Waldorf Journal Project #8

April 2007

AWSNA

From Norway:

Teaching History through the Grades

Compiled and edited by

David Mitchell

Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime,
Therefore, we are saved by hope.
Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history;
Therefore, we are saved by faith.
Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone.
Therefore, we are saved by love.
No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our own;
Therefore, we are saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness.

– Reinhold Niebuhr

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From Germany

Foreword

The *Waldorf Journal Project*, sponsored by the Waldorf Curriculum Fund, brings translations of essays, magazine articles, and specialized studies from around the world to English-speaking audiences. This eighth edition of translations is a selection of articles intended for personal study on the subject of history as taught through the grades up to the ninth class.

The articles give many examples, awaken our own personal historical remembrance, as well as address why we teach history and how we can be successful with identifying key points to bring to our students from each historical epoch.

Some of the authors represented in this Journal, such as Karl Brodersen, Jørgen Smit and his brother Christian, Jørgen Borgen, and Dan Lindholm may be familiar names to many readers. They were giants in their profession as Waldorf teachers in Norway and, indeed, through all of Europe. They are representatives of profoundly deep thoughts and compassionate teaching. The series concludes with an amazing reflection on America written by a medical doctor from Germany while visiting Concord, Massachusetts.

There is much to be gleaned from the chapters that follow, and it is hope that you will be both inspired and nourished by the wisdom they contain.

All the articles are available on-line at

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The editor is interested in receiving your comments on the articles selected. AWSNA Publications would also be interested in hearing what areas you would like to see represented in future *Waldorf Journal Projects*. If you know of specific articles that you would like to see translated, please contact me.

— David Mitchell, editor
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A Phenomenological Approach to the Subject of History

by
Oddvar Granly
Rudolf Steiner College, Oslo

Translated by Ted Warren

In our study of the natural sciences we observe phenomena. Our study of the humanities is different, for, as in history, the occurrences happened in the past. For example, the Norse historian Snorre was in the city of Haugesund on his journey to Norway in 1218. Modern historians have reports, documents and the remains of buildings to help reconstruct the occurrence. With this material they can create a picture of the event, which can be contemplated later. To study history we distance ourselves from the standards of today and try to experience how people in earlier ages thought. And when new discoveries come to light, we can even expand or change our interpretations!

What about the origin of events—what led to the occurrences? Halvdan Koht spoke about "motives for occurrences in history." In the early twentieth century, a strong generation of historians at the University of Oslo were trained in Marxist historical interpretation. This influenced the material in textbooks. For example, in my high school history book, the following interpretation was given for the origin of the Viking raids: "As land in Western Norway became over-occupied, the desire to travel abroad was awakened."

Historic symptomatology

Rudolf Steiner developed a historical perspective in which the search for motivating forces is on a broader level, in which the actual occurrences are symptoms and one does not search for the active impulses within them. Let us use a comparison. If a young girl blushes, should we look for the cause in her skin or in her blood system? The cause lies on a broader level in the form of a message she received that brought a blush to her cheeks. In history one should never overlook outer or peripheral causes of events. Often there is a complex of active forces behind the event. The story of the French Revolution provides an obvious example for studying with the pupils in the eighth class just how

the causes of events may be found on different planes. The teacher can begin by presenting how in 1664 Louis XIV built his Versailles at the expense of the people of France. Year after year the palace buildings were created in Baroque style, the gardens filled with hedges, alleys, symmetric flower beds, fountains, statues, a fish pond and much more. Then paint a picture of life at the court of the Sun King who was the sovereign center of the universe of orbiting servants and royalties. He had 3000 house servants, 3500 mounted guards and 10,000 foot soldiers. His daily routine was divided into a morning celebration of mass, meetings with ministers, extravagant meals, and evenings with garden