition in which they can once again support certain forms of aquatic life that vanished when these rivers became polluted. Although all conservation and restoration endeavours are necessary, in the long term it is crucial that the social attitude to water is transformed from viewing it just as a commodity to recognizing water as a *living* element. In this respect, the work of British sculptor John Wilkes, and his colleagues around the world, has done much to awaken an awareness of the vital qualities of water. By developing sculptured vessels called Flowforms — which support and enhance the rhythmical dynamics of water — Wilkes has provided an aesthetic focus through which people can begin to appreciate water as a living element. As it swirls and pulses through the Flowforms, the streaming water reveals itself as a medium for rhythmical processes, and thus, as a medium for life.



There is an old Eastern European folktale about an ailing king stricken with an unnamed malady. Through the revelation of a venerated wise man, it is learned what remedy is required to effectuate the cure, and thus the king's three sons set off in search for it: the water of life. This water can be procured only with great difficulty, and on their respective journeys, each of the sons is confronted with challenging obstacles. With such imaginary pictures, one can ask: What is special about this water? Where are the sons journeying to obtain it? Certainly there must be water readily available within the kingdom. One way to interpret this story is to recognize that all the characters are collectively representative of qualities within each of us, and that the journeys take place in an inner landscape. The obstacles to overcome are perhaps our own preconceptions, how we habitually view the world. We don't have to physically travel anywhere to obtain the water of life. It is received when we struggle to awaken to a living appreciation of nature, to reforge a dynamic connection to the world around us. In doing so, nature takes on new meaning for us. Thus, a dewdrop on a blade of grass, a rain puddle on a woodland trail, a gurgling neighbourhood creek, or a temporary vernal pond, can become for us invitations to stimulate our imaginations, to enhance our "seeing", to begin an inward journey towards a new relationship to nature. And there is perhaps no better guide for our journey than water itself.

For further reading:

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Theodor Schwenk. 1965. Sensitive Chaos. Rudolf Steiner Press, London. 144 pages.

Theodor Schwenk. (In press). Water: A Question of Consciousness. *Anthroposophic Press*, Hudson, New York.

For information on Flowforms contact:

The Flow Design Research Group,
Emerson College, Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5JX, England.

THE POWERS OF SORROW

by Georg Kühlewind

The power of sorrow is not the power of sorrow. Sorrow consists in losing something which is no sorrow. The "reasons" for sorrow are always illusory reasons: otherwise we would always be sorrowful, there are always reasons enough for this.

Sorrow comes from an overflowing of powers: whether something is taken from us, upon which we depended, or whether it simply comes over us without an external cause. These powers could have been creative, if we had been able to bear them. But we neglect them and do not make them our own.

Because we do not experience all this, the powers of sorrow say to us nothing or little: they lay themselves upon us from behind and wrap us up. Therefore we are in a darkness, which does not speak to us in words; because we flee from it, and do not receive it face to face.

Because we flee from sorrow, it falls upon us, often without an aim. Because we flee from it, we never enter into it; it comes upon us and presses upon us without a word with its outer aspect. Because we never enter it, we do not notice, that it is the dark robe of comfort.

What comforts is the spirit, the word. The unspoken external aspect is the darkness of sorrow about the loss of the word.

At first our happy powers fly away in front of us, because we cannot retain them. They would take us with them, outside. If for us their direction were something external, an "outside", we would flutter away with them into visions, into hallucinations, tempted out by them from the dwelling which protects us. And so we defend ourselves: we take refuge in the secure dwelling and hold firmly to it. Thus the dissipation of forces becomes a persecution: they capture us, being much quicker than we are in a nameless sorrowfulness which meets us from them as darkness.

Soon we give it names, and feel it, feeling ourselves in it: we become sorrowful, it becomes *our* sorrow and loses still more its own power to speak. We are sorry for ourselves because we are unhappy. Darkness becomes enhanced and exaggerated. The light in the sorrow becomes paler and smaller.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they will be comforted". This comfort can not come from outside, for the sorrow wraps us round, and lets nothing

through. The comfort dwells within the sorrow itself unless attentiveness has been entirely submerged in it, it finds in the thick darkness, here and there, something glistening, a gleaming vein in the dark stone.

