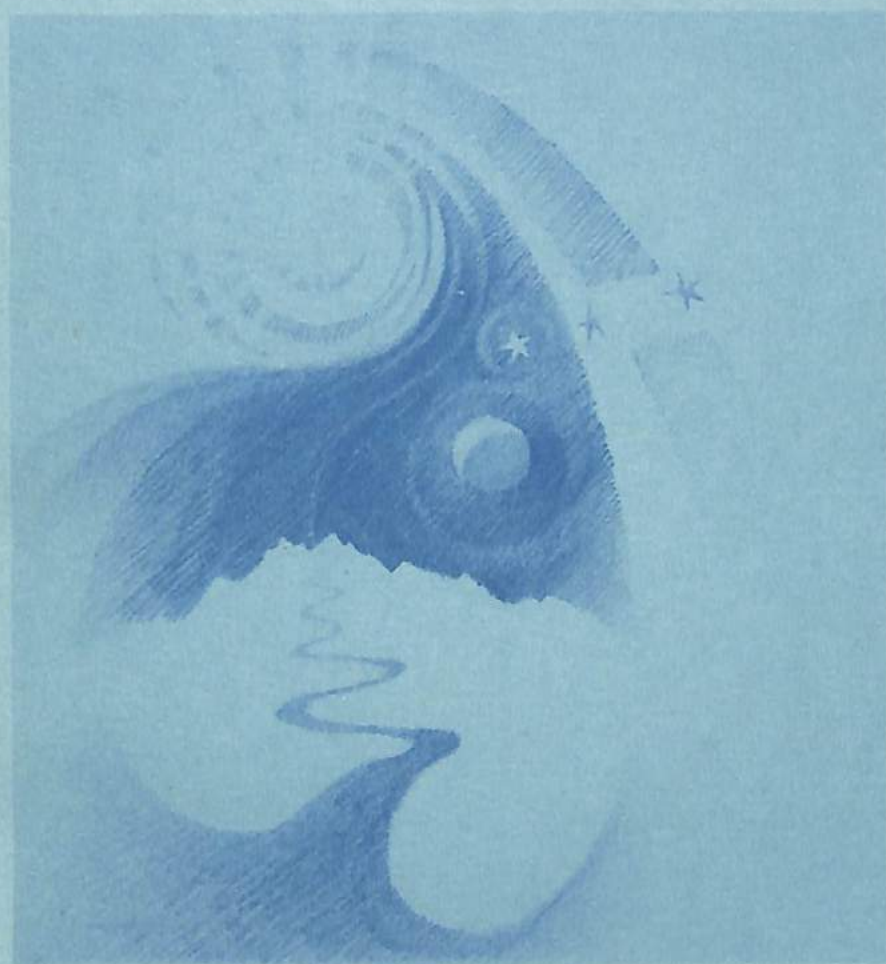


THE GOLDEN BLADE

1990



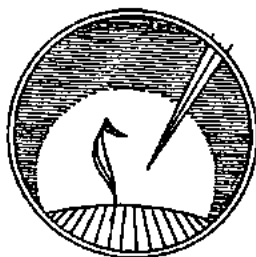
FREEDOM AND DESTINY +

THE GOLDEN BLADE

1990

FREEDOM AND DESTINY

THE STARS OF THE YEAR



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

The aim of this Annual is to bring the outlook of Anthroposophy to bear on questions and activities of evident relevance to the present, in a way which may have lasting value. It was founded in 1949 by Charles Davy and Arnold Freeman, who were its first editors.

The title derives from an old Persian legend, according to which King Djemjdid received from his God, Ahura Mazda, a golden blade with which to fulfil his mission on Earth. It carried the heavenly forces of light into the darkness of earthly substance, thus allowing its transformation. The legend seems to point to the possibility that man, through wise and compassionate work with the Earth, can one day regain on a new level what was lost when the Age of Gold was supplanted by those of Silver, Bronze and Iron. Technology could serve this aim; instead of endangering our planet's life, it could help to make the Earth a new Sun.

THE GOLDEN BLADE

FORTY-SECOND (1990) ISSUE

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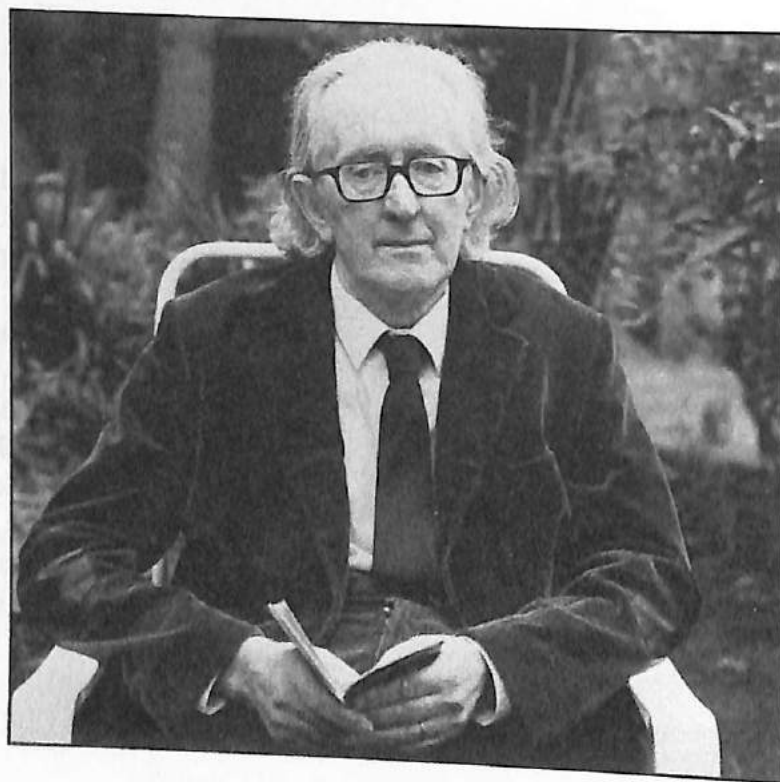
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Edited by Adam Bittleston and William Forward
Consultant Editor John Meeks

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Adam Bittleston
Editor of *The Golden Blade* 1966 — 1989

ADAM BITTLESTON 1911 —1989

Work on the concept and content of this edition of *The Golden Blade* had been virtually completed when, on the morning of 25th May, Adam Bittleston died. He had long suffered from the effects of a leg injury, sustained in a fall in the mid-seventies, and in recent years had been effectively bed-ridden. He did not allow this to hinder his work of counselling, writing and editing which he was continuing to do until the last few days before he died. His work and influence have been greatly valued, especially in the English-speaking world, and many will wish to have a broader perspective on them than can be offered by an obituary notice. We therefore propose to devote space in the next issue to a look back over his life and work.

Adam Bittleston was born in 1911 at Ockley, Surrey. At Oxford he took a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. Towards the end of his time at Oxford he resolved to train for the priesthood of the Christian Community, which he did in Stuttgart under Friedrich Rittelmeyer, Emil Bock, and other notable teachers. He was ordained in 1935, and worked in Leeds, London and Edinburgh. He married in 1937 Gisela Hermann, who has become widely influential as a teacher of the art of puppetry, and had three children, who all went into teaching when they grew up. In 1970 he moved to Forest Row, Sussex, where he was involved not only in the training of priests but also in the teaching and counselling of students at Emerson College in Forest Row. He has written several books, including "Meditative Prayers for Today", "Our Spiritual Companions", "The Spirit of the Circling Stars" and "Loneliness".

William Forward

EDITORIAL NOTES

In earlier civilizations — whose world view we are learning to regard with increasing tolerance as we learn more about them — there lived for millenia an understanding that events in the starry skies had their effects on life on earth. Thus the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom went hand in hand with astronomy. The astronomers of our civilization recognize and often admire the skills of their predecessors among the ancient Egyptians, Aztecs or Babylonians. No one would deny today that Sun, Moon and Stars exercise their influence on Earth but this is perceived and studied using the quantitative approach that characterizes the thinking of today. The qualitative understanding of the relationships of the heavenly bodies embodied in the science of astrology has gradually diminished and grown decadent to the point where astrology is no longer recognized as a science proper. In the perspective of the evolution of culture one can see that this has been necessary for man to come to experience himself as a free individual to the point where he can say, with Shakespeare's Cassius: "The fault lies not in our stars...but in ourselves". Thus today's wise men would undoubtedly have seen the Star of Bethlehem and have marvelled at the unusual phenomenon, but it is difficult to imagine that they would have allowed it to lead them to Bethlehem let alone see it as a harbinger of the birth of an individuality who would be of the greatest possible significance for the Earth. From a world-view in which everything on Earth is pre-determined by the Stars, we have come to one in which earthly conditions are extrapolated, giving us the somewhat frightening picture of a Space filled with countless objects linked only by the gravitational consequences of their participation in a Big Bang.

Such a view is, however, no longer in accord with what we experience — the quality of things, however subjectively we judge, is after all a matter of experience. The rôle of the Sun in the changing cycle of the seasons is also experienced *qualitatively* by everyone on Earth, as is the influence of the Moon in the ebb and flow of tides, and in monthly rhythms generally.

The extraordinary political events of 1989 — "glasnost" and "perestroika" in the U.S.S.R., being followed by burgeoning democracy in many of what were known as the satellite countries, the open expression of the yearning for democracy in Tiananmen Square and the release of political prisoners in South Africa, to name only the most striking — these suggest there is an ebb and flow in the affairs of men, to understand which needs a qualitative approach to the nexus of influences within which we stand at any time.

Such a qualitative approach must come from the realm of the feelings, the realm in which dialogue and interaction are the key activities. It was for such a dialogue that Adam Bittleston called in his last words as Editor of *The Golden Blade*:

"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".

In this issue John Meeks' commentary on the Stars of 1990 challenges us to take on such a dialogue out of our own experiences of naked-eye observation and what our cultural heritage brings to us in the way of pictures and characters associated with the planets. Such a bringing together of the outer and inner experience can be facilitated by what he describes as a star-like activity we can undertake within ourselves. Having found a night-sky stillness within, "To place a word, a thought-content, an image into the middle of this space, is meditation. There it can radiate, as a star or sun, nourishing the life of the soul...".

By means of this creative activity we are at the same time living most intensely in the present, free from the sensation of being determined by the past or excessively fascinated with unknown events to come: "To be in the present means to work actively for the future on the ground of the past, the ground of destiny. To be in the present is to be free".

There are yet other ways in which a dialogue with the Stars may be undertaken. For many years now agriculturists working with indications given by Rudolf Steiner have taken the movement of the Stars into account when planning their planting, weeding, propagating, harvesting, etc. Bio-dynamic agriculture, whilst more labour-intensive, has demonstrated not only that it is possible to produce good crop-yields without using chemical fertilizers and pesticides, but also that the nutritive value of the foods produced under these conditions is significantly greater. Increasingly, social economists are seeing that the higher costs of bio-dynamic farming methods are more than offset by the social benefits of:

1. Lower unemployment in rural areas;
2. Less expenditure on pollution control measures;
3. Food of higher nutritive value;
4. An ecologically balanced environment.

1989 was also a year in which this was beginning to be officially recognized, not only in Europe's largest farming nation, France, but also one of Europe's most difficult farming environments — Norway. In February of 1989 a government report on bio-dynamic and organic agriculture in Norway recommended:

1. State subsidies to those farmers wishing to convert to these methods;
2. Regular environmental subsidies to bio-dynamic/organic farmers;
3. Research and development grants for new projects in this area.

Subsequently a Norwegian county council funded the purchase of a large farm in prime agricultural territory by a trust which placed it at the disposal of bio-dynamic farmers. One can already begin to see how out of this dialogue with the Stars man is again quite literally changing the face of the Earth — this time in a healing way.

This also has its implications for community forms — from the United States we hear how the problem of distribution (which often accounts for over half the cost of the fruit and vegetables delivered) is being overcome by consumers dealing directly with the farmer of their choice, contracting his production, so that he is no longer producing between the twin risks of unpredictable climatic conditions and an equally unpredictable, mechanically-operating market. The term "community-supported agriculture", though long in use, has now come of age.

Such dialogue in freedom between Man and the Stars does, however, depend for its

substance on the results of spiritual research. In this issue of *The Golden Blade* we publish the translation of a lecture, given on 5th May 1921 by Rudolf Steiner, in which he sets out the way in which the human spirit relates to Sun, Moon and Stars in its passage between one life on Earth and the next. This theme is taken up and developed further in the three lectures we reproduce in translation here, given by Elizabeth Vreede on the subject of Astrology to the Astronomy and Mathematics section of the School of Spiritual Science. Many will recognize, expressed here in more scientific language, details from the great imaginative pictures of the after-life handed down to us in the Egyptian Book of the Dead, Dante's *Inferno*, the Dream-song of Olaf Asteson, and others.

Each life on Earth carries with it consequences into the next and bears within it the fruits of previous lives — this too represents a nexus of influences, a destiny to which the individual is subject and to which a free relationship must be striven. Among the many form-giving factors that will influence each life, such as race, creed, language, caste/class, there is also that of being male or female. What this really means for the development of the free individual is being experienced and examined more consciously today perhaps than ever before, given the greater degree of freedom available in many parts of the world with regard to the manner in which one lives out the masculine and feminine within one. A thought-provoking article by Jochen Bockemühl on Goethe's *Fairytale* examines the potential of what he describes as "feminine thinking".

In the reflections we bring in this issue on the individual biographies of two such contrasting figures as the poet Rilke and the teacher William Mann, we can see the power of individual creativity at work within the complex network of constraints imposed by family, nationality, religion...even temperament — both these cases are characterized by single-minded devotion to their calling.

A sense of calling is not granted to everyone and one of the most deeply disturbing social phenomena of the last two decades has been the havoc wrought by drug addiction, mainly among young people just at the time of life when they might otherwise hope to experience a sense of calling. Jaap van der Haar's work with drug addicts leads him to present the phenomenon to us as a call in itself: a call — both to the drug addicts and to those around them whose experience of addiction is less intense — to recognize today's moral imperative as the undertaking by each individual of a path of inner development. Only by accepting the position one is in and working to transform it can one attain a healthy balance in the nexus of forces to which one is subject today.

Brian Gold's illustrated study of the American Indian gives a stimulating view of a branch of humanity which appears to have reached the end of its development in one form and now is a constituent in the remarkable melting-pot of racial types found in the U.S.A., giving the greatest possible opportunity for the individual to find an appropriate vehicle in which to live out his destiny in freedom.

As Adam Bittleston remarked in this space last year in connection with Rudolf Steiner's Karma lectures: "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?"

W.F.

MAN, OFFSPRING OF THE WORLD OF STARS *

Rudolf Steiner

The civilisation of the fourth Post-Atlantean epoch — the period of the development of the Mind Soul in humanity — was directed from the Greek Mysteries. In other words: the indications upon which the culture of the human mind was based issued from the Mystery-Sanctuaries which existed here and there in Asia Minor and Southern Europe. Now the secret of man's connection with the Sun was an essential part of these Mystery-teachings. From the book "Theosophy" we know that the Ego lights up^(a) within the Intellectual or Mind Soul and enters into possession of its full, inner force during the age of Consciousness, or Spiritual Soul.

Now because the Ego of man was destined from a certain point of view to be awakened during the age of the culture of the mind or intellect, it was quite natural that the Mysteries of that age should have been concerned with the secrets of the Sun and their connection with the human Ego. In the book "Riddles of Philosophy" it is said that the Greek's life of thought consisted in an actual perceiving of the outer world. The Greek's thought was at the same time a perception, just as we today have a perception of colours or sounds. The thoughts and conceptions of the Greek were not brought into being merely by inner activity of the soul, but they were born as it were from the objects themselves. In this respect Goethe's thinking undoubtedly possessed qualities in common with Greek thought. This is quite clear from his famous conversation with Schiller. Schiller stated that Goethe's conceptions were not *perceptions*, but *ideas*, and to this Goethe retorted that he actually *saw* his ideas before him, that he *perceived* them objectively.

The life of thought in Greece was associated with a very definite inner experience which arose when men looked at the world around them. They regarded the substance of the ideas which thus lit up before them as being the creation of the Sun. With the rising Sun they beheld the appearance in space

* Lecture given by Rudolf Steiner at Dornach on 5th May 1921. Printed in "Anthroposophical Quarterly", volume 20, number 4, and reprinted by kind permission of the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain.

of the life of ideas, and this life of ideas passed away again with the setting Sun. Men have now quite lost the faculty of perceiving and experiencing spirituality in the world around them. When the Sun rises they see only the phenomena of light and colour which there appear. And it is the same when the Sun sets in the red glow of evening. The Greeks felt that the world of ideas came to them at sunrise and passed away from them at sunset. They felt that in the darkness of the night they were bereft of the world of ideas. And when they looked at the sky, which seems to us to be blue, but for the colour of which the Greeks used a word which simply meant "darkness", they felt that their world of ideas came to an end at the boundaries of visible space. Beyond this world of space the Greek divined the existence of other worlds — the worlds of the thoughts of the Gods, which he connected with light. These worlds seemed to him to be concentrated in the living Sun, and to withdraw during the night into the spaces of the dark firmament. Without some insight into this entirely different world of perception and experience, we cannot understand the further evolution of man's life of soul. This faculty of inwardly living perception functioned for a certain period of time, but then the most advanced representatives of the human race, those who still received their training in the Greek Mysteries, began to feel that their power to perceive the spiritual radiations from the living Sun in cosmic space was waning, and they saw salvation in the Mystery of Golgotha, inasmuch as the impulse coming from the Mystery of Golgotha made it possible for them to rekindle the light within their own being. And they tried now to experience the light by entering in spirit into the events connected with the Mystery of Golgotha.

Now the intellect alone can give us no real knowledge of what has really come to pass in the life of humanity through the ages. A great and far-reaching metamorphosis took place in man's life of soul and must never be forgotten when we are studying the course of evolution. We who have been living in the era of the development of the Consciousness Soul since the beginning of the fifteenth century have in our inner, intellectual activity, only a shadowy reflection of the spirituality which pervaded the life of the mind in the fourth Post-Atlantean period of civilisation. And the task before us is to awaken a faculty of the soul which will quicken in this shadowy intellect of ours a living understanding of the universe. The shadow-intellect that is characteristic of all modern culture has fettered man to the Earth. He has eyes only for earthly things, particularly when he allows himself to be influenced by the claims of modern science. In our age it never occurs to man that his being belongs, not to the Earth alone, but to the Cosmos beyond the Earth. Knowledge of our

connection with the Cosmos beyond the Earth — that is what we need above all to make our own.

We take earthly life today as the basis of our ideas and concepts and build up a conception of the Universe in line with the conditions of this earthly life. But the picture of the Universe thus arising has been evolved by simply transferring earthly conditions to the world beyond the Earth. By means of spectro-analysis and other methods — admirable as they are in their way — a conception of the Sun has grown up which is really modelled wholly upon earthly conditions. Everyone is familiar with the appearance of luminous, incandescent gas, and this picture is then transferred to the Sun in the heavens. But we must learn to think of the Sun in the light of Spiritual Science. The Sun which the physicist believes to be a luminous body of gas out in cosmic space is spiritual through and through. The Sun receives the cosmic light and radiates it to the Earth, but the Sun is not physical at all. It is spiritual in its whole nature and being. The Greek was right when he felt that the Sun was connected with the development of his Ego, for the development of the Ego is associated with the intelligence and the faculty of forming ideas. The Greek conceived the rays of the Sun to be the power which kindled and quickened his Ego. His was still aware of the spirituality of the Cosmos, and to him the Sun was a living being, related to the human Ego in an absolutely concrete way. When a man says 'I' to himself, he experiences a force that is working within him, and the Greek, as he felt the working of this inner force, related it to the Sun. The Greek said to himself: Sun and Ego are the outer and inner aspects of one and the same being. The Sun out there in space is the *Cosmic Ego*. What lives within me is the *human Ego*.

As a matter of fact, this experience still comes to those who have a deeper feeling for Nature. The experience is not nearly as vivid as it was in the days of Greece, but for all that it is still possible to become aware of the spiritual forces indwelling the rays of the Sun in springtime. There are people here and there who feel that the Ego is imbued with a new vigour when the rays of the Sun begin to shine down upon the Earth with greater strength. But this is a last faint echo, an outward shell of an experience that is dying out altogether in the abstract, shadowy intellectualism prevalent in every branch of civilised life today. The task before us is to begin once again to realise and understand the connection of the being of man with *super-earthly* existence.

If we study and compare many things that are to be found in anthroposophical literature, we shall be able to understand the way in which the Sun is related to the Ego, and we shall also realise that the forces which stream down

to the Earth from the Sun and from the Moon are entirely different in character and function. In a certain respect, Sun and Moon stand in polar antithesis. The forces streaming from the Sun enable the human being to become the bearer of an Ego. We owe to the rays of the Sun the power which moulds the human form into an image of the Ego. The forces which determine the human form from outside, even during the period of embryonic life, are the active forces of the Sun. While the embryo is developing in the mother's body, a great deal more is happening than modern science dreams of. Modern science is of the opinion that the forces all originate from the fertilised germ, but the truth is that the human embryo merely rests there in the body of the mother and is given form by the Sun forces. These Sun forces are, of course, associated with the Moon forces which are also working but in a different way. The Moon forces work above all in the inner, metabolic processes. We may therefore say: the Sun forces give form to the human being from outside. The Moon forces radiate outwards from within the metabolic process; they are centrifugal forces. This does not contradict the fact that these Moon forces are working, for instance, in the shaping and moulding of the human countenance. The Moon forces stream out from a centre in the metabolic system and work as it were by attraction upon the forming of the human face, differentiating the features, but there is an interplay between these Moon forces and the Sun forces. The organism that is connected with procreation is subject to the Sun forces. The whole being of man is involved in this way in the interplay between the forces of the Sun and the forces of the Moon.

A distinction must be made, however, between the Moon forces that work in the inner processes of metabolism in man, and the forces that originate in the metabolic processes itself. The Moon forces stream into the metabolic process, but this metabolic process has forces of its own as well. And these are earthly forces. The substances and forces in the vegetable and other foodstuffs work in the human being by virtue of their own inherent nature. They work here as Earth forces. Metabolism is primarily an outcome of the working of Earth forces. If the substances of the foodstuffs were merely to unfold their own forces within the human organism, there would be nothing but a chaotic play of forces in man. The fact that these forces work without intermission to renew and upbuild the being of man, is due not to the Earth at all, but to the Moon. The human being is shaped from within outwards by the Moon, and from without inwards by the Sun. Because the rays of the Sun are received through the eye into the head-organisation, the Sun forces work within the organism as well, but for all that they are still working from *outside*.

And so on the one hand the development and evolution of the Ego of man is dependent upon the forces of the Sun. Without the Sun, man could not be an Ego being living on the Earth; on the other hand there could be no such thing as propagation, there could be no human race without the Moon. It is the Sun which places man as an individual on the Earth, and it is the Moon that charms down the human race to Earth — the human race conceived here as one whole. The human race as the physical product of the generations is a product of the Moon forces which have worked in the generative process. As an *individuality*, however, man is the product of the Sun forces.

If, therefore, we want to understand the human being and the human race as a whole, we cannot do so by studying merely those conditions which obtain on the Earth alone. The efforts of geologists to understand the being of man by investigating the nature of the Earth are all in vain. Man is not primarily a creation of the Earth. He receives his shape and form from the Cosmos; he is an off-spring of the world of the stars, above all of Sun and Moon. From the Earth are derived only those forces which are contained in the substances of the Earth. These forces work outside the human being and also within him when they are introduced into his organism either through eating or drinking. But within the organism they are received into the realm of forces of a super-earthly nature.

The processes that take place within the human being are by no means an affair of the Earth alone. They are through and through an affair of the world of stars. This is the kind of knowledge that we must struggle to reach once more.

Think of the human being as he stands there before us in his physical body. This physical body takes in the foodstuffs from the outer world and the forces of the foodstuffs continue to work within the body. But the physical body is permeated by the astral body and in the astral body the Moon forces are actively at work. The Sun forces too play into the astral body. The etheric body is there in the middle, between physical and astral body.

When we study the forces of foodstuffs, we find that, to begin with, they are active in the physical body and are then taken hold of by the astral body in which the influence of Sun and Moon are working. But between the physical body and astral body the etheric body is fulfilling its functions. The forces in the etheric body come, not from the Earth but from all directions of cosmic space. The products of the Earth, the substances which exist in the solid, liquid or aeriform condition, are taken in by the human being and worked upon by the forces of Sun and Moon. But forces streaming in from all

directions of cosmic space are also working in the human organism. The forces contained in the foodstuffs themselves come from the Earth, but from cosmic space the etheric forces stream in. These etheric forces also take hold of the foodstuffs and work upon them in such a way that they become inwardly responsive to light and also to warmth. We say, therefore: the human being is part of the Earth because he has a physical body. His etheric body relates him to the whole environment of the Earth. Through his astral body he is involved in the weaving forces of Sun and Moon.

Now these influences of the Sun and Moon in the astral body are modified and differentiated in a high degree as they work upon the 'upper' man. By 'upper' man I mean, in this case, the part of the organism that is encircled and permeated by the blood-stream which passed upwards from the heart in the direction of the head. The 'lower' man, then, comprises the other part of the organism — that part which lies *below* the heart.

Thus we have the upper part of man, including the head and everything that is organically connected with the head. The formation of this part of the organism is dependent, mainly, upon the Sun's influences. Its most important period of development is during embryonic life. The Sun's influences work upon the embryo in a very special way, but these influences continue to be active when the human being is born and is living in the physical world between birth and death. The astral influences working upon that part of the human organism which lies *above* the heart — speaking very roughly, for it would be necessary to go into more precise detail if we were describing the blood circulation — these astral influences are then modified by the influences of Saturn, Jupiter and Mars.

The planet Saturn circles round the Sun and sends forces to the Earth. These forces of Saturn work in the whole astral body of man, but above all in the part of the astral body which corresponds to the 'upper' man. They stream into the astral body, pervade it, and are the essential factor in bringing about a proper connection between the astral body and the physical body. When, for instance, a man cannot sleep properly, that is to say, when his astral body will not leave or come down again properly into his etheric and physical bodies or in some other way is not rightly connected with the physical body — this is due to an irregularity in the working of the Saturn forces. In other words, Saturn is the heavenly body which, by way of the human head, promotes and is responsible for setting up the proper relation of man's astral body to his etheric body and his physical body. And it is the Saturn forces too which mediate the connection of the astral body to the Ego, because of

Saturn's relation to the Sun. Saturn's relation to the Sun is expressed in space and time inasmuch as Saturn accomplishes its orbit around the Sun in a period of thirty years.

In the human being, the relationship of Saturn to the Sun is expressed in the connection of the Ego with the astral body and in the way in which the astral body is membered into the whole human organism. The connection of Saturn with the upper part of the astral body was regarded as a factor of great importance in ancient times. In the Egypto-Chaldean period, three or four thousand years before the Mystery of Golgotha, the Teachers and Sages of the Mysteries judged a human being according to his relation to Saturn — which was revealed by the date and time of his birth. For these Sages knew quite well that the position of Saturn in the heavens at the time of man's birth enabled his astral body either to function regularly or irregularly in his physical body. Knowledge of these influences played a very important part in olden days. But the onward progress of evolution is denoted precisely by the fact that in our age, which, as you know, began in the fifteenth century, we have to become free of these forces and influences.

Please do not misunderstand me. This does not mean that Saturn is not working in us nowadays. Naturally the Saturn forces work in us, just as they worked in the Ancients, but we must now learn to make ourselves free and independent of them. And do you know how we can make ourselves free? Nothing is worse than to give oneself over to the shadowy intellectualism of our age. If we do that, the Saturn forces run riot within us and give rise to the so-called nervous troubles that are so very prevalent in our time. When a man suffers from 'nerves' as we say, it is because his astral body is not properly connected with his physical organisation. This lies at the basis of the morbid nervous symptoms which are so common nowadays. Our striving should be to unfold real vision, to attain Imagination. If man can achieve nothing better than the forming of abstract concepts and ideas, nervous symptoms are bound to increase in severity, because this intellectual activity tends to alienate him from the influences of Saturn, which are still at work within his being. His astral body will be torn away from his nerves, and he will be driven more and more into a state of nervous tension and excitability. The nervous complaints of our age must be recognised in their cosmic aspect, for they are caused by an irregular working of the Saturn forces.

Just as Saturn works chiefly in the upper part of the astral body and in the whole astral body inasmuch as the astral body is connected with the organism as a whole through the nervous system, so is Jupiter active in thinking.

When a man thinks, one part of his astral body is active. It is pre-eminently the Jupiter forces in the astral body which strengthen the thinking faculty, and Jupiter is responsible for permeating the human brain with astral forces.

Now the influences of Saturn continue throughout the whole of man's life. The beginning of a human life may really be said to consist of the first three periods of ten years. This is the period of growth, for as a matter of fact the activity of the growth forces does not wholly cease until after the thirtieth year. And our whole life and our health depend on how our astral body has developed during the thirty years. Saturn needs thirty years to complete its orbit around the Sun and this has its exact parallel in the life of man.

The development of the faculty of thinking takes place essentially during the first twelve years of life. Again we find the parallelism in the orbit of the planet Jupiter.

Just as Jupiter has to do with thinking, so has Mars to do with speech.
Saturn: upper part of the astral body as a whole.
Jupiter: thinking.
Mars: speech.

Mars works upon a still smaller part of the astral body than that with which Jupiter is concerned in connection with the thinking of man. And the development of the forces which finally express themselves in speech, is dependent upon the working of Mars within our being. Man learns to utter the first sounds of speech in a period which corresponds approximately to half the time required by Mars to complete its orbit around the Sun.

We see, then, that the development of faculties situated primarily in the region of the human head is connected with the Saturn forces, the Jupiter forces, and the Mars forces. The forces of the three outer planets, therefore, work on within the astral body through the life of man. The Sun is connected more directly with the Ego, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars are concerned respectively with the behaviour and functioning of the astral body in the human organism, with the faculty of thinking and with the faculty of speaking.

The Sun is connected with the Ego, And then we come to the inner planets, as they are sometimes called, the planets; which are nearer the Earth and lie between the Earth and the Sun, whereas Saturn, Jupiter and Mars lie on the other side of the Sun. The forces of these inner planets are likewise connected with the being of man. We will take Mercury to begin with.

Like the Moon, the centre, from which the Mercury forces work, lies in the inner being of man, and it is only in connection with the forming of the human countenance that Mercury works from outside. The Mercury forces work in the part of the human organism that lies below the region of the heart. From there these Mercury forces stream into the human organism. The working of the astral body in the breathing and circulatory functions of the human organism is regulated by Mercury. Mercury acts as the intermediary between the astral body and the rhythmic processes in the being of man. The Mercury forces act as the intermediary between the astral body and the rhythmic functions in the human organism. Because this is so, the Mercury forces intervene, as do the Moon forces, in the metabolic processes as a whole, but only in so far as the metabolic process is subject to rhythm and reacts in turn upon the rhythmic functions.

We come next to Venus. Venus works pre-eminently in the etheric body of man. The cosmic forces chiefly active in the etheric body, therefore, are those of Venus.

Then we come again to the Moon. The Moon forces in the human organism work in polar antithesis to the Sun forces. From within outwards the Moon forces lead substance over into the realm of the living and are therefore connected with procreation. The Moon stimulates not only the inner, reproductive processes of the organism, but the procreative process as well. Thus we have:

Saturn:	upper part of the astral body as a whole.
Jupiter:	thinking.
Mars:	speech.
Sun:	Ego.
Mercury:	intermediary between the astral body and the rhythmic functions in the organism.
Venus:	activity of the etheric body.
Moon:	stimulates reproduction.

You see now in what way processes in the human organism are dependent upon the Cosmos. On the one side man is bound up with the earthly forces through his physical body. And on the other side he is bound up with his whole cosmic environment through the etheric body. The cosmic forces, however, work in different ways in his being as we have heard. This differentiation originates in the astral body in which the forces of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars,

Venus, Mercury, Moon are contained. By way of the Ego, the Sun works in man. Suppose that as the result of his earlier incarnations a man has within his being forces which predestine him to be a thinker in the earthly life upon which he is entering. He prepares for his descent to the Earth and — since Jupiter takes a definite time to complete his orbit — he will choose a moment for his birth when the rays of Jupiter pour directly down upon him.

In this way the heavenly constellations provide conditions into which a human being may be born — conditions which are determined by his previous earthly lives.

In the age of the Consciousness Soul, of course, it is the task of man gradually to make himself free of these conditions. But he must free himself from them in the right way.

In speaking of the Saturn influences, I said that it is a question of trying to replace shadowy intellectualism by real Imagination. In the book "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds" indications are given which, if they are followed, can make us independent of the cosmic forces, although none the less these cosmic forces continue to work in our being.

Man is born on Earth into conditions determined by a constellation in the heavens, but he must equip himself with forces which make him independent of this constellation. It is to this kind of knowledge — a knowledge of man's connection with the Cosmos beyond the Earth — that our civilisation must attain. Man must learn to realise that the forces of heredity described by modern science are not the only forces at work in his organism. To imagine such a thing, my dear friends, is the purest nonsense. It is pure nonsense to think that the maternal organism contains those forces which are then transmitted by heredity and so build up a heart, a liver and the other organs. There would be no heart in the human organism if the Sun did not build it into the organism of man, neither would there be a liver if Venus did not place it into the organism. And so it is with each single organ. Their presence in the human organism is due to the working of cosmic forces.

These are the things that humanity must once again learn to understand. Man must realise that the mysteries of his being cannot be explained by a science which deals merely with earthly phenomena. Around man live other creatures — and they too are not merely creatures of the Earth. It appears, to begin with, as if the minerals were entirely earthly in their nature. But in the minerals, too, changes have taken place which were due to the forces working in the cosmic environment of the Earth. The crystallised forms of the metals are all due to the play of forces from beyond the Earth. The metals were given

shape and form at a time when the Earth's forces were not yet working in their full strength, but when cosmic forces were working in the Earth. The healing forces contained in the minerals, above all in the metals, are connected with the way in which these metals were formed within the Earth by the working of cosmic forces.

In the first epoch of Post-Atlantean times, when the ancient Indian civilisation was at its prime, man felt and knew himself to be a citizen of the whole wide universe. Although he had not yet developed the forces which modern humanity is so proud to possess, he was in the true sense of the word, MAN. By the time of the Chaldean epoch, however, man's attention had already begun to be diverted from the Sun. He had become a kind of amphibium — a creature who is thankful when the rays of the Sun pour down upon it, and when it need not always be confined to its dark burrows in the ground. But in our time one cannot say that man even resembles a creature like the mole, for he is really much more like an earthworm who has eyes at most for what has first been sent out into space from the Earth and comes back again as rain. This is really all that men see in the way of forces from beyond the Earth. But this the earthworms also see! In his materialism today man has become an earthworm. He must rise above this earth state, but he can only do so by realising and knowing his connection with the Cosmos beyond the Earth.

Our task therefore, is to raise ourselves above the earthworm state into which our civilisation has fallen, and bring a new spiritual life into being.

THE OBSERVATION OF THE STARS AS A PATH TO FREEDOM

KEY TO SYMBOLS USED IN THE DRAWINGS

Planets

☿	Mercury
♀	Venus
♂	Mars
♃	Jupiter
♄	Saturn
♅	Uranus
♆	Neptune

Constellations of the Zodiac

♈	Ram (Aries)
♉	Bull (Taurus)
♊	Twins (Gemini)
♋	Crab (Cancer)
♌	Lion (Leo)
♍	Virgin (Virgo)
♎	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 OBSERVATION OF THE STARS AS A PATH TO FREEDOM

by John Meeks

Illustrations by Michael Brinch

"There are some who long for a home concealed behind these remote blue spaces: a first love, parents, brothers and sisters, old friends, fond memories of the past. Others live in the expectation of unknown splendours in the world beyond; they imagine a vivid future to be hidden there, and reach out towards a new world. There are but few who remain calm, in the face of this magnificent round, and seek nothing more than to comprehend its fullness and the richness of its inter-relationships. In regarding each detail, they never forget the sparkling thread which weaves together the many lights to a single, holy chandelier. To behold this living adornment hovering over the depths of the night is their whole fulfilment and bliss".

—Novalis, "Die Lehrlinge zu Sais"

In Novalis' fragment on the Egyptian mysteries of Isis, these words about the stars are spoken during a conversation among the pupils. They bear witness to a longing to lift the veil which conceals the true face, the true being of the goddess. But the expectations are different. Some hope for the restoration of a golden past, others seek refuge in an unknown future. Both seek redemption from the painful reality of the present. Accordingly, they see the world of appearances as an illusion which conceals the true realm of the spirit, of eternity. Only a few find the peace and inner activity to enliven the act of beholding, to invite the breath of eternity to enter the present moment. They would understand Goethe's admonition not to seek reality *behind* the phenomena. And their willingness to awaken to the present means that they have embarked on a path of freedom.

It is not difficult to identify the distractions which so powerfully draw us away from the here and now. The awareness of failings and inadequacies of

the past can weigh upon the soul as a paralysing burden, while the nostalgia for what seems irretrievably lost can exercise the seductive power of a dream. Both can lead to resignation, to lethargy, to inactivity. A preoccupation with the future can stir anxieties, fears, worries and the restlessness which accompanies them. But it can also invite escape through the hope of greater or smaller wonders and miracles to come. Salvation, perhaps, through a minor intervention of the gods (winning the lottery) or through a great apocalypse, a world-judgment to right all wrongs.

The lethargy stemming from the past and the restlessness stirred by the future meet in the everyday consciousness of the "present". They are the caricatures of the true calm and the guided inner activity which are essential to every true awakening to the present moment.

The quality of calm, of inner tranquillity, provides a ground, a foundation for all human action which is directed to the future. It could be compared to the womb, the motherly "past", in which the formative power of an inner sun shapes and transforms the organs of the embryo for their future task. And just as the development of the living organism is guided by the ideal or "archetype" of the species, the human being in his striving for freedom is guided by the ideals he has set for himself. In following his ideals he brings movement into the womb of tranquillity which arises from the past. And providing he has sought and achieved in his choice of ideals a true link to the cosmos, they will wander before him like angelic beings, the messengers of the gods, assuring that his striving will never cease. For one of the seductions of the future is the illusion that we can one day attain our ideals and then "rest in peace". A true ideal is a living being, whose development never ceases.

Now the question could arise: Why should Novalis choose the observation of the stars to illustrate the awakening to the present? Do we not unfold our creative activity through the motherly substance of the earth and the kingdoms of nature? Is it not the motherly ground (*mater* = matter) of our own physical bodies which gives us the possibility to transform the earth? Looking at the stars, we are transported beyond ourselves into a realm where we cannot be creative outwardly. But just as the idea which guides our action is conceived, born and nourished in the inner stillness of the mind, the stars and the dark spaces around them can be our teachers and guides if we seek to understand the mysteries of creation.

Each individual star appears to us as a radiant, scintillating point of light,

surrounded by the darkness of night. Our knowledge of astronomy tells us that each star is a sun, a source not only of light, but of warmth and life. It is a pure spring which can nourish and sustain, and yet it appears utterly concentrated and contained. The stars are embedded in the surrounding darkness as in a motherly womb. This darkness is permeated with the invisible light of the sun and the stars, which only appears outwardly where it is received and mirrored by a celestial body, such as a planet or moon. And so it should not surprise us to learn that all those cultures of the myth-creating age which felt a closer connection to the darkness of the firmament, pregnant with invisible energies, should speak of a great goddess of the sky. The divine mother of the Egyptians, the goddess *Nut*, is such a being, whose body is adorned with the stars, and who gives birth to the sun, the moon and the planets. Those cultures, by contrast, which felt more related to the visible manifestation of the light, spoke of a male sky-divinity — so, for instance, the Greek god Uranos.

From the lecture by Rudolf Steiner included in this issue we learn that in ancient times the sun was experienced in connection with the higher individuality, the I AM. And just as the sun — the cosmic I AM — was regarded as a source of light, love and life for the surrounding universe, so too the human being, when he one day becomes the full bearer of the higher individuality, will radiate these same forces like a sun, blessing and nourishing the beings around him. An ideal, it would seem, whose full attainment must lie in a far distant future. And yet from time to time, moments can be experienced which offer a glimpse, an intimation of this potential. So, for example, when a deeper insight shared with others in an atmosphere of loving interest becomes a power of fructification, allowing latent possibilities to develop and blossom forth. Thus the Arab proverb quoted by Emerson: "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fertile". One human being, through his wisdom, his love and his actions, can awaken what is most individual, most unique in those around him. And providing he does not abuse his gifts to exercise influence on the will of others, he can truly be compared to a sun: to a source which nourishes all beings selflessly, helping them to become what they truly are.

In such moments of grace it is possible to observe that the soul-forces are intensely concentrated, as though to a fine, radiant point of light. Surrounding this light is a quality we could compare to the motherly darkness of the night sky, a tranquillity which is the ground for all development, all initiative. It is the stillness, the calm and the serenity which is equally the ground for every

meditation. To place a word, a thought-content, an image into the *middle* of this space, is *medi-tation*. There it can radiate, as a star or sun, nourishing the life of the soul, transforming and ennobling the sheaths.

But what is the origin of the motherly serenity, and the fatherly activity of the light as we meet them in the human soul?

The forces of the past, the forces which have shaped human destiny, can weigh upon the soul as a burden, or can awaken the longing for a lost paradise. Either way, as we have seen, they can lead to lethargy, resignation, passivity. Through the activity of the higher individuality, the legacy of the past, the forces of destiny, can become a motherly ground, a foundation for all development into the future. And, as such, they are a source of peace, of tranquillity. When we walk over the surface of the earth, we feel the resistance of the ground beneath our feet. Without the resistance of this mineral crust we could never take a single step into the future. Yet what is this foundation but the mineralized remains, the memory of a once living past? The surface of the earth gives us confidence and peace, and each new initiative, each seed of freedom, grows within the motherly soil of the past, the destiny of the earth. Similarly, the deeds we have performed in the past, together with all their consequences for the earth and for humanity, are the ground of resistance — but also the ground of peace — upon which our present and future creativity can grow. To begin to realize this, to begin to work with it out of the higher individuality, is to transform the lethargy which paralyses into the tranquillity of a motherly ground, a womb in which all higher possibilities can be engendered.

The forces which come to meet us out of the future can stir us to restless activity, to a state of tense expectation. As long as we have not yet recognized a guiding ideal, the forces which thus arise are often contradictory, at times negating each other, at times reinforcing each other to unguided, destructive activity. When, in an act of intuition, an idea is conceived, when it is transformed by the higher individuality into an ideal, it can become a direction and guiding light which can unite more and more of the contradictory energies to a single, harmonious strength. The restlessness of expectation is thus transformed into a pure source of creative power, a *star*. As long as we still draw our strength from the fascination with unknown events to come, we are not yet in the present.

To be in the present means to work actively for the future on the ground of the past, the ground of destiny. To be in the present is to be free.

* * *

What are the factors which lure us away from the present when we look at the stars? There are many, no doubt, for the human being is immensely resourceful in finding escape-routes into the past and future. An example is the thought of the vast distances which are said to separate us from the stars. The realization that the light of Sirius requires nine years to reach the earth, while most of the bright stars in Orion are close to a thousand "light years" away, can impose itself like a modern veil of Isis between ourselves and the stars. The light which we see today is already antiquated, we are told; an unbridgeable gulf separates us from the "present" of each star. The power of this thought may owe much to the simple fact that few people today observe the stars regularly, and with concentrated attention. And so there is little possibility to weigh the *ideas* of popular science against immediate *experience*.

But there is, all the same, an interesting and highly instructive parallel to the problem of light-years in a more familiar realm of experience. If we examine our lives, looking for moments when we were truly present with our whole attention in the here and now, we may well remember a profound artistic experience, inspired perhaps by a medieval cathedral, a painting by Leonardo, a symphony by Beethoven. These works were all conceived and created in a more or less distant past. Their creators have moved on to other tasks. And yet, over the centuries, they have continued to call human beings into the present. To be sure, the symphonies of Beethoven, the Last Supper of Leonardo, have become all too familiar. And strangely, their familiarity makes them remote. When Beethoven wrote his great symphonies, they exercised a power on human beings which we can hardly imagine today. For some they offered something like an initiation. To others, let us say, to those who did not stand up well to the tests of initiation, they were shocking, unbearably dissonant, even "violent". Today they have become a part of our "musical heritage". Once like radiant stars, pouring forth blessings in the present, they are now destiny, a part of the motherly womb from which new impulses are born. At worst, they are "background music".

Yet now and again, perchance, we may succeed in listening as though we had never heard the music before. It has ceased to be "background", womb, it has moved into the centre of our consciousness as radiant, life-giving star. And the lapse of time since its creation nearly two centuries ago — two hundred "light years" — is no longer relevant. We have experienced eternity in the moment.

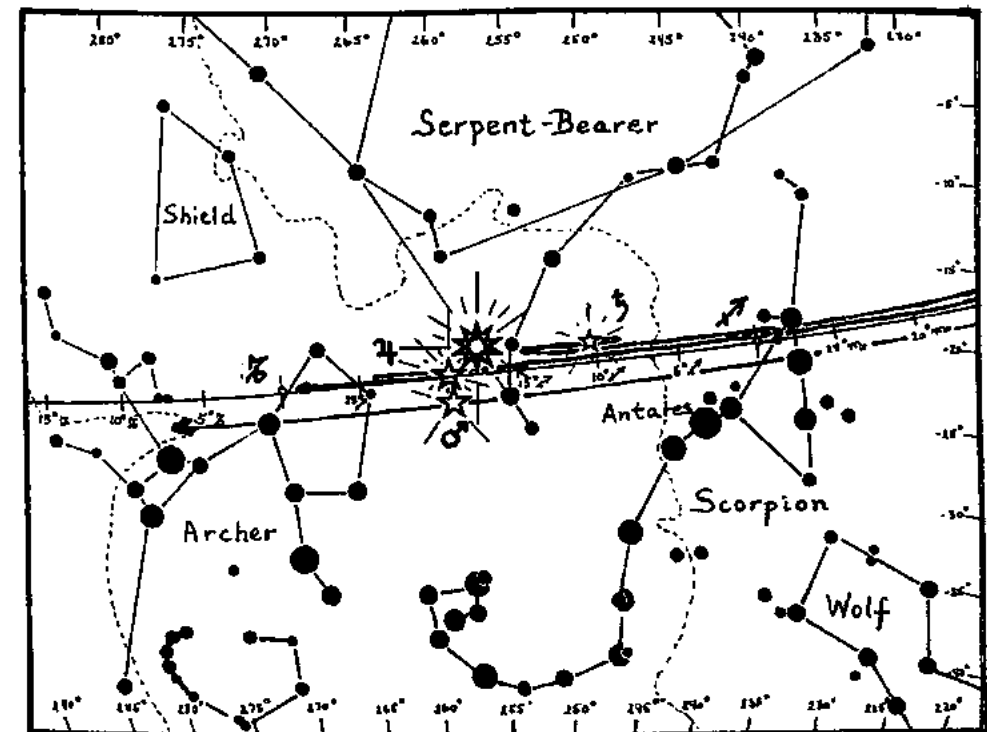
* * *

If the knowledge of light-years can easily lead to a certain resignation and passivity — qualities we have come to recognize in their connection with the past — there is another widely prevalent thought which tends to engender the restlessness of expectation. It is the idea that the stars and planets exercise an influence on human life and the life of the earth. To be sure, man is an image, a hieroglyph of the universe; his life is most intimately interwoven with the rhythms of the cosmos. But the word "influence" suggests that the stars are active agents which affect the more or less passive human being. The conviction of fatalistic astrology that man is unfree thus lives on in unconscious phrases and thought-habits.

And so it is natural enough that when people become aware of a striking celestial event, such as a close conjunction of two bright planets, they seldom ask: "How can I find a relation to it?" but rather: "What does it mean?" or "What is its effect?". These questions are accompanied by a gesture of drawing back from the phenomena. From the standpoint of the spectator we can be intensely curious about the cosmos. But curiosity can easily succumb to the lure of sensationalism. The form of enthusiasm which we call curiosity, or even fascination, is not yet selfless. To become selfless requires devotion and love for the phenomena. It requires that we transform the restlessness of expectation into a power of awakening in the moment.

For this reason, our monthly observations of the stars and planets do not so much offer an interpretation as a path. This applies to the myths as much as to the celestial phenomena. The great dramatists, sculptors and vase painters of Greece were as free in dealing with mythological themes as Shakespeare in utilizing historical and literary sources. And it is the aim of every true artist not to interpret, but to bring life into his subject. A living myth is a myth in the course of a development. To discover the turning point of this development is to step into the present.

JANUARY 1990



The New Star of 1604 in the Serpent-Bearer. The nova is shown on the day of its first recorded visibility, 9th October. Jupiter and Mars are shown in conjunction, as they appeared on Michaelmas day, 29th September.

Mars and Venus

At the beginning of 1990 Mars can be found in the morning twilight at the beginning of a new visibility period. Venus changes over from the evening to the morning sky, while describing a loop between the Goat (Capricorn) and the Archer (Sagittarius). From the end of January onwards the planets can be observed together in the southeast before sunrise. Although they never meet in conjunction, they are never far apart for the whole first half of the year. In the drawings from February to May their journey through the constellations of the zodiac can be followed in detail.



The Redemption of Mars and the New Star of 1604

In the 1989 issue of *The Golden Blade* we considered some of the problematical aspects of Mars as the god of war and strife. Even in ancient Greece, when heroic deeds on the battlefield were still sung by the greatest poets, and immortalized on the Parthenon friezes, he was often regarded with manifest disapproval. All but an outcast among the Olympian gods on account of his violent, passionate nature, we find him mistrusted and shunned by many older astrologers as a bringer of misfortune and discord. The dual consciousness which underlay the awakening faculty of abstract thinking all too readily saw the world in terms of the polarity of good and evil influences. And yet this seemingly incorrigible, impulsive warrior is the guardian of the metal iron, and as such the inspirer of strength, courage and the power of earthly deed.

These are qualities needed by all who would work to uplift and ennoble the substances of the earth. And many whose lives are dedicated to peace and healing for the earth would feel that their association with deeds of war is an anachronism today which needs to be discarded once and for all.

In Botticelli's painting of *Mars and Venus*, which we reproduce again this year, a great turning point in the spiritual history of man is brought to expression. The war god has laid aside his armour, and has fallen into a deep sleep — so deep that even the triton-shell trumpet blown into his ear by a playful young faun cannot awaken him. It is the sleep of initiation, and the hierophant is the sober, wakeful goddess of love and of the arts. In every initiation the neophyte must lay aside all garments and other encumbrances which stem from the past. The armour of war is left behind as an empty shell. But whenever a god abandons his temple to take on new tasks in world evolution, his old place will be filled by other spirits who are not ready to advance in the same way. Perhaps we could see the fauns in Botticelli's painting as the forerunners of a whole host of such spirits who gleefully seize their long-awaited chance to occupy the neglected and empty temple. To be sure, they are as yet children, and cannot fill out the armour they have inherited. The one who has put on the god's helmet is wearing it backwards, and is blind — fittingly enough, for it is he who is guiding the lance! But in the course of time they will grow into their self-appointed task, nourished by those who revere them and bring them offerings, mistaking them for the rightful deity of the Ares temple.

And Mars himself? Into what new spaces has he entered through the initiation of love, and where can we seek him today? We can approach an

answer to this question by looking at a most wonderful and remarkable cosmic event which took place some 19 years after the completion of Botticelli's painting (1585).

On the evening of Michaelmas (29th September), 1604, Mars and Jupiter stood in conjunction in the foot of the Serpent-Bearer between the Scorpion and the Archer. Saturn, the other outer planet, stood close by to the west, near the reddish star Antares, the "heart" of the Scorpion. About ten days later, as Mars had begun to move away to the east, with Jupiter following at a slower, more stately pace, a new star or *nova* appeared nearly in the place of the conjunction. From night to night it grew dramatically in brightness, outshining the three planets and dominating the evening sky. By the 1st November it had reached a peak, shining with the brilliance of Venus, but with a more lively, scintillating light, flashing in many jewel-like colours. As November advanced, the star disappeared in the twilight as the sun approached from the west. On November 26th, the sun and Saturn passed close by the nova in a triple conjunction, Saturn being between the star and the sun. Towards the end of December the star reappeared in the morning sky in the east, reminiscent perhaps to many of the "star of Bethlehem" which appeared to the three Magi in the east and guided them to the birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem. During the following year the star only slowly faded. Johannes Kepler, who devoted a small book to the star, last sighted it on October 8th, 1605, exactly a year after its first appearance.

The appearance of a nova of such brilliance and long duration is a rare and deeply significant event. And indeed, its immediate proximity to such a close gathering of planets makes it unparalleled in recorded history. In the language of modern astrophysics, the star of 1604 is classified as a "supernova". Physically, it is generally understood as a cataclysmic event in which a star, nearing the end of its normal development, gives forth in a matter of months energy which it would normally have radiated over millions of years. Such a star can shine for a brief time with the brilliance of a whole galaxy.

From a spiritual point of view, we could say that the star has renounced whole epochs of development in order to nourish the evolution of other stars and star systems. It is nothing less than a sacrifice of inconceivable dimensions. And the gifts and blessings which a nova can bestow on other worlds are of such a nature that stagnations and hardenings of all kinds can be loosened and dissolved, and so a ground created for new development.

Now it is a most extraordinary fact that in the same year of 1604 an event took place on Mars which fundamentally transformed the planet's mission

and influence. In a lecture on Christian Rosenkreutz given at Neuchâtel (18th December, 1912) Rudolf Steiner describes a crisis in human consciousness during the period leading up to this event, which had its origin in the activities of demonic beings who peopled the Mars sphere. In their descent through the planetary spheres towards a new earthly incarnation, countless human souls became impregnated with the impulses of these beings. The aggressive and discordant forces they carried with them to the earth resulted in a darkening of the consciousness of the spirit. A remedy was urgently needed if human evolution was to proceed in a healthy way. And it is Christian Rosenkreutz, as the spiritual guide of this evolution into the next period of history, who sends the Gautama Buddha, with his impulse of love and compassion, from the sphere of the earth to Mars. What results is the implantation of the seeds of peace on the planet of war. But it is not the ancient static peace which established order in social life through the wisdom of cosmic laws. It is dynamic peace which leads through continual metamorphosis from harmony to ever higher harmonies. For the power of discord can be so enhanced as to form the musical portal to higher levels of consciousness. Buddha's deed is thus not an imposition, but a true act of healing, which works with the forces already present, concentrating and re-directing them in the service of the whole.

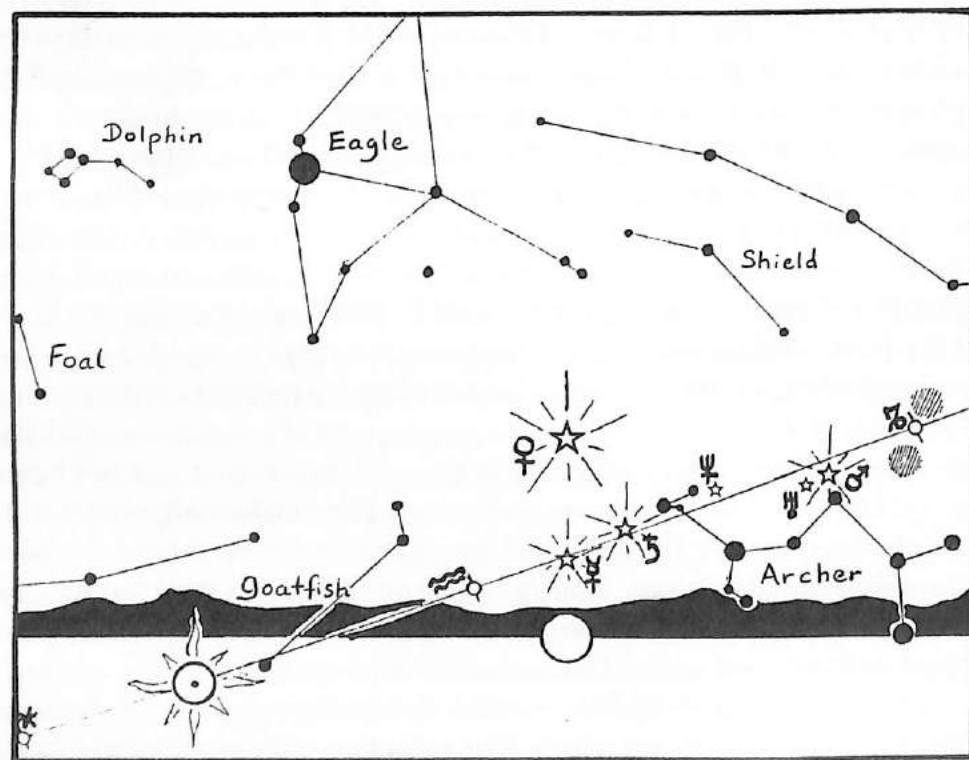
The "faithless stewards" of the armour of Mars have abused the power of iron to fashion a technology of war and of the boundless exploitation of the earth and of humanity. There is little place for true heroism, or for individual judgment and initiative in a war dominated by ever more powerful machines and machine "intelligence". This is not to say that other forms of war are any more justified today. The cancerous growth of the technologies of destruction has been prompted by the same inner aggressions and antipathies which are the origin of all war in the modern world. They are but the outer garb of a fallen Mars culture which is all the more desperate to perpetuate itself, now that its justified mission is long fulfilled. And the exploitation of the natural environment, which has largely been made possible on such a vast scale through the power of iron, is but another side of the same warlike mentality, which pays homage to forces and beings that have outlived their times.

The spiritual power of iron, which inspires courage for free, dynamic peace, resides in the human blood. The substance which Mars casts away outwardly in Botticelli's picture is resurrected within, where it becomes the physical bearer of the higher individuality. It is this inner power of iron which may one day prove strong enough to reclaim its responsibility over the mission of iron in the outer world.

FEBRUARY 1990

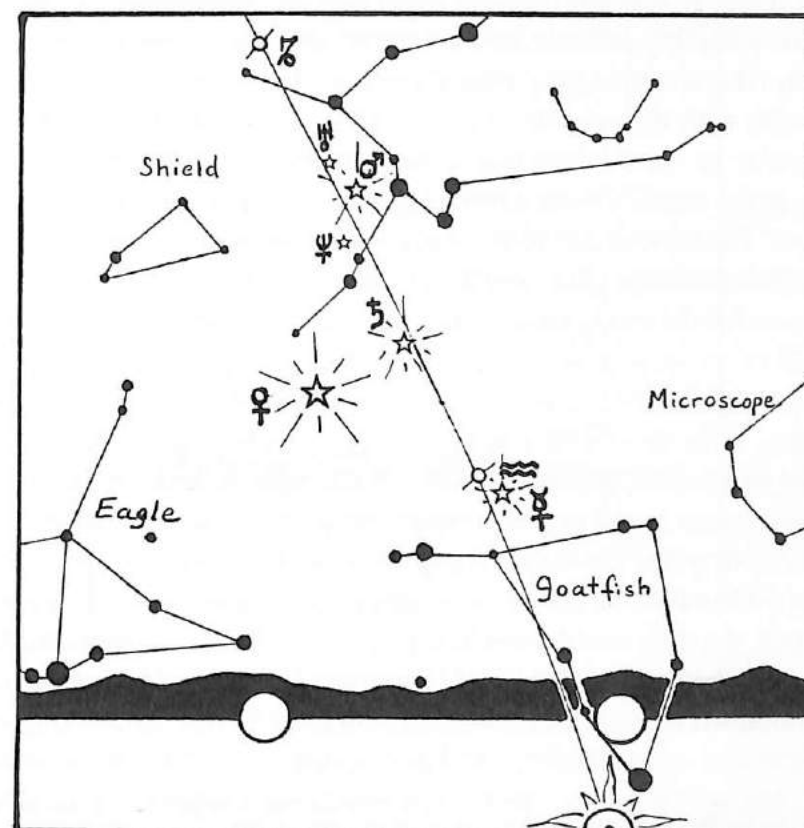
A close concentration of planets in the morning sky

The illustrations show two moments in a multiple meeting of planets, which include all those visible to the naked eye with the single exception of Jupiter, and two of the three trans-Saturnian planets, Uranus and Neptune. As the month advances, Mercury moves away to the left, while Mars passes through the group of distant planets. Two days after the first drawing, on 9th February, Mars passes only 13' to the south of Uranus. On that morning the two can easily be seen with the help of binoculars, the pale green of Uranus contrasting with the orange-red of Mars. Three days after the second drawing, Mars passes about $1\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ south of Neptune (February 17), and on the 28th, it passes 1° south of Saturn.



Wednesday, 7th February, late morning twilight before sunrise. Northern hemisphere, London, $51^\circ 30'$ Latitude. Two hours earlier, at 5 a.m. (GMT) Saturn and Venus were in equatorial conjunction. Five planets: Venus, Mercury, Saturn, Mars, Uranus and Neptune, are gathered within 17° in the Archer (Sagittarius).

The drawings show a striking difference in the planets' visibility in the northern and southern hemispheres. Because of the relatively low angle of the zodiac in the northern hemisphere, the planets only rise as the twilight brightens, and will be quite difficult to see without the help of binoculars. Observers in the southern hemisphere are ideally situated to follow these events, as the planets can already be seen in the darker twilight.



Wednesday, 14th February, late morning twilight before sunrise. Southern hemisphere, Auckland, New Zealand, $36^\circ 52'$ Southern Latitude. At 6 p.m. the same evening, Venus and Saturn will again stand in equatorial conjunction. Mars and Mercury have both advanced somewhat in their journey through the zodiac since the previous week. As Mercury moves into the Goatfish, the planetary gathering slowly begins to expand.

What is a conjunction?

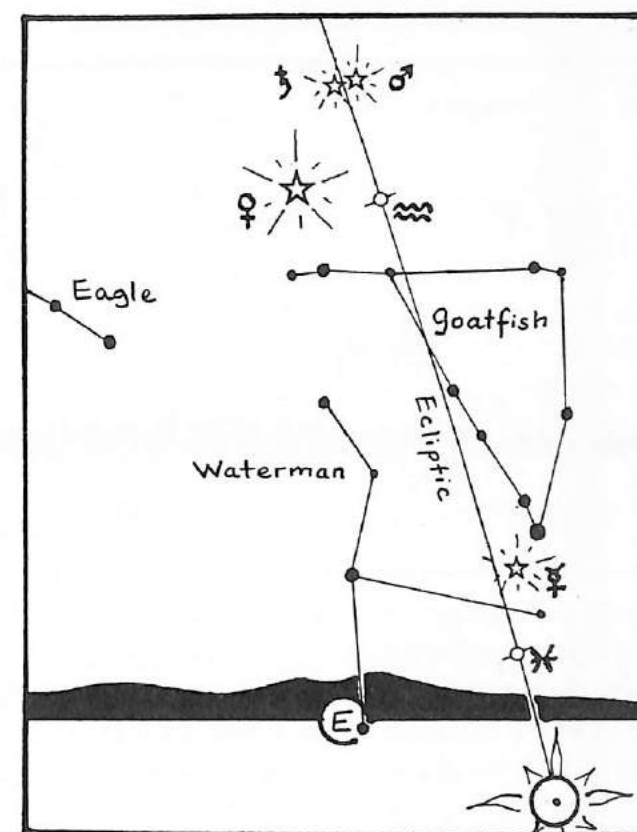
The dates of our two illustrations have been chosen to coincide with two conjunctions of Venus and Saturn. They are in fact the final stages of a triple conjunction which began on November 15th of last year. Now it is quite

possible that one or another reader may be tempted to consult an ephemeris to follow the events of February more closely. If it happens to be an ephemeris intended for use by astrologers (rather than astronomers), nothing will be found about such a conjunction in February. This apparent contradiction arises for the simple reason that astronomers and astrologers use different systems of co-ordinates to determine positions on the celestial sphere. The co-ordinates used by astronomers are described as "equatorial" — they are a projection of earthly latitude and longitude into the cosmos. An equatorial conjunction is attained in the moment when the line joining two planets forms a right angle with the celestial equator. This means that the planets will be perpendicular to the horizon when they reach their highest point, or culmination, in the south. On the earth's equator, they will also rise (or set) at the same time. The reason for this choice of co-ordinates is purely practical. Astronomical telescopes are usually provided with a drive-mechanism which compensates for the rotation of the sky. In order to locate a star or planet in the small field of view, it is sufficient to set the instrument so that it can only swivel along the line of celestial "latitude" (called "declination") in question. Astrologers, who do not face this practical problem, are interested in the movement of the Sun, Moon and planets through the zodiac. Their calculations are therefore based on the ecliptic, the path of the sun. For this reason, conjunctions or other geometrical angles between planets as determined by astrologers are often hours or even days apart from those calculated by astronomers, the difference often being greatest when the planets are furthest apart — as in the case of Venus and Saturn this month. The interesting and unusual circumstance that their meeting only qualifies as a "conjunction" when calculated equatorially, need not tempt us to ask which method is "correct" and which "false". But it can widen our viewpoint and, above all, encourage us to enter into the musical dynamics of the encounter, rather than to depend on one or another method of calculation.

MARCH 1990

Venus has already moved away from Saturn, and is approaching the Goatfish (Capricornus), while Mars still lingers in conjunction with Saturn. Mercury can still be seen with difficulty at the end of twilight as it approaches nearer to the Sun.

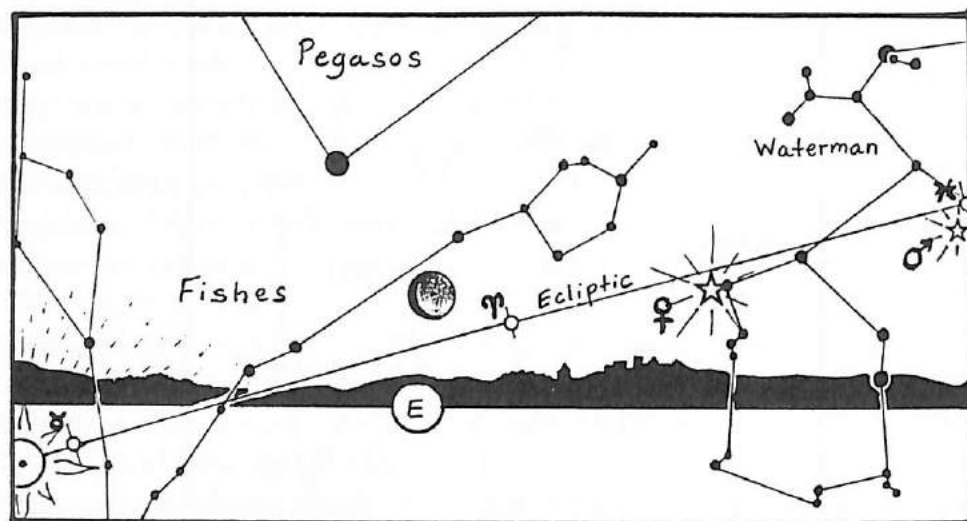
From 29th December 1989 to 8th February 1990 Venus was retrograde



Venus, Saturn, Mars and Mercury in the morning sky. Southern hemisphere, Sydney, Australia, 33° 5' Southern Latitude. Thursday, 1st March, late morning twilight.

as it moved from the evening to the morning sky while crossing between the earth and the sun. Even after becoming direct, Venus moves quite slowly for some weeks, before resuming its usual moderately swift pace through the zodiac. During this period Mars, usually slower than Venus, is able nearly to overtake her. At their closest approach on about 7th March, they are less than 6° from conjunction, and nearly as close as Venus and Saturn during their prolonged "equatorial" conjunction in February. Again the question can arise: what is the nature and quality of a conjunction? How does a simple "overtaking" of one planet by another differ in musicality from a prolonged encounter over weeks which may never fulfil the exact geometrical criteria for a conjunction?

APRIL 1990

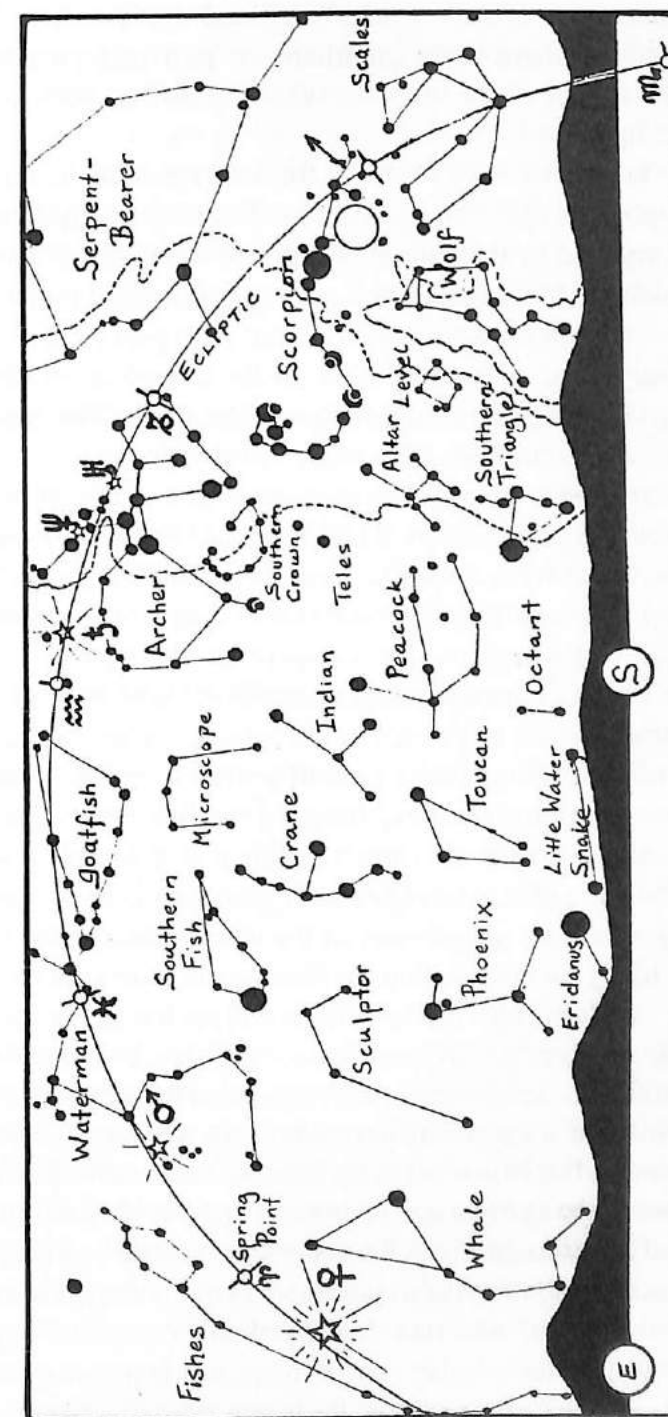


Venus and Mars with the waning crescent Moon in the morning sky. 23rd April in late morning twilight. Northern hemisphere, London, 51° 30' Latitude. The Moon is shown on its last morning of visibility before New Moon on 25th April. Venus and Mars are still only 15° apart. Since the February scenes, they have moved from the Archer through the Goatfish into the Waterman.

MAY 1990

The Southern Constellations

During the Renaissance, the rediscovery of the cultures and mysteries of the ancient world gave many new impulses in the visual arts, in literature, philosophy and social life. In the sciences, by contrast, a radical break with the past was necessary in order to enter into a new, virginal relationship with nature. At the same time as the painters and sculptors lived into a rich tapestry of myth and imagination derived from the past, the great explorers were sailing into uncharted seas, where an entirely new world awaited them. Not only did the earth offer endless wonders — the stars of the southern hemisphere were new, and the southern arms of the Milky Way were even more luminous and dense than its familiar northern expanses. To chart these stars was a practical necessity for navigation, and the native mythologies of the southern peoples were as yet unknown.



Early morning panoramic view of the southern sky, as seen near the equator. Friday, 11th May, at the beginning of morning twilight.

Little need be said here of the prejudices which reduced these peoples to "savages" in the eyes of most of the "civilized" adventurers. We can be certain that many of them were guardians of rich and ancient spiritual traditions — the keepers of a memory reaching further back than Rome, Greece, or even Egypt.

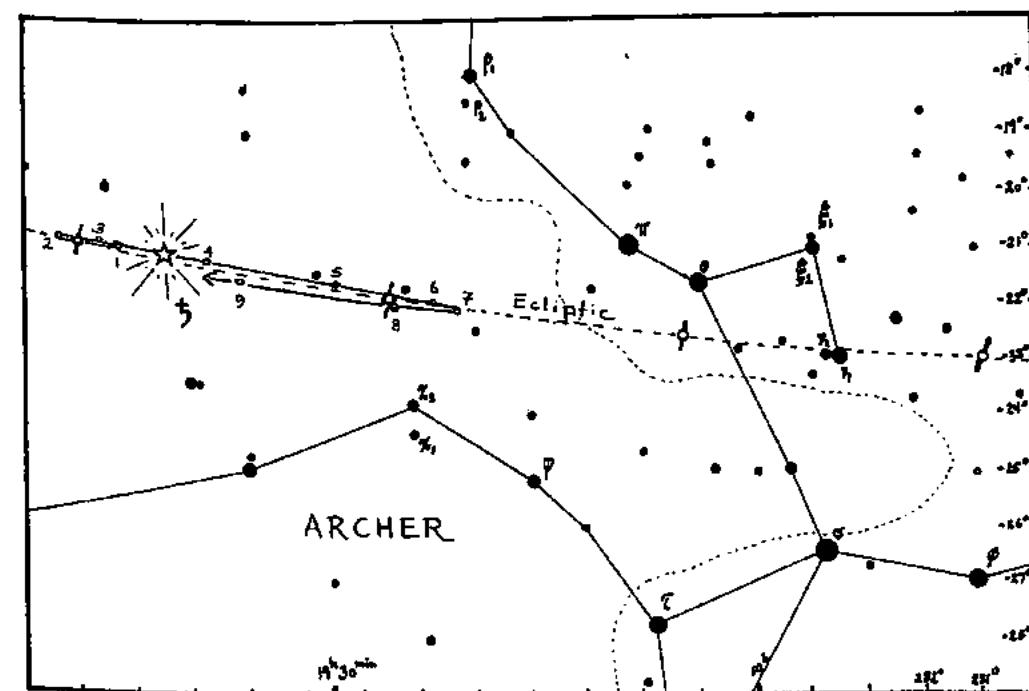
The constellations we have inherited from the age of navigation tell little of the southern peoples and their spirituality. But they testify to the wonder and admiration aroused by the animals of the tropical regions. The scientific instruments which we find interspersed among the tropical fauna (including one "savage" — the Indian) were added for the most part by La Caille in the eighteenth century. But viewed from a wider historical standpoint, this curious potpourri of images is symptomatic of the times. The exploration of unknown oceans and continents bore many similarities to ancient initiation trials. The step from the relatively docile environment of Europe to the exotic world of the tropics, fraught with real and imagined terrors, aroused feelings of wonder and awe, but at the same time demanded sobriety, wakefulness and presence of mind. Without these the human soul would be in constant danger of losing itself, of dissolving into the womb of mother nature.

In the midst of the overwhelming vastness of these new surroundings, precision instruments such as the mariner's compass, chronometers, octants and telescopes offered refuge into a kind of artificial security. Such devices help to focus the consciousness away from the totality, to a single point. It is remarkable to reflect on the encounters with native peoples such as the Polynesians, who were able to navigate with great precision without the help of instruments, out of their observation of the whole dome of the stars and its rotation. It is unlikely, of course, that the Europeans were ever aware of such abilities, for they seldom cultivated meetings and exchanges of a deeper kind. In deprecatory words like "pagan" and "barbarian" they brought to expression the enormous gulf of consciousness which separated them from these peoples. It is the gulf between a consciousness which is woven together with the wholeness of nature, but is not yet fully focussed and individualized, and a consciousness which has grown accustomed to approaching nature gradually and circumspectly, as though from the security of a fortified castle.