To follow this gleaming light with the attentiveness of feeling, with the attentiveness of sorrow itself, is a Way. We have not to seek outside the sorrow, or to follow with thoughts: in the darkness, one must follow the pale gleam through the darkness, otherwise it disappears. In the direction in which it gleams, it becomes stronger. In becoming stronger, it gives the right direction. Where it becomes stronger, in this direction the sorrow decreases. One feels there is a sense behind it: not to be said in words produced by thought, but a significance in feeling. In feeling we ponder.

The significance in feeling is neither sorrow, nor joy, as we are accustomed to experience them: a new quality. Generally this consists in sorrow and in a joy which completes it. It is not a mixture of both. The original form cannot be restored through mixing the fragments.

The metamorphosis leads to a new level, on which real comfort dwells. The spirit of true comfort leads from the beginning upon a way of transformation: it ascends. The powers of the Ascension are at the same time for the disciples the powers of being left behind. They almost become sorrow. But the disciples remain united in their prayer and longing. At Whitsun — after ten dark days — the spirit of the comforter is there. The powers springing off the sense of being deprived become powers springing from the sense of being abandoned no longer. The powers of sorrow become themselves comfort; "blessed are they that mourn" (Matthew 5, verse 4).

BOOK REVIEWS

John Fletcher, *Art Inspired by Rudolf Steiner*.
Mercury Arts Publications, £36.

This impressive book covers a wide field. It describes in detail Rudolf Steiner's momentous decision, not only to work in the world as a teacher of Initiate Knowledge, but to show how this knowledge can enkindle in the soul the creative powers which reveal themselves in art. This decision came to expression in the summer of 1907 at the international congress of the Theosophical Society at Munich. Rudolf Steiner was then Secretary of the German section of the Theosophical Society. The assembled members of the congress, including Mrs. Besant, its President, found themselves in a hall decorated in powerful colours, with great carved pillars, and paintings by several artists on spiritually significant themes, mainly painted under Rudolf Steiner's direction. Many participants found all this baffling; but some of them received enduring inspiration for their further work—one of them going as far as to erect a small building at Malsch, near Karlsruhe in South-West Germany, of which the fascinating history up to the present is told in this book. The Malsch building, large enough for about 12 people to sit inside, was in many ways a preparatory study for the First Goetheanum; and Mr. Fletcher has collected many colourful illustrations which show this. There are sketches too of a projected building in Munich, before the final decision for the site in Dornach was made. Then there follows the building of the First Goetheanum itself, employing many willing hands. Elderly people who had never held a chisel before found themselves carving wood; experienced painters found themselves facing entirely new tasks.

As the story widens out, it becomes very difficult to hold it within the compass of a single book. Mr. Fletcher is not concerned only with architecture and painting—but with all the arts, and their significance for mankind.

Two very significant lectures by Rudolf Steiner, which contribute substantially to the understanding of art in general, are included in their entirety. The noble story which bore the title "The Being of the Arts", given in October 1909, tells of two women, without shelter in a snow-laden landscape, huddled together, near to freezing. The beauty of the sunset gives to one of them a warmth which grows into a vision lasting all through the night in which she sees and unites herself with the spiritual beings who inspire all the arts—and at dawn can impart some of her warmth to the other woman.—In the lecture given at the dedication of the Stuttgart House of the Anthroposophical Society

on October 15th, 1911, Rudolf Steiner shows how in art the right effect on the human soul is achieved when two or more different themes meet.

In Mr. Fletcher's book it is natural that a certain priority is given to the visual arts; an almost overwhelming abundance of illustrations, most of them in colour, are included. But poetry, drama and music do play a part in his whole composition; music in fact is treated in an astonishingly many-sided way, although Rudolf Steiner himself did not write music. He gave, however, far-reaching indications about the future of music, very illuminating for composers, in lectures on Tone-Eurythmy and elsewhere.