Because the constellations of the southern hemisphere are a late creation, and rather the product of arbitrary fantasy than of genuine mythological tradition, our relation to them today can, perhaps, be unencumbered and fresh. But if we would venture forth to explore these new domains, we would do well to reflect on the portals to the etheric world which are opening in our times.

Devotion and awe are the foundation for all inner, spiritual development. But without the corresponding faculties of wakefulness and clarity, they cannot guide humanity safely over the threshold of the spiritual worlds. The awareness of the spiritual traditions of the southern peoples can, perhaps, accompany us for a part of the journey. But, ultimately, a renewal of our relationship to the stars calls for a quite "virginal" seeing, and an awakening to the moment not through the instrument which narrows the vision, but through the higher individuality which widens it.

JUNE 1990



Loop of Saturn in the Archer (Sagittarius). The drawing shows the movement of Saturn from 1st April to 1st December. The position of the planet at mid-month is indicated by a star with rays. Saturn reaches its first standstill on 4th May. It is retrograde for about 4½ months, until 23rd September. Its opposition to the sun falls on the 14th July. On the previous day it comes into opposition with Jupiter. The numbers on the loop correspond to the following dates:

- 1) 1st April
- 2) 4th May (beginning of retrograde motion)

- 3) 1st June
- 4) 1st July
- 5) 1st August
- 6) 1st September
- 7) 23rd September (beginning of direct motion)
- 8) 1st November
- 9) 1st December.

A triple opposition of Saturn and Jupiter in 1989/90

In astrological tradition, great importance is attached to the conjunctions of Saturn and Jupiter, which follow at intervals of roughly twenty years. They have frequently been related to historical rhythms, to the sequence of longer cultural ages or epochs. Rudolf Steiner describes their influence over periods of cultural renewal:

"If we look in history for times of 'Renaissance' — particularly during its last period — when there was a great renewal of ancient impulses, we shall find that this is directly connected with a certain relationship between Jupiter and Saturn." *

Such moments of rebirth are not merely times of repetition, of imitation or of nostalgia. The temptation to revert to a previous stage of evolution, to resuscitate a "golden age" of the past, is one-sidedly Saturnine, without the renewing impulse of Jupiter. Saturn, as the planet of inwardness and of memory, is also the guardian of the finest fruits of the past. It is a part of his mission to ensure that the achievements of earlier epochs are transformed into gifts and capacities for the future. Jupiter, the planet of wisdom and of providence, has the possibility to fructify these gifts of the past, raising them into the present, leading them through a rebirth, or *renaissance*. In this way the lead of Saturn is transmuted through a process of spiritual alchemy into the gold of the sun.

The last conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn took place in 1981. It was a triple conjunction, both planets tracing out loops simultaneously in the constellation of the Virgin. Such complex meetings are extremely rare, this one being only the twelfth since the great triple conjunction of 7 B.C. in the

* Lecture given at Dornach, July 27th, 1923. Printed in *The Golden Blade*, 1988, pp. 43 — 49.

Fishes, which Kepler presumed was the event known to us as the "Star of Bethlehem". Their next conjunction will take place at the turn of the new millenium, on 31st May, 2000, not far from the Pleiades in the Bull (Taurus). It will mark the end of Jupiter's passage through the twelve constellations of the zodiac during the last twelve years of our century — a journey to which we are devoting particular attention in our yearly observations.

Just as a conjunction represents a concentration of forces, a spatial contraction which readily attracts our attention and interest, an opposition, as a moment of greatest separation, is easily overlooked. It is the time when the planets are directly opposite in the sky; when the one rises, the other sets, and consequently it is seldom possible to see them simultaneously.

The three oppositions of Jupiter and Saturn take place on 10th September and 14th November 1989, and 13th July 1990. The slow fluctuation of the two planets around the central axis of opposition continues for nearly a year. The period from conjunction to opposition could be compared to a great cosmic exhalation, in which the impulses gathered during their heavenly council are carried out into the furthest reaches of the zodiac; while the period following opposition has more the character of an inhalation, in preparation for a new meeting. At the turning point of this breathing rhythm, at opposition, the planets mirror to each other from afar what they have experienced on their journey.

The last of the three oppositions, on 13th July, takes place at a time when Jupiter is near the summit of the zodiac, while Saturn has descended to its deepest reaches. We could well be reminded of the remarkable myth related by Plutarch: that Zeus (Jupiter), after overthrowing his tyrant-father Chronos (Saturn), cast him into an enchanted sleep in a cave on the island of Ogygia. There Saturn slumbered in an atmosphere of peace and serenity, and every resolve of Zeus concerning the destiny of humanity was made known to him in his dreams. The walls of the cave were lined with gold, and a fragrance of the finest incense rose up from it, spreading over the whole island. It is a most telling image of the nature of the two planets as experienced by the Greeks. Zeus high on the snowy summit of Mount Olympos, wielding the thunderbolt where necessary to fructify the earth with the forces of the cosmos; Chronos asleep in the womb of Mother Earth. Zeus a representative of a masculine fatherly power, ordering the affairs of the world in accordance with divine law; Saturn, once a wielder of similar powers, now pure receptivity, a representative of the motherly ground of the world, the ground of destiny in which all true freedom is rooted.

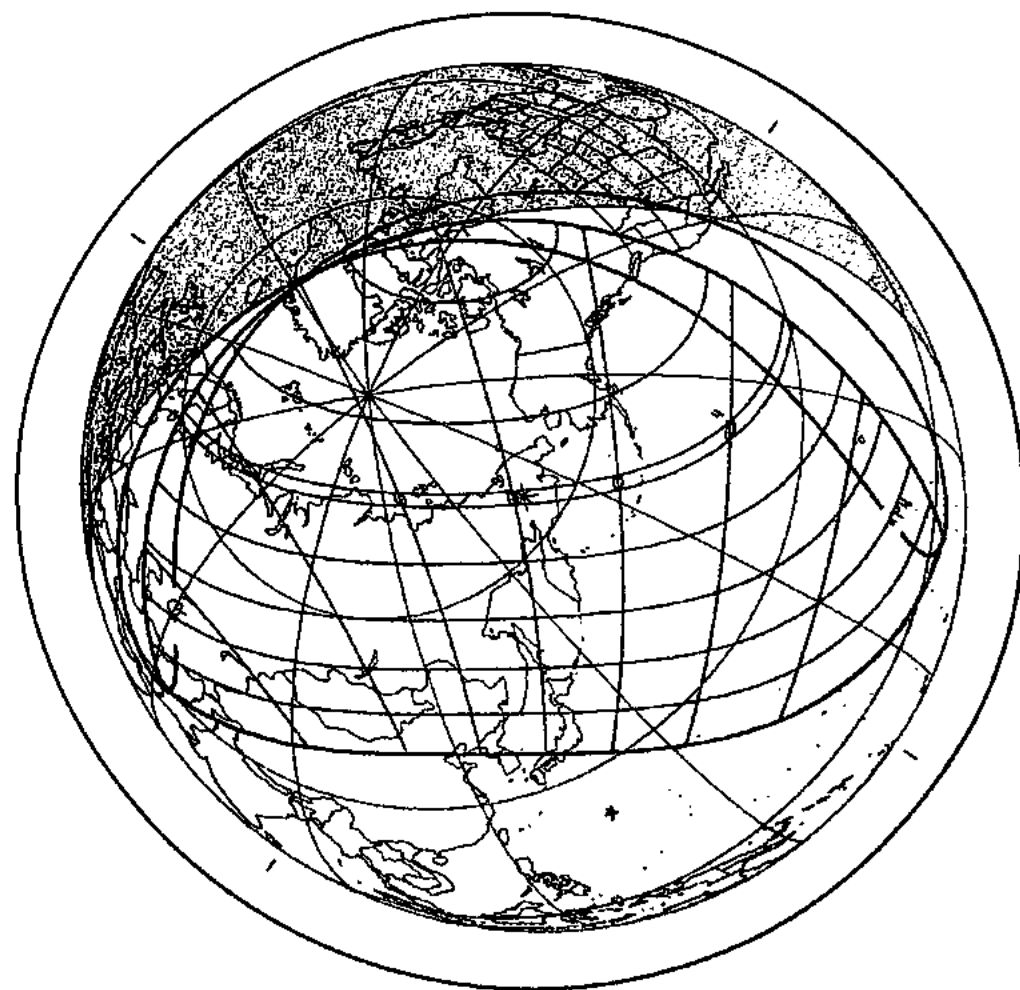
JULY 1990

Total Solar Eclipse on 22nd July. Visibility: Southern Finland, Northern Siberia, Aleutian Islands, Northern Pacific (From: Fifty Year Canon of Solar Eclipses: 1986 — 2035, by Fred Espenak, Sky Publishing Corporation, Cambridge, Mass., 1987).

The drawing shows the overall visibility of the eclipse, both in its total and partial phases. The "totality zone" is a relatively narrow strip (about 200 kilometres wide in this case), which is formed by the movement of the Moon's shadow-cone from west to east over the earth. Five individual stages of its movement are indicated by small ellipses. Each ellipse represents the whole area of the earth from which a total eclipse can be observed at a particular moment. The movement of the shadow over the earth results from the interplay between the earth's rotation and the Moon's movement in the course of its orbit around the earth. In the present eclipse, the shadow takes 2 hours and 20 minutes to sweep across the earth. In southwestern Finland, where it first contacts the earth (Turku and Helsinki, for instance) totality takes place just as the sun is rising. Here the totality lasts for only one and a half minutes. As the shadow moves swiftly across the earth, it wanders through all the hours of the day. In northeastern Siberia (the central ellipse in the drawing) it takes place at noon, and for observers in the centre of the totality zone it lasts two and a half minutes. In mid-afternoon it crosses the Aleutian islands, and leaves the earth in the eastern Pacific at sunset. Because the earth is rotating roughly in the direction of the shadow's movement, namely from west to east, the shadow's speed is slightly slower, and its overall path slightly shorter, than would otherwise be the case.

Surrounding the totality zone, the drawing shows those parts of the earth where the eclipse is partial. At the extremities of eastern and western visibility, two great loops are boldly drawn, which together form a kind of curved figure-of-eight, or lemniscate. The western loop delineates the places where the eclipse begins and ends at sunrise. It is dissected by a curve representing "maximum eclipse at sunrise". The eastern loop defines the beginning and end of the eclipse at sunset, and is dissected by the curve of "maximum eclipse at sunset".

In addition, the "curves of maximum eclipse" — most of which pass through the small central shadow-ellipses in the drawing — show all places

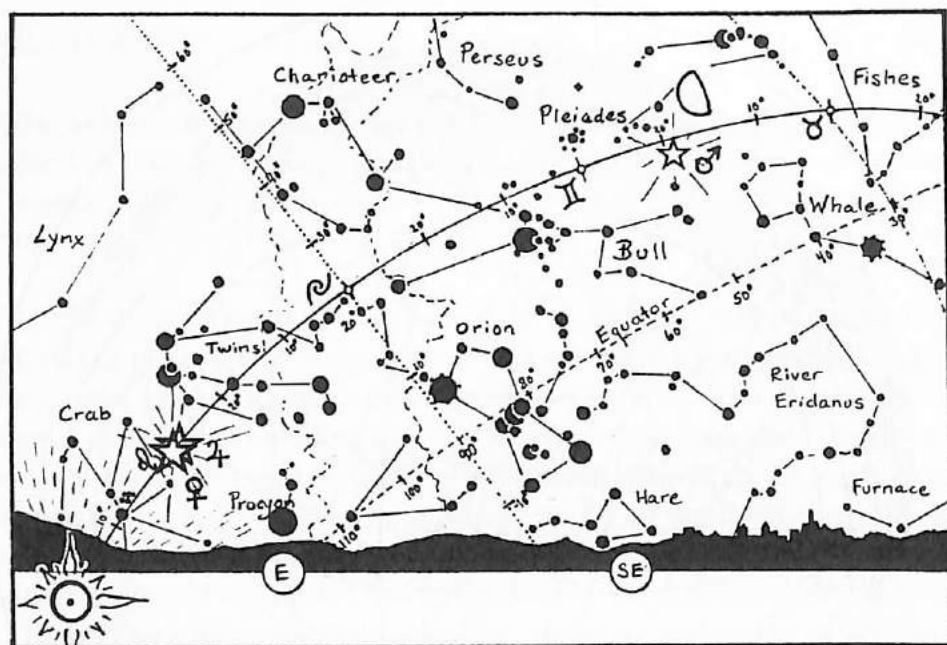


where the eclipse has reached its maximum intensity at a particular time. They are plotted at half-hour intervals.

The drawing brings to expression the complexity, but also the beauty and harmony of the whole spatial-temporal process of the eclipse. The contemplation of this form can also help to attain a finer and subtler sense for the Earth as an organism in the cosmos.

AUGUST 1990

An exceptionally close conjunction of Jupiter and Venus in the morning sky. The two planets are shown as they will appear shortly before sunrise in northern Europe. At their closest approach, around 23.00 U.T. on 12th



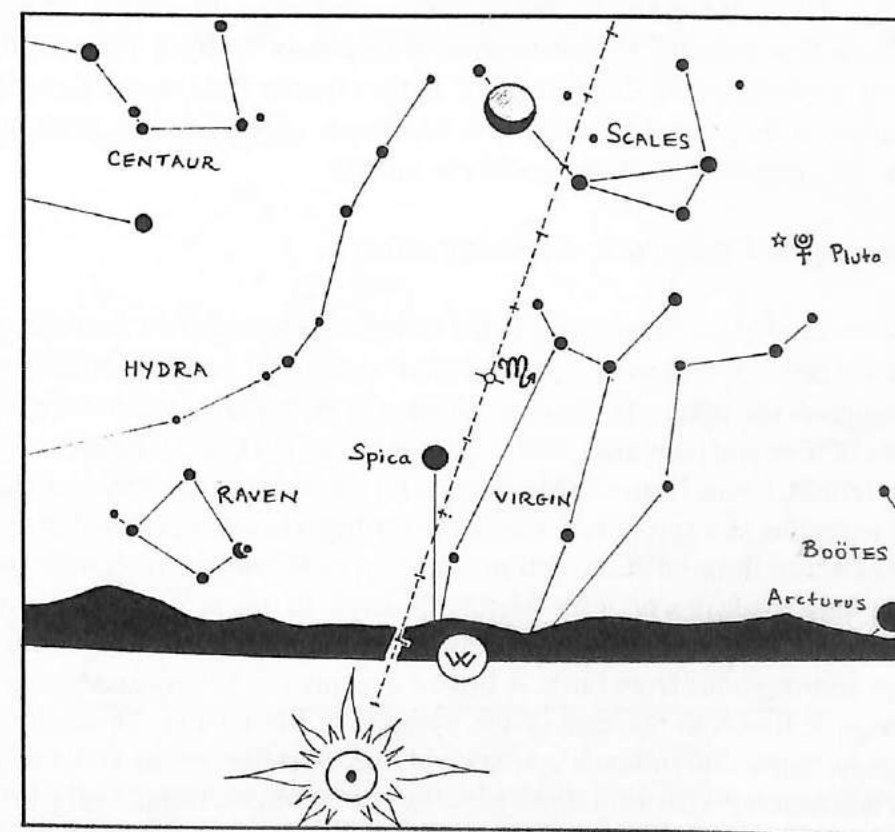
August, they are only 3 arc minutes apart, about one tenth the apparent diameter of the moon. Observers in Central Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan, western India) are well-placed to observe the closest approach in the morning sky. At this time there is little doubt that these two brightest planets will appear to merge together into a single point of light — a singularly rare event.

One of the most interesting and significant aspects of this conjunction is its similarity to an almost identical meeting of the same planets in the year 3 B.C. On the same day of the year, August 12th, they could be seen in the morning sky in Babylon only about 6 or 7 arc minutes apart. They were at that time in the constellation of the Lion, about 6° to the right (west) of the bright star Regulus. They were 20° to the west of the sun, as compared with 21° in 1990. Again, it is almost certain that their approach was close enough to allow them to merge into a single point of light.

The similarity of these two events might seem little more than a curiosity, if each were not followed a year later by a far more complex meeting — a so-called “triple conjunction”, which again is almost identical in its sequence. It is our intention to describe and to illustrate these events in the 1991 issue of the *Golden Blade* in connection with the question of the Star of Bethlehem. For the present, a brief survey of the single stages of this great “dance” can be of value in placing the conjunction of 1990 into a wider context.

The first meeting in the year 2 B.C. took place on June 17th. At their closest approach they were 4 arc minutes apart, again making this an extremely rare event. In Babylon this melting together of the two planets could be seen in the evening sky just before they set in the evening twilight. The second conjunction on 25th August was invisible in the immediate proximity of the sun. The third meeting, visible in the morning sky in the east, took place on 13th October, with a separation of nearly two full degrees (four lunar diameters) — a more usual or typical distance for planets in conjunction. In 1991 the three meetings take place nearly on the same dates of the year as in 2 B.C., the first being on 18th June (separation $1^\circ 14'$), the second (invisible) on 27th August, and the third on 15th October (separation $2^\circ 28'$).

SEPTEMBER 1990



Waxing crescent Moon in the evening sky at the hour of the equinox. Wellington, New Zealand, $41^\circ 17'$ Southern Latitude, on 23rd September at 18.58, Local Time. The position of Pluto is shown to the right of the Scales.

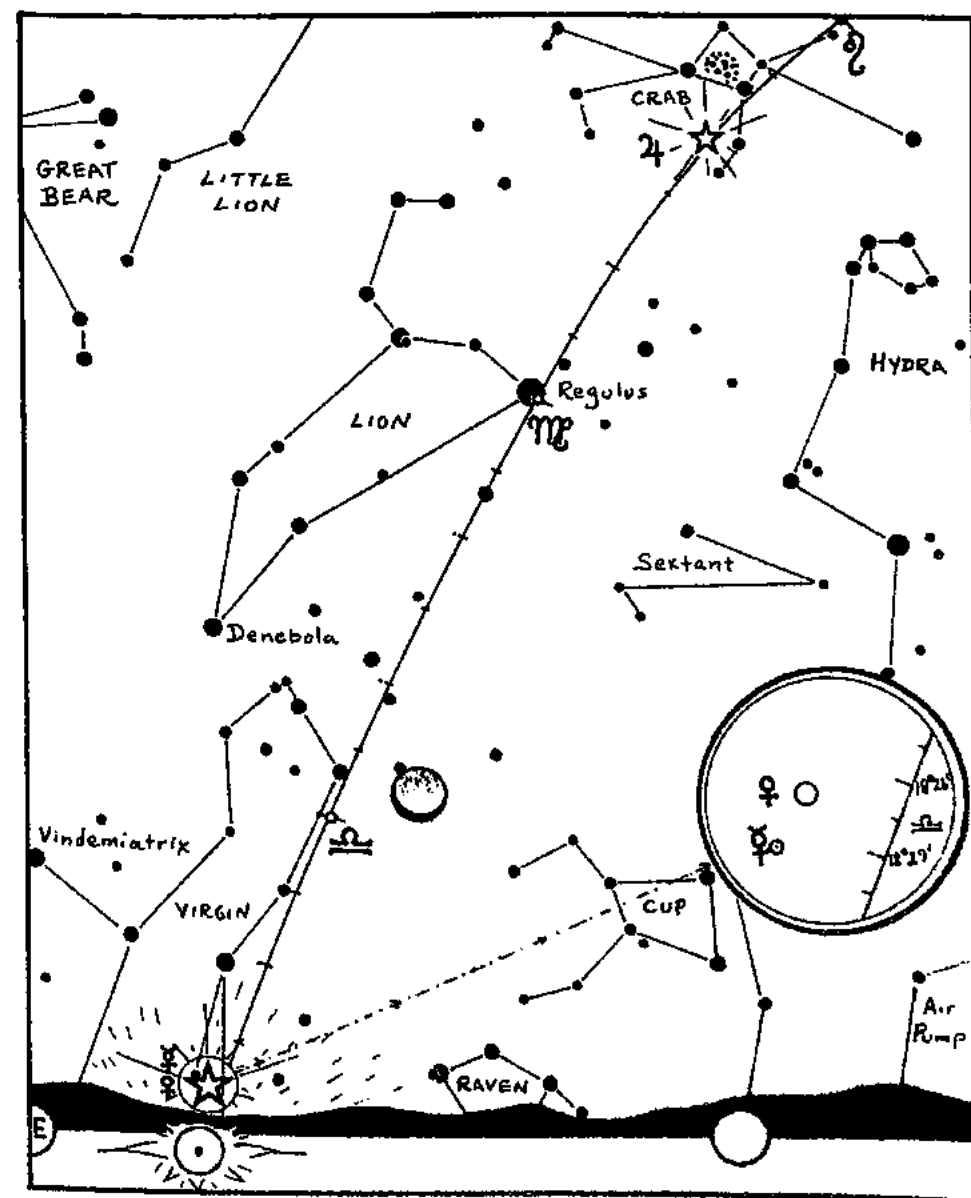
The September equinox falls at 6.58 U.T., which is 18.58 local time in Wellington. At this moment the Sun is located exactly at the crossing point between the Ecliptic (the Sun's path) and the Celestial Equator. It is the Spring Equinox in the southern hemisphere and the Autumn Equinox in the northern hemisphere. The appearance of the waxing crescent moon, which is orientated nearly horizontally, like a cup or barque, is characteristic for the spring equinox in both hemispheres.

OCTOBER 1990

A very close conjunction of Venus and Mercury on Tuesday, 16th October at 5.47 U.T. The drawing shows the position of the pair as they would appear at Madrid, a few minutes before sunrise. Being only 4° from the sun, their meeting is not visible to the naked eye. In the circular field on the right, they are shown as they would appear in a telescope, only 88 arc seconds apart (about one twentieth the diameter of the moon).

A Mythological Perspective: Hermaphroditos

Venus and Mars are often regarded as representatives of the feminine and masculine principles as such — indeed, their sigils ($\text{♀} \text{♂}$) are still widely used to distinguish the sexes. To be sure, Venus (or Aphrodite) was revered as a goddess of love and fecundity. But if Mars represented masculine prowess on the battlefield, it was Hermes (Mercury) who was most frequently associated with the phallus as a symbol of masculine virility. He was honoured in many parts of Greece through cultic columns known as *Hermae*, which were often placed along roadsides or at the parting of ways. In this aspect, Hermes was seen as the brother and spouse of Aphrodite. Their child, Hermaphroditos, was not androgynous from birth. A boy of exceptional beauty and grace, his mother gave him into the care of the nymphs of Mount Ida. Through their tutelage he came into intimate contact with the mysteries of the water and of life. When he left his foster-parents at the age of fifteen, he began a pilgrimage through Asia Minor, visiting springs, streams, rivers and the mystery centres associated with them. Such places were always under the guardianship of nymphs or priestesses. In the course of his journey, he came to the spring of Karia, where the nymph Salmakis fell in love with him. He resisted her



approaches, but not the element over which she presided. As he bathed in the pure waters of the spring she embraced him, and their bodies fused together and became one.

The idea that in ancient times human beings were androgynous was familiar to the Greeks. In Plato's *Symposium* we learn of the time when male,

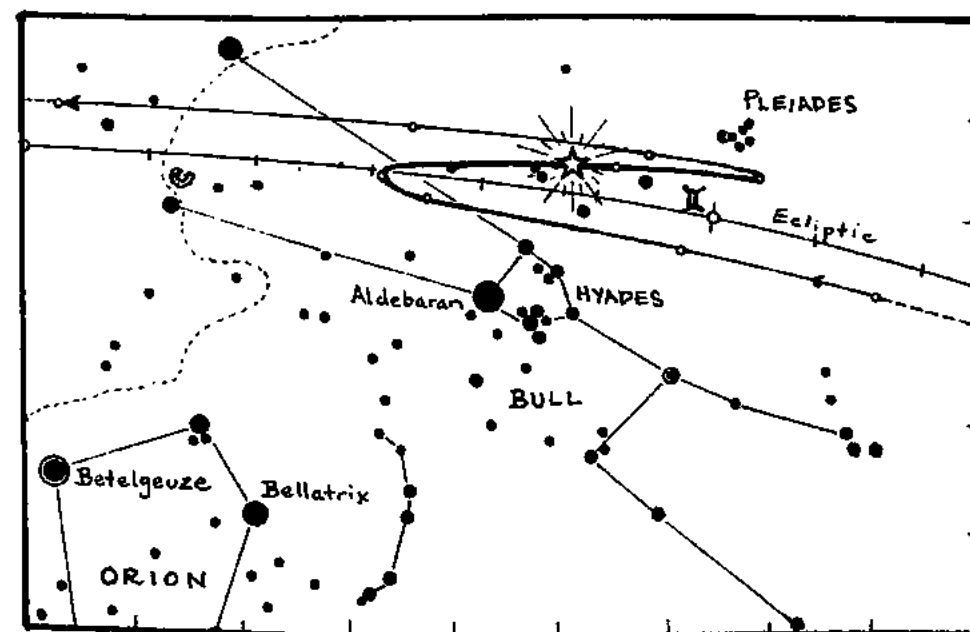
female and androgynous beings lived simultaneously on the earth. The male sex is described as having a solar origin, the female sex a terrestrial origin, and the androgenous sex a lunar origin, "for the Moon partakes in the nature of both Sun and Earth". These remarkable beings are described as being spherical in shape and their movements rolling and circular, like those of the planets. They are more cosmic than earthly, and seem to preserve a living memory of the original condition of humanity, before the division of the sexes.

In Hermaphrodites we meet a being who has reverted to this ancient condition in an atavistic way. Born as a son of Hermes, he embodies the power of the sun, symbolized by the upright column, or Herma. But he is fascinated by the water with its various feminine qualities; its receptivity, its ability to mirror the world around and above it, its yielding, embracing nature, and readiness to take on the shape of its surroundings. His union with the water is not a true marriage, it is not a fructification of the feminine element with the solar ray, but a submission of the sun to the power of the water. His metamorphosis is therefore not an ennoblement, but a fall: a descent into the depths of the earthly waters, and a forgetting of his cosmic origin.

The close conjunction of Venus and Mercury near the sun may well call to mind this remarkable being, a deity whose whole interest lies in his condition, not his deeds — for after his transmutation he has fallen out of the stream of evolution, and little or nothing is told of his further exploits. But it may also remind us that in a far future the human being will indeed re-unite the masculine and feminine aspects of his being and return to an androgynous state. Not, however, out of a dimming of consciousness, but out of a continuous fructification of his own life-stream with the ray of his inner sun — the I AM.

This distant goal of human evolution will certainly not be attained by blurring, or even ignoring the boundaries between the sexes. True fructification, as the source of all creativity, can only take place when opposite virtues and qualities are united without losing their identity. To work towards the future Hermaphrodites means to fructify the inner Yin with the inner Yang — to unite the feminine virtues of devotion, receptivity and formative potential with the masculine virtues of intuition, initiative and the power to shape. Their union is initiation, and the waters which flow from their spring are the waters of life, which have the power to nourish, to bless, and to awaken into the eternal present.

NOVEMBER 1990



Loop of Mars in the Bull (Taurus), between the Hyades and the Pleiades.
Mars becomes retrograde on 22nd October. On 27th November Mars is in opposition to the Sun (indicated by star). At this time it rises at sunset, remains visible all night and sets at sunrise. On 2nd January, 1991, it reaches its second standstill immediately below the Pleiades, before resuming direct motion.

The wedged-shaped Hyades with the bright orange-yellow star Aldebaran, and the well-known Seven Sisters, or the Pleiades, are two of the most remarkable star clusters in the sky. Indeed, the word "cluster" seems to describe their quality even better than the term "constellation", which usually designates larger, less concentrated groupings. The fact that they both find their place within a single constellation — the Bull — seems almost irrelevant, for they are so singularly striking and beautiful, that it is difficult not to see them as "individualities".

The architectural clarity of the Hyades is all the more impressive through the close proximity of the Pleiades. The Pleiades in particular have inspired countless myths and legends. The images are manifold — a swarm of fireflies, a fisherman's net glistening in the sunlight, a group of dancing maidens. All seem to express a mild, gently stimulating, dynamic quality of their light,

which indeed seems to dance and fluctuate as the eye wanders to and fro.

If the Greeks occasionally likened the Pleiades to a flock of doves, the Hyades might well be compared to the V-formation of a flock of migrating geese. The clarity and order of their arrangement can startle the beholder into a kind of awakening. Almost equally distant on either side from the Sun's path, we could regard them as the supporting columns of a great portal, through which the Sun, the Moon and the planets pass in their journey through the zodiac.

On 11th March, 1989, Mars stood in close conjunction with Jupiter in this same portal. Jupiter, the guardian of wisdom, stood to the south of the ecliptic, near the Hyades. Mars, whom we have characterized in his redeemed aspect as the inspirer of dynamic peace, stood north of the ecliptic, near the Pleiades. There they could be seen over the western horizon in the early evening — a most impressive configuration.

Six days before their closest approach a gigantic group of sunspots came into view on the eastern rim of the Sun. Over the following fortnight the group slowly drifted across the solar disc in the course of the sun's rotation. Again and again bright flares appeared in its neighbourhood. The most powerful of these, on 10th March, was of a rare type, visible in white light. Two days later, on 12th March, energetic emissions of this and other flares reached the earth, where they induced vivid auroral displays, which could be observed as far south as Central America and the Caribbean islands. In Canada, geomagnetic storms knocked out electricity throughout much of Quebec.

This unprecedented intensity of solar activity was baffling to astronomers. Even the sober editors of *Sky and Telescope*, who certainly cannot be accused of sensationalism, indulged in the heading: "When the Sun Went Wild" (June, 1989, p. 590). Such events may indeed seem wild, and even disconcerting, when only the physical aspect of the sun is considered. But is it possible that energies of another kind are being offered to the earth and to humanity? All the present indications are that the sunspot and flare activity will continue to be unusually intense in the months to come. Maximum solar activity was originally expected for 1991, but in view of the present tempo of increase — the fastest ever observed — many astronomers are now looking towards 1990 or even the latter part of 1989. If we regard the sun not merely as a powerful source of physical energy, but as a great sustainer and nourisher, a source of light, love and life for the beings of our solar system, then the question naturally arises: What streams to the earth at such times etherically? How are the life-sheaths

of our planet affected? What challenges and opportunities are given to humanity?

If we can begin to live with questions of this kind, which can certainly not be answered by logical or associative thinking, they can become guides, and even ideals for our lives. A question is no less an idea than an answer, but it is an idea in the inner gesture of a chalice. If we are not in a hurry to fill our vessels prematurely, before the answer has ripened, the answer, when it comes, may indeed have a quality of spiritual nourishment which we had hardly deemed possible. It is the cosmic nourishment of the Grail.

For this reason, the thoughts which follow are presented largely in the form of questions. They are not meant to be understood rhetorically, but to stimulate, and to indicate a direction of research which may well prove fruitful.

Is there a relationship between the activity of the Sun — understood now in its etheric aspects — and the reappearance of the Sun-Logos, the Christ, in the "clouds" — the etheric realm of the earth? The question is frequently posed: Has it already begun? As long as this question remains on a purely intellectual level, we are unlikely to find an answer. For the Messianic expectation alone is not enough to assure recognition. The events surrounding Christ's physical incarnation in Palestine demonstrated clearly that the thinking — however clear and conscientious — and the attention to outer signs and symptoms do not suffice. The possibility of recognition lies far deeper, and invariably involves the inner certainty of the heart, and the will to transform on every level.

Today, in the age of freedom, the will to transform must surely mean more than the readiness to follow in the "footsteps" of Christ. At a time when the life of the earth is imperilled by the abuse of man's growing autonomy, we seem called upon to walk before Christ, to prepare the way for his incarnation in the etheric spheres of the earth. To await a wonder, an act of heavenly grace in passivity, however fervent, is not in harmony with our true calling.

The task of collaboration with the spiritual worlds to make possible and fruitful the "second coming" is a Michaelic task. Michael, as a helper on the path to human freedom, is known to us as the Archangel of the Sun. But as guardian of the spiritual power of iron on the earth and in the cosmos, he has a close and intimate relation to the planet Mars. This relationship comes to clear expression in the well-known images of Michael as a warrior, armed with a lance or sword of iron, with which he overcomes a dragon.

The presence of Mars in the portal of Taurus, his conjunction with Jupiter

at a moment when tremendous waves of energy streamed from the sun to the earth, thus begins to appear in a wider context. It could well be experienced as an awakening word in the celestial script, whose significance cannot be simply "interpreted". For it is man himself who, in the age of freedom, is able to give meaning to the celestial events.

After moving away from Jupiter last year, Mars has completed a whole revolution through the zodiac. When it last passed through the portal of Taurus, it was nearing the end of a long visibility period, and was far outshone by Jupiter. Now it is at its brightest, and as it slowly traces out the harmonious form of a loop, it lingers for nearly six months (September 1990 to March 1991) in the vicinity of the portal. Is it conceivable that Mars, as the representative of inner courage and dynamic, free peace, is now able to transmit energies to the earth which were still in a latent, seed-like state at the time of his meeting with Jupiter?

Will to transform. O be inspired by the flame
That envelops the thing you would grasp, and makes it elusive with
change.
For the designer-spirit who masters the realm of the earthly
Loves most in the dance of mutation the invisible parting of ways.

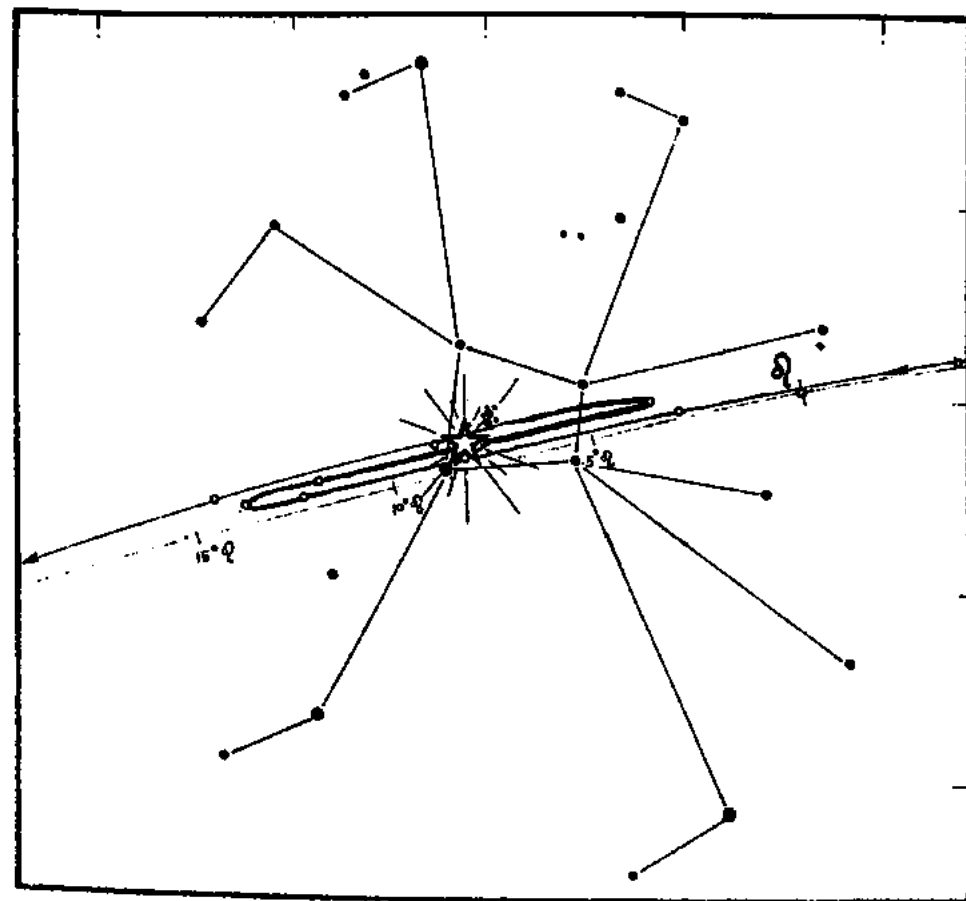
Whatever seeks refuge in form already is frozen.
Does it believe itself safe in its nondescript armour of grey?
Wait, something harder forewarns from afar what has hardened,
Alas —: absent hammer draws back for the blow!

He who pours himself forth as a spring — he is conceived by
knowing,
and it leads him enraptured through all the joyous creation,
which often concludes at the source, and begins with the ending.

Every felicitous space is a grandchild or child of division,
through which they wander astounded, and metamorphosed Daphne,
since she feels herself laurel, wills you to change into wind.

— Rainer Maria Rilke, Sonnets to Orpheus, Part II, 12
(Translation J. M.)

DECEMBER 1990



Loop of Jupiter in the Crab (Cancer) 1990/91. For the southern hemisphere the drawing should be turned upside-down.

Last winter (1989/90), Jupiter described a loop in the foot of the Twins, near the June solstice point. At the time of its opposition to the sun on 27th December 1989, it moved across the night sky in an arc similar to that of the midsummer sun¹. Since completing that loop it has begun a path of descent through the constellations, comparable to that of the sun from June to December. The individual stages of this descent² take Jupiter through the constellations which the sun traverses month by month. At its opposition to

- 1) For the southern hemisphere, read: "midwinter sun".
- 2) For the southern hemisphere, read "ascent".

the sun on February 1st, 1991 (indicated by the large star with rays), Jupiter will be near the faint star-cluster Praesepe, very close to the point occupied by the sun at the opposite time of year (around July 1st).

The Crab is the faintest of all the constellations in the zodiac, and in its traditional (Ptolemaic) form, also one of the smallest. On full moon nights it is virtually invisible, while on clear, dark nights the delicate cluster Praesepe emerges into view like a pale cloud, enclosed by four dim stars which demarcate the head and thorax of the Crab.

In the late Egyptian zodiac in the Temple at Denderah (dated around 100 A.D.) the place usually assumed by the Crab was occupied by a scarab beetle. The scarab was known to the Egyptians as one of the manifestations of the Sun-god Ra. Under the name *Chepre*, the "eternally becoming, or evolving" god, the sacred beetle was shown rolling the sun across the sky just as the earthly scarabs roll their almost perfectly spherical balls of dung across the earth. Within these balls of dung the beetles deposit their eggs, so that each such ball could be thought of as containing the germs of life. And just as the sun approaches its highest point in the constellation of the Crab or Scarab, the beetles descend into their holes, carrying the life-bringing, fertilizing substance of the manure into the depths of the earth. Through their work, the power of life and of renewal is allowed to penetrate into the earth, at a time when its surface is already parched by the physical sunlight.

But the midsummer solstice was also the herald of new life, for only a few days later the waters of the Nile began to rise, and to inundate the valley, making possible a new season of fertility and growth.

While the sacred scarab was understood as an image or revelation of the sun in the macrocosm, it corresponded to the inner sun — the heart — in the microcosm of the human being. The same power which allowed life to arise from the "grave" of the dung-ball was seen as a power of resurrection which had its seat in the heart. It is the power of eternal birth and renewal during life, but also the power of resurrection after death. For this reason the scarab was invoked in the rites of the dead.

In the Book of the Dead we read instructions to "make a scarab of green stone, with a rim of gold, and this shall be placed in the heart of a man..." There follow the "words of power", which the deceased addresses to the scarab: "O Heart, which I have from my mother! O Heart which belongs to my eternal being! Do not bear witness against me, do not oppose me before the judges, do not betray me before the Master of the Scales. You are my spirit, who is in my body, ... do not speak falsely of me in the presence of the god."

THE LIFE BETWEEN DEATH AND RE-BIRTH IN THE LIGHT OF ASTROLOGY

Dr. Elizabeth Vreede

I

We will now endeavour, in connection with the November letter, to picture the path of the human soul between death and a new birth in so far as it takes its course through the world of the planets and the stars and back again to the earth. What the soul experiences in this way in the preparation of its Karma, and which it brings to expression in the germ of the new human body — this lays the foundation of a true Astrology. We are naturally entirely dependent upon the communications of the Spiritual Investigator, Rudolf Steiner, for such an undertaking. All that he brought down in the course of years from the Spiritual worlds by way of supersensible knowledge, forms a science that shall be a guide in our search for an Astrology of the future. Naturally only a very little of this can come into consideration here.

The man who passes through the gate of death leaves his physical body and lives on as we know for a few days linked with his etheric body. During this time he is still connected with the physical world, but very especially with the planetary constellation which was there in the moment of death. (In the second letter this was briefly referred to). Just as the moment of birth represents something like a fixation of the configuration of the starry heavens at that very moment, upon which everything later is projected, so is the moment of death likewise something which remains stationary for the further life in the spiritual world. The constellation — principally that of the planets which are present at that moment — is like a summing-up of the previous life, of the karma out of the incarnation just ended. And while the human being experiences in his etheric body the life-tableau, the retrospective pictures of his past life, planetary forces in their combined workings echo on within him. It is something like, said Dr. Steiner, the swimming in embryonic water before the birth of the physical man, only that the latter goes on for a longer time. The forces, too, which work in the embryonic existence are also etheric (working in the fluids), but they are interpenetrated with earth forces, even strongly defined by the portion of the earth where the embryonic life is undergone.

The constellation which is present at the time of death imprints itself in

the soul during the days of the retrospection and remains stationary for the first half of the after-death life. When the soul returns again to birth, it must in some way or other adapt itself to this constellation, else the new life would not be properly related to the earlier karma or to the cosmos. It strives therefore to come back again with a constellation similar to the one under which it left the earth or at any rate to seek again an essential feature of the death constellation for the new birth. We know, of course, that the aspect of the heavens at a definite moment is never repeated exactly as it was before. And just what the soul goes through in the life between death and rebirth must induce it to seek out other constellations too which represent an expression for the new embodiment of the karma which has meanwhile been worked out. Perhaps, indeed, one characteristic aspect (the relation of two planets to one another) of the death-horoscope will be found in the new birth-horoscope. If for example, a soul has left the earth under the constellation Saturn opposition Sun, as the most outstanding of its aspects ruling at the moment of death, the next birth would take place under the same constellation (which occurs, as we said previously, once a year), while the remaining planets would be grouped otherwise than at the moment of death. Moreover, the place of birth will in general be quite a different one, indeed this, as already said, will impress its mark in the embryonic time upon the person being born, and then especially through the configuration of the starry heavens with regard to the horizon at birth. Although it is naturally only with difficulty that investigations can be made in connection with a death-horoscope and the horoscope of the following birth, yet the possibility is given us of proving a series of such cases by means of Dr. Steiner's Karma Lectures. They corroborate indeed what has just been stated and open up new vistas for a historical investigation of the future.

What the soul next goes through after death is that the etheric body is now laid aside — it has expanded into infinity and apparently dissolved — and the soul leaves the earth, one could even say, too that it leaves Space and enters into Time. And indeed it does that in a quite definite way, which has still a last touch of Space about it — namely, in the direction of the East. For every place on earth the East is, as we know, that direction in which the earthly (horizon, equator) meets with the heavenly (zodiac) in a quite special way, inasmuch as the celestial bodies have their place of rising there. Towards the rays of the rising Sun the soul leaves the earth as the domain of Space.

Dr. Steiner has pointed out in this connection that in certain occult societies one uses the expression: Brother So-and-So has entered into the eternal East — when he has died. We have there a symbol showing reality. The

'Gate of Death', through which man leaves the physical plane in order to enter the spiritual worlds, is to be found "in the geographical East". We are not concerned with the fact that one can conceive the East relatively (for what is East to one man lies in the West for another), but we have to do with a quite definite direction which coincides with that of the earth's rotation — for the earth rotates from west to east. (We will return to this subject on another occasion.) The rotation of the earth which takes place in complete unconsciousness for the four-membered human-nature immediately becomes a conscious phenomenon in the first days after death.

So does man set himself free from the physical and then also from the etheric and there follows the entry into the elementary world, into the Moon's sphere. It is that sphere which has the Moon's orbit as its outermost borders. The soul gradually expands to the extent of this entire sphere. It comprehends all that lies within the circle described by the Moon. It has now arrived in the "Soul-land", which in its lower regions is identical with the Moon-sphere. And there forthwith it moulds the action of its karma from the earth life which has just expired. In the other-world of the Moon-sphere everything is engraved as actual records in the Akashic Chronicle that we have carried out on earth without completion. All that a man has undertaken to do, but has not carried out, or in this carrying out he has come to a standstill, or what he ought especially to have done by way of self-development but has omitted — all this engraves itself in the Moon-sphere in the life after death. In the other spheres, too, as we shall shortly see, the faults and characteristics of men are likewise engraved.

This fact again has a strong connection with the free-will allotted to man. If the engraving did not take place in the ether world of the spheres, the errors would express themselves directly in man's physical body. A lie, for instance, would make him immediately blinded. This direct punishment of our sins is taken from us by the good gods, so that we may do right in freedom. The force, however, which otherwise would work in the physical, becomes as it were stemmed up, engraves itself in the cosmic ether, and man first meets the consequences of his deeds and especially of his imperfections in the life between death and rebirth. There in the human soul, cleansed through the vision of these consequences in the ether, they awaken the will of making good again, under the same conditions as those in which the deeds were performed — that is to say when once more one draws upon oneself a physical body. Indeed, there arises the longing to take again a physical body, "the thirst for existence", just through the experiencing of one's imperfections after death.

Out of this longing the germ for the new earth life is formed and on again reaching the Moon-sphere on the way to reincarnation advantage is taken of the planetary constellation which is suited to it.

Perhaps only in few cases it is moral faults which are thus inscribed in the Moon-sphere, for these are for the most part of a social (or rather an unsocial) nature, i.e., in connection with other human souls. Whereas the Moon-sphere is concerned with what affects the man himself, regarding which one could say, he had not lived up to his talents, he manifested imperfections which, according to the lines laid down for his life, he ought not to have, and which had not been eliminated right up to the time of his death. There can also, however, be what Dr. Steiner called noble imperfection, ideals, intentions, which the man had cherished but which, just because of their magnitude, he had not been able to bring to reality — for instance, an unfinished work of art, as Goethe's "Pandora". Naturally the completion of "Pandora" would not be inscribed in the Akashic Records, "but the fact — corresponding to the astral body of Goethe — that he had the far-reaching design but had only carried out a portion of it. All that is inscribed between Earth and Moon" (Lecture, March 12th, 1913).

If there are records of such a kind in abundance from one soul, then they do not remain bound to the karma of the single personality who has made them, and who could otherwise hardly find the possibility to balance them all karmically in a future earth life, but they become as it were public property for humanity. Dr. Steiner pointed this out in the example of Leonardo da Vinci. Although this mighty spirit had carried out such vast deeds on earth, still immeasurably more was what he had not yet brought to reality in his plans and purposes or what had to remain imperfect through the unfavourability of the time, or simply through earthly conditions. That which such a spirit inscribes in the etheric world severs itself from him and becomes an inspiration for other souls who live upon earth after his departure. While that which a genius leaves behind in incompleteness remains in a certain conclusion within the earthly spheres, just in his imperfect or unfinished works there lies the germ of continuous evolution. Something is lifted up out of the personal fate of a man and is transposed from the sphere of necessity and karmic destiny into that of freedom. Instead of the unfinished purposes of the Leonardo da Vinci appearing as karma in his next horoscope, they act as a new relation to the cosmos for those men who can receive them in freedom as inspirations.

In the foregoing we have spoken of those things which affect man himself most closely and which are therefore likewise inscribed in the nearest

sphere, the etheric sphere between Earth and Moon. The very first period of the after-death life runs its course much nearer to the earth than to the orbit of the Moon, for those strongly bound to earth by desires, ambition, and so on. Distances apparently spatial correspond in the spheres of the universe to the gradual withdrawing of the soul from earthly relations, until in the real star-world it performs those exalted deeds (working with the higher hierarchies) which lead to the new human germ. The immense distances of the stars from the earth of which modern science dreams — although the dream has a mathematical foundation — expresses in reality nothing more than the fact that the men of the last few centuries were estranged from such lofty spiritual activities. When on earth once more men come to understand the concrete tasks of the human spirit, especially in the middle period of its life between death and a new birth, then too will the heavenly worlds again appear nearer to man.

In the Mercury-sphere man undergoes other conditions. There he experiences what he has become as a moral being, or on the other hand in terrible loneliness which was unmoral. Inscriptions are made here too, although not nearly so manifold as in the Moon-sphere. In the latter they were the unfinished projects, the deeds of omission, all that, in so long as it remains unfinished, affects only the man himself — whereas in the Mercury-sphere is inscribed what passes from man to man but has not arrived at the right accomplishment — unfulfilled promises, for instance. In the Venus-sphere is experienced all that unites man on earth in groups which have a spiritual link, as in religious communities. He who has been an atheist up to his death will live in this sphere in utter solitude. Lack of understanding for the religious life is engraved here and works karmically into the next life. We must now picture to ourselves that the soul on its return journey to a new embodiment passes again through the planetary spheres, and that the recordings which we have made there work in the direction of forming our destiny, whether they take the shape of a destiny which (apparently!) meets us from without, or whether they are woven into the new bodily nature or soul qualities. What during earth life is stemmed up, which does not act as a moral force affecting the physical body, and which then becomes inscribed in the universal ether now comes forward as an impulse of destiny. Man cannot extinguish it, but must engrave it into his own being.

Dr. Steiner has given an example of a man who had inscribed an imperfection in the Moon-sphere — and every human being makes very many records there every time — and afterwards in the Mars-sphere inscribed a peculiarity in connection with his aggressive nature. When he then

appeared again on earth he had taken up into his karma the imperfection engraved in the Moon-sphere, but Mars now stood in a definite aspect with the Moon, for the spheres revolve and so various combinations of the planets come about. So Mars would work with the Moon, for instance, through the conjunction — one placed behind the other — and the man would seek through his combative forces to overcome what remained within him as imperfection from the Moon inscription.

"So the positions of the planets actually show what man has previously engraved in those spheres, and when we read the spheres astronomically, even the physical spheres of the stars, it is a description of what we have ourselves inscribed there. The planets only give the indications — it is what we ourselves have inscribed the stars do indeed work upon man; because man passes through the spheres. His Mars qualities work upon his Moon qualities and thereby comes about what can come about through their interaction there. So it is actually our moral legacy, deposited during our life between death and birth, which comes forth again as star constellations, in the new life. That is the deeper basis of the constellation of the stars and its connection with human karma."

The planets beyond the Sun differ from the planets this side of the Sun, inasmuch as in the former it is more the perfections of man, the soul qualities he has gained, which are inscribed to that they bestow something upon him as forces for his new bodily nature, something important for his future karma, since it endows him with special faculties. From this aspect the passage through the Saturn-sphere is of especial significance.

Let us suppose a man has received spiritual concepts, such as those of Spiritual Science, during the life. Then for him the passing through the Saturn-sphere, which for most men remains in unconsciousness since they were unable to inscribe anything there, will be of deep purport. Saturn, whom we have already come to know as the planet of the spiritual-investigator, will transform the inscriptions of the man of spiritual tendencies into bodily faculties in the next life, so that he will be gifted with spirituality by nature, he will be born as it were a man tuned to the things of the spirit. The natural Christianity of a Raphael, for instance, his quite natural relation to the Christ impulse is the disposition given him from the Saturn-sphere which comes forth for him again in a natural way out of his karma as John the Baptist, out of the manifold Saturn inscriptions of John the Baptist.

It will also be understandable that very many souls cannot consciously enter the spheres of the outer planets, especially of Jupiter and Saturn, because

they have nothing to inscribe corresponding to these spheres. In the Lectures held at Penmaenmawr ("The Evolution of the World", lecture 10), Dr. Steiner has explained that such souls, instead of experiencing these planets, only become the spiritual inhabitants of the Planetoids, those small celestial bodies which lie between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter and which looked upon spiritually are colonies of Jupiter and Saturn. An example of not being able to experience fully the Saturn-region is offered by the soul of Felix Balde in the Fourth Mystery Drama ("The Soul's Awakening", Scene 6). He finds himself there in the spiritual life which lies between his incarnation as Joseph Kühne (in "The Soul's Probation") and his coming incarnation as Felix Balde. The time is pictures when Saturn pours out many coloured rays over the spirit region. The soul of the future Felix Balde must wander in solitude repeating only empty words of destiny out of his last earth life, for the spirituality of his incarnation during the Middle Ages did not lead to "Cosmic Midnight in wakefulness of soul". The soul of Joseph Kühne can only remain awake as far as the Sun period and even then only becomes freed from its solitude under the enchantment of Lucifer.

We have not yet considered the passage through the Sun-sphere, which is of such immense significance for the life between death and a new birth. Just as everywhere else the Sun here is placed in a dividing and yet in a uniting position between the inferior and the superior planets. Man lives there in the heart of the solar system, himself become heart, and there is his relation, not only to men and groups of men as in the Mercury and Venus-spheres, but to the entire human race, is what pronounces judgment. And first and foremost judgment is pronounced by the relation that he himself had gained on earth to the Representative of humanity, to the Christ, and to Lucifer that spirit who has encroached so powerfully upon the evolution of mankind.

It is during his life on earth that man must come to know the Christ Impulse, for since the Mystery of Golgotha, the Christ dwells no more upon the Sun. In the Sun-sphere a man can only have an understanding for all men, through the fact that Christ died for all men, no matter of what race, or of what religion; since such an understanding was lacking in Joseph Kühne, he lived in the Sun-sphere in dismal solitude until Lucifer became his deliverer ("The Soul's Awakening", Scene 5). Lucifer is that spirit who guides the soul's wanderings through the sphere of the outer planets; there he has his rightful mission, but he can only work beneficially if Christ has first kindled the consciousness. Just as the Christ — that is to say, what we have taken up of the Christ Impulse — leads us through the lower planets up to the Sun-sphere,

so does Lucifer lead us, in so far as we can maintain our consciousness, up to the Saturn-sphere, yes, even to the spheres of the stars.

Then comes that moment which has been called the Cosmic Midnight, the middle of the life between death and a new birth, where the last earth life and its results has been given over into the Cosmos in its entirety, when the path of return to earth is trodden once more. An experience fraught with deepest meaning for the soul who can go through it in wakefulness. We can regard this Cosmic Midnight as passed through in the Saturn-sphere as we find it in Scene 6 of the Fourth Drama, or as in the Sun-sphere as it occurs in many other passages of Dr. Steiner's works. In a certain sense the Sun-sphere contains the other spheres within itself, so that man does not actually leave the Sun-sphere even when he enters the Saturn period. For with the Sun-sphere begins the "Spirit-land" which also includes the spheres of the upper planets, where man has left behind as corpse the astral body of his last incarnation, whereas the Mercury and Venus spheres represent the higher parts of the Soul-world. How from that time forward the new earth life is prepared, how karma shapes itself in connection with the world of the planets and stars, this shall be the subject of the next letter.

II

The path of a human soul towards a new embodiment, which we must now consider, leads quite especially into those regions which are important for the observation of karma as it comes to expression in the Birth-horoscope.

The "Midnight Hour of Existence" is, as we know, that time when the soul turns away completely from the last incarnation and faces the one to come. (In one of the glass windows of the Goetheanum, "the Birth", the soul is represented above with a kind of Janus — twofold head, one countenance of which looks back to the earth-life that has passed, while the other looks down upon the new parents who are to prepare the body for the soul.) All the experiences of the last life are metamorphosed into qualities and faculties for the next incarnation. They must now be incorporated into what is called the spirit-seed of the new earth-life. We generally picture a seed as something small, tiny; — that, however, is only the physical seed. The spiritual seed which must always be present if anything is to grow, is bound upon the Macrocosmos, is at first immensely large, as great as the Universe. The human spirit has poured itself out as far as the Saturn-sphere and beyond. It lives in the starry-world, indeed beyond the starry sphere and looks back thence into the world of the planets. It wanders through the Zodiac, and together with the

Beings of the Hierarchies who are active in the Zodiac, it builds the spirit-seeds of the single organs and limbs of the human physical body. The Cosmic Consonants, the pictures of the Zodiac, unite with the Cosmic Vowels which resound there from the planets. The spirit-seed of the single organs and limbs of the human physical body. The Cosmic Consonants, the pictures of the Zodiac, unite with the Cosmic Vowels which resound there from the planets. The spirit-seed is variously formed according to how each starry constellation works in conjunction with the planets. The spirit-seed is variously formed according to how each starry constellation works in conjunction with the planets. While the human soul stays in the constellation of Aries the head is perfected, but the 'uprightness' which distinguishes man from the animal is likewise acquired. In Taurus, the throat, or the 'possibility of sound-creation,' — again the human which is raised above the animal. (Cf. Cycle XXII, "Man in the Light of Philosophy, Theosophy, and Occultism", Lectures 5, 6. We are dealing here with the actual Constellations, not with the 'Signs.')

Here, too, the inscriptions made by man in the various spheres work as actual factors in the upbuilding of the spirit-seed. The planets shine spiritually, "from the other side", into the various Zodiacal spheres according to the way they carry out their movements. The movements, which at the same time are sounding in sphere-music, reveal to the human soul as Cosmic-Script and Cosmic-Speech what it has done well and what ill. The movements in themselves are naturally the same for all those human beings who pass together through the experience of — let us say — Mars standing before Aries, but the cosmic speech sounds different according as the spheres to which the planets belong — Mars sphere, Venus sphere — have been differently prepared through the inscriptions which the human being has made there. (Cf. London Lecture, November 19th, 1922; Goetheanum, VI. 50) These tones are interwoven in the upbuilding of the future physical body: so this becomes an expression of karma.

All this happens under the guidance of spiritual beings, man would not be able to accomplish it alone. He is living in this period in the cosmic condition of 'substantiality' which once was common to the entire world-order.

There are only Beings there, of the planetary and starry-worlds, among them also Luciferic Beings of the most varied grades, and those Beings who extend even beyond the Zodiac achieve the highest deeds in the Cosmos. But now comes the time when the Beings begin to fade away from the consciousness of the human soul. Indeed the turning back towards birth means that the

purely spiritual withdraws more and more from man, and that he is led more and more towards his future sphere of work. The planetary world — so says our Teacher — lays hold upon the incarnating man with its "weight". It is no longer exclusively the upbuilding, organ-forming forces which specially work at this stage, but rather what corresponds, understood spiritually, to earthly gravity. Only earthly gravity stands as it were at the foot of the ladder which leads down from the cosmic-moral, represented to us by the starry world, down to the a-moral heaviness of the earth-nature. Indeed it is the longing for this heaviness that seizes man when the world of spirit-beings shuts itself out from him and the revelations of that world become ever darker. Just as in his life-time the sleeping man is always drawn back again to his physical body, since he has a hunger for the heaviness of the physical plane, since he could not endure to live for evermore in the light of the spiritual world — so too with the man between death and rebirth. Man longs for the well-guarded solidness which at the same time renders possible the experience of the freedom which the earth with its weight brings about for us.

This longing for weight streams out from Saturn, whose sphere the soul must now again pass through. Jupiter when his sphere is traversed bestows a certain joyousness upon this longing for weight so that man can contemplate his new and perhaps difficult earthly tasks with even a feeling of joy. Mars gives a forceful, active grasp of the earthly tasks so that man meets and takes hold of with courage what awaits him. Venus again mingles with her "weight" a loving acceptance of the earthly mission with the forceful and joyful longing which has been bestowed by the other planets. Arrived on earth man experiences the gravity which he must first overcome in standing upright and in walking. But this then becomes the foundation of the experience of his freedom, inasmuch as it offers him an opposition which is only a 'natural' one, therefore leaving the soul free, within the limits self-appointed through its karma.

In this passage through the spheres back towards Earth, we must also consider in which constellation the planet lies when man passes by. If Saturn is in Leo, for instance, so that his influence is strengthened through the Lion in the Zodiac, then the "longing for heaviness" will be so modified as to bestow on man the gift of "meeting outer accidents of life cleverly", — should this be in other respects determined by the foregoing karma. If Saturn lies at that time in Capricorn or Aquarius he will make man weak, one who will be easily cast down by the outer events of life. These relations, too, come to expression later in the horoscope.

If up to now we have dwelt principally on general human characteristics (with the exception of the above remarks about Saturn) we must now consider what more closely concerns the individual than taking incarnation. He has a quite definite karma to work out; he must be born in quite definite conditions. We come here to those provinces which on the one hand are guided by the normally progressive beings of the Hierarchies, the "good gods", but which on the other hand could not be at all what they are without the Lucifer impulse. This particularly applies to the nation, in which one is born, whereby one also speaks a definite tongue, and the family, the line of generation, and finally the parents who bestow on us the physical body and with this draw us at the same time into the stream of heredity. Therein plays that human element which can never be excluded from the incarnation, which separates groups of men from other groups, through nationality and speech; or as in the case of heredity, constrains the soul to enter a body which can never be the full expression of its being. It is a remarkable fact which the spiritual researcher relates to us, that very early, just after the "Midnight Hour of Existence", when the spirit-seed has not as yet begun at all to form, it is already settled in what part of the earth, and in what nation a man will be born. This decision has nothing to do yet with the direct working of the folk-soul, who as an Archangel, belongs to the Mercury Sphere. (We will return to this later). But it is Lucifer who in the higher spheres beyond the Sun must, as we have heard, play a great and also a rightful part in seeking out for man the nation to which he will belong. If a man has taken the Christ into himself upon earth, he can assuredly preserve in his soul what he has acquired, he need not lose the fruit of his life after death, but as a rule he can not yet, in the present-day stage determine his future karma out of his own being. He must let himself be helped by Lucifer. That is a rightful task of the Light-bearer.

Lucifer seeks out the nation for our next incarnation and the decision entails that various things must come to pass in that nation so that there may also be the right environment — historic, political and so on, for the soul when it is incarnated there perhaps centuries later. Naturally, those souls come into especial consideration who are destined through their karma to play an important part for humanity through their nation or in their nation. One sees therein, one might say, the hand of Lucifer at work. The battles, wars and revolutions which must happen throughout the centuries so that a soul may find its place prepared on earth, cannot happen without the activity of Lucifer. In a certain sense all that goes to bring this about, is far removed from the regular astral workings. Lucifer penetrates and rules therein.

Something similar is repeated in the choice which follows of the family in which one will be born. One cannot yet speak of definite parents, for those who will be the parents are, as a rule, thus early in the return to earth, not yet incarnated themselves, nor yet the second, third, fourth previous generations. But a definite stream of inheritance is there, a "family tree", and this is worked upon in a preparatory way. When one pictures that as well as for the actual parents there must also be a preparation for the not yet born grandparents and great-grandparents, then one gets a picture of a whole weaving ruling world of active forces which must be led and guided by whole hosts of beings who belong to the Hierarchies, but who are supported by Lucifer in this. What one can find drawn as a complicated, many-branched genealogical tree of an old race, only gives a picture — brought to a state of rest, of this immense spiritual activity which streams out over the centuries in order to make possible the conditions for a single human life.

"If you imagine the greatest complexity that can arise here on earth, it is primitive and simple compared with the mighty web of cosmic greatness and grandeur which is woven there, which is then pressed together, densified, through conception and birth, and which permeated with physical earth material becomes the physical human body". (As above.)

Dr. Steiner once gave a concrete example of this working. When Luther was to appear it had to be prepared for in the 8th, 9th century. Already the forces had to be directed to the people where he was to work.

"Then again a time elapses. And next the question must be decided — and it is an awe-inspiring activity, although one can only describe these things with ordinary words — the question must be described what characteristics should the parents really have who are to actually bring forth the man that is to be born at a definite place, at a definite time? That must all be settled already long before... It had to be settled for Luther already in the 10th, 11th century what forefathers were to be his, in whose line he would be born". Luther himself was born as we know in the 15th Century. Here we are looking within the mighty activity which is required so that a single person can be born in accordance with his karma.

When the nation and the line of generation have been chosen for man in this way, the moment also comes later when the parents are chosen, when a link that at first is still of a soul and spirit-nature is formed with the parents. The human soul takes much more part itself in this than in the working upon the stream of heredity in general. Our parents we have actually chosen for ourselves. That happens when after the passage through the Sun Sphere man

prepares himself to tread the sphere of Venus. There he must clothe himself afresh with an astral body. This astral body with lightning speed rushes together from all sides, like iron shavings crowd round a magnet. It is an exact expression of the karma which has meanwhile been worked out, and it has the form — so Dr. Steiner described it — of a bell open beneath which exactly mirrors the being of the soul in a thousand shades of colour. Such bell formations shoot hither and thither in the astral world with immense speed during a time which is only measured by hours, and thus seek out the parental pair within the framework, one might say, of the already previously decided line of generation. Here the soul's link with the parents is now established. It is just in the Venus-sphere, the sphere of work of the Archai, that the greater or less connection of the man with his family is decided — the freedom of the soul, or the dependence on the family.

Here the lower planets begin to play a part in their direct relation to Sun and Earth. For a man will take a different position in his family if he meets the planet Venus this side or the other side of the sun, as he passes through the Venus-sphere. If Venus is placed so that she sends her beams to earth — that is to say, she shines either as morning or evening star — then he will become a person who feels himself very much bound up with the family, or if Venus is in conjunction with the Sun, especially in superior conjunction, then in his progress he will be but slightly affected by the planet, he will not be very much bound up with the family.

Then there follows the passage through the Mercury sphere. There the human being becomes bound to the nation to which he will belong, by its respective Archangel. There is no question here of the choice of the nation for this has already happened much earlier with the co-operation of Lucifer, as we said, and a choice would, moreover, no longer be possible, for the incarnating soul has already previously in the Venus-sphere been connected with a definite pair — for the family belongs usually to a definite nation. A distinction must therefore be made between the choice or appointment of the nation and then of the family which has taken place at a certain earlier period, and the soul connection spoken of now, first with the parents in the Venus-sphere and then with the folk-soul in the Mercury-sphere. With this latter, too, where the nation-soul impulse is mediated through the respective Archangel, the purely astronomical position of Mercury plays a rôle. A man will find greater or less connection during his life with the folk-soul according to the position of Mercury in relation to Sun and Earth in the time of the passage through the Mercury-sphere. Naturally all these relations are extraordinarily

complicated and not to be grasped in a simple scheme. One need merely think that according to the researches of Spiritual Science the planet Venus is actually within the Mercury sphere and Mercury in the Venus-sphere in order to see how here, too, the linking with nation and family is crossed and blended in a remarkable manner. So, for instance, Venus gives the capacity for the particular earth-language: through Mercury as Folk-soul planet this speech is directly determined. Mars, again, bestows speech in general, the Universal Word, which indeed is changed through the power of Venus to the human word.

For man himself this is the time when he can only perceive the increasingly darkening revelations of the spiritual beings themselves. He has no longer the direct encounter, they appear to him only in pictures. The consciousness of the spiritual world becomes ever more dimmed. The new incarnation approaches ever nearer. To be sure, man lacks at this period not only the physical body, but also the etheric body — he is a being of soul and spirit, which ever draws itself more and more together. Smaller and smaller becomes the created spirit-seed of the future physical body, and the gaze of the soul is increasingly directed to the mighty task which lies before it: — out of the spirit-seed to make a human being who shall undergo his destiny on earth.

Most important things in this connection take place in the Moon-sphere, in which man now enters. Here the moment has arrived in which the etheric body is organised into him. This event comes about from a feeling of desertion, of forlornness. The spirit-seed, which has been built up through long long periods of time, leaves the soul in the Moon-sphere. It seems all at once to be no more there; the fruit of life and work since the Cosmic Midnight seems lost. In reality this fruit has taken its way to the earth through conception. So in rapid definite moments the etheric body is organised into the human being. This event is immensely significant just for the astral connections. The etheric body is not fitted in of itself, as was the case with the astral body, but it is formed out of the etheric forces in the whole planetary system with the help of supersensible beings. In this the spiritual inhabitants of the Moon are especially active. The Moon, as we know, is a true mirror of the Universe; it not only reflects the light of the Sun, but really collects all cosmic influences in itself. And the Moon-beings observe all that goes on in the planetary system. They observe what man has experienced with Saturn, Jupiter, Mars and so on, and plan the etheric body accordingly. The etheric formative forces are drawn from the planets, the "moral ether", as well as the

four kinds of ether, above all, the light-ether, "the flowing light of the Cosmos", with the exception of the Sunlight, which would work destructively. It can only be included in the human etheric body in the form of moonlight, the light of the Sun rayed back from the Moon. And if no moonlight shines, at New Moon, the whole remaining cosmos works upon the forming of the etheric body. It is then that what Dr. Steiner called the "moral ether", or the "inner side of the etheric body" is incorporated, while the outer side is formed at Full Moon. (Lecture, April 21st, 1924.) What is present by way of constellations, how the planets stand and their movements, this is observed by the Moon-beings from their Moon standpoint, they read thence man's fate in so far as it is to come to expression in an etheric body. There man actually encounters his whole destiny as he had brought it with him in his previous earth-life through death. But at the same time he meets it with all that he has become himself in the meantime. The Moon-beings create the true balance according to their cosmic observations. There they combine the previous life with the future one through the etheric body and weave karma within the soul.

We will break off our considerations at this important point, in order to continue them next time.

III

The passage through the Moon-sphere which we were speaking of last time is characterised at its beginning by an important event which takes place some time — or it may be a short time — before the incorporation of the etheric body. Again it is a question of a decision. After the decision as to parents and people there comes, just at the passing into the Moon-sphere, the decision as to the sex. Now for the first time the question is decided what the sex shall be for the future incarnation which will be the one best suited to karmic conditions. And here again the phases of the Moon play a rôle. In order to become a man, the path to Earth, the passing by the Moon, must come about when it is New Moon as seen from the Earth — that is to say, it is actually Full Moon seen from the other side of the Moon. Not the Full Moon which sheds its light on Earth is meant, but it is the other side, the side which is always turned away from the Earth, which sends out into the universe the reflected light of the Sun. Such light and the forces bound up with it shine towards the human soul which is approaching the Moon at this time, since it wants to accomplish its next Earth-life as man. For a woman it is the opposite. At the time when the light of the Full Moon rays down on to Earth the soul draws near the Moon which then turns its dark side towards it. For when here on Earth we

have Full Moon, the Sun, as it were, shines over the Earth upon the orb of the Moon turned towards the Earth, while the other side of the Moon is then steeped in darkness.

So we have 14 daily phases from New Moon through the First Quarter to Full Moon, etc., for the side turned away from the Earth just as we have for

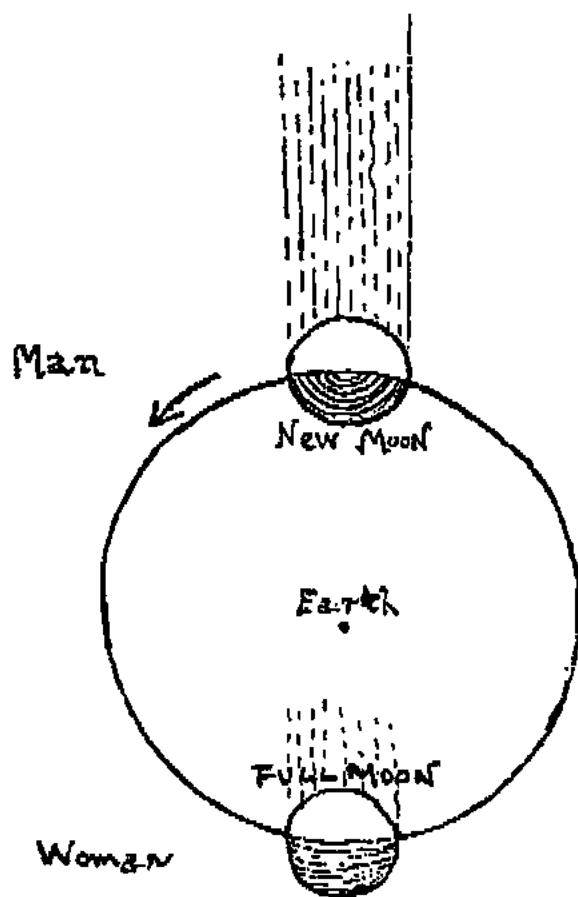


Diagram I.

the side visible to us. We can present it to ourselves so: If the Sun is thought of in the direction of above, the Earth in the centre of the Moon's orbit, then the Moon goes round it in one month. (Earth and Sun are here regarded as stationary for their reciprocal movements do not now come into consideration.) We Earthmen always see but one side of the Moon; the far side remains for the most part always invisible, it is just to the descending soul that it

presents itself. In this diagrammatic drawing, therefore, we must so picture it that whoever is to become a man comes from "above" so that the illumined side of the Moon shines towards him, while for the Earth it is New Moon. The woman will approach the Moon from "below" according to the drawing, and thereby be permeated by the forces which ray their workings into the universe through the dark side of the Moon. On Earth it is then Full Moon time. We see through these considerations how we enter more and more into relations of space, which already have a connection with the Earth.

It was Kepler — if we may allow ourselves a little historical digression — who first had the courage to set these Moon relationships quite concretely before himself. Stimulated by the Copernican System, which he entirely supported, he was obliged to perceive the Moon as a celestial body which moved freely in space just as the Earth, but which in consequence of the imperfect revolution upon its axis (it is dependent in this movement entirely on the Earth) has something like a near and far side. The latter is distinguished from the former in that it can never be shone on from the Earth, knows neither "Full Earth" nor "New Earth", but only a 14-day period of unbroken sunshine, alternating with a period of the same length of complete darkness. Charmingly, with rich imagination, and at the same time in fully scientific form, Kepler has described these relationships in his "Moondream" — or rather has let them be described by a Moon-demon who was conjured up by a wise woman in Iceland, to the son of this woman, a former student of Tycho Brahé. It was a courageous act to make so clear to himself the astronomical relations of the Moon sphere in all details. Later astronomers, building on this description, have from time to time desired — bemoaning their fate — to have an Observatory upon the side of the Moon turned away from the Earth where the disturbing conditions of our Earth environment cannot make themselves felt, never clouded sky, 14 days long neither the disturbance of daylight nor night light, but unbroken black darkness wherein only the planets and fixed stars shine. One cannot refrain from thinking that such a Moon observatory, whence one looks out into the wide world spaces, is really present in a spiritual sense, and that the Moon Beings whom we spoke of last time are the observers there. We find depicted by Kepler that which is encountered by the human soul in passing through the Moon-sphere, we must, of course, only conceive the actual relations more in a spiritual way. Even what was set out above, New Moon here, Full Moon over there, etc. are light-ether and astral relations — it is not a matter of the physical nature of the Moon.

So too, when one considers the human being in this stage one must keep

in mind that it is first and foremost in question of soul and spirit relations, not in the least of anything physical, as in the choice of nationality and the family. Just as the man at this time, although he already has a connection with a folk-spirit yet can in no way be looked upon as "German" or "English", so too the sex is in the first place only characterised by what distinguishes man from woman in the soul. This soul nature is then interwoven in the spirit seed of the physical body whereby later, in the embryonic life, the physical differentiation towards sex is also expressed.

In the peculiar two-fold view of the Moon, with its contrasting phases according as one observes the near or the far side, we can also see an indication of the double-sexed nature of man, which as we know is male in the etheric body when the physical body is female and vice versa. One must think that in the stage now depicted the human being has not yet drawn to himself his etheric body, he is still a being of soul and spirit.

Dr. Steiner has given yet further details about the work of the Moon during man's descent. For instance, it can also happen that he who is to become a man, and therefore is drawing near the Earth at New Moon (or Full Moon as seen from the Cosmos) still remains above in the Moon-sphere for half a Moon period) that is to say, waiting still for the next Full Moon before he betakes himself into the Earth sphere. If he does this he will have black hair and dark eyes. The woman who still waits for the next New Moon phase (again reckoned from the Earth) will have fair hair and blue eyes. The second half of the Moon-revolution therefore brings another decision, but now one which is connected even less with the "whole man" than the decision of sex — it is a matter of the colour of hair and eyes. Naturally it is not physical hair that grows on man at this time, but what we can find of a soul nature in the dark or light eyes and hair of the incarnated human being, that is created as rudiments in this period.