In conclusion Mr. Fletcher takes five artists, of whom he gives short illustrated biographies: Assia Turgenieff (to whom the book as a whole is dedicated, and to whose development of Rudolf Steiner's indications on drawing special attention is drawn), Francina van Davelaar, Baron Arild Rosenkrantz, and Walther Roggenkamp.

A book abounding in love for humanity and for the good powers of the spiritual world. A.B.

Thomas Meyer, *D. N. Dunlop: Ein Zeit- und Lebensbild*.
Philosophisch-Anthroposophischer Verlag am Goetheanum,
Dornach, Switzerland.

Thomas Meyer (born 1950), a free-lance writer living in Basel, Switzerland, has been notably active in translating English writers into German; and this book bears witness to his familiarity with the subtleties of both languages. He writes of a great Scotsman, Daniel Nicol Dunlop (1868–1935) and most of his sources wrote in English. The book is addressed primarily to readers interested in the history of the Anthroposophical Movement and in world economic problems. But it has much to offer to those all over the world who wish to understand better how in a human being the eternal "Individuality" can bring the temporal "Personality", which is to begin with self-seeking, and self-assertive, fully into its service. When he was twenty-eight, Dunlop wrote an article on this theme, containing the most profound insight. The greater part of one chapter in this book is a translation into German of much of this article (p. 73). It would be very good if it were available separately in the original English now. But the book as a whole constantly illustrates how Dunlop's own immortal individuality shone through his words and actions. This is manifest not only in his work for spiritual movements, and particularly in Theosophy and Anthroposophy, but also in all he did for world economic co-operation. Dunlop was General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Great

Britain from the end of 1929 to his death in 1935. Throughout this time he was also the principal organizer and inspirer of the World Power Conference, later called the World Energy Conference, at which the leaders of the electrical and allied industries from many nations met and planned mutual co-operation and information.

Daniel Nicol Dunlop was born at Kilmarnock, a small town not far from Glasgow, on 28th December 1868, during the twelve holy nights following Christmas. His mother died when he was about four years old, and he went to live with his maternal grandfather on the island of Arran. Soon he was conscious of his mother's invisible companionship, sharing with him her profound love of the sea. He awoke too to an intense love and understanding for the Gospel of St. John, which was much more real for him than anything he was told at school; and he was happy to teach a group of other boys about this. His grandfather died in 1882, when he was thirteen, and soon he was on his own, working in an office and then in a bicycle shop in Glasgow, and reading occult books at night. During a visit to Ireland he made friends with the poet AE (born 1867) and with W. B. Yeats; and eventually moved to Ireland altogether, where he met his future wife. Together, after a short period of work in New York, they moved to London in 1899.

Simultaneously, from then on, he was active in the Theosophical Society, and in the Anthroposophical Society; and worked on the organizational side of the electrical industry. And these two elements in his life were closely interwoven. In both he sought to bring the heavenly order of the stars into the dealings of human beings with one another all over the world. At a Theosophical Congress in Paris in 1906 he first saw Rudolf Steiner, who made a deep and enduring impression on him. But at first none of Rudolf Steiner's books were available for him in English. It was some years before a direct meeting between them came about. When it did, a profoundly understanding friendship was instantly present; it was like the meeting of brothers who had been separated, and sought each other, over long ages. Dunlop knew at once that it was his task to serve the revelation of spiritual knowledge entering humanity through Rudolf Steiner in every way he could. They both saw clearly the many practical fields in which an anthroposophical understanding of Nature and of man was desperately needed by humanity; but they also saw that in all the practical activity concern for the being of Anthroposophia must never be lost. With this purpose Dunlop organized for Rudolf Steiner the Summer Conference at Penmaenmawr in Wales in August 1922, a very significant step on the way from the loss of the First Goetheanum to the Christmas Foundation Meeting.