We can now say that the new human being, so far prepared, leaving the Moon-sphere enters into the Earth sphere, or what was called in earlier times the sub-lunar or the elementary world, and therewith earthly relations begin to have increasingly a meaning for him. True, we must still not consider these from their physical aspect, but they display themselves from the cosmic-astral or even from the elementary aspect. For the Earth the descent of the souls is something like a fertilisation. It takes its place in the course of the year. Just as the plant seeds reach the Earth at a definite time of year, where they must go through their waiting and maturing time, so must the human seed, the spiritual archetype of the future human being likewise betake itself at a

definite time into the aura of the Earth. It is the time which in our regions corresponds to winter, from Christmas to the beginning of Spring — namely that space of time in which Gabriel works as Cosmic Archangel. Thereby, astronomically we have a definite relation given between Sun and Earth, no longer directly to the Constellations or to their spiritual beings as is the case in the more central time between death and a new birth. One can say: the human germ makes the transition from astral to etheric, from the "Constellations" to the "Signs". For the beginning of winter means astronomically: the Sun stands in relation to the Earth at the deepest point of its yearly path, it finds itself in the division of its path, it finds itself in the division of its path which has always been characterised by the "Sign of Capricorn". At the beginning of spring the Sun crosses the Equator, day and night have equal length, it is the "Sign of the Ram" — Aries. Solar-Earthly relations! It is not a matter of the outer meteorology of the time of year, that first makes itself felt when man is born, but of the astronomic-spiritual influences of the seasons, in this case of the winter.

The final uniting of the spiritual human germ with the fructified ovum in the mother can indeed take place in the course of the entire year, it is lifted out of the course of the seasons, nevertheless, the uniting with the Earth, the coming down to the Earth sphere, only happens during the three months mentioned.

There was a time in the evolution of mankind — at least among certain peoples where there was the worship of Hertha or Nerthus — in which the fructification too could only take place in the time which immediately follows the beginning of spring, the close of the period of the downward streaming human souls. From the day of the Vernal Equinox (March 21st) to the following Full Moon which to-day we call the Easter Full Moon lay the time of generation for mankind. All that was regulated through the Mysteries, mankind experienced this event in holy visions. The births followed therefore only in the time of the Twelve Holy Nights or somewhat later. It was a mighty change in humanity's evolution, when — about 3000 B.C. — this cosmic ordering was broken through and conception and therefore naturally also the births, were spread over the whole year. The setting free of men from the old dreamlike clairvoyance was purchased thereby. Nevertheless even to-day the time when the Earth is fructified by the instreaming human seeds is only that from winter to spring. Should the conception take place later in the year then the souls must wait so long in the Earth's environment. And through this their destiny takes on a different shade, the stronger or weaker connection which

the man has with the Earth-world, according to whether he must wait a longer or shorter time for the uniting of the spirit seed with the earthly seed which proceeds from the parents.

With this description we have arrived again at the point where we broke off last time, at the moment when the fruit of the most exalted spiritual activity, the creation of the spirit seed, departs from the soul. This creation arrives earlier on the Earth than man himself. It unites itself with the substance of heredity which comes from the parents. The consequence of this loss is as we know the incorporation of the etheric body. This event still takes place entirely in the Moon-sphere, which in fact completely encircles the Earth, and to a slight degree also interpenetrates it, although the human soul already finds itself in the "Earth environment" in which the workings of the planets are reflected in wondrous wise. It is just these planetary workings which, as we have seen, are woven into the etheric body.

At this point still one more dramatic moment plays a part, a moment which is the mirror of another event playing its part immediately after death. Just as then, before the etheric body is laid aside, the tableau of the preceding life ensues, when in powerful, solemn pictures the whole life unrolls itself once more before the watching soul, so does the soul foresee the coming life at the moment when below on Earth the fructification takes place. Again the life shows itself in pictures, naturally not in all the details as can be done in the case of the earthlife that has run its course, but the destiny which awaits man in the next life reveals itself in its general configuration and contour. Whereas the life-tableau after death is received in a deeply earnest condition, quite undisturbed by personal feelings, the pre-vision makes a powerful, a shattering impression upon the soul by which it is possible to explain many things in the earthlife by way of feelings and having a presentiment of destiny. Dr. Steiner has indeed related in the passage where he refers to this prevision how the soul through the sight of a difficult life that awaits it, receives a shock, draws back as it were from the embodiment and in this way the cause originates by which the incarnation will be that of an idiot, or epileptic. This information lets us gaze deeply into the mighty workings of Karma, which in its detail is assuredly not as a rule worked out by the incarnating soul or its wishes, but by mighty Spirit Beings, for whom the Karma of man lies bare, just as an open book.

Here is plainly shown a parallel of the pre-natal life with the after-death life, which we can also find in another connection. For instance, just as man after the dissolving of the etheric body leaves the Earth in the direction of the

East, so in a certain connection does he return to Earth again in the direction of the East.

The human being during the life in the spiritual world is, as we know, himself become sphere, planetary sphere, celestial sphere, out of this he builds his head. He is in reality head-organisation when he descends down to Earth, and as regards the head we cannot speak of a definite direction; it comprehends the whole sphere. This head is indeed the transformation, the metamorphosis of the whole remaining organism of the foregoing Earth-life. One can say: Man brings with him his head which has the tendency to spherical form out of the spheres. The limbs and the whole metabolic man are actually first built up by the Earth itself at a later period, and attached to the head, as a matter of fact during the embryonic time. We have already mentioned that the particular district where the mother happens to be before the birth takes place has a great influence upon just this lower man. The forces for it come from the centre of the Earth and are differentiated by the different regions of the Earth. Yet there lies as we know between the head system and that of the lower body, the chest system — heart, lungs, blood-circulation. These chest organs are neither brought from the sphere of the farthest spaces of the cosmos, nor first built up on the Earth, but they come as our Teacher expressed it, out of the half-sphere, they are a hemisphere whose central point for ordinary earthly geometrical relations is at infinite distance, but lies in the direction of the East.

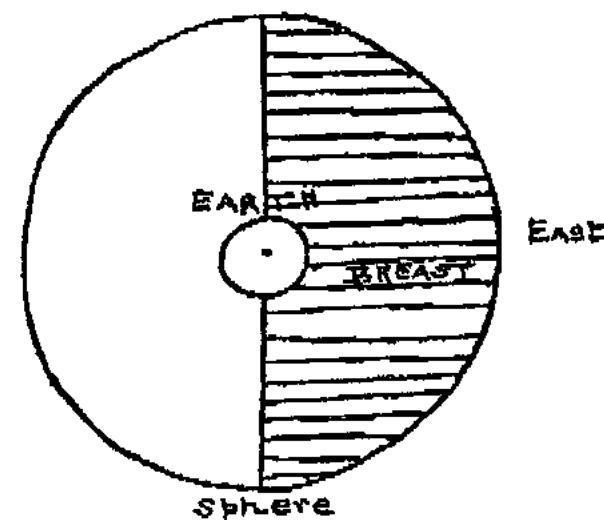


Diagram II.

There we see again emerge the concept of the East, which in so remarkable a way binds together a spiritual concept with a geographical, astronomical one. The East is for the whole Earth a definite direction, and at the same time for a definite place on the Earth is a direction which in a way loses itself on the horizon. It seems to go from there further into the endless indefinite but it is in this direction that the Sun daily makes his appearance and the stars and planets rise. In this direction the dead disappear into the spiritual world, leaving the three dimensional space behind; from this direction man comes in so far as he bears within him the rhythmic system, in so far as he carries his destiny with him in his breast — his "beat of heart and lung". We find this significance again of the Eastern direction in the birth horoscope, in which precisely the East point — so-called ascendant, is regarded as the most important point in the whole horoscope.

The human being at this stage is present in yet a different way as a threefold being. On the one side we have the soul itself, which clothed in the etheric body, stands directly before its re-union with the lost spirit-seed. This spirit-seed is there as a second entity and works as the stimulating creating impulse in the ovum, the substance of which thrown into chaos through the fructification accords admission to the cosmic forces of the spirit-seed. In the ovum itself works the third element, the substance of heredity which given by the parents and forefathers comes from the whole stream of generation, with which again the soul from the spiritual world is cosmically united, for the stream of heredity too, comes originally out of the spiritual world.

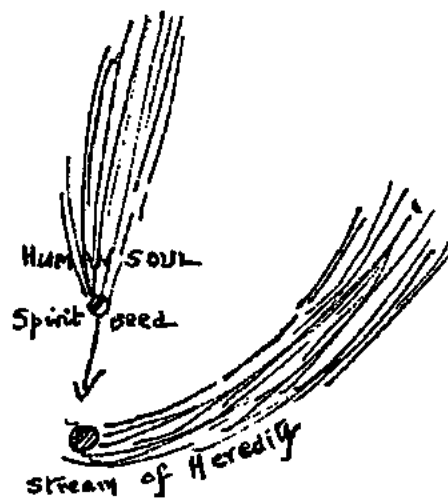


Diagram III.

The union of the soul or the ego with the fructified seed then very soon comes about. This happens in the third or fourth week of the embryonic development. Only in the case of great initiates there is a connection already at an earlier stage — the seed right at the beginning is taken hold of by the ego, so that nothing happens without the co-working of the spirit itself. It is not possible for us to describe the quiet wonderful development in embryonic life which runs its course according to the laws of the cosmos. We refer for that to the articles by Dr. König in "Natura". The laws of the old Moon existence live in what builds itself up there. The soul itself experiences in wondrous pictures, which, however, fall like dreams from the consciousness — the work of the etheric body, of the astral body and of the ego in the construction of the new physical body.

We have followed the human soul on its way — merely sketchily and incompletely as was not possible otherwise; how going through death it enters the spiritual world, wanders through the heavenly spaces and lives through them, in order to return again at last to Earth. It was a description corresponding to the time which lies after the Mystery of Golgotha. If one wishes to describe the pre-Christian times much must be represented differently. That has already been indicated in the description of the Sun sphere. The Christ lives no more in the Sun sphere, His throne stands empty, the throne of Lucifer towers mightily on high. Indeed the human soul can find Christ since the Mystery of Golgotha on Earth itself. The Christ lives in the aura of the Earth, he meets the soul in the moment of death, but one can also say that souls meet with the Christ in birth. When they embody themselves they make themselves at home in that world which is nearest to the Christ as He lives among us to-day. The Earth is just that world where the tidings of the Christ can penetrate to human souls. They do not need any more to prepare themselves in Mystery-places to seek for the Sun-God in the Sun sphere. The Christ is with us always until the end of world. Unmeasured significance accrues to the Earth-life which is so short in relation to the life between death and rebirth, but which in spite of that creates the conditions for the whole spiritual existence. One can understand much onesidedness in the historical development of Christian humanity which proceeds from the idea of inculcating in man the unique significance of the Earth life, which moreover was regarded at that time as a non-recurring event. This sowing, so one can say, has had a rich crop. We live in a time when the Earth is taken to be real and important as never before. Yet for the most part that is not on account of the Christ. And so we see that after all it was again only out of Mystery wisdom that humanity of our time could

be taught why the Earth must be for us full of meaning, a holy place. That the Earth is the body of the Christ who has come down to us from Heaven, that in bread and in all the things of Earth we must find springing forth the Christ force which penetrates and indwells the whole Earth-Body — this is what the great Teacher had to reveal to us, who has also bestowed upon us the knowledge of Death and Rebirth. So we look to the Good Friday of Holy Week when there was prepared : "in Christ we die"; we look to the Easter Sunday of the Resurrection where the Event took place which has sanctified the body of the Earth for the human soul, which has given the Earth her meaning, so that the soul returns ever and again through birth in order to find the Christ, in order to be able to take the Christ force with it into the spiritual world when the hour of death shall strike once more.

THE BRIDGE OF THE GREEN SNAKE

by Almut Bockemühl

Should we ever arrive at the stage when, in social life, all human beings — whether male or female — reach total equality, this would be due to the fact that each one of us is given two kinds of tasks: on the one hand self-realization through giving concrete shape to our inner life; on the other hand helpful service to our fellow human beings. It is no longer right to attribute on principle the creative and the nurturing tasks to different people, but for some time still there will be those who are more active in the one or the other realm.

The achievements through which our personality becomes visible to the world are like fully-grown plants. They have materialized into a picture. But like the plant which appears as a representation of its development, and therefore of its past, so man's creations also point to the past. They are a conclusion.

With every creation, a talent from long ago — may be from a past life — comes to a conclusion, to a completion.

On the contrary, the other kinds of work, the serving and nurturing deeds for the benefit of others, have a forward-looking gesture. It does not matter whether the work brings some profit for me, whether I enjoy it, whether I get something out of it, whether I can realize myself in it and receive recognition. The individuality takes the second place in these tasks. Washing dishes every day which will be used again straightaway, mopping floors which will be dirtied in no time, putting children to bed night after night, caring for the sick who might never recover — all these are activities which form substance in the world as a whole. For centuries it was mainly women who carried them out patiently. In doing so, they made their willpower available to the world in a selfless way. Many technical and mechanical tasks belong also in this realm — even work on the assembly line; everything whose result does not give satisfaction, everything that is so detached from one's personality that one cannot identify with it.

These tasks are like seeds which will only come to fruition and maturity in the future. Being carried out again and again with perseverance and conscientiousness, they engender a maturity of the will which can be found in

older mothers of many children and in workmen, but which is hard to put into words. In all religious orders the monks and nuns were given such menial tasks to do, alongside their inner work.

In his lectures on the "Karma of Vocation", Rudolf Steiner points out that the fact that Jacob Bohme wrote mystical books had its origin in the distant past, brought something to a conclusion. But the fact that he was a shoemaker, working for his fellow human beings, was a germ for something that would only come into effect in the far future, in later incarnations. Rudolf Steiner says:

"A remarkable truth lies hidden here. That which on earth we often value so little — we value it little because it is the starting-point of what we shall only value in the future. It is natural for men to be far more intimately connected, in their inner being, with the past. Therefore they are often far less fond of what is now a beginning than of what comes over to them from the past."

We are much more conscious of the past, and very little of the future. One can say that in everything related to the future, man is sleeping.

So it is understandable that our evaluation of people is not always right, for:

"The highest deeds are always an end, the most insignificant task is always a beginning."

When one studies European fairytales and would like to decipher the message they carry still for people in our time, the central figure of the simpleton, the boy who sits in the ashes, or the poor little Cinderella, stands out. Many people only acknowledge this unwillingly.

In feminist circles fairytales have become discredited just because of the Cinderella figure. It looked too much like an attempt to fit women into a certain rôle from childhood onwards. In America the expression "Cinderella Complex" was created to label women who cannot free themselves from servitude.

Some women might have this problem, but the expression shows a lack of knowledge of fairytales. There are various stories — mainly from Russia and Scandinavia — where it is the man who sits in the ashes and does the menial tasks.

Cinderella is a figure who distinguishes herself from her sisters mainly through her sense of the growing, the budding. She does not ask her father for treasures, jewellery or clothes (no salary rise or success). She only asks for a humble hazel rod, which she plants and daily tends. And so it grows into a tree.

"Cinderella went to it three times a day, wept and prayed, and each time a little white bird came flying onto the tree. If she uttered a wish the little bird dropped her what she had wished for."

Thus in an actively serving but also a patiently contemplative life, one builds a relation to the "little white birds", the doves. We may see in it a quality of the soul which Cinderella develops. Later she uses it to distinguish the good seeds which will germinate from the bad ones which are not fertile any more. She prepares for the future. This is why she seems so modest and her sisters don't like her. In her we can clearly see "how something that receives very little appreciation on the earth, is only acknowledged because it is the starting point for something that will be valued in the future".

Cinderella also knows that the question is to find a balance between two opposite spheres of existence. She manages to put an end to her 'success' at its climax and return to the ashes. She masters the principle of balance, she achieves the mastery of life-rhythms. This seems to be the pre-condition to her rise to royal dignity in the end.

Cinderella symbolizes one side of the feminine being. But there is another side, an opposite pole. It is the 'Princess on the glass mountain', the 'King's daughter of the golden roof', the 'Princess from the castle of the golden sun', the 'fairest of the fair', or however else she may be called. Here we have a feminine figure who distinguishes herself through her special beauty and many a prince sets forth to conquer her. These beings are as detached as Cinderella is down-to-earth. They live in an inaccessible distant realm, on an island in the ocean, or on the 'glass mountain'. Other mountains might be hard to climb; the glass mountain cannot be climbed at all.

These princesses have to wait until they are conquered, they cannot contribute much towards it. They are pure symbols, symbolically represented radiant spirituality, detached from any willpower. Hence their strange passivity. They are untouchable, but desirable; the virginal quality of wisdom.

These two prototypes are to be found in every woman; she can feel them in herself. The wisdom described above shows itself in the feeling of women that they have known for a long time what men are striving for. But this knowledge is often difficult to grasp. If we want to get it in our grip, we slide away like on the glass mountain. It floats above the earth and causes women generally to be closer to the spiritual than men. On the other hand they are often more practical. The Cinderella side of them keeps them more down to earth and they do not easily lose their common sense.

From this point of view it is very revealing to read how John Stuart

Mill characterizes his friend, Harriet Taylor. He writes:

"Alike in the highest regions of speculation and in the smaller practical concerns of daily life, her mind was the same perfect instrument, piercing to the very heart and marrow of the matter; always seizing the essential idea or principle."

He describes her contribution to his writing in the following way:

"What was abstract and purely scientific was generally mine; the properly human element came from her: in all that concerned the application of philosophy to the exigencies of human society and progress, I was her pupil, alike in boldness of speculation and cautiousness of practical judgment. For, on the one hand, she was much more courageous and far-sighted than without her I should have been, in anticipations of an order of things to come, in which many of the limited generalizations now so often confounded with universal principles will cease to be applicable."

"But while she thus rendered me bolder in speculation on human affairs, her practical turn of mind, and her almost unerring estimate of practical obstacles, repressed in me all tendencies that were really visionary. Her mind invested all ideas in a concrete shape, and formed itself a conception of how they would actually work: and her knowledge of the existing feelings and conduct of mankind was so seldom at fault, that the weak point in any unworkable suggestion seldom escaped her."

In this characterization the possibilities and qualities of specifically feminine thinking are portrayed in a very appropriate way. When Margarete Mitscherlich argues that "the future is feminine or it does not exist", this cannot mean that as many women as possible should get into leading positions. If they do so by retaining the current masculine way of thinking, we will not get any further. This is clear from several examples. The point is that feminine thinking, feminine spirituality, must penetrate our culture more and more, otherwise one will soon not be able to speak of culture any more.

Many people feel this need, and it has resulted in the recent formation of a 'spiritual women's movement' in America and also in Europe. Unfortunately people are a bit in the dark about what 'feminine spirituality' really is. It seems to me an easy way out if we just believe that by referring to Eastern traditions we should revive the old natural feminine centres of healing and power.

This is, however, what is striven for, even if it is given a scientific gloss

and adapted to modern times. When we read that we should "gain understanding also by way of intuition, symbolism, even by magic, and no more simply in a rational-analytical manner", this is a mystification. It will not have a lasting impact. Neither will we make any progress by appealing directly to feelings, to feminine heart forces. Feelings cannot be made to order. Here lurks the danger of sentimentality.

We should much rather connect with a mentality like Harriet Taylor's, who combined in a rare, harmonious way "daring speculation" with "sound common sense". What gave her the capacity to bridge these two extremes? Harriet Taylor was a child of the 19th century, which had very different qualities to ours. She therefore possessed a sense of morality which gave her a secure foundation. Mill writes:

"Her intellectual gifts did but minister to a moral character at once the noblest and the best balanced which I have ever met with in life. Her unselfishness was not that of a taught system of duties, but of a heart which thoroughly identified itself with the feelings of others, and often went to excess in consideration for them by imaginatively investing their feelings with the intensity of its own. The passion of justice might have been thought to be her strongest feeling, but for her boundless generosity, and a lovingness ever ready to pour itself forth upon any or all human beings who were capable of giving the smallest feeling in return."

It was thanks to the foundation of this "moral character" that she became neither a fanatic nor a dry social reformer. Much as we may admire it, we don't have access any more to the disposition of soul it implies. We have to find another bridge for our century, and maybe we can once more look for help in a fairytale picture.

Goethe, too, wrote a fairytale, one of the few literary fairytales whose symbolic imagery can match that of folk tales. This is true also of the way in which it points to the future. Its theme is the harmonization of two human faculties, represented by figures in which we can again recognize the two feminine prototypes which we already observed in Cinderella and the princess in the glass mountain.

Of course, every 'picture' which is worthy of the name can be seen from a variety of aspects. We are, however, quite entitled to choose a particular view according to our needs.

In Goethe's fairytale the two main feminine characters are called the green snake and the fair lily. They live in two realms separated by a

river. This river can be crossed only under very special circumstances.

With his fairytale Goethe wanted to represent something which Schiller had treated philosophically in his letters on the aesthetic education of man. There he speaks of two opposing human impulses the "material" and the "formative" impulse: one could also say, the sensual and the spiritual principles. There is a wide gap between them, and it is time that a link be found.

The green snake in Goethe's fairytale corresponds to the material drive. It is completely bound up with the material, sense-perceptible, world: it creeps through the rocky chasms; it caresses the mineral world. As a snake it lives in the horizontal and can only partially erect itself, but it can wind its whole body around things and sense their being. This picture can represent a soul quality like elementary love or the mother instinct.

The fair lily on the other bank of the river is a noble and pure virgin, living in a big garden with wonderful trees. But the plants in this garden bear neither flower nor fruit, and the maid is unapproachable like the princess on the glass mountain. She seems to be under a curse, for every living being which she touches is killed. If we see in her the "form" impulse, i.e. the purely spiritual principle, we understand that anything sensual is repelled by her, because the sensual and the spiritual have to be seen as two mutually exclusive principles. For the beautiful lily her untouchability is very painful, especially after the young man who loves her falls dead to the ground in a desperate attempt to embrace her.

Both worlds on either side of the river are lacking something. How can they be brought into connection with each other?

After many years of intense study of Goethe's fairytale, Rudolf Steiner made it the basis of his first mystery drama "The Portal of Initiation". He has, so to say, updated the fairy tale and transposed it into another art-form. But the characters and the action correspond so closely that each can help understand the other.

In the first draft of his drama Steiner even kept the names from Goethe's fairytale. There are two characters, called snake and lily. In later versions they received individual names: the lily is now called "Maria", the snake, "the other Maria". No doubt Steiner wants to suggest that it is a question of two sides of the same being.

Maria is a woman who, in her spiritual development, is far above the people of her surroundings. Yet there is a painful mystery in her life: the people whom she specially loves and is loved by — her friend Johannes Thomasius and her fosterchild — cannot blossom in her presence, but

stagnate in their development. She feels completely united with the cosmos and the truth, but she realizes that she finds it more and more impossible to work in the material realm, that the tie which weaves together spirit and matter is getting thinner and thinner. She knows it must not tear completely.

Rudolf Steiner portrays this as an anticipation in Maria's destiny of something that humanity as a whole is experiencing in the epoch which began with the 20th century. Millions will feel — so he says — what Maria is perceiving painfully as an abyss between her and other people, but they will not realize what it is about: namely the birthpains of a new epoch, in which old human capacities have to be lost because new forces have to be born.

We have here more than a psychological problem. The capacity of modern man is being called upon to be increasingly open to impressions from the spiritual world, even without spiritual training. This is indeed becoming more frequent today, especially among younger people.

The loosening of the spiritual member which makes this possible is the result of an abstract thinking which has long been practised in our culture. 'Abstraction' means being drawn away from, i.e. in the process of abstracting the spiritual is drawn away from the material. This can lead to a rupture of the link between spirit and matter or, in other words, to abstract thinking finding access to reality. Such thinking can be accused of being 'masculine'. In reality we are all in the grip of it, men or women. The task of the present is to see the danger that lurks in it and to prevent it consciously. In Rudolf Steiner's drama Maria is a representative of present humanity, and she is experiencing consciously what in many people is only a vague feeling. We have here a predicament for which it is not easy to find a remedy. According to Goethe's fairytale, help must at first come from another side. The princess on the glass mountain must wait until somebody climbs it, and the beautiful lily must wait for the bridge to be built from the other bank. For this bridging something is needed that has a central significance in the fairytale: the sacrifice of the snake. The "other Maria", who corresponds in Steiner's drama to the green snake, is a woman who has lived through motherhood fully. Her warmth of heart gave her the strength to bring up her children as capable human beings, even when she had to do it on her own since early death robbed her of her life companion. She carries on working and caring, and she receives new vitality through a spiritual world view which she allows to work on her with religious intensity. She is called "Maria's lower sister", who serves the reflection of the spiritual in the physical. In one scene of the elemental world she enters as a shining snake-like figure who describes her own actions in the following words:

I make my way through rocky depths
and wish to clothe in human words
the rock's own will;
I sense earth being,
and wish to think within the human head
the earth's own thinking.
I drink pure living airs,
and the air's powers I transform
into human feeling.

The way in which she addresses rocks, earth and air here make it clear that we are dealing with a force that is elemental, i.e. instinctive in man in the best sense of the word. The other Maria works out of a motherly instinct, caring, helping and assisting people, something that is denied Maria outright.

Rudolf Steiner addresses mainly the social side of the problem in a way which is at first unusual and surprising to us: if each of the two women wishes to stay as she is, she not only hinders her own development but also the other's. Each must make a sacrifice in order to allow further development.

To begin with, the sacrifice of the other Maria is required — again closely following the action of Goethe's fairytale. If she decides to strive consciously for clear concepts and not only absorb the spiritual in the feeling realm as something strengthening, then she enables her higher sister to become active in the material realm. Only by adding the light of consciousness to the warmth of her love can she give warmth to Maria's loving light and so prepare the way to earth.

How can this happen? In Goethe's fairytale the green snake swallows the golden coins which the will-o'-the-wisps throw to it. In those will-o'-the-wisps we can see the representatives of intellectual thought. Intellect is brilliant and agile. It churns out thoughts like stamped coins, and does not care about what happens to them afterwards. The snake eats the coins and digests them. They melt in its body and make it glow from within.

Intellectual thoughts receive another quality when they are 'digested'; they can then fill areas with light which have so far been lying in the dark, in the instincts, like the snake that brings light into the rocky cracks. When clear thinking penetrates the instinctive soul-life, then 'the time has come'. This is a keyword in Goethe's fairytale.

An instinct which is enlightened by thinking is no longer an instinct. It is transformed into luminous power of thought. The snake sacrifices itself, i.e. it ceases to exist as a snake and crumbles into a heap of shining diamonds.

We now get to a very interesting point. It is an acute problem that the natural mother instinct is becoming ever weaker and is about to disappear altogether. It is crumbling like the green snake. Does it simply disappear into nothingness? The snake doesn't. The product of its decay are diamonds. In Goethe's fairytale much depends on the fact that these diamonds are not left behind as rubbish, but are carefully gathered up and thrown into the river. Out of them arises then a majestic bridge which forms the connection between the two separate kingdoms.

If the precious stones are left lying behind, the sacrifice of the snake would be in vain. For centuries people would have poured their instinctive creativity into the world's development to no purpose. The power of instinct would still break down, without becoming transformed, and the bridge to the spiritual world would not be built.

What does this mean? We should not let the remnants of motherly love seep away, we should not ignore the transformed product which is penetrated by intelligence, but include it in the stream of life. We need the snake's power but the snake must be metamorphosed, not re-animated. Then it can help overcome the abstractedness of our culture.

The abstract hostility to life of our world can be reconnected with real necessities if enough women know that they need to use the diamonds of their specifically feminine qualities to build the bridge which links the spiritual and the material kingdoms.

And so we come to the other aspect of the matter. The fair lily has to set out over the bridge which the sacrifice of the snake built, in order to penetrate truly into the realm of worldly life. It has to leave its paradisaal garden to go and meet the snake.

The garden of the beautiful lily is the realm of the purely spiritual. No earthly fruit ripens there. The realm of pure thought cannot be immediately fertilized for earthly existence.

Let us for the sake of simplicity consider a concrete example: when we realize that our learning is not dictated any more by our instincts — e.g. how to act as mother of a child — then we turn to books for help. There we find things explained in an intellectual way, which might be completely right. They make sense to us and we want to put them into practice.

Sooner or later we will notice that this is a fruitless undertaking. The child in the book is not our child. Mark you: it is certainly necessary to penetrate life questions with thinking and to take advice. But when it comes to action, we must forget the lessons and set out to the realm

of the green snake to learn to see in its light.

Only if we watch our child closely will we notice what it needs. There are consequences to be drawn from this. To face the snake means: to be guided by what we perceive as an objective necessity, and not by 'instructions for use' nor by personal feelings of pleasure or displeasure.

In his second mystery play "The Trial of the Soul", Rudolf Steiner juxtaposes the sacrifices of the two Marias. We are being shown how Maria—in spite, or maybe just because, of her outstanding spiritual qualities—was not free of "intellectual vanity" and "self-admiration". She applies these words to herself, when she judges herself severely. She had a great and good influence on her friend the painter Johannes Thomasius. But she had to realize that this influence gave her a certain satisfaction and tied him down. He loved this bondage, and he was hurt when he felt her growing reticence. She nevertheless brought herself to hold back and to moderate her need for recognition, however fine and subtle it may have been. There was no call for an outward dissolution of friendship, only for an inwardly more tolerant attitude.

Maria: In future I will not interpret
too quickly knowledge from the spirit realm;
I will regard it as a power
for my soul's forming — not as a direction
through which I can be spared the trouble
to learn in life itself the aims for action.

Not even the "knowledge from the spirit realm", in this case Maria's realization of her karmic feeling of solidarity with her friend, must become the direct motive for action. We have to learn to act out of the requirements of the situation. What Maria achieves now does not lie in the realm of perception, but of will.

The two qualities, represented by the 'one' and the 'other' Maria, have first to be developed separately in turn, and then to unite into the human being himself. One path leads out of dull unconscious vitality into bright waking consciousness. The other path goes from the realm of pure spirituality in thought, which is, however, hostile to life, over the bridge into concrete working for the benefit of humanity. This is the path of "learning in life itself the aims for action".

All human beings, men and women alike, are called upon to progress on this path in an individual way, as much as their life circumstances allow it, and thereby contribute towards a salutary future.

SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING RAINER MARIA RILKE

by R. Lissau

I am often puzzled by the fact that Rilke met Rudolf Steiner without being able to appreciate him, while, according to an oral tradition, possibly unreliable, Rudolf Steiner spoke of Rilke in a rather derogatory manner.

This alone would not worry me overmuch were it not for the fact that Rilke gave lyrical expression of incomparable beauty to insights which he and Steiner had reached independently of each other. These insights concern some of the most far-reaching questions — for instance the meaning of the second half of the evolution of mankind and of our planet — but also apparent details like the phenomenon of human breath or the quality of money lent out on interest. Had Rilke found his spiritual teacher in Steiner as did his contemporary Christian Morgenstern, readers could easily decry his statements as 'those of an anthroposophist' and dismiss thereby their importance. As it is, Rilke is one of the greatest testimonies to Steiner's conviction that ours is an age of light in which new insights from beyond the threshold find their way into the hearts and minds of many people.

Rilke died one year after Rudolf Steiner, but was younger than he by fourteen years. But there are interesting parallels. Both were German-speaking Austrians who chose to incarnate in a Slav environment. Steiner explains to his Russian audience in Helsinki why this fact was so important for him and his work. Should Rilke have chosen a similar incarnation for the same reasons, to make himself more sensitive and transparent to intimations from beyond the Threshold?

The family environment which Rilke chose caused him great suffering, but it might also have had very positive consequences for the extraordinary sensitivity of the mature poet. Father liked to trace his descent to the lower ranks of the Carinthian nobility. He himself was narrow-minded and pedantic with few cultural aspirations. At first, he wanted his son to become an officer in the army, but the experiences in the military academy all but destroyed the sensitive youngster. After this, father suggested that his son become a bank clerk — for him a soul-destroying and humiliating occupation. Mother, on the other hand, had influenced her little boy already much earlier. She had wanted

a baby daughter, and when a boy arrived she put him into girl's clothes and gave him dolls to play with. In her way, she must have found solace for a rather meaningless life in her strong commitment to the Roman church, but her devotion was of such sentimentality that her son was filled with a deep aversion to anything the Western churches of his day had to offer. The question arises — and the present writer lacks the resources to answer it — whether we do not detect in the boy a terrible tension in the well-meaning attentions of his parents; the cold pedantry of the father and the emotionalism and sentimentality of the mother, with the hope of a balance destroyed through the aversion to Christianity which the boy developed.

And yet: while the aversion to institutionalized Western Christianity remained strong, we shall meet in the mature Rilke experiences which a student of Steiner's Christian message can only feel to be deeply Christian. Perhaps the cultural tensions of the family home rendered his soul painfully and deeply responsive to contemporary spiritual intimations and experiences. Or could it be that Rilke entered this life with strong memories of pre-natal experiences which, born as he was 25 years before the end of the Kali Yuga, he was unable consciously to connect with the clearly-formulated statements of Steiner? Question after question! But the very nature of these questions tells us much, not only about Rilke, but, more importantly still, about the nature of our century and the forces that wish to inspire men of this age.

There are some poets who by the age of twenty have written their greatest poetry. Rilke is not among them. His poetry is not so much that of a man of genius — as Mozart was in the realm of music — but of a man of this century who went through a remarkable series of inner experiences which deepened and transformed the core of his being. A few features of this development were the intense dynamic of the transformation, the gradual ascent, the unswerving direction towards the climax in February 1922, and the early death four years later in the firm conviction that what he was meant to say he had indeed said. The unswerving direction of his development is the more mysterious as it was not premeditated nor consciously achieved, yet underlying it there was an immense effort. It was a path of ever-increasing discipline, and of ever-deeper penetration of the world of the senses and the internalization of the impressions of these senses.

The first step in the process came soon after the turn of the century when he accompanied his Russian friend Lou Andreas-Salome on two journeys to her native country. Outstanding among his impressions were the Russian monks, their discipline and devotion, inwardness and fulfilment. The memory

of these experiences lived on and resulted in *Das Stundenbuch* — The Book of Hours — a substantial volume of poetry in which the life of the monk is explored. Had he stopped here he would have been considered a major German poet, sensitive, contemplative, delicately shaping sounds, words and images. But he did not stop and his next experience showed him that the dedicated and disciplined life of the monks was also possible within the confines of twentieth-century Paris. He became Rodin's secretary and learned from him that the true and responsible artist needs for his work as much discipline and commitment as any monk, but lives, contrary to the monk, the life of a modern European, related to the world of the senses.

Face to face with Rodin's way of working Rilke realized what for him remained the true task of the poet: to school and discipline himself to experience the world of the senses so profoundly that he can say or sing it. In Rilke's language this means that the poet can liberate objects, both in the world of natural creation as well as man-made things. They turn into utterances of the human word in its most accomplished form and thereby are released from material existence and presented to their origin. This is, of course, the same task as the one Steiner outlined for the second half of the earth's evolution, the age of Christian transformation of the natural and of the social worlds.

Rilke was well aware of the importance of the step he had taken. While his early volumes of poetry had somewhat self-indulgent titles, now that he had embarked on the objective task of transformation he chose an objective title for his new work: *New Poems*. A couple of years later they were followed by *New Poems – Part Two*. The most celebrated of these poems concerns a panther kept in a narrow cage. For months Rilke would, come rain, come shine, spend half an hour each day gazing at this animal in the Jardin des Plantes and, in the end, distil the fruit of his disciplined visual and meditative exercise in three times four lines. They say nothing about him who gazed, everything about the object of his gazing: *

- 1 His glance, so tired from traversing the cage's
repeated railings, can hold nothing more.
He feels as if there were a thousand cages
and no more world thereafter than before.

* For our German-speaking readers, those poems given a numeric sequence appear in the original at the end of this article on pages 92 and 93.

The padding of the strong and supple paces,
within the tiniest circle circumscribed,
is like a dance of force about a basis
on which a mighty will stands stupefied.

And only now and then a noiseless lifting
of the eye's curtain, till an image dart,
go through the limbs' intensive silence drifting —
and cease for ever in the heart.

A poem like this is the ripe fruit of meditation practised regularly. Before the end of his life Rilke realized that the act of meditative — Goethean — gazing could be paralleled also in other sense experiences. For instance, in tasting. He would attempt to articulate the taste of an orange, as in his poem *Mystic*. D. H. Lawrence was to articulate the taste of an apple. Rilke, in his poem, suggests also a second way in which the taste of the orange might be distilled, freed from the body of the fruit: in the unfolding music and gesture of a dance.*

Stay...this is good...But already it's flown.
...Murmurs of music, a footing, a humming: —
Maidens, so warm, so mute, are you coming
to dance the taste of the fruit we have known?

Dance the orange. Who can forget it,
the way it would drown in itself, — how, too,
it would struggle against its sweetness. And yet it's
been yours. Been deliciously changed into you.

Dance the orange. The landscape, create it
warm from yourselves, till its airs be enfolding
again the splendour they ripened! Loose,
flowingly, fragrance on fragrance! Relate it
all to the peel, so chastely withholding,
all to the joyfully plentiful juice.

This extension of the inner penetration of sense experiences was, perhaps, the smallest gain of Rilke's further development. He moved on. Two volumes of *New Poems* had appeared when, in January 1912, he had an experience which was to influence profoundly the rest of his life. He was

* Rilke's orange is of the European or Moroccan variety, perhaps a Sicilian blood orange. He would not have known the sweet and slightly bland taste of overseas oranges.

staying in the castle of Duino which belonged to the Thurn und Taxis family. The princess, his patron and hostess, and her other guests had left. One morning Rilke was walking in the beautiful park of the castle which falls precipitously 200 feet into the Adriatic. The morning post had brought a business letter and he worried about the reply. A strong southerly gale was blowing. He suddenly stopped, for out of the wind a voice called to him:

Who, if I cried, would hear me among the angelic orders?

He took out his notebook which, like Beethoven, he always carried with him. A few more lines followed. He realized that he stood at the beginning of his greatest work. Yet he went back to his room and wrote his reply to the business letter. By the evening the *First Elegy* was finished. The *Second Elegy* followed soon after. A few fragments were also written down indicative of the large proportions of the work he had now undertaken. The next two years saw only the completion of the *Third Elegy*, while the rest of the work hardly progressed.

From the moment of his initial experience in the gale he realized not only that the work begun would be the culmination of his poetic activity, but also that it had given an entirely new direction to his creative impulse. In Paris he had learned to articulate ('sing') the essence of the objects of his beholding, animals and flowers as well as man-made objects created by craftsmen and artists. Now he turned to those intimations of the non-physical, the supersensible world of which he had been aware — the dead, the angels, his own eternal Self. Two years after Duino he wrote a poem *Wendung* (Turning) which ends in the lines:

2 Work of sight is achieved,
now for some heart-work
on all those pictures, those prisoned creatures within you!
You conquered them; but do not know them as yet.
Behold, O man within, the maiden within you! —
creature won from a thousand natures, creature
only just won, but never,
as yet, beloved.

This, then, was his new task, but the outbreak of war affected him to such an extent that the work of completing it could not even be thought of. The years of the war were the nadir of Rilke's life. He had no nationalistic feelings. He appreciated Europe's cultural diversity from Spain to Russia, his friends were

fighting on both sides of the divide. His only endeavour was to survive. With the end of hostilities came two offers of hospitality from Swiss friends. The Château de Muzot proved the ideal and final domicile. It is an ancient keep standing in an heroic landscape. Wide views to the South reveal some of the highest Alpine peaks. Road and rail lie deep down in the Rhône valley, out of sight of the orchards and vineyards of Muzot spreading out over an extensive plateau. Here Rilke lived, the only inhabitant of the keep. A local woman did the necessary housework. No post. Three friends only knew his whereabouts. He consciously kept any outer demands away from himself, his life was a disciplined preparation for the mystery of communion. If inspiration were to come it should find him ready and prepared.

The great moment came in February 1922, ten years after the inception of the *Elegies*. For some time Rilke had felt he was approaching a period of artistic creation, when the letter of a bereaved mother and an engraving of Orpheus in a shop window set his mind aflame. In four days he wrote a cycle of twenty-six sonnets without having to correct a single word, sent them to the mother, and two days later posted one more sonnet in exchange for one which now was not considered good enough. On the same evening work on the *Elegies* was resumed, and two days later they seemed complete with the jubilant *Ninth*. But the end had not yet come. After another two days he wrote the *Tenth Elegy*, which leads us beyond death into a world where there is no longer any difference between what so far had been external and internal. Three days later another elegy followed to replace the former *Fifth*, and during the next five days there were written twenty-nine more sonnets, the *Second Part of the Sonnets to Orpheus*. All this poetic activity was confined to less than three weeks, a climax of intense creation, unparalleled perhaps in literature, though not in music.

Rilke differentiated between these two creations, the *Duino Elegies* and the *Sonnets to Orpheus*: the *Elegies* were the climax of his life's work, the *Sonnets* a by-product, almost a trifle. His critics do not agree. For them the two works are variations on the same theme, the one in a major, the other in a minor key. Rilke characterized the different moods of the two works as *praise* and *lament*. The common theme is the fleeting nature of the human being on earth and his transcendence into a spiritual sphere, mysterious in its essence, but realized by some people of exceptional destiny at certain moments of their lives.

Rilke felt he had gone to the limits of his being, he had completed his work. Now his *Complete Works* could be published and he could begin to

resume living. Correspondence started again. Once more he went on his travels, particularly to Paris. Now and then a new poem was written, a group of them in French. He died at the end of 1926, apparently from grazing his finger on a rose bush. His simple, austere grave is adjacent to the church of Raron, a village to the west of Muzot. Its situation, on the brow of a gentle hill which offers a commanding view of what we have already called an heroic landscape, must make it one of the most impressive places of burial in Europe.

We remarked that some poems of the middle period — *Book of Hours* to *New Poems* — are the result of a disciplined act of meditation. In his late period — 1912 – 1926 — not a few poems are meditations in themselves. We shall look at two of the *Sonnets to Orpheus*, 11 and 29 of Part Two. The first describes a particularly revolting way of shooting birds. In the caves of the Karst, near Duino, white rock-doves are found. A servant frightens these blind birds out of the caves where the sportsmen stand waiting to shoot them. Even J. B. Leishman, Rilke's sensitive translator, is at a loss to appreciate the apparent conclusion of the poem in the last line but two. He has, however, overlooked the importance of the two times three full stops which divide this poem. First there is a description of the facts. The full stops indicate a period of meditation, as a result of which Rilke appreciates the great lesson of the *Bhagavad Gita*. But then the poet, in a second meditative act, internalizes the act of killing and dying.

- 3 Many a rule of death rose with deliberate rightness,
onwardly-conquering man, during your hunting past:
better than trap or net known to me, fluttering whiteness,
you they were wont to hang down in the cavernous Karst.

Gently letting you in, as were you a token
publishing peace. But then: vassal would twitch at your thong,
Night would cast from the caves pallid handfuls of broken-
flighted doves to the light...

Not even that, though was wrong.

Far from the gazer remain every emotion but gladness,
not from the hunter alone, fathering, watchful and keen,
that which his suns have matured.

Killing is merely one form of our wandering sadness...
Pure in the spirit serene
's all we ourselves have endured.

The outer situation is bearable only after it has been unreservedly accepted as Rilke's own.

The second sonnet, the last of the work, shows that internalization is the essence of meditation, as Rudolf Frieling once pointed out, referring in particular to the final two lines. In this poem Rilke addresses himself — he is the friend of the many dead (*der vielen Fernen*) — and encourages himself to go to the utmost of the meditative experience. Then, when the point is reached where the experience becomes unbearable, transformation (*Verwandlung*) must take place and the meditant becomes what would have threatened him had it continued to stay outside. The following three lines express the full dynamic power of meditation, its magical, meaningful lightening up of our sense impressions, while the last three lines conclude the meditation, linking the meditant once more to the physical plane of existence.

- 4 Silent friend of those far from us, feeling
how your breath is still enlarging space,
fill the sombre belfry with your pealing.
What consumes you now is growing apace

stronger than the feeding strength it borrows.
Be, as Change will have you, shade or shine.
Which has grieved you most of all your sorrows?
Turn, if drinking's bitter, into wine.

Be, in this immeasurable night,
at your senses' cross-ways magic cunning,
be the sense of their mysterious tryst.

And, should earthliness forget you quite,
murmur to the quiet earth: I'm running.
Tell the running water: I exist.

Readers who wish to explore further Rilke's meditative experiences and who have access to the German originals are advised to study, in particular, *Es winkt zur Fühlung fast aus allen Dingen*, a poem which to my knowledge has not been satisfactorily translated.

So much, then, for the mood, practice and discipline of Rilke's meditation. What were the results of his searching endeavour? Steiner sees man's earthly task against the background of the Christian gospel: Fall, Incarnation,

Resurrection. Rilke's childhood experiences prevented him from accepting these dramatic events in all their profundity. But nevertheless, he too knew that man — and not the poet only — faces the task of releasing the whole of creation from the bonds of matter, of internalizing, articulating and spiritualizing the whole of the created world. This activity includes not only the God-created, but also the man-made world, artefacts, works of art and works of craftsmen and artisans. Like the Zen Buddhist, Rilke is shattered by the unique 'suchness' of things. He experiences them with religious intensity and begins the work of transformation.

- 5 Are we, perhaps, here just for saying: House,
Bridge, Fountain, Fate, Jug, Olive tree, Window, —
possibly: Pillar, Tower?...but for saying, remember,
oh, for such saying as never the things themselves
hoped so intensely to be.....
- 6 Praise this world to the Angel, not the untellable: you
can't impress him with the splendour you've felt; in the cosmos
where he more feelingly feels you're only a tyro. So show him
some simple thing, remoulded by age after age,
till it lives in our hands and eyes as a part of ourselves.
Tell him things. He'll stand more astonished: as you did
beside the roper in Rome or the potter in Egypt.

Rilke is emphatic that the Angel of whom he is speaking has nothing in common with the angels of conventional catholicism. His Angels are great hierarchical beings who have already accomplished the task of transformation which we earthly beings are just beginning to face up to. Angels are not the only discarnate beings whom Rilke experiences; he is equally much occupied with the dead, both as a generality as well as with many individual dead. Some of his outstanding poems are requiems and, as we have seen, the *Sonnets* owe their origin partly to the early death of a Dutch girl whom Rilke had never met. One of the passages where Rilke is most intimately concerned with the dead is the second half of the *First Elegy*. There he follows the early departed beyond the Threshold. Again, it seems that Rilke's awe of the majesty of hierarchical beings and his intimate concern with the dead are the fruits of a meditative life, possibly also some real spiritual experiences.

So Rilke lives in a world which does not know the strict division of here

and yonder. Like Steiner he lives in the One World. All earthly beings and objects partake in the *Weltinnenraum*, the cosmic inner space. It is the place where transformation (*Wandlung*) is appropriate and a human being lives rightly if he wills this transformation (*Wolle die Wandlung*). It is the place which abounds in true, we feel tempted to say 'karmic', relationships:

Hail, the spirit able to unite!
For we truly live our lives in symbol,
and with tiny paces move our nimble
clocks beside our real day and night.
Still we somehow act in true relation,
we that find ourselves we know not where.
Distant station feels for distant station —
what seemed empty space could bear...

In this world man occupies a unique place. A transcendent task is laid on us, though we, knowing the existence of death are, in a way, the most transient creatures of all.

7 oh why
have to be human, and, shunning Destiny,
long for Destiny?...

Not because happiness really
exists, that premature profit of imminent loss.
Not out of curiosity, not just to practise the heart,
that could still be there in laurel...
But because being here amounts to so much, because all
this Here and Now, so fleeting, seems to require us and strangely
concerns us. Us the most fleeting of all. Just once,
everything, only for once. Once and no more. And we, too,
once. And never again. But this
having been once, though only once,
having been once on earth — can it ever be cancelled?

Rilke had a unique awareness of the spiritual dimension of the human being, an awareness which is the more convincing as it is not based on traditional Western thought nor influenced by Eastern occult schools. It arose in him out of the realities of his biography. Had he been able to learn from Steiner his own experiences would have been largely validated, but also changed in two areas. Steiner would have been able to show him that a spiritual

Christianity is worlds removed from that sickly form with which Rilke came in contact in his youth. Steiner would have shown Rilke that the latter's deepest intimations, the importance of man for the earth and all her creatures, and the consequent task of transformation, was indeed most profoundly Christian. Is it foolish to think that this new vista would have released deeply buried sources of joy in the poet, would have affected the balance between Lament and Praise?

But an even greater change would have resulted from a recognition of our repeated earth lives. Rilke's perception of the transience of our earthly existence — including, of course, the impermanent nature of our psychological personality — is an absolute pre-requisite of any kind of esoteric development. This is emphasized by Rudolf Steiner in the verse given at the foundation of the Anthroposophical Society of Great Britain, *I look into the darkness*. Such an awareness would have further strengthened, in Rilke's perception of the world, the element of Praise against that of Lament.

But enough of what might have been. At the moment when Rilke's poetical creation achieved its climax the element of Praise burst forth in the *Sonnets* autonomously, spontaneously and, for himself, totally unexpectedly. He himself had developed in the direction of utter affirmation.

And now a last question to all who love Rilke: which of us would like to do without the tentative, groping, preliminary nature of his statements and without the mood of tenderness, sorrow and compassion which imbues his most spiritual insights? Some of this he might have lost had he found in Rudolf Steiner the teacher who might have given him greater certainty.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without expressing my gratitude to, and appreciation of, J. B. Leishman's translations of Rilke. He has shown that even the most delicate and exquisite poetry can be expressed in a beautiful English which, for those who read Rilke in German, is transparent to the values, rhythms and music of the original as well as faithfully preserving the meaning with all its intended ambiguities, suggestions and affirmations.

1

DER PANTHER
Im Jardin des Plantes, Paris

Sein Blick ist vom Vorübergehn der Stäbe
so müd geworden, dass er nichts mehr hält.
Ihm ist, als ob es tausend Stäbe gäbe
und hinter tausend Stäben keine Welt.

Der weiche Gang geschmeidig starker Schritte,
der sich im allerkleinsten Kreise dreht,
ist wie ein Tanz von Kraft um eine Mitte,
in der betäubt ein grosser Wille steht

Nur manchmal schiebt der Vorhang der Pupille
sich lautlos auf —. Dann geht ein Bild hinein,
geht durch der Glieder angespannte Stille —
und hört im Herzen auf zu sein.

2

WENDUNG

Werk des Gesichts ist getan,
tue nun Herz-Werk
an den Bildern in dir, jenen gefangenen; denn du
überwältigtest sie: aber nun kennst du sie nicht.
Siehe, innerer Mann, dein inneres Mädchen,
dieses errungene aus
tausend Naturen, dieses
erst nur errungene, nie
noch geliebte Geschöpf.

3

XI

Manche, des Todes, entstand ruhig geordnete Regel,
weiterbezwingender Mensch, seit du im Jagen beharrst;
mehr doch als Falle und Netz, weiss ich dich, Streifen
von Segel,
den man hinuntergehängt in den höhligen Karst.
Leise liess man dich ein, als wärst du ein Zeichen,
Freiden zu feiern. Doch dann: rang dich am Rande der
Knecht,
— und, aus den Höhlen, die Nacht warf eie Handvoll
von bleichen
taumelnden Tauben ins Licht...

Aber auch *das* ist im Recht.

Fern von dem Schauenden sei jeglicher Hauch des
Bedauerns,
nicht nur vom Jäger allein, der, was sich zeitig erweist,
wachsam und handelnd vollzieht.

Töten ist eine Gestalt unseres wandernden Trauerns...
Rein ist im heiteren Geist,
was an uns selber geschieht.

4

XXIX

Stiller Freund der vielen Fernen, fühle,
wie dein Atem noch den Raum vermehrt.
Im Gebälk der finstern Glockenstühle
lass dich läuten. Das, was an dir zehrt,

wird ein Starkes über dieser Nahrung.
Geh in der Verwandlung aus und ein.
Was ist deine leidendste Erfahrung?
Ist dir Trinken bitter, werde Wein.

Sei in dieser Nacht aus Übermass
Zauberkraft am Kreuzweg deiner Sinne,
ihrer seltsamen Begegnung Sinn.

Und wenn dich das Irdische vergass,
zu der stillen Erde sag: Ich rinne.
Zu dem raschen Wasser sprich: Ich bin.

5

...Sind wir vielleicht *hier*, um zu sagen: Haus,
Brücke, Brunnen, Tor, Krug, Obstbaum, Fenster, —
höchstens: Saul, Turm ... aber zu *sagen*, verstehst,
oh zu sagen *so*, wie selber die Dinge niemals
innig meinten zu sein. ...

6

Preise dem Engel die Welt, nicht die unsägliche, *ihm*
kannst du nicht grosstun mit herrlich Erfültem;
im Weltall,
wo er fühlender fühlt, bist du ein Neuling. Drum zeig
ihm das Einfache, das, von Geschlecht zu Geschlechtern
gestaltet,
als ein Unsriges lebt, neben der Hand und im Blick.
Sag ihm die Dinge. Er wird staunender stehn; wie du
standest
bei dem Seiler in Rom, oder beim Töpfer am Nil.

7

DIE NEUNTE ELEGIE

...warum dann
Menschliches müssen — und, Schicksal vermeidend,
sich sehnen nach Schicksal?...

Oh, *nicht*, weil Glück ist,
dieser voreilige Vorteil eines nahen Verlusts.
Nicht aus Neugier, oder zur Übung des Herzens,
das auch im Lorbeer *wäre*...

Aber weil Hiersein viel ist, und weil uns scheinbar
alles das Hiesige braucht, dieses Schwindende, das
seltsam uns angeht. Uns, die Schwindendsten. *Ein* Mal
jedes, nur *ein* Mal. *Ein* Mal und nichtmehr. Und wir auch
ein Mal. Nie wieder. Aber dieses
ein Mal gewesen zu sein, wenn auch nur *ein* Mal:
irdisch gewesen zu sein, scheint nicht widerrufbar.



*William Mann
in 1954*



William and Liselotte on their wedding day, 1st of Advent 1929

THE TASKS AND DEEDS IN THE LIFE OF WILLIAM MANN

by Roswitha Spence

Augustus William von Kaufmann was born six months into the twentieth century on June 6th, 1900, in Solotwina, a small village at the foot of the Carpathian mountains — then part of Austria and soon to belong to the South of Poland. His British father, but of German ancestry, was born in Australia and was, at the turn of the century, director of some oil fields in Galicia (Eastern Europe). Georg von Kaufmann was very much a Victorian father with all the discipline and autocracy that implied; added to this was an ungoverned temper, making him a parent to be feared and respected. Of his first marriage to an English lady, three children were born — Katy, George, and one who died in infancy. The eldest, Katy, was to become a nurse and welfare officer through both world wars in the slums of London and was in fact one of the original pioneers of the National Health Service. George studied science and was to meet and work closely with Rudolf Steiner, translating on Steiner's English lecture tours and developing the work of Projective Geo-metry. Augustus William was born of his father's second marriage to a German lady named Elsa Franz, a clergyman's daughter, and was the adored, and probably spoilt, baby of the family!

Augustus William was, from infancy, affectionately called "Muchi" and this name he carried for three quarters of his life, until his 60th birthday, when he decided it was time to be called by his Christian name. He felt "Augustus" to be too ponderous for him, so he asked all but his wife to call him "William" and, to help them along, charged one penny each time a friend or colleague lapsed. It is astonishing how quickly the transition was accomplished! This little detail in William's life is remarkably indicative of his personality: taking hold of a given situation and, with decisive clarity, transforming it into a free choice.

When William reminisced about his early childhood a great glow of warmth would suffuse his whole being, with an adoration for his mother, a devotion for the Carpathian mountains, for his treasured horses and, quite particularly, for the Polish peasants. This love for everything Polish was to

endure his whole life, visible in all the Polish peasant crafts scattered around his room and home, and in the immediate way he would speak in Polish to any native of that land. This love of the peasant sustained in him, perhaps, the peasant in himself, which enabled him to reach and love the simplicity of heart in others.

The other theme of reminiscence was totally opposite for William, and filled him with sorrow and pain whenever he spoke of his years at Mill Hill boarding school (London). During these years he became the victim of every cruelty known to the schoolboy of those times, until it reached such a crisis that he became seriously ill and his father was called from Poland to collect him. Just before leaving Mill Hill, William was to have a strange premonition and said to his school fellows "such behaviour leads to war". Only months later came the outbreak of World War I.

William was to complete his schooling in Bavaria (Southern Germany), on a lakeside surrounded by beautiful mountains, and these years were, by contrast, incredibly happy for him. However, with the outbreak of war, his British passport had to be replaced with a German one.

It is possibly during these years that his deep love of nature was first able to be realized, and led him to then spend two years working on a farm. One of his tasks there was to nurse a herd of cows through foot and mouth disease, and only a very few died — cows were very special for him thereafter!

Now twenty-one years old, William chose to study agriculture at the University of Munich for three years, taking his degree in 1924, and it was during this time — in 1922 — that his brother George invited him to come to a lecture by Rudolf Steiner. George was already wholly committed to the work of Rudolf Steiner and had on different occasions spoken with William about Anthroposophy. The brothers shared a deep and sensitive friendship throughout their lives and when later he himself came to Anthroposophy, their widely different approaches to their work seemed to reach across and encompass an incredible range of knowledge. But at William's first and only meeting with Rudolf Steiner, he was to embarrass his brother by promptly falling asleep! It was with an impish grin and twinkling eye that, many years later, he would recount this event to his students, and also have a great smile of understanding for those who fell sleep in his own lectures: "I am glad that I can help them to higher experiences" he said on more than one occasion! William joined the Anthroposophical Society in 1925.

Following his agricultural degree, William was then to try his hand at his father's profession, spending five months on an oil rig in Texas, USA. It was

one of the most exciting adventures that he would recount to children and friends. He would have his audience sitting on the edge of their chairs, with shining eyes and bated breath, listening to descriptions of the hazards of machinery, desert and rattlesnakes. So vivid were the pictures he conjured that each one would feel as though they had been there too. The imaginativeness of story telling was to grow and become richer throughout William's life, with an ever-greater degree of pedagogical quality, so that through the unfolding of the tale the listeners' hearts and minds would be stretched to infinite horizons and "return to earth" deeply enriched.

The decisive moment in his life came in 1926 when Captain W. O. Field visited the family home in Poland as George's guest. Captain Field, or W.O.F. as he was known, was a teacher at "The New School", in Streatham, London — later to become "Michael Hall" — and the colleagues there had commissioned Captain Field to find a teacher for the German language. Thus William was invited to join the faculty and commit his abundant creative enthusiasm to the task of teaching — a task he was to identify with ever more deeply for the sixty years to come.

One difficulty had to be overcome before he was able to live and work again in England and that was his German passport. Much pulling of strings through friends of friends was to be necessary before William was granted British nationality. This incident on the face of it seems insignificant, and yet he, in his whole being, was so free of any particular nationality, so at home in different languages, that he was essentially a "European", and any kind of boundary or passport inevitably clipped his wings.

William was at all times a lively, outgoing and incredibly energetic man, and in those early years he made strong and lasting impressions on those with whom he came in contact, notably one playwright by the name of Ronald Mackenzie. William had a great love of music and was himself a skilled pianist and flautist, and it was William the pianist who intrigued Ronald Mackenzie sufficiently to write a play about him called "Musical Chairs". This play was to run its West End season with a talented young actor named John Gielgud playing the lead. But this incident was to embarrass William painfully and make him so uncomfortable that it never featured in his reminiscences. It was the work of The New School that absorbed his time and interest and was to lay the foundations of a unique and lasting signature of what a teaching vocation could be.

It was to teach the German language that William was invited to The New School, but very soon other subjects were added, such as Woodwork,

Religion, black and white drawing, choir singing, and then, later, History of Art. But his energy extended far beyond the classroom, taking responsibility for the social and environmental life of the school. The memories of "those early Streatham days" still live vividly in the hearts of those who were part of the making. Jesse Darrel recalls: "I was amazed at his 'all-roundness'; he took endless trouble to meet what was asked of him and brought science, art and religion to any task he undertook, but everything had to be rooted in Anthroposophy". Francis Edmunds said: "He was always The Teacher and was unswerving in his sense of truth". Francis also recounts with amusement how some children asked him: "Why is it that when Mr. von Kaufmann comes into the room there's absolute silence and attention and when you come in there's bedlam?". William demanded complete authority and was unable to compromise at any level — a very positive quality on the one hand, but one that had its shadow side in that it excluded him from many things, and also excluded the children who were unable to live up to his high standards.

Before meeting the work of Rudolf Steiner, William's zest and energy sprang out of an eager response to all that life had to offer him, but as his studies of Anthroposophy deepened more and more, he would strive for greater clarity and consciousness in his actions. It was as though every morning, on waking up, he would view the tasks of the day ahead and ready himself to bring all he could towards each detail, but in freedom and decisiveness. William had, as a young man, already chosen for himself a very disciplined path of schooling which was to become not only a deeply ingrained habit, but also a very real life-line in the difficulties that destiny was to bring.

It was in the small details of daily life that his personality was most vibrant — for example, in the meticulous way he would dress and the deliberate choice of colour for his cravat, depending on which subject he was to teach that day. The children loved it, and still remember with joy how they were allowed to put in a request for "the purple one tomorrow"! Or if making a little sign for the milkman to know the number of pints for the day, the whole "gadget" had to be aesthetic as well as practical and durable. To make beautiful and useful items was a source of delight and challenge to William throughout his life, giving enormous pleasure to those fortunate enough to receive them as gifts.

It is remarkable the extent to which William's personality permeates the memories of those who recall their connections with him. No memories

appear blurred or vague — on the contrary, they spring to mind with astonishing clarity and vividness. Although he was to take on two classes for the latter years of their lower schooling, he was never to be class teacher for the full eight years, and the lasting memories shared by those who were there relate much more to specific events in the various subjects he taught. For example in the teaching of German, Martin Askew recalls: "William's technique of teaching German was excellent; when giving one word he would give the whole family of words related, like the nouns and verbs, etc., so that the pupil would learn much more than just one word; and all the poems he taught us we learned for life". William laid the foundations of the German language in his pupils so that when, later, they perhaps travelled to Germany, they not only had the language to converse in, but were also able to connect with the German culture. He had a great love for German literature, particularly Goethe and Schiller, and this he was able to pass on to the children. William also had a particular technique for his teaching of black and white drawing where time and again he was able to take the children through three distinct stages: the first, where all the crudities of early adolescence would push through, the second revealed deep loneliness, and the third would shine forth with great new idealism. As an artist, he never pushed his children but encouraged them to try harder; his black and white work was very strong and clear. In painting, too, he would bring the children to a real "living in colour" experience, that would sustain them for life. He was a natural artist, but self taught.

However, for some children the break time was the favourite time: there William would answer endless questions about anything and everything. Bob Wills recalls: "He gave us the opportunity to talk to him, the walks around the garden set an example of the value of 'being', even more than in the class room. One question we asked was about war. His reply was: The real problem is between East and West".

School expeditions to the Lake District and elsewhere were also times when his energy and enthusiasm, his exacting authority, but also generous humour, made everyone in his company feel very alive and the memories flood back in colourful abundance: "William loved to drive fast in an open sports car; it was the first time I had ever travelled at seventy miles per hour". "I showed my bicycle to him, but the tyre was not good enough for him, so he gave me money to buy a new one". "We were reading comics on the top of the mountain; he got so angry he blew us right off the top". "William put little copper tops on to each post to stop the rain rotting the wood". "We went to

Whipsnade Zoo where his interest in everything taught me how to look at an elephant". "He used to play silly games like rolling himself into a carpet, or singing light-hearted songs". "I met William by chance on a railway station and was immediately invited to supper on that same day, where he introduced me to 'Knowledge of the Higher Worlds'. Without hesitating he knew how to help younger people to that which they were seeking".

Among the colleagues at The New School were Arthur and Jane Sheen who had a young lady from Germany to help in the home called Liselotte Ehlen. Liselotte was a eurythmist and Bothmer gymnast and had spent most of her school years at the original Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany, where she also met Rudolf Steiner. However, Liselotte's work with the Sheens was to be of short duration, as William very soon recognized her as his future wife and on 1st Advent, 1929, they were married. William and Liselotte had two children — first a son, Christopher, and then a daughter, Roswitha. Like most newly-married couples their first home was an attic flat, but soon they built a semi-detached house with Jesse and Dorothy Darrel and their daughter Bridget, who was the same age as Christopher. Little did they think that they were to be neighbours for life in three different settings. Owning a new home opened up all sorts of new challenges for William's abundant creative energy. He designed and built much of the furniture, brought tapestries and artifacts from his beloved Poland and landscaped the garden, complete with pond for the children to paddle in; together they created a world of beauty in which the goodness, truth and joyous laughter of a home could grow in health and strength. But his architectural skills were still somewhat green! He discovered a wonderful unused space in the roof, ideal for a workshop, "except there's this wretched beam in the way, I know, let's cut it out ... I wonder why the saw keeps getting stuck? ...". A few days later all the ceilings were discovered to be sagging, so the builders had to be called in, and with much scratching of heads and lifting of eyebrows, they explained the principles of physics in roof structures and proceeded to jack up and bolt each beam back into place. One might imagine this little adventure would caution him in any further escapades, but not a bit of it. On the contrary, it seemed to launch him on to a career of taking charge of all things practical at the school, designing and building and working very closely with Mr. Whitmarsh, whom he engaged for the responsibility of maintenance. William's gales of laughter about his 'Loft Workshop' were to resound many, many times throughout his life, but he always learned his lessons very thoroughly and no mistakes were ever repeated. He also had an eagle eye for

precision, he could spot a horizontal wood slat half an inch out of true the length of a wall. William demanded absolute exactness, tidiness and promptness from himself and also from all who worked for him, and for those whose standards perhaps had other priorities, he was a difficult man to work for, greatly respected but also feared.

His love and respect for Mr. Whitmarsh was very strong and over the many years in Streatham, Minehead and Forest Row, they worked on countless projects together. Mr. Whitmarsh recalls, of the early Streatham days: "Mr. Mann bought a paint spraying machine — he loved modern technology — to be able to spray the classroom walls different shades of colour. One colour would have been enough for anyone else, but he had to mix seven. It had to be exactly right. Where it mattered there was no compromise". On another occasion William decided that a Midsummer Festival should have a grand St. John's fire. But where to get the wood in the middle of the town? — then Mr. Whitmarsh saw that the trees in the street were being pruned. They now had the wood, but how to light the fire? "We need twelve torches, Mr. Whitmarsh", so out of candle stubs and brown paper the first torches were made and thus not only was there a magnificent Midsummer Festival, but also a founding of what was to become a school tradition still alive to this day.

In those early years of The New School many of the deeds of the colleagues were to become the life and soul substance upon which Michael Hall now stands, and William's contribution to that is also visible. Perhaps most significant is the religious life of the school in the religion lessons and the Sunday services. Within a year of joining the school, he went to Stuttgart, Germany, and met with Dr. H. Hahn in order to learn of the whole impulse of teaching religion in the Waldorf School movement and to bring the texts back to found the Sunday rhythm of the "children's", the "youth" and the "offering" services for the three different age groups of the children. Dorothy Martin, Jesse Darrel and later, Francis Edmunds, joined him in this vital work, as lifespring for the being of school. Here again, the memories of those who experienced those services are strong and vivid, for some it was awe inspiring, even heavy, for others the awe filled them with reverence. Conrad Saxon Snell recalls: "I remember him standing in front of the altar in sober black, very 'held'. Especially the offering service, it was a deep experience". Elizabeth Edmunds remembers: "He spoke the words so clearly, every word went deep. His language was so beautiful". In the religion lessons also, William made deep and lasting impressions so that the subjects he spoke of, such as the life of Kaspar Hauser and others, became fundamental knowledge for life.

Christianity and religion were the most central and powerful forces that lived in William and guided and influenced all that he did throughout his long life. He never once experienced religious doubt and his reverence for the Divine and Spiritual was total and utterly dedicated. Francis Edmunds said of him: "You could experience his selfless devotion when he spoke the services for the school; at the altar he was completely The Child. That was also his unquestioning attitude to Anthroposophy". This devotion to the religious in all things, was to grow ever stronger, permeating all that he undertook in his research of art, in his practical application and above all, in his way of teaching every subject he took responsibility for.

The darkening clouds of world destiny were gathering towards the advent of World War II, when it became evident that a move out of London was essential. Through family connections of Jane Sheen a property in Minehead, Somerset, was chosen and the whole school moved in late August, 1939, only days before the outbreak of war. Some four years previously Francis Edmunds had felt The New School needed a true name and was the one inspired to suggest "Michael Hall". So it was as Michael Hall that the school found its new home, aptly, in St. Michael's Road behind St. Michael's Church. The property was beautifully situated high on North Hill overlooking the Bristol Channel and Wales to the north and, to the south, the open wild country of Exmoor; so remote that for many of the children the entire experience of war was just the word alone.

Where the Streatham years were ones of pioneering, the Minehead years were ones of 'deepening', just as the post-war years in Forest Row were to become the years of truly grounding and establishing the life of Waldorf education in Britain, together with the other Steiner schools around the country. And so began a new phase in the life of the school and all those connected to it. It was also at this time that William, George and Kate von Kaufmann (all in England with British passports) needed to shed their German name to avoid being 'housed at His Majesty's pleasure'. Kate chose Eglin, George became George Adams and William kept the last syllable of their surname and has since always been known as William Mann.

Michael Hall's newly-acquired property in Minehead opened up a whole new world of possibilities for him, and presented him with the first major challenge of his architectural abilities. The adjacent barn had living quarters at one end for the Darrels and at the other a grain loft that he converted for his own family. The space between had several loose boxes for horses, "an ideal space for the school Hall". The creation of the Hall in Minehead features as

the most prominent memory of William, as being a real 'Deed' and 'Gift' to the whole cultural life of the school. Mr. Whitmarsh recalls: "Mr. Mann was the only driving force there and he would get on with it and see it done, and see it through". Jesse Darrel observed how "He was very sensitive for Theatre". and Elizabeth Edmunds: "The creation of the stage was not only practical but perfect and it led him on to further deeds". Christopher Mann remembers well "the energy and willpower on the practical side, wrangling deals out of people for the school during the war. With the shortage of building materials he managed to find bits and pieces all over the place. For the building of the stage, the wiring and lighting etc., he got older children to help. Children were endlessly soldering biscuit tins for flood light". The whole building was originally without electricity and the dark evenings at home felt very cosy with oil lamps. But with the conversion of the Hall, the whole building was wired under William's supervision and his greatest adventure here was to build a dimmer system for the coloured lighting of the stage. Mr. Whitmarsh explained: "We got accumulator jars — nine of them — inside each one were four Aladdin lamp glasses, a copper plate at the base of each one. Inside, moving up and down, was a barrel-shaped tube of copper connected to a pulley, the whole in a solution of water with a little salt. The nearer the tube got to the bottom, the more intense was the light. We made the whole lighting system, lights and all. Everything had to be his way, but Theatre was a very real thing for Mr. Mann".

One very important activity that found its place on that stage was the Eurythmy that Liselotte Mann brought to the school — not only in lessons with the children or the adults that she trained, but also in many Eurythmy performances that were then taken on tour. William played a very important role in this work, both with lighting and even more with the music. Music was a central love of his, playing his piano and flute for the joy of it as well as for his wife and for the school orchestra. On many an evening in the home, he would accompany Liselotte's singing, especially songs by Schubert, and later when Christopher played the violin and Roswitha the cello, family trios would resound in the home. Mozart's Magic Flute, Bruckner, and quite particularly Richard Wagner's Parsifal, were among the most loved works, and William was able to share these on an intimate level with children and adults alike. For many years he also conducted the choir with great gusto and enthusiasm, awakening a love for music in all who participated.

The regular festivals and annual Christmas plays also took place on the new stage, and although William was to play an imposing "God" and a lusty

shepherd "Gallus", his love of theatre leaned more towards the architectural side and here it was possible for his love of wood to be given expression, in both panelling and carving. At the far end of the Hall under the Mann family's flat was an ideal space for a woodwork room and he spent many hours there, beyond those of the woodwork lessons he gave. Elizabeth Edmunds recalls: "William's hands were extraordinarily large and able, they were so characteristic of him, the way he touched substance. He inspired us". Francis Edmunds observed: "In the woodwork he did with the children, his meticulous way led them through early exercises to be able to arrive later at a craft in shaping simple or more complex objects, like benches or letter boxes. William became an example for other teachers". Christopher Mann remembers: "He was very thorough! When sanding anything, no white or rough spots were allowed even after repeated wetting, and when two forms were to be symmetrical they had to be exact. He was very nit-picky!". The children who were unskilled or unable to make any effort were the ones who suffered from William's impatience; he could be very sarcastic, which could hurt deeply. His love of wood led him also to study its nature and the distinctiveness of one variety from another, so that he was able to point out to the children the bark and leaf formation of the tree that was of the same kind they were carving in class. When, on one occasion, for the whole community, 100 lbs of marmalade was cooked out in the open in a large copper bowl, only birch wood was used as it burned hottest and best. Bob Wills remembers: "He always expected a little more than we could do. When I thought I'd finished something, he would say 'Oh, no, it has to be finished properly'! He also taught us how to treat tools; we were never allowed to be sloppy. William's standards were very high, and his personality made one try and achieve high standards".

William was always schooling his standards in his own work — for example, in his creating of the Lectern, familiar to many. This Lectern is a good example of how he brought craft, art and reverence for the spiritual, into one deed. In the designing he penetrated deeply into what was asked for in the way of form: What was it to lecture? To speak the true word? As well as stand behind it in human proportion of height and width. Mr. Whitmarsh recalls: "Mr. Mann got an ash tree and cut it into three inch planks and, just as he'd seen it done at the Goetheanum in Dornach, each layer had to be cut and planed and glued together with lino glue, then clamped with a car jack. He took many weekends carving it, to have it ready for a conference". It has been used in countless Michael Hall conferences ever since.

With the ending of World War II, it was felt that Michael Hall should

move back, if not into London, then within easy access, as the school was originally founded as a London school. Cecil Harwood and William Mann were assigned the task of finding the right property and eventually discovered a stately mansion with barracks from wartime use, surrounded by a beautiful park, in a sleepy little village, called Forest Row, thirty miles south of London. Thus in 1945, Michael Hall uprooted itself again and undertook the move to its third and present home at Kidbrooke Park. The mansion made an ideal hostel for the children, The Clock House and other cottages on the property housed the teachers and their families and the huts, with very little alteration became cosy classrooms, some of which still stand today. One of these huts was converted by William and Liselotte into a snug little bungalow for their family. The many children of staff and school had been very fortunate with the grounds, moors and sea of Minehead and very accustomed to feeling at home in nature; now they had new territory to explore and very soon took possession of every nook and cranny they could find. William also very soon found access to some horses (he never lost his love of riding) and took groups of children further afield to explore all that Ashdown Forest had to offer, even making friends with local land owners and obtaining permission to 'trespass' their acres, his love of nature and of horses communicating itself immediately to all who shared these outings with him.

A new surge of creative energy welled up in William, now challenged by what was felt to be the true and permanent home of Michael Hall. Mr. Whitmarsh can still hear him say: "We're going to build a school, let's get going", and he got everyone moving. The large garage was converted into Laboratory and Physics classrooms, the little ancient dairy was pulled down to make way for a Gymnasium designed and directed by him, and when one of the classroom huts was damaged by fire it was decided to remove it altogether as it would be a good space for an assembly Hall. William's experiences with the Minehead hall were of great help as he was able to organize his team to a more complex and beautiful panelling of the interior, and carved stage front and steps into an artistic whole.

When, later, more staff houses and the upper classroom block were built, he worked closely with Charles Austin and their many tussles became the fabric of a deep and lasting friendship. Michael Hall, like the great oak tree in the playground that all children love to climb, was growing deep roots, and wide and high branches.