After the death of Rudolf Steiner in March 1925 the remaining years of Dunlop's life were filled with activity in both his fields of work — but were troubled by the tensions in the Society as a whole and by the growingly bitter international conflicts with their effects on world economy. Though he never lost his vision of the future, the realization of the aims for which he lived were meeting hindrances too great to be overcome within a short period of years.

But for those near him in the last months the presence within him of an individuality who shared in conscious responsibility for the protection of the Earth through many thousands of years shone out more and more clearly.

It is to be hoped that this book will appear, in the course of time, in other languages. We hear that an English version of it is in preparation. A.B.

Rudolf Treichler. *Soulways: The Developing Soul — life phases, thresholds and biography*. Hawthorn Press, Stroud, £12.50.

Many people in Germany concerned with the health and sickness of the human soul have long seen in the work of Dr. Rudolf Treichler an invaluable help in understanding their own inner development, and that of others, particularly through the years between 21 and 42. Dr. Treichler could draw both on his abundant experience with patients, at the Friedrich-Husemann Klinik (near Freiburg, in the Black Forest), and Rudolf Steiner's many references to the course taken by the unfolding of the human soul.

Here circumstances only permit a very brief welcome to the book in which Dr. Treichler sums this up, now appearing in its English form. In this book Dr. Treichler never loses sight of that healthy basic progress in the soul, present to some extent in everyone, which is disturbed in mental illness, and which therapy seeks to restore.

He gives many vivid examples and case-histories of the most familiar forms of mental sickness, always relating them to healthy development, and describing the inner and outer pressures which hinder the three main phases of healthy progress — 21–28, 28–35, 35–42 — from reaching fulfilment.

It is to be hoped that in English-speaking countries too this book will be widely read, and used; for example in biography workshops, and by those concerned with counselling. Dr. Treichler's style is free from jargon and technicality, and this book is addressed to the general reader. Previous knowledge is not necessary, either of medicine or of Anthroposophy. One can understand that he is an accomplished teller of fairy stories, of which he has also written with charm and wisdom. A.B.

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Owen Barfield was born in London in 1898. His father was a solicitor. He was educated at Highgate School, London, and when he left school went into the army, Royal Engineers (Signals), 1917 – 1918. Afterwards he graduated at Oxford in English Language and Literature, making several significant friendships. He became a regular contributor to the New Statesman, London Mercury, and other literary journals.

He practised regularly as a solicitor from 1931 until 1959. He was always interested in the relation between poetry, science, and religion; and taught and lectured on these and kindred subjects in many universities in Britain and the U.S.A.

Among his many books are: *The Silver Trumpet* (1925); *History in English Words* (1926); *Poetic Diction* (1928); *Romanticism Comes of Age* (1944); *This Ever Diverse Pair* (1950); *Saving the Appearances* (1957); *Worlds Apart* (1963); *Unancestral Voice* (1965); *Speaker's Meaning* (1967); *What Coleridge Thought* (1971); *Orpheus* (1983).

"Three Great Ideals in Our Time" is from "Awakening to Community", translated by Marjorie Spock, published by Anthroposophic Press, U.S.A., by whose kind permission it is reprinted here. "What is the Earth in Reality in the Macrocosm?" is from "The Michael Mystery".

"The Hymn to the Earth" was translated from the ancient Sanskrit by Hermann Beckh, and published in German in 1934 by what is now the Verlag Urachhaus in Stuttgart; English rendering here by A.B.

Gisela Bittleston is the author of "The Healing Art of Glove Puppetry" of which a new edition is being planned. Photographs by Anne McNicol and Jo Steed.

The article by Andreas Suchantke was translated by Norman Skillen; this has been slightly abridged and revised for publication here. The illustrations are from photographs by the author.

"Georg Kühlewind" is the pen-name of a distinguished author and lecturer who lives and works mainly in Eastern Europe. This article appears in an English rendering by the author's kind permission.