Throughout the many years of working with Michael Hall and Anthroposophy, William's outward activities were balanced by an active inwardness

in his studies and esoteric research. More and more, his personality was forming into a quality of inner certainty and outer competence, carried by a tremendous fire of enthusiasm that took some people with it, but left others bruised, even 'singed'. Michael Hall had many remarkable and strong individualities among the teachers and staff, each with unique and vital creative capacities, so that the task of collegueship was tested on many levels. But William's destiny was to test him to a far greater degree during the first fifteen to eighteen years at Kidbrooke — indeed test and mould the life of the whole family. Already, before the war, Liselotte had suffered a difficult illness for which she received medication that was to clear it for many years, but now, after the war, this illness overtook her repeatedly, rendering Liselotte unable to look after the home and children and very often needing to go to hospital for long spells at a time. These years were incredibly hard for Liselotte and William and caused them both deep suffering. Francis Edmunds says of that time: "Liselotte's illness was his teacher, as ever again he made his resolve. Here his benevolence and sympathetic understanding of others came to the fore. That is why at that time he earned great love from the students. There was a real transformation in William during those years that stands out as a remarkable fact. It was his version of Dostoevsky's redemption through suffering". Elizabeth Edmunds recalls: "He was very much the mother as well as the father. The gentler side of him was remarkable. Each time Liselotte was ill he would win through the troubles. Their sacrifice, on both sides, became a golden vessel in the end". Many friends came forward to help during those years, including William's mother, who was at last able to leave Germany and spend the final two years of her life with the family — the bond between them all very deep and strong.

It was perhaps in these years where his determination to be creative and free in the face of difficult odds became most manifest, particularly in the small events of daily life in the home. For example, there were occasions when Liselotte was especially in need of cheering, and William would spin the most amazing stories, about little classroom events, what a child did or said, pictures of nature, pure fantasy or nonsense. If the sun was shining on a Sunday morning, a picnic would suddenly be created and the whole family bundled into the car for a day by the sea, Liselotte wrapped in blankets and cosseted. Cleaning the house became a weekly ritual of adventure, polishing the green-stained floor and dusting the piano "...from high notes down, ... or up today?". His abounding sense of fun brought much laughter to balance out the tears. But William was a man of extremes and just as the energy and joy

would take hold, so also would he suffer times of deep anguish, where his fire would be quenched and nothing could make him smile. As though the whole sorrow of mankind weighed on his heart, he was unable to find a balance, or quality of equilibrium. These shadows would overtake him, particularly when his own health failed him. The years of anxiety and struggle left their mark, and were to temper his moods and actions for the rest of his life.

As a father, William was both wonderful and difficult; difficult because his way was best, his judgement right, his discipline absolute; wonderful because his love, warmth and encouraging support were never in doubt, his interest in everything so alive it could almost seem like 'invasion'! Dull moments in the home were few and far between, and if one should maybe threaten, it would be banished by: "Wita", (their daughter's nickname) "stop ironing and let it cool, you should know how a tool works before using it, take it to pieces carefully and see where each piece belongs and what it is for, then put it together again". Or, "Come on, Wita, let's make a lamp for Mum. We'll put some wood on the lathe, you do the stem, and I'll do the base", and a new table lamp would grace the home that Saturday evening. William was very quick and agile and would love to make and build things with his children, and later, when, as an adult, Christopher came to teach, his father would do all he could to help in every way, becoming a real friend and colleague. As a friend too, as Francis Edmunds describes: "He was a loyal friend and colleague when once the mutual understanding was there and the trust established. For his friends he was a pillar of strength". Jesse Darrel said: "Whenever I had a practical or human problem, he would give deep thought to it then bring me enormous help". Linda Nunhofer recalls: "William had a very unique friendship with Carl; there was incredible closeness between them, he could turn to Carl for anything. Their conversations would nearly always be out of William's preparations for classes, and in their Anthroposophical studies they shared a very deep connection". Being 'in preparation' was William's constant striving and his way of transforming that which had to be done into that which he wanted to do — with his family, his friends, his work and with himself.

The most central core of William's striving was undoubtedly his penetration of Anthroposophy, its Christian foundation, and how this brought enlightenment to his whole study of the history of art. How art through the ages is in fact a manifestation of the evolution of consciousness and mankind. In the pre-war years his studies were bounded by the books available, but with the ending of the war, when the possibilities of travel opened again, he began

his quest for art treasures in the original, searching further afield in Europe, especially Italy. William had a passion for travel, in fact he had little ability to sit still and for others in his company he could be felt to be restless, even exhausting, but nevertheless his enthusiasm, especially for art, carried many along with him. And so began his regular trips to Italy nearly every school holiday. In the early years he took his family, the car half loaded with camping gear and the other half all photographic equipment (in those days very primitive and cumbersome). Their destination — one or other major city of art galleries and architectural splendour, taking in as many churches as possible on the way. At each stop he would search out the man 'in charge' and ask for permission to photograph and his unique quality of determination, clothed in genuine charm just about always succeeded. Then would come the setting up of camp in some nearby beauty spot — it had to be idyllic and was chosen with the utmost care — followed by the unpacking of the elaborate equipment. Liselotte was usually allowed to admire the work of art for as long as she chose, whereas William, his 'eye' so seeing, his perception so alive, would stand for a moment totally still, deeply moved and filled with wonder, before organizing his photo team of teenage son and daughter to their posts. There were no automatic devices on the camera, so it fell to Roswitha to crawl on the floor and measure the distance from picture to camera (she grew to know the floors much better than the pictures!), while Christopher unravelled the lengthy cables for the special lighting, then each would climb onto some precarious perch to hold the lamps steady while William took the photograph. Hundreds and hundreds of artworks were to be photographed all over Greece, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Germany, Belgium — even Egypt, and in each situation the practical obstacles were different, needing all the diplomacy and ingenuity possible. On one occasion in Ravenna (Italy), the Giotto frescos were so high that, to avoid distortion of angle, William was permitted to use an eighty-foot high scaffolding tower on tiny wheels, wobbling crazily on the uneven floor.

Back home again in the long winter evenings the whole family would sit at their round table and make endless slides: the first would stick black tape on to mask all but the picture, the next would clean the glass perfectly, the third put the picture between glass and clamp them together and the fourth stick the edges with tape, and anyone ahead of their team mates would put a white label on it for William to fill in later. In this way a slide collection began to be assembled, long before the souvenir trade made it easy, and was to eventually reach around three thousand slides, many of them not reproduced anywhere

else. Some works of art were not accessible in the original and therefore had to be photographed from a book, for which he built a special camera hoist and table in his loft. Each picture chosen for the slide collection was of particular significance for him; for what he perceived in it in his joy of discovery and for what he could bring to his students to awaken them to ever-new revelations through art. Elizabeth Edmunds recalls: "He brought us a tremendous amount of depth. First the experience of the darkened room and then the quality of the art on the screen and being led through that — it was an experience of being led through evolution".

With the slide collection more or less complete and his knowledge of where to find what, William's regular trips to Italy took on more the nature of a guided tour, first with friends and then with the Michael Hall students of class 12 — a June/July journey he was to undertake for sixteen consecutive years. He had a great love for the teenager, Linda Nunhofer observed: "He had an incredible capacity with teenagers. He never got fed up with their young silliness; each one was new and William gave them his whole attention. When he took the classes to Italy and then came back, each class would end up by being 'the best' class; each new group and situation was best each time, all the teenagers' joys and enthusiasms were new and wonderful. William never became blasé". But it is also true that he was sometimes carried away by his own enthusiasm to sharing deeper truths with the teenagers prematurely, which could become quite a problem for them. The regularity of these class 12 trips to Italy also established friendships with the youth hostels, restaurateurs and art custodians throughout his favourite haunts, and other guides of galleries, etc., were apparently very tolerant of him: each time he seemed to have more interesting things to say than they did, judging by the amount of tourists they lost to William!

It was during the 1950's that he was first invited to America to give History of Art lectures on both the east and west coasts, travelling by train across the great continent. In fact, he was to give three lecture tours in America and on one occasion also to teach History of Art to a class 9 in Kimberton, Pennsylvania. These journeys inevitably challenged the lecturing capacities of William and helped to gradually change the emphasis in his tasks. He was still very involved with the new developments of buildings and maintenance, very active in the social and cultural life of the school and continued with the Sunday services and teaching of religion lessons — even to having his grandchildren present in his classes. But many of the other subjects that he had taught as a younger man — such as black and white

drawing, choir, woodwork, and even German — were taken over by new colleagues, enabling him to concentrate his attention on teaching History of Art to the classes 9 and History of Architecture to classes 12, followed by the Italy Art Tour. William was also being invited more and more to give lectures on History of Art outside the confines of Michael Hall — in Tunbridge Wells, London, Edinburgh...in fact most major cities and Anthroposophical communities of Great Britain. He developed a quite particular style of lecturing as he grew older; using fewer and fewer pictures, he would take the time to go much deeper into details and the esoteric mysteries to be found therein. He would bring immense determination to his lectures, even when his health troubled him. Peggy Askew noticed: "However frail he would be to begin with, the moment William came to speak about art all his vitality would come back and he would look healthy and strong again". His love of architecture also led him to study the whole artistic impulse of Rudolph Steiner's first and second Goetheanum, so that he not only drew and modelled the many forms but also gave courses and lectures on many different aspects of those great buildings.

Architecture and building, both practical and beautiful, never ceased to be of vital interest to him, so that when it came to building a house for themselves both William and Liselotte spent hours and hours on every little detail of its design and process of building. Liselotte too was always intensely creative and practical so that their house became not so much a 'dream' house as a very 'awake' artistic and practical space for them to live in every aspect that was important to them. It was astonishing how the smallest details would be given the utmost attention: a shelf in the kitchen exactly the right length for that which was to stand upon it — the window just there so that this particular cupboard could stand against that wall — the light switches placed at this height because that's how tall we are. The devotion of friendship that Charles Austen, as architect, was able to give William and Liselotte in his patience and loyalty was remarkable, and when ultimately it was ready for them to move in, the space was already a home, permeated through and through with their consciousness. And once moved in, it was still not finished in that William's love of 'gadgets' would time and again see him in the workshop making shelves for this and lights for that, in the endless joy of home improvement, and each time he would have an impish grin of delighted achievement like a child with a new toy.

Somewhere along the line William 'officially' retired from the school, but it was a great family joke because not only was the word 'retirement' a

contradiction in terms when applied to him, but it seemed that from then on his work increased, only his precarious health holding him back. It was astonishing how much he was able to pack into one day; the steady habits of years enabled him to do with very little sleep provided he got his 'forty winks' after lunch. So his day would begin between 5.00 and 6.00 a.m. with meditations and study and then he would cook the breakfast and be social with Liselotte. Then back at his desk he would work for several hours preparing his next lecture or whatever the current task might be. Next he would leap out of his chair to telephone, see someone, or to make something — most likely nip down to the village to shop, and everywhere he went he would meet and talk to people, always interested in their latest news, always actively involved in what was going on around him. Or he might be bursting with some new discovery that he had made. Francis Edmunds recalls: "William was untiring in his study of Anthroposophy, his work in art. Every new truth that came to him he longed to share with others immediately. The 'child' lived in him eternally". In the afternoon there would be more work at his desk, someone to tea, or meetings, consultations, study groups, etc. After supper a concert, or school play, lecture, home slide show, or whatever was on: William and Liselotte would be there, seldom missing any event, and to end the day he would study some more, often to well beyond midnight. In spite of so much constant activity, William no longer gave one the same experience of restlessness, there was a dignified mellowness in his whole being and a truly attentive listening ability. Without any stress, he was able to plan his life in an orderly fashion, he was able to live, work and rest wholly within the present moment in whatever he was doing. Regrets of the past were foreign to his nature, memories were to be enjoyed. It was the future that was of immense importance for William and his commitment to that future was born out of how he lived in the present moment.

Study and group work were his ways of dedicating himself to 'preparation' — to taking hold of the present moment in such a way that it made the coming moment richer in experience for each and every one; it was his way of stretching the soul capacities of his friends and students to greater height and depths of spiritual and earthly realities. One study group he took over from Captain Field in the mid/late 1940s, and continued with it every term time week for over 40 years until his death. Rene Evans was a member of that group and she described how "William was very much the group leader; his presence very much precluded any 'chattiness', until the latter years when he gradually encouraged others to open up and it became more vocal all round".

Another famous group was for young wives and mothers, meeting their questions and every day struggles on a very human level. He was also part of several other groups that met in a weekly rhythm and for each he would come prepared. One particular study group that was deeply appreciated was the annual "Manifestations of Karma" for Emerson College Foundation Year students. His life-long studies of Anthroposophy and his perceptions of individual people, gave him remarkable insights into this subject.

In 1973, himself aged 73, William transferred the centre of his work and attention to Emerson College: still living in the grounds of Michael Hall and deeply interested in all its developments, he nevertheless felt a very real connection with the adult students and gave the last thirteen years of his life to their questions and inner struggles. In old age he became very gentle, his fire still full of youthful exuberance, but more in warmth and no longer so abrasive. His health more frail than ever, he nevertheless was unstinting in his efforts to help others in whatever way he could, his total interest in every nuance and detail of the other person quite astonishing. Students would marvel at the wealth of warmth and love streaming through his interest in them, so that they felt truly safe to unburden themselves of their deepest troubles, knowing that out of his wisdom he would bring them help and new directions. In the regular History of Art lectures too, new worlds of unsuspected beauty would unfold for the students, and although not all were able to receive his way of speaking, for most participants the lectures were an experience of deep Christian truths revealed through art out of the wisdom of Anthroposophy.

It is interesting that during the last years of his life William took it upon himself to be particularly active in the life of the Biodynamic Farm at Plaw Hatch, Sharpthorne — as though, coming full circle, his agricultural studies in the early 1920s were really able to flower and bear fruit. As a member of St. Anthony's Trust, he was very active, not only in bringing to the attention of the wider community the importance of Bio-dynamic produce, but also helping the people working the farm to deeper understanding of what their task involved. Hardly a week would go by without him visiting there, beside the many study times he would spend with them. Bob Wills described how much they missed him at the St. Anthony Trust meetings, not only for his wisdom but also for the little tasks he volunteered for. "If he decided to do something he could be utterly relied upon".

William never lost his sense of humour, indeed as he grew older his gusts

of laughter would seem to resound ever more loudly as though, with greater insight into spiritual wisdom, his appreciation of the fun and joy of earthly life was enhanced. He would take immense pleasure in the most simple little events, whether easter egg hunting with his grandchildren, or finding just the right pair of shoes that Liselotte wanted. On his 80th birthday he asked Bob Wills if he could borrow his little boat to row around his pond, and for quite a long spell William was delightedly content to splash around and give himself a real treat before joining the family for the festivities. His sense of fun was very infectious and quite unpredictable, so that the most serious moment of research or conversation could be instantly transformed into hilarity. His spontaneity too was never dimmed, whether to instantly nip down to the village to purchase a pot of cream for Liselotte's cooking, to go to some suddenly discovered concert, or to attend to phone calls or problems just brought to his attention. In whatever he did, William's movements would be clear, decisive, and very formed, and his mood of soul wholly centred in that deed.

William was born with a gift for languages and totally at home in English and German, so that the art of translation presented no problem to him. School children in his German lesson would be astonished how he would look at the text in one language and say it out loud in the other, 'reading' at almost normal speed. In the sixty years of his adult life of studying Anthroposophy, he became very familiar with many Rudolph Steiner texts in both languages, and inevitably, eventually came to translating in written form. His handwriting was beautiful, and his shelves filled with passages, notes and cross references from his studies, but he never willingly put his own thoughts into writing for publication. Rather would he be inspired to translate a verse or meditation by Rudolph Steiner when a particular one came to mind for a particular individual need of a friend. He would give deep thought, not only to the choice of words for the correct imagery but also to the sounds and rhythms which he knew to be of equal importance in verses. Often when the verse was finally and beautifully written out, he would think of others who might like to have a copy too, so he would visit his friend Bob Wills to use his photocopier — "The girls in the office loved him, especially when he pinned a copy of the verse on their notice board, which he usually did". Working with William for several years on translations, it was an astonishing experience, not only of crafting German words into English, but also the art of creating a quality of 'Englishness' within the sentence and still being faithful to the original: he would give endless care to the smallest detail. His command of the breadth of language and culture of both the German and the English was extensive.

Throughout their 57 years of marriage William's deep love for Liselotte was abiding and steadfast, he respected her judgement; utterly and greatly revered her sense of the artistic and her depth of wisdom. Their studies on Anthroposophy together were constant and over many years covered an amazing number of Rudolph Steiner's books and lectures, as well as other authors and their works. One would read aloud to the other in the evening — while she mended or he crafted something, their hands would seldom be idle — and so they wove a fabric of communication with each other that was rare and precious. A gift of that collaboration was perhaps the last deed to which William gave his strength: their translation of Rudolph Steiner's *Soul Calendar* verses. Together, on most days, they would work on the verse of that particular week, and then the next and the next throughout the whole year, and then improve it the next time each verse would come along. They were to spend nearly seven years working together in this way until the very last day of William's life. It was again the 1st of Advent, December, 1986, and William and Liselotte's 57th Advent together in marriage; Liselotte described how they both wanted to come up to Emerson College for the festival, but that William was not feeling too well, so he sat in their living room and worked on the overall translation of the verses. One particular word still bothered him as not being quite right and he struggled with it intensely, as though it were a last deed and gift of his life forces, and when at last he found the word he sought, a great sigh breathed out of him. William died later that night.

It was the late Adam Bittleston who invited me to write about the life of William Mann. Adam's gentle strength and encouragement smoothed away every obstacle that I presented, until I asked the basic question "Why?" Adam replied that the theme for the 1989 *Golden Blade* was "Destiny and Freedom" and that William was a wonderful example of how a human being can take hold of their destiny and transform it into freedom. For example, "When Cecil Harwood and William decided on Kidbrooke Park for Michael Hall, destiny worked through them, the destiny of the children, of the school and of Forest Row; when William decided to work at Emerson College it was much more a free choice, as personal creativity and a culmination of all his life's work". Then Adam went on to say: "His deep relationship to the work of the spirit of esoteric Christianity in Christian art became an educating and inspiring experience for pupils and students. It left the hearer wonderfully free".

If destiny is not transformed to freedom, the act of teaching remains at the level of information or instruction. William undoubtedly took this step and became the true teacher; he gave his whole being to the task of nurturing that

which can grow and develop in the human soul. His life was a dedication to The Child, not only the small child at school, but also the eternal child in each human being. Perhaps one of his own grandchildren, Fiona Durman can say it best:

"We all have a concept of the 'true grandfather', no doubt installed in us through magical story books read to us when we were young. Real grandfathers are often, quite naturally, far different from this image. But when I look back to the grandfather I had, he seemed to be (seen through the eyes of a young child) the living image of this concept.

Never passive, but always involved, he'd crouch down and squeeze through the door of a playhouse, not just look in through the window, and likewise with a new toy, he'd try it out and play alongside me. When I related to him a story or experience I remember an attentive man, bending down to my level, with head bent slightly to one side in concentration. He'd always respond either with a serious comment, a light remark or hearty laugh. His laughter was frequent, his jovial nature a tonic on otherwise dull occasions. In the last five years or so, a time I felt he aged considerably, I noticed the balance changing and his seriousness coming more to the fore. But he never lost his capacity to laugh, a hearty, merry laugh that came straight from his heart.

He was not an indulgent grandfather showering us with endless toys and sweets, but he gave us the far greater gift of his time, his attention and his love. My strongest memory was of him taking us for rides in an old wooden cart. It was narrow, but long enough for two of us to sit in, with a long pole to turn the wheels and pull it by. I can still smell the hedgerow and the humid air of the greenhouse, as he pulled us through the school nursery near their house. I can still conjure up the sound and feel of the wooden wheels creaking over gravel and stones. I couldn't have been more than eight years old.

Of course, he was a wonderful storyteller. I recall a few Christmas Eves, sitting round the fire, the candles on the tree lit, listening to a Christmas Story. As a teenager, I was sometimes bored by the idea of a long-winded story I couldn't make head or tail of, but likewise, I can't remember such a story ending without me being taken in by it and the mood created.

For all his abundance of good nature, humour and love, he was not someone to be tampered with. Wrong-doings were reprimanded, and his disapproval greatly avoided. I looked up to him with great respect, admiration, love and a tinge of awe-inspired fear. In my eyes he really was a 'true' grandfather".

* * *

Any life span of 86 years must be an immense journey of change and transition, individual and unique, but perhaps one aspect that is remarkable in connection with William is how he related to other people and the extent to which he is still present in their experiences of him. Was it perhaps his 'all-roundness', the 'whole human being' which made him accessible to so many? Perhaps his warmth and youthfulness that gave each friend the certain knowledge that they had his whole attention? For me he was and is the father, teacher and friend whose example is impossible to live up to and equally impossible to ignore, but whose quality of being lives with me in constant and abundant joy. Each person who knew him would have a different word to encompass their experience of William Mann; I would choose the word "activity" — the kind of activity that is so needed to transform destiny into freedom: activity of thought, of heart, of deed, born of an inwardness of soul to serve as best he could the high ideals he set himself, towards the well-being of those he cared for and towards the future of mankind.

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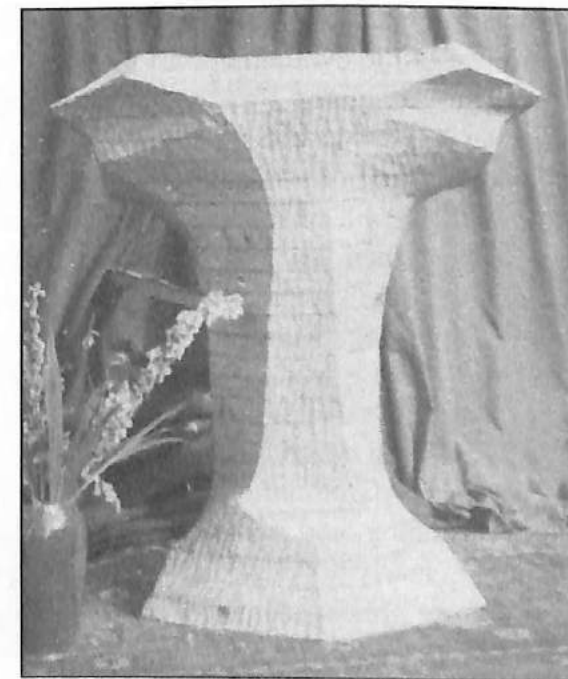


The College of Teachers in the Streatham days



*Above:
William and Liselotte
in 1982*

*Right:
The Lectern
made by William
in Minehead
during the
War*



WILLIAM MANN — THE TEACHER

by Ted Roberts

My first meeting with William Mann was during an introductory talk given by Cecil Harwood in the autumn of 1962 at the then Michael Hall Teachers' Training Course. We were twelve in all, meeting those who were to teach us in the forthcoming year. To this day, I remember a distinguished, white-haired figure who sat quietly, carefully studying us during his introduction as an art teacher and lecturer who owned what could be the largest private collection of art slides in the country. His intent gaze could give William a stern appearance at times, and I was to find out later that this quality was certainly an aspect of his character — but on this occasion, formalities over, one quickly discovered a warm and enthusiastic spirit at work behind this outer appearance.

During the year that followed, his courses on the study of art — as he preferred to call them — were thought-provoking and pervaded by enthusiasm born of knowledge, something which I had not experienced before. Through his study of Anthroposophy he brought a profound and living experience of the evolution of art to his listeners.

Some years later, I was to enter his study of art and architecture main lesson periods in both classes nine and twelve at Michael Hall. Here I had first-hand experience of his handling of pupils, and saw the way in which he was able to enthuse a love for the great works of Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Renaissance; then, later in twelve, his presentation of modern forms of architecture. Pupils warmed to his descriptions that provided a seedbed, from which many things were to grow in the future. No one more than William Mann knew how important the study of the cultural and aesthetic was for the adolescent, and how it was to form not only a love for art itself, but a basis for the religious and moral life of the pupils.

William Mann came to the study of art through his involvement in religion teaching, and it was this aspect which was central to his lessons. I remember clearly his presentation of such great individuals as Leonardo da Vinci, whose tireless search for truth in all things led him to spend his life in a devotion to the exploration of nature. Through the knowledge he gained by

his studies he was able to free the human spirit which was in danger of being overwhelmed by the world of matter. Such profound study, and thoughts which arose from his work, provided an inspiration and direction for those pupils in class nine who were themselves setting out on their journey into the adult world.

The Italy Trip which was begun by William has, to this day, remained a strong part of the life of the school, and every year class twelve looks eagerly forward to this crowning experience of their education. I had the privilege of sharing several of these trips and of experiencing the energy with which William strode through the hot streets of Florence, Siena, Urbino and Padua. In the churches and museums curators and custodians came to know him and welcomed 'il professore' with warmth each year. Often doors were opened to us which were normally closed to the general public. The Italians were quick to recognize his love of the works of art, and their hearts were also deeply moved by the singing of the classes who, prior to the trip, had carefully prepared pieces to be sung in the churches. William knew that the experience of the forms and colours of Renaissance Italy was only made complete by the human voice. Such experiences made a lasting impression for, years later, postcards from Italy were to find their way to the school, carrying messages of thanks and gratitude for having had the opportunity of exploring these great works of art as part of the pupils' education.

Time and again William strove to bring before his pupils, through art, the joy of discovery and a sense of purpose.

Forever practical, someone who loved to be doing, woodwork was a skill he developed and taught as a subject in his earlier years. Although I did not have any personal experience of him in these early years, I did see him at times at work, either carving or doing carpentry. On one such occasion we were discussing the piece he was working on when he raised his hands and, spreading wide his fingers, he declared that they were the best collection than any man could possess. The school was to benefit greatly from projects he undertook putting his and the pupils' hands towards creating an aesthetically artistic environment. For his love of all things practical did not remain in the confines of the classroom, but penetrated into the school architecture and estate where, to this day, evidence of his work is to be seen in many areas of the school.

William did not suffer fools gladly, and in true pioneering spirit he could be daunting at times, speaking strongly for his beliefs in Waldorf education and its task in the modern world. Although the education of children was a

central interest in his life, in later years his work took him to Emerson College and art courses with adults; nevertheless, his interest in Michael Hall remained steadfast. On frequent visits to him after his retirement, his first interest was to have an update on school affairs, new teachers, classes, and particularly in wanting to know how the children were responding to what the teachers had to bring.

During our discussions, William never missed an opportunity to share some new discovery he had made through his studies; always a constant source of information and encouragement, he urged further and deeper study of anthroposophical work. Despite the encroaching years, his youthful enthusiasm grew ever stronger, and it was typical that, right until the end of his life, he remained physically and mentally active, displaying unflagging energy that much younger people envied.

William Mann was one of those rare souls who, having discovered his path in life, followed it with his whole being and sought to give to those who came his way the benefit of his interest and learning. Just as his phenomenal memory of those who entered his life never left him, so the memory of him will live on in those of us who were privileged to have shared his life.

ADDICTION AS AN IMPULSE TOWARDS THE RENEWAL OF CULTURE

by J. van der Haar

Looking at our present society, one often receives the impression that taking drugs is a new phenomenon. However, when one reflects on this first impression, it becomes clear that the use of intoxicants is almost as old as the world. In the past each culture knew an intoxicant that had a relationship with that culture. Retracing history, one can find the use of opium in the countries of the golden triangle, the use of cocaine in South America and the use of hallucinogens in Central and North America (psilocibine and psylocybin). In this connection the use of hashish in the Middle East and the Mediterranean can be considered to be very old. Europe, lastly, has known alcohol as her own intoxicant for centuries. Use of the various substances was embedded in the cultural pattern and therefore, to begin with, did not generally lead to excesses. When the culture declined, or when these substances appeared in another culture to which they were not connected, real problems became manifest — of which there are some clear examples. The introduction of opium to China by European businessmen in the nineteenth century led to opium addiction, which spread very fast and gave rise to the opium wars — the objective being to chase out both the British and the opium. Another example is found in the introduction of alcohol to American Indians by Europeans. It soon became clear that the Indians could not cope with alcohol, and alcoholism followed. History can teach us that there is a clear and strong connection between consciousness-changing substances and the cultural background to which they are connected.

In the middle of the twentieth century these intoxicants, originating all over the world, appeared in Western Europe. Although, at the time, it was not a conscious introduction — they appear as answers to certain questions — the effects are the same as those described above. It turns out that we do not know how to cope with these substances, which thus gives rise to addiction. Taking a closer look, we can see that the alcohol problem is connected with the experiences already described. From the middle of the last century accepted values have changed very quickly. Traditions have disappeared — including the traditional ability to regulate the use of alcohol. This development has been so serious that when one wishes to discuss the problems of addiction in Western Europe one has to start with alcohol. It is a substance with which the

people of Western Europe have a relationship but a more-or-less unfree one and, in practice, it is a subject that is being avoided. People prefer to discuss the abuse of illegal drugs, which is quantitatively much smaller. This is not really surprising, for when one considers alcohol as a potentially addictive substance one has to ask questions of oneself which can be unacceptable or difficult for a lot of people. However, the situation indicates that it is no longer justifiable to avoid these questions. The latest information in Holland shows that there are forty thousand registered drug addicts, as against four hundred thousand alcoholics. A further group of four hundred thousand people is considered to be on the verge of alcoholism (an alcohol consumption of seven units a day is taken as the limit *). The figures are comparable for Great Britain. However, this is not all. It is not only alcohol which can lead to a widespread addiction problem; it is well known that the use of tranquillizers has also increased during the last twenty-five years. When one also realizes that, during this period, ideas such as telephone chat-lines, gambling addicts, workaholics, computer addicts, bulimia and anorexia have all become part of the common language, one becomes aware of the whole problem. In fact addiction, as a problem of modern culture, forces itself upon one's awareness. Statistically, if one projects the increase of the last twenty-five years forwards over the next twenty-five years, then before the middle of the twenty-first century fifty per cent of people will show addictive behaviour.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that it is clearly not realistic to concentrate one's attention solely on addiction to illegal drugs. Even if 'legal' drugs such as alcohol are included, the problem is still not fully addressed. Consciousness that *addiction as such* is becoming a common phenomenon of our modern culture needs to grow. One person may be addicted to cocaine, another to the 'social' contacts of telephone chat-lines, a third may not want to eat: they are all addicted. The variety of possible addictions, substance and non-substance, shows that it is not the addiction itself that needs to be looked at but rather what lies behind it and what is potentially common to all addictions. One might describe addiction as an expression of a strong need for the compulsive repetition of a particular state of mind, which is experienced initially as being pleasant, and is achieved by some particular act. Different means — i.e., alcohol or not eating — can bring about this particular or changed state of mind in varying ways; the choice is therefore an individual expression of the desired state of mind. This need, which is not the same

* A unit is half a pint of beer, a measure of spirits or a glass of wine. On average, in Great Britain, each adult drinks 18 pints of beer per week!

as the natural one, has clearly increased since the sixties. The question arises: why is it that, since the middle of the twentieth century particularly, people tend to create a pleasant or harmonious feeling in themselves by outer means. For an answer, one has to go back to the beginning of the sixties. That is where the tendencies leading to the present wave of addiction were born. At that time individuals such as Timothy Leary and groups such as the Beatles and Pink Floyd manifest something which is strongly connected with the will, to change one's state of mind. They often spoke about substances like hashish and LSD, and encouraged their use. Their starting point was certainly not the negative effects of using such substances that one can now see. For them, these were substances which brought about a revolution in consciousness so that another, better society could be created. So they encouraged their use as a means towards a love of fellow men, a more humane society, a release from materialism and, last but not least, a life with inner growth and development.

From the mid-sixties onwards, not only did those substances find their way to the West but also another trend occurred at the same time — a great interest in Eastern meditation, astrology, ancient religions, etc. If one considers them collectively, impulses from that time were concerned with the search for the self, for the meaning and content of life.

At the beginning of this century, Rudolf Steiner (the inaugurator of Anthroposophy) indicated that this search would manifest during the twentieth century. In one of his first publications ("Occult Science") he remarks in his introduction that — whether we want it or not, whether we are aware of it or not — man has reached a point at which he becomes aware of his own inner world, and that he will have to find a relationship to it. This development, which occurs in everybody as an inevitable process, in the same way that puberty is inevitable, is in fact the foundation of the phenomenon of addiction. In this age, every individual is aware of himself; this awareness can be accompanied by disharmony and discontent, as modern society — or even community living — is usually unable as yet to meet the search for self knowledge adequately. Such disharmony and discontent may be countered by altering the consciousness using external substances — leading to addiction, which is why there is a potential addict in everybody nowadays. This situation can only be overcome by the choice to take a path of self knowledge on one's own initiative.

One can take the point of view that addiction may be seen as something that leads men away from their true path of development. However, it can also be considered to be an expression of the search for self development, without finding the entrance to it. This last approach creates

an openness and is like an invitation to formulate a possible answer.

An answer to the problem of addiction — developing an addiction therapy — can, from the above, immediately be seen to go hand in hand with the formation of so-called therapeutic communities. For the first time the classical medical model, where the physician makes an individual therapeutic programme, is broken. It is the first large-scale development of social therapy; with time it can be perceived that social therapy within this community becomes more and more prominent. During the last ten years a new integration of the medical and social therapeutic approaches has taken place. However, the character of the community retains its essential importance. This community impulse does not show only in the realm of therapies, revealed as a partial answer for the treatment of addiction, but also lives strongly within the (sub)culture where drug taking first started. It seems right to conclude that during the sixties a need arose for the forming of communities, and this impulse has a strong connection with the phenomenon of addiction.

In view of the relationship between addiction and the theme of forming communities, as original impulse and the intuition of treatment, it seems to make sense to work out of this aspect if one wants to formulate a possible answer. History shows that this idea has a very long past. One can think about communities based on professions, which exist into the twentieth century; one can also think of the more agriculturally-based three-generation families, who formed communities as well. Historically, however, the religious communities are the clearest examples of the traditional community. The characteristic of all these communities is that they had hierarchical forms and there were leaders to guide the individuals who lived in them. The things that could not be carried by the individual on their own were taken over by the community. Recent examples of this can be found in religious communities in general and particularly in the religious sects. For the leaders of these religious communities turned out to be capable of leading groups of people to a common experience of the source and meaning of life. By these means, the participants were brought into a sphere where they could be free of earthly problems for a while. This experience was possible during the ritual, which lifted up the human soul for an instant, and gave experience of the life before birth. Just as after sleep one wakes refreshed, so the experience of one's origin by means of ritual can strengthen the soul in its attitude to life.

However, these ritual or cultic acts have clearly changed over recent centuries. Since the seventeenth/eighteen centuries, thinking has become more important within the religious life. This is most noticeable within Protestantism, but also within Catholicism and other areas, and it is at the cost of the

content of their rituals. Since thinking, from the point of view of the general development of mankind, has taken its necessary place within religious communities, it creates a more and more individual approach to religious matters, which causes tremors within the religious world. The effect of the religious act — as we know it today — is, however, still an echo of what a religious community could offer. Simultaneously, with the introduction in the middle of the twentieth century of the search for new therapeutic and social communities, the old communities seem to hold less interest for the young. The churches are empty, family ties loose their hold, etc., so a lot of young people are searching, but do not find what they are looking for in traditional structures; they are looking for something new. The soul is looking for refreshment, but not the one the rituals can bring; it is looking for refreshment in everyday life. When we trace the course of history, we can interpret this as a more individual form of community, which is imbued with the clarity of thought.

If the search is still directed to finding the source and meaning of life, and if this cannot be found through religion but is looked for in everyday life, then indications are that something completely new is needed. It has been mentioned already that every person — whether he wants it or not — is or will be confronted by the existence of his own inner world.

The awareness of the surrounding world challenged men to study this world, and natural science was based upon these studies. In the same way, the awareness of their own inner world challenges men to discover and study it. But consciousness requires objects to become aware of; these objects can be found in people's immediate surroundings and in fellow human beings. The source and meaning of life can be found more and more within the consciousness of self that can be found through others. New forms of community, suitable to the twentieth century, are based on these points of view. Where individuals strive to meet each other in freedom, where honesty, clarity and the overcoming of sympathy and antipathy are central ideas, then people are creating community forms for the future. Through discovering the microcosm within the everyday reality, a truly new relationship with the macrocosm is found.

Results of research round the theme of social questions in general, and the theme of community forms in particular, can be found in reports of the lectures given by Rudolf Steiner at the beginning of this century. In his "Spiritual Science" he strives to relate natural science with the isolated occult sciences. He also strives for a renewal of the ancient occult schoolings, so that these can become relevant to the specific problems of the twentieth century. In the first instance, he relates to the old pre-Christian schoolings

through studying the connection between the perceptible world and its spiritual principles. He also renews the meditative contents in a way that makes them real in this century. In the spring of 1924 he introduced a third schooling. He foresaw that the development of the twentieth century would lead to the consciousness of man's inner world, and to the chaos and disharmony that goes with this consciousness. This completely new situation, in which every person will sooner or later find him- or herself, needs a development of the ancient schoolings of study and meditation. Steiner calls this new way the schooling of one's actions; the schooling which has a direct connection to everyday life. Previously an inner schooling apart from the practice of life was possible; in the twentieth century this schooling must be achieved with the intuitive action. It is, in fact, a way of looking back at the action and its effects. That is how the individual can become aware of the moral content of his deeds, which are a direct expression of himself. This is the path of practical self knowledge.

For this new inner path, one needs a company of fellow human beings who are also striving in this direction; they can support each other in this process of consciousness. Together they can develop social structures which fit their group / community and which are a support in this whole field of development.

Forms of community that have such striving are the foundation on which an answer to the phenomenon of addiction may be found. In fact, the experience of treating addiction indicates this. Almost all models are based on confrontation with one's own acts and the insight gained thereby. Although the need for these new communities can be most clearly seen in the realm of problems of addiction, it is also perceptible in a larger sphere. In this connection we need only look at parent groups in Waldorf schools or student groups in anthroposophical educational institutions. There too one experiences a strong quest for social renewal; taking a closer look, it can be considered as a need for self knowledge. This need often expresses itself as a discontent with the social structures of the organization concerned and as a rejection of the (too) theoretical transfer of knowledge. In fact, a need of a search for a new attitude to, instead of a transfer of a theory of, life is expressed.

Theories, dogmas, and leaders who are not felt to be real leaders, turn out to be of no true help to the generation that grew up in the second half of the twentieth century. There is a concrete demand for a living, not an abstract, attitude to life, and for exercises in everyday life. Although study and meditation are still significant preparations, it becomes ever clearer that the

indications Rudolf Steiner gave about development need further working out to suit the actual social reality of 1990.

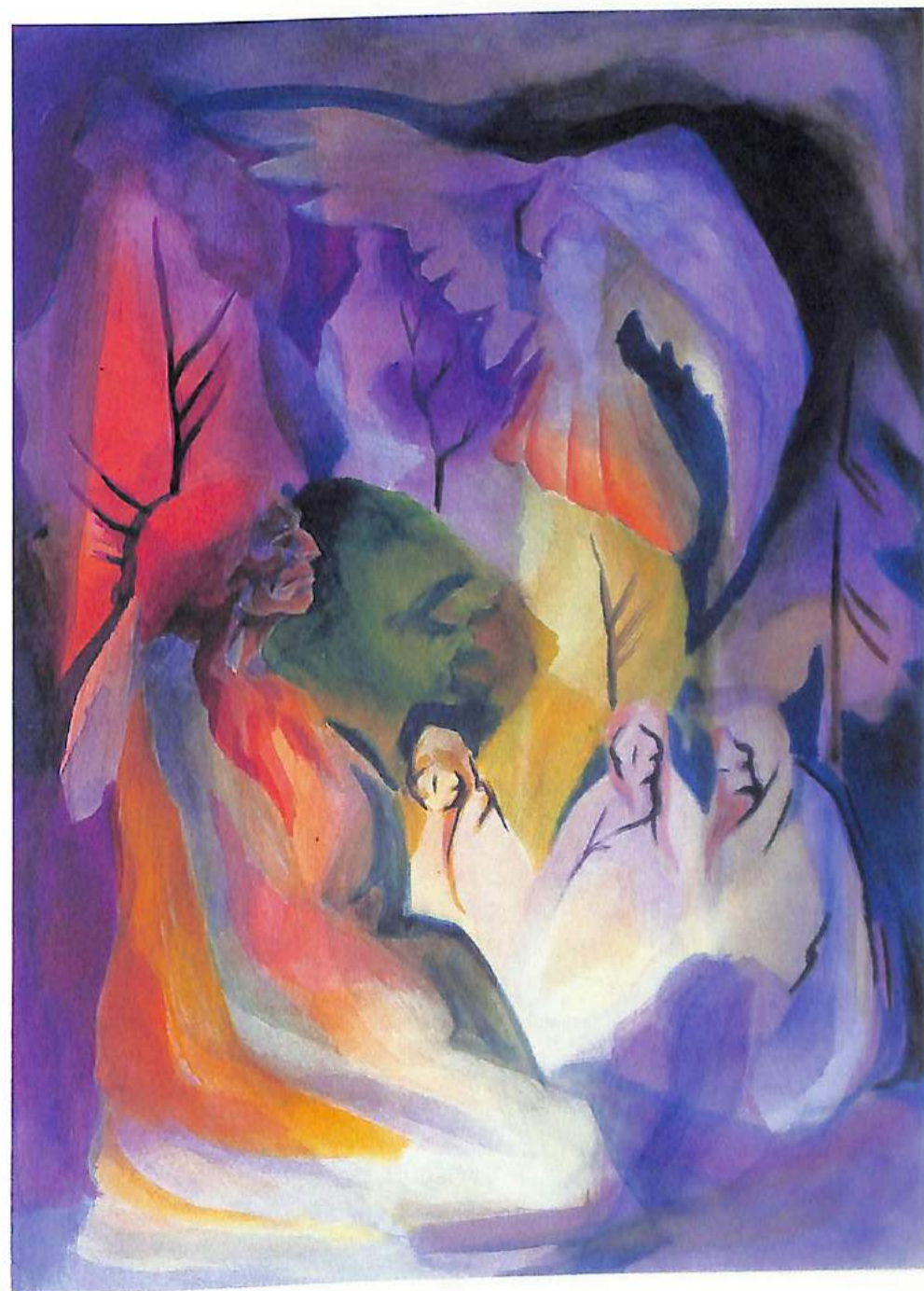
This search for the development of forms of living together, in which individuals can get to know their own inner world by means of social interaction with their fellow men, can be described as the development of so-called 'islands of culture'. Living with addicted people makes one realize that if the therapeutic community does not carry an impulse for social renewal, it will not really help the addict on his path of development.

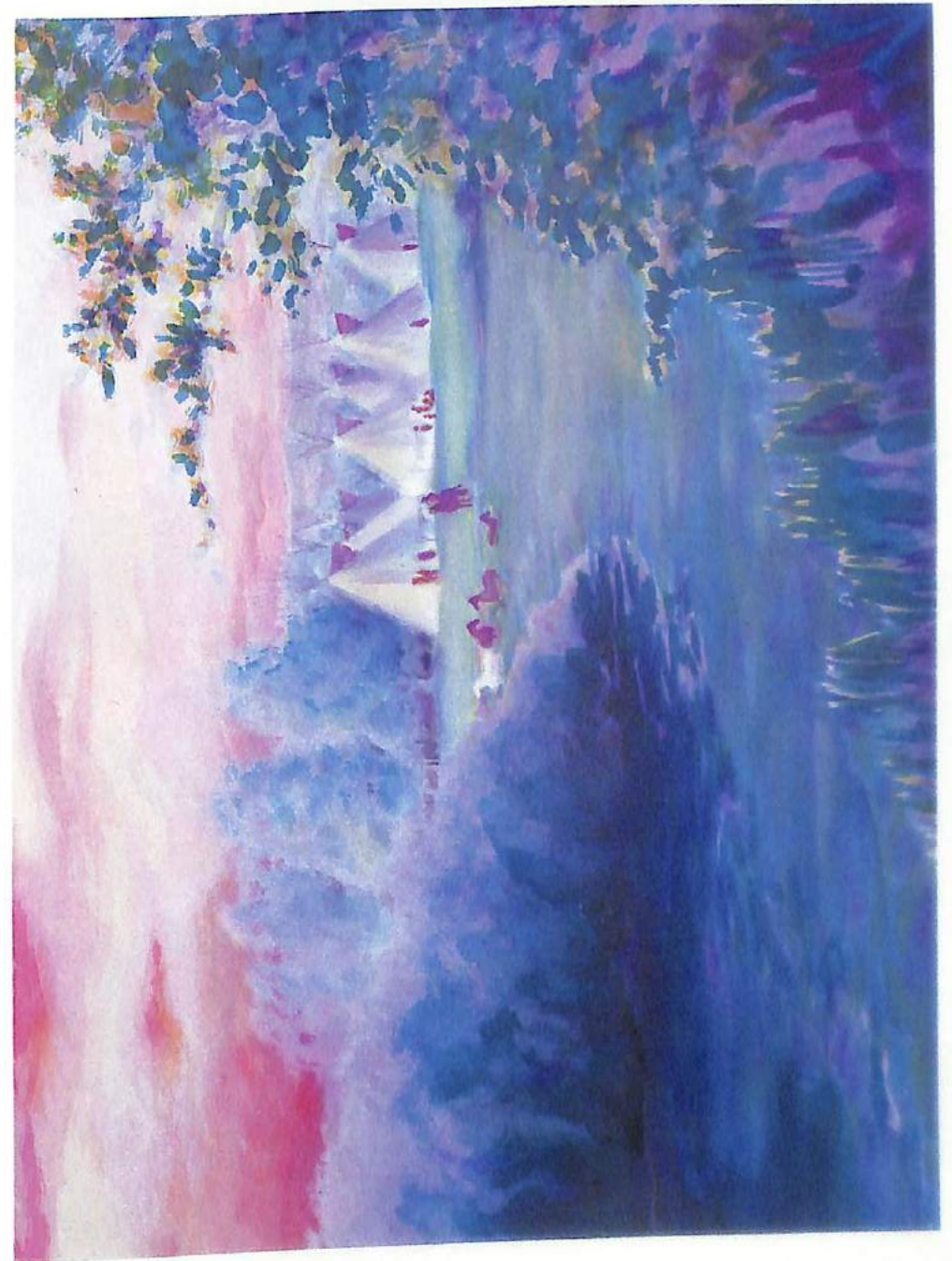
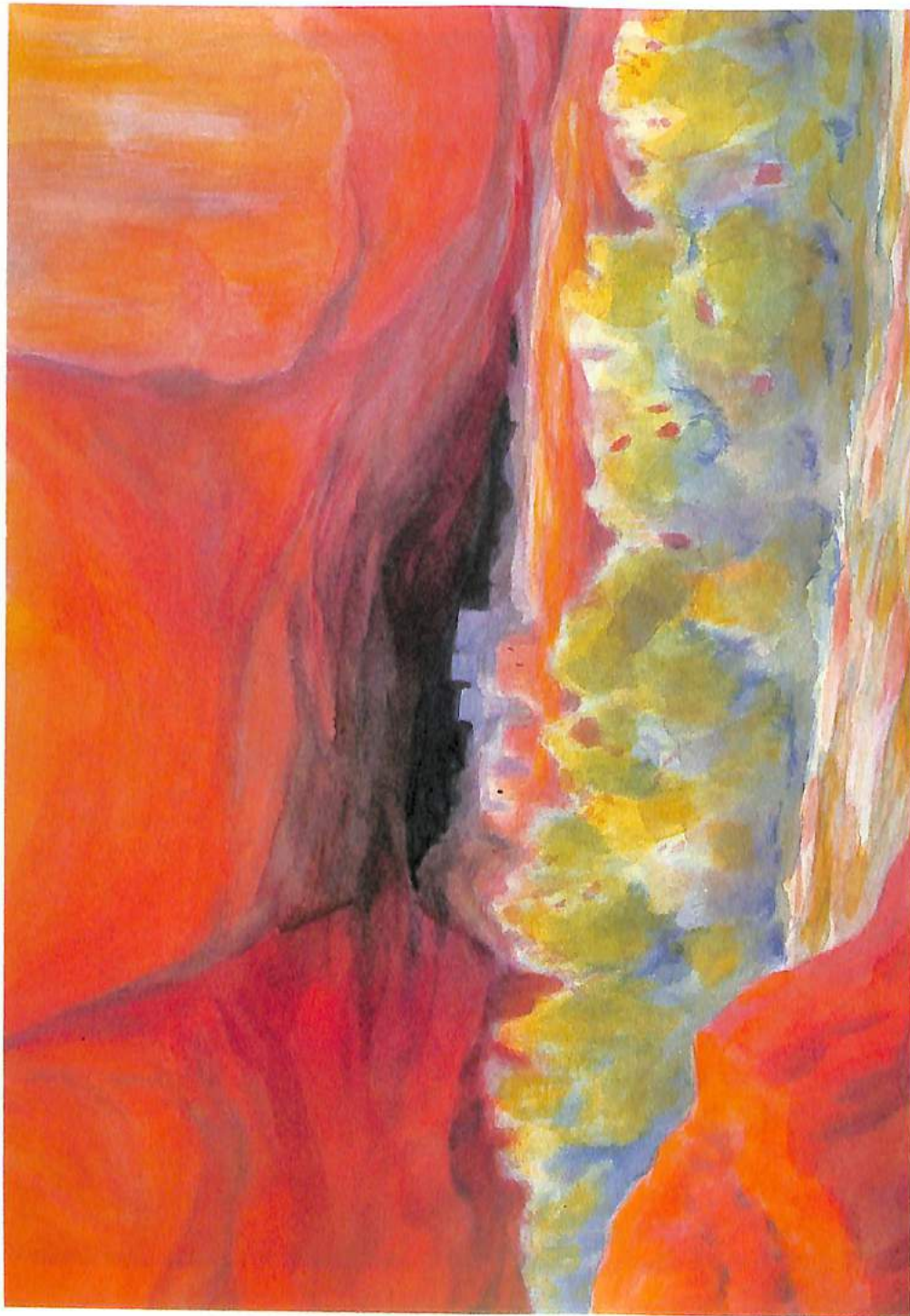
As long as the people who take on the task of forming the therapeutic community do not themselves develop this attitude to life — which implies following this path — they will not have the impulse for development to pass on to their addicted fellow-residents. In fact everyone who opens himself can have this experience. For the moment one enters a community, an institution, a health centre, etc., one senses its atmosphere. This atmosphere can be cold, chilly, warm, open, dusty, inspiring or whatever; it has nothing to do with the accommodation — it is a direct expression of the people who carry the initiative. So when, for example, there is an atmosphere of self development, everyone who enters the initiative will perceive its atmosphere. It has a direct effect on people and works on a deeper level than that of motives, which can be approached by the intellect. It affects the incentives which are the basis of our motives.

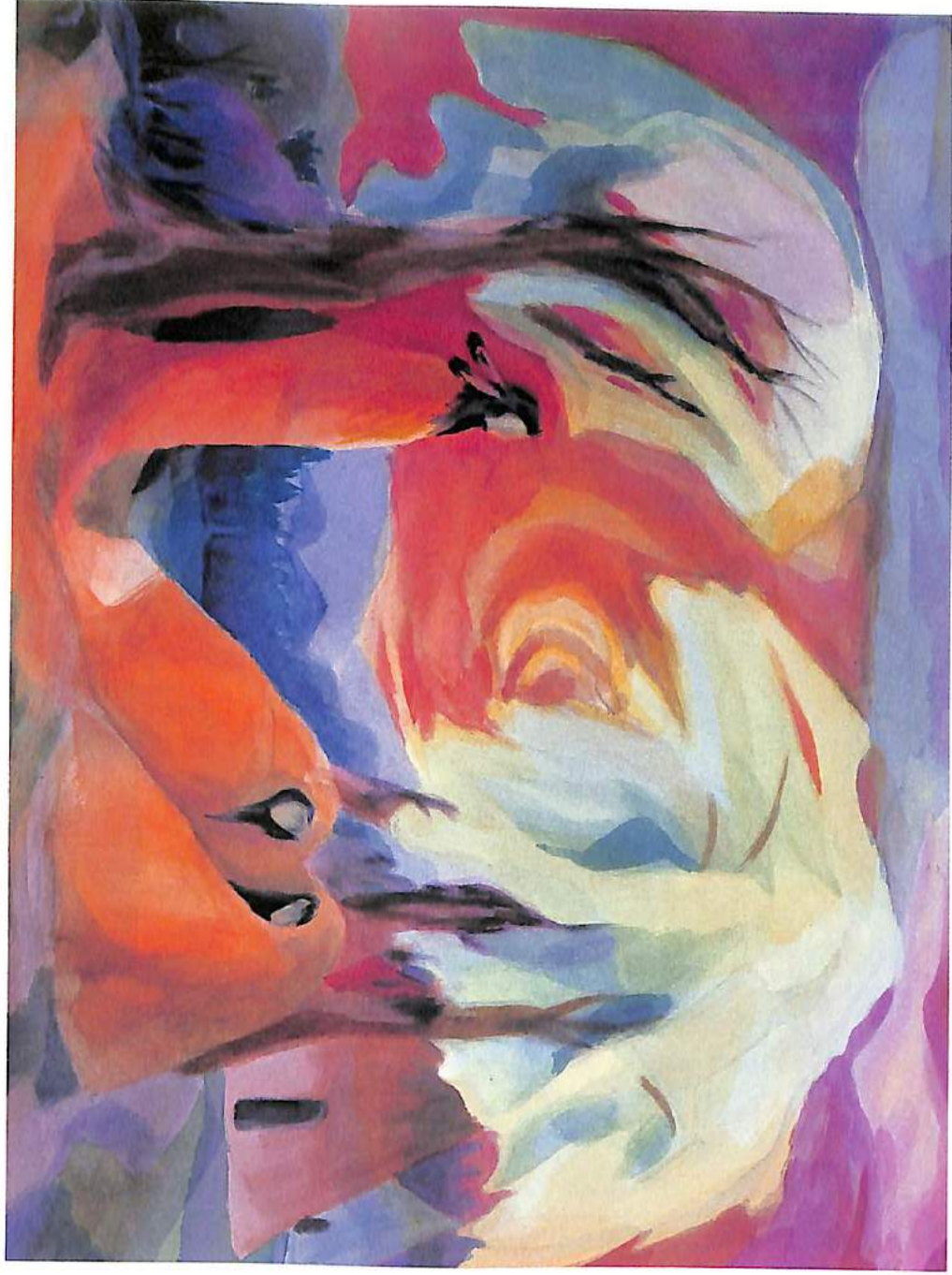
Communities which search for the impulse of cultural renewal described will — owing to the nature and character of those impulses — activate people to follow a path of self knowledge which, as already mentioned, is the foundation on which tendencies to addiction can be overcome. So addicted fellow human beings oblige us to develop this culture within communities. If addicts do not meet this culture daily, 90–95% will revert to addiction. Working with systems and pragmatic organizational structures will only be a short term and partial answer to the questions brought by psychiatric patients, the mentally-retarded, students, etc. In the near future these people will reject what is being offered.

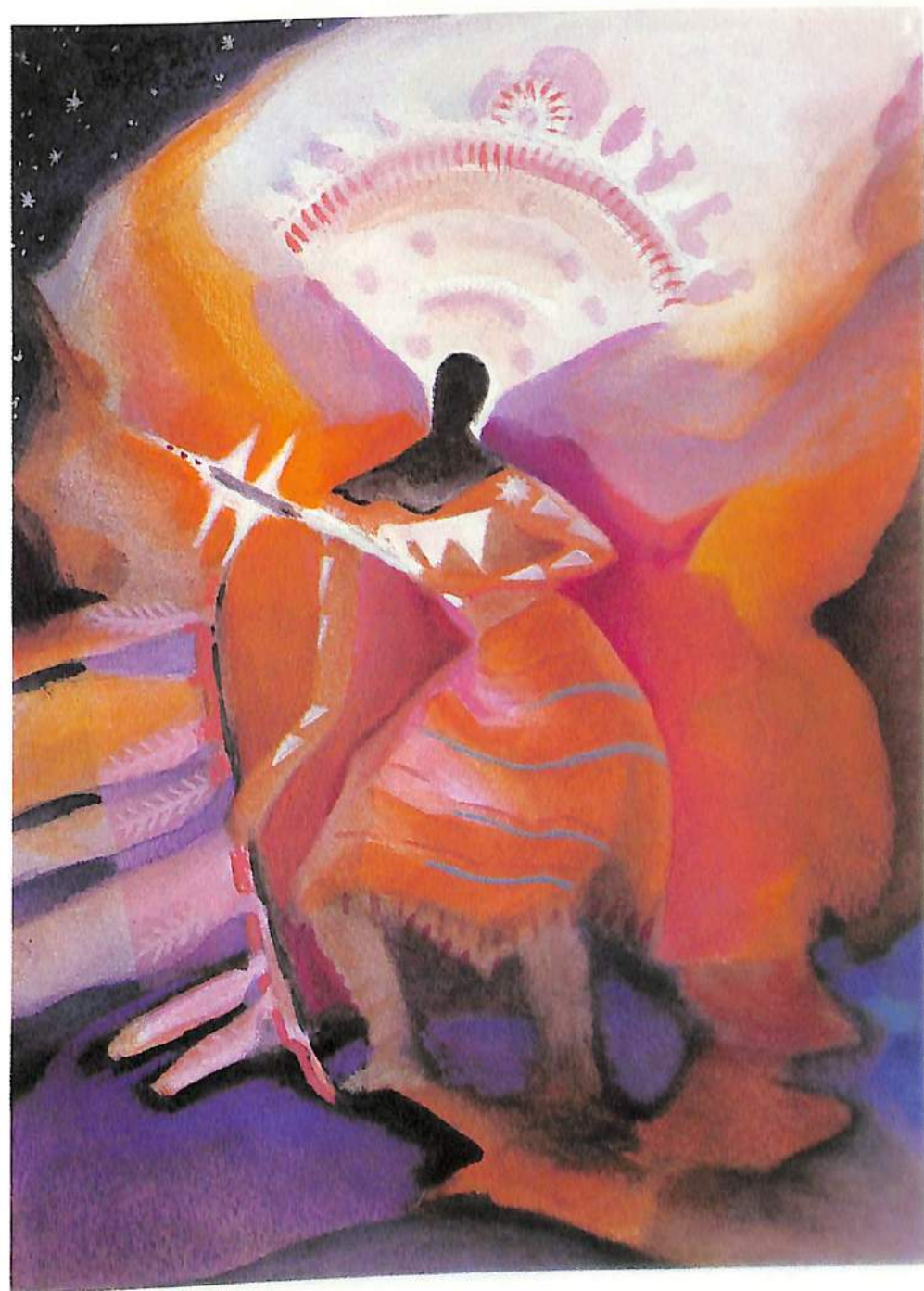
In problems with addiction, we meet the foremost question of life, which will show itself on a large scale in the twenty-first century. Addicts demand the development of cultural islands. Individuals can be helped through this process, and at the same time there is the opportunity to develop social structures to meet the needs of the future — the demands of the future.

In this respect the phenomenon of addiction which confronts us today can be seen as an impulse for the renewal of culture.











ON THE DESTINY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

by Brian Gold

Most archaeologists generally agree that the origins of the Red Indian can be traced to a time some twenty-five to fifty thousand years ago. Global temperatures were very much lower then, producing large amounts of pack-ice with drastically lower sea levels. It is speculated that nomadic hunters, following migrating herds of game, crossed the Bering Straits between Siberia and what is now Alaska via a land bridge. In the centuries that followed, wave after wave of various peoples found their way to North America, which has resulted in the variety of Indian types found today. The variations are distinguishable, not only by height and build, but by shapes of head, as well as skin-tones which are from fair to very dark.

Rudolf Steiner presents us with a rather different picture of the origin and destiny of the North American Indian¹. In the ancient past, when the remnants of the continent of Atlantis lay scattered across the Atlantic ocean as islands, ships still braved those troubled waters. The black race, in their wanderings, found their way to the West, leaving the warmth and light of their home in Africa far behind. It must be understood that the nature of the black race is so constituted as to take in as much light and warmth as possible — and in so doing, become black. In their new home in the West, where conditions of relatively restricted light and warmth held sway, the race became copper-red. This change stemmed from the fact that they became obliged to reflect the light and warmth which gleamed a copper-red. (Copper itself is a body which must reflect a little light and warmth). So profound was this change that they became a dying race by virtue of the fact that their nature received too little light and warmth. It can also be said that the earthly element in their nature, which is to say their desire life, could no longer be properly developed and this also added to the dying process in the race. Their bones, however, became extremely strong by virtue of ash which was taken into them. Such was the result that it can be said that the whole man, by reason of his bones, goes to pieces. Certainly this predominance of bone in the physiognomy may be cited as an identifying characteristic among a vast majority of the Red Indians today.

In the time before the fall of Atlantis, the impulses within the souls of men

were turned to the "Great Spirit" ², who was designated by a word or sound of which an echo still exists in the Chinese "Tao". For the Red Indian, though, the actual designation "Great Spirit" may be found in one form or another throughout the six hundred and fifty dialects spoken by the descendants of the first Americans.

Following the destruction of Atlantis, old Atlantean forces — along with Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces — spread through the world. As a result, there existed in the western hemisphere a variety of mystery centres long before the rediscovery of America in the fifteenth century.

To this point, Rudolf Steiner goes to great lengths, in a series of lectures given in September 1916 ², to describe an eminently important event which occurred in Mexico and Central America in the year 33 A.D. It is here that a solar being bearing the Christ impulse incarnated and caused the crucifixion of "perhaps the greatest black magician ever to have trod the earth" thereby countering an Ahrimanic attempt to prevent the course of mankind's evolution.

If knowledge of this event ever travelled north to the American Indians it has not survived into our times. An ancient memory does yet live amongst the Hopi Indians still living on their traditional homelands in northern Arizona. The racial memories to be found in the creation story of the Hopi are well worth investigating, and can be found in "The Book of the Hopi" by Frank Waters. In it, startling parallels can be found to certain of the stages of development depicted in Rudolf Steiner's "Cosmic Memory".

In the Hopi creation story we find that, following the description of the initial manifestations of creation, three consecutive world conditions leading to our present world are described in great detail.

In the first world all matter is still soft and pliable, and mankind is in communication with his Creator by the "open door on the top of his head". An in-depth description is given of what Rudolf Steiner, in "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds", refers to as the seven lotus flowers, or spiritual organs. Evil enters into this first world when division and unrest are incited by "a handsome one; in the form of a snake with a big head". The world is brought to an end in a rain of fire and volcanic activity. A second, if less golden, world follows, in which material greed threatens the development of man. This world is brought to an end when the Creator causes the axis of the world to change, continents rise and fall and the world is lost in the hoary grip of a global ice age. In the third world, great cities rise up in association with mankind's preoccupation with earthly life. At this time, it is said, there existed

at man's command a knowledge of "creative" energies which fell into decadence — one result of which was the creation of a shield that was made to fly, carrying many people on a lightning-fast attack on a neighbouring city.

In "Cosmic Memory" we find something which can shed light on this unexpected image ³. "The Atlanteans could control what one calls the life force...they knew how one could change the energy of a pile of grain into technical power. The Atlanteans had mechanisms in which they — so to speak — burned plant seeds, transforming the life force into technically utilizable power. The vehicles of the Atlanteans, which floated a short distance above the ground, were able to move in this way, they also had a steering mechanism which allowed them to rise above mountain ranges as need be".

The third world, according to the Hopi creation story, was brought to an end by a great flood in which the few remaining righteous people were warned and guided by the doors in the tops of their heads which had remained open to the Creator. Surviving the cruel waters, first inside sealed reeds and later in boats, the voyagers pass by the scattered island remnants of the third world, coming at last to the shores of our fourth and present world. From the beginning it was intended that there should be seven worlds in the progress of man. A prophesy is given in which it is foretold that our present world will pass away as a result of "a spiritual conflict with materialism. Materialism will be destroyed by spiritual beings who will remain to create one world and one nation under one power, that of the Creator".

When considering the Red Indian of recorded history there arises the image of a people existing in a special relation to intervals. In a world where survival depended upon the most accurate and sensitive observation of nature and its subtle changes, the Red Indian developed an awareness that Goethe, no doubt, would have greatly admired. For the Red Indian, movement — which is to be understood as becoming — rather than form is the essence of their ceremonial relationship to nature. They thrived in the shadows of ambiguity in the form of metaphors and symbols. For them, the very nature of metaphor and symbol realized its power in the fact that it tells one nothing and yet within the realm of imagination and inspiration it suggests everything. Movement might also be found within solitude and silence which, rightly understood, led one to a well-spring of creative experience within the depths of the soul, and for this reason was held in deep reverence.

Flowing from this came the highly prized and intimately personal gift of visions and songs of power. It was through these gifts of the Great Spirit which stirred in their souls that guidance and healing was acquired for the tribe as

well as an individual. In the words of Rudolf Steiner: "The American Indian had strange inner soul qualities, as a rule we fail to do justice to such things, if we egotistically boast of our 'higher culture', regarding all this as mere barbarism. There was a certain quality in the souls which expressed itself in a universal, pantheistic form of religion. Their hearts were turned in aspiration to a great spiritual being and their religion was thoroughly monotheistic. These people had a living and vivid experience of one great spirit universal behind the world of nature and the deeds of men".

Throughout the Red Indian world the wind was held in great reverence as the breath of the universe; it was to be found in symbolic images and gestures that became the visible motion of the power that imbued all creation. Dance was understood as "the breath of life made visible". From the Navajo, living in the deserts of south-west America, comes this telling and potent image: "In the skin of our fingers we see the trail of the wind, it shows us where the wind blew when our ancestors were created".

Perhaps a clue to understanding the awe in which the Red Indian held the wind may be found in the following extract from Rudolf Steiner's "Universe, Earth and Man"⁴: "In what we know as the airy element, and particularly in our own air (the air we breathe) live the Beings we call Archangels. It is no fairy-tale or mere legend when we see in the currents of air and the raging storms, the bodily manifestation of spiritual realms...the peoples and races of our earth are indeed guided by the spirits called Archangels or Spirits of Fire". One could well imagine an awareness of just such "spiritual realms" lying behind the feelings of the early Red Indians.

The special relation to nature previously mentioned went far beyond what is understood today as interaction or even expression through art. In fact, most American Indian tongues had no word for art as an independent concept. A skilfully-constructed canoe, or a well-planted crop, was held in just as high regard as a carving, beadwork or a beautifully-decorated piece of pottery. It was indeed the living process rather than the end result that found value in the hearts and minds of these people of the interval. In truth, there was no activity, direction, colour, season or moment which could not be rightly grasped as sacred by the Red Indian who followed upon the path of the Great Spirit.

It is perhaps fairly well known that hunters would, before setting out, make offerings and praise the spirit of the animals in order to gain their consent. What may be less well known is that the animals were considered to be as much involved with their own capture and death, as were the weapons used against them.

"In our in-between age", states Rudolf Steiner⁴, "when men cannot know very much about the living soul relationships between themselves and the world, all kinds of substitutes have had to be created. Why is it that the initiates of all ages have urged people to pray before eating? The prayer was to be an affirmation that with the food spiritual substance enters into man".

The beginning of the end of the red man's world can, by spiritual investigation, be traced back in a certain sense to the Luciferic impulse working through the descendants of the old Atlantean teachers now working from a certain place in Asia². Ghengis Khan received the command to summon all the powers of Asia to spread the influence that would lead the fifth Post-Atlantean age back into a Luciferic form. This influence was intended to bring about a kind of buoyancy and lightness in the human race that would draw man away from the earth. America had to be discovered so that man might be brought to grow closer to the earth, to grow more and more materialistic. This evolutionarily proper impulse to introduce the balancing effects of America came under attack by both Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers.

The successor of Ghengis Khan, Kublai Khan, was also deeply under the sway of certain Luciferic initiations, and it was to his court in China that the Venetian, Marco Polo, came. During his stay, Marco Polo was deeply influenced. He wrote a book of just such a nature as to excite the imagination of Europeans concerning the western hemisphere. It was this book, which spoke of a magic land in the west, that induced Christopher Columbus to set out on his voyage to America.

Working in concert with the Luciferic impulse was an Ahrimanic fascination with all the treasures of gold that were to be discovered in America. These impulses worked in such a way as to place themselves in violent opposition to what was happening quite rightly in the discovery of America. And so it was that, driven by these impulses, people like Juan Ponce de Leon came seeking the mythical 'Fountain of Youth', while Coronado and others were driven in their search for the 'Seven Cities of Gold', bringing with them the destruction of the red man's world. A history written by the non-Indian for the non-Indian, has more or less glossed over the shameful result of the meeting of these two races.

It is at this point that we must once more turn to the spiritual investigation of Rudolf Steiner in order that we might begin to gain an understanding of that which flowed from this conflagration. "The relationship that had developed, on the one hand between the American Indians and their whole environment,

their native land, and on the other between them and the destiny they suffered in being exterminated was decisive for their life between death and a new birth. From this it has happened that the majority — no matter how paradoxical it may sound, it is simply a fact — that the majority of western, middle, even a portion of the eastern Europeans extending into Russia (not all, but a great portion of them) have souls that once dwelt in the bodies of the old American Indians...European life is not understood rightly if it is considered only one-sidedly from a point of view lacking in reality, that is, according to inherited characteristics. What has now become reality in European history was formed only as a result of this co-operation between what the souls are through their former earth lives and what they received in this life through inheritance; also through education, but education in its broadest sense”.

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- 1 “Colour and the Human Races”. Dornach, 3rd March, 1923.
- 2 “Inner Impulses of Evolution”; “The Mexican Mysteries”; “The Knights Templar”. Dornach, 17, 18, 23 and 24, September 1916.
- 3 “Cosmic Memory — Prehistory of Earth and Man”. Chapter III.
- 4 “Universe, Earth and Man”. Eleven Lectures given between 4th and 11th August, 1908.

BOOK REVIEW

Mitte der Erde — Israel im Brennpunkt natur- und kulturgeschichtlicher Entwicklungen (Israel in the Focus of Natural and Cultural Evolution).

Edited by Andreas Suchantke. Contributions by A. Suchantke, Hans-Ulrich Schmutz, Wolfgang Schad, Wolfgang Fackler. Richly illustrated with colour plates and black-and-white drawings. Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Stuttgart, 1988.

“When Noah felt death drawing near, he instructed his eldest son Sem to go with Melchizedek to fetch the body of Adam, which they had brought with them on the Ark:

The Angel of the Lord will walk before you
and show you whither to go;
and he will bring you to the place
where Adam's body should be laid down,
which is the middle of the earth.
There the four quarters joined together,
for when God created the earth
his might strode in front of him,
and the earth parted before it to the four quarters
like a rushing of winds and breezes;
but there his might stood still and came to rest.
It is there that the redemption of Adam
and of all his children will come to pass.”

These verses from a collection of Hebrew legends known as the “Treasure Cave” (first recorded in the 4th century B.C.) appear as a fitting prologue to this monumental book on Israel. For what is expressed here is more than a poetical metaphor, placing the “chosen people” into the centre of the evolutionary stage. It is an amazingly prophetic description of the dynamic flow of evolutionary processes on our planet as they have come to appear in the light of modern research. In the present study they are described on four levels — those of geology, biology, palaeontology and the cultural and spiritual history of man. The slowest of these processes, that of the drifting of the continents, may hardly seem like a “rushing of winds and breezes”. Yet it might be compared to a stately bass continuo in the chorus of processes and a stream-bed in which the swifter migrations of plants, animals and human beings take place. And these in turn are the foundation for the still more dramatic changes in the spiritual history of man.

The opening contribution by A. Suchantke, which comprises more than half the book, is devoted to the ecology, morphology and migratory

movements of plants and animals. The author's black-and-white drawings are meticulous, and bear witness not only to a deep love for the phenomena, but to a keen eye for what is essential. The "four quarters" of creation are represented in Israel by four great continental influences: Asian, Mediterranean, African and Euro-Siberian. Thus the unique character of the landscape lies not so much in its indigenous species as in the meeting and interpenetration of the floras and faunas of different continents.

The same fundamental theme is explored in its geological-geographical dimensions in the article by H.-U. Schmutz. In his charts of the history of continental drift, it becomes evident that it is not so much a flowing together (as on the biological plane) as a drifting apart which has engraved itself into the stones of Israel. The signature of this separation can be seen in the great Rift Valley with the Jordan and the Dead Sea, which is morphologically more characteristic of the ocean-floor with its trenches than of the continental plates.

In W. Schad's chapter on the prehistoric human remains of Palestine, many new and original perspectives are offered on the perennial question: what makes the human being human? Not only inner evidence, such as the study of the development and use of stone tools, but equally the changing morphology of the skeleton suggests the paradoxical answer: we *are* human as long as we are striving to *become* human.

And nowhere is this striving more in evidence than in the history of the Hebrew peoples in their mission to prepare a physical chalice for the Sun-Logos, the Christ. For anyone who would penetrate more deeply into the history of the Old and New Testaments will soon discover that it is not a continuum, but is punctuated by many abrupt passages to quite new levels of consciousness. This human dimension is placed by W. Fackler into a still broader perspective, which allows full scope for the meetings of cultural streams from north, east, south and west.

On behalf of our many readers who will not have access to the German text, it seems only appropriate to plead for a translation in the near future, not only into English, but also into Hebrew. For, as Suchantke is at pains to point out, the efforts currently being made in Israel to preserve and restore the landscape are as exemplary as they are unique. The hospitality which the authors have been afforded on their many trips to Israel has now been answered in the writing of this book. It is greatly to be hoped that the insights it contains can soon be available to their hosts and to all their countrymen.

J.M.

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

John Meeks taught Astronomy, Goethean Science and Anthroposophy at Emerson College for 11 years. He is now embarking on a period of more independent research, teaching and writing. He lives in southern Alsace in France where he is connected with the development of the Maison Saint Germain (S-68480 Lucelle), a centre for artistic and cultural life affiliated with the School of the White Spring.

Elizabeth Vreede's writing on astrology is taken from a series of letters she wrote from the Mathematical-Astronomical Section of the Goetheanum early in 1929. The author is now deceased.

Almut Bockemühl was born in Germany in 1933, did German studies and Biology at the Universities of Göttingen and Tübingen, married in 1956 and now lives with her husband and four children in Dornach, Switzerland. She has a special interest in fairy tales and after five years as a lecturer on the Foundation Course at the Goetheanum is now a freelance lecturer. Her most recent book — from which the article in this issue is taken — entitled "Selbstfindung und Muttersein im Leben der Frau" is currently being translated and will be available from Hawthorn Press.

Rudi Lissau, now retired, has been a teacher for many years at Wynstones and has given numerous lectures on a variety of topics, including the poet Rilke.

Roswitha Spence is the daughter of William Mann and has kindly made available to *The Golden Blade* the photographs reproduced here from their family album.

Ted Roberts has been a teacher of Art and Art History for many years at Michael Hall School and in his early years there worked closely with William Mann.

Jaap van der Haar is a founder member of Arta, an initiative in Holland for the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

Brian Gold is an American from Colorado and is working as a freelance artist in Forest Row where his wife teaches at Michael Hall School.

The present editor, William Forward, has been teaching at Michael Hall for six years after a career in banking.

Our special thanks to those who have given this journal financial support, and to Anne McNicol and Jo Steed of Imprint for their patience and dedication in the task of publication.

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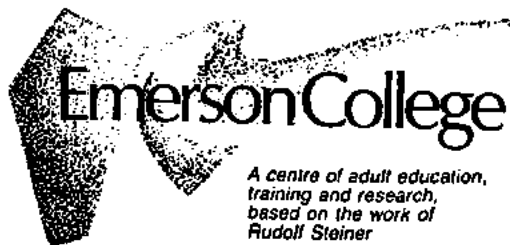
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This is a book on practical childcare, with a difference. It is written by parents, for parents, and offers suggestions (based on experience) in areas such as sleep, feeding, incontinence, play, behaviour, growth, siblings, clothing, travel and more. It addresses the emotional needs and development of child and adult. *To a Different Drumbeat* seeks to enhance the process of caring for children who have special needs.

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Rudolf Treichler

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Soulways will be a useful guide for counsellors, parents, teachers, doctors, therapists and those doing biography work.

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