Counselling and Spiritual Development and other essays from the 'Golden Blade'

Adam Bittleston

These essays cover a remarkable range. Whether his theme is as apparently mundane as driving the car or as little understood as the hidden connection between prayer and nature spirits, Adam Bittleston's insight into the teaching of Rudolf Steiner suggests reassuring practical advice. At the same time, he sets everyday matters in their historical context and perceives their spiritual origin in the stars and rhythms of the universe. In the gentle light of wisdom, the complexity of human relationships is fully appreciated and no easy answers are given. Yet, carefully read, these essays can help to draw forth self-healing and understanding for a fragmented world.

1988; 270pp; 22 x 14 cm
0-86315-074-8; hb; £9.95

Crisis Points Working through personal problems

Julian Sleight

Everybody goes through a major crisis at some point in their life. We may need to help ourselves or seek ways to help a friend through a hard time. As a counsellor Julian Sleight has helped many through a crisis in their lives. He has distilled these years of experience into a process of twelve steps which help to resolve difficult situations of all kinds. The steps are designed to allow us to face the facts of our lives and to perceive the feelings and emotions that come from within our destiny.

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Kings and Prophets

Saul, David, Solomon, Elijah, Jonah, Isaiah and Jeremiah

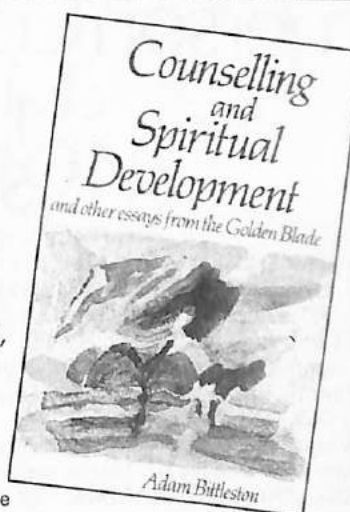
Emil Bock

Emil Bock undertakes the stupendous task of rekindling the universal significance of the biblical kings and prophets for us today. David, Solomon, Elijah and many others appear not just as obscure figures important to the history of a small nation — at best examples of moral uprightness and devotion — but as the embodiment of the stages of the path leading the soul to an experience of Christ.

Bock makes clear that in the first half of the last pre-Christian millennium it was among the Israelite-Jewish people that the true pulse of the spirit of the age was beating. For a while the life and endeavours of all mankind was concentrated in a brightly illumined centre of world history charged with apocalyptic mysteries.

With majestic strokes he paints the history of the Israelites as being guided from above by the spirit of Christ actively preparing his own incarnation through them. The attainment of a new human consciousness, which flashes up in Moses, was destined to take a decisive step forward in prophets such as Isaiah who experienced the death of ancient visions and the rebirth of new powers of perception such as are awakening in mankind today.

G; 1988; 352pp; 22 x 14 cm
0-86315-080-2; hb; £12.95



Reincarnation

Friedrich Rittelmeyer

This book was written over fifty years ago when the idea of reincarnation was still something of a novelty to most people in the West. Since then it has been taken up by many people as a matter of fact. However, it is easy to see how misunderstandings and illusions enter in. Reincarnation can be used to justify day-dreams or imaginary past glories. It can harden into a purely mechanical process, organizing just deserts for vice and virtue after the fashion of the Mosaic Law. The joy of Rittelmeyer's approach is that it is so essentially Christian. The breath of joyful freedom can be felt everywhere as he struggles to find a path through all the pitfalls on the way to a Christ-filled acceptance of reincarnation. With the help of Rudolf Steiner, Rittelmeyer was able to encounter the cosmic truth of reincarnation and, wrestling with human doubt on every level, courageously to bring it down until it entered the fullness of modern religious life.

G; RP 1988; 160pp; 20 x 13 cm
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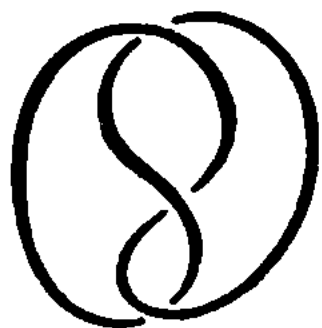
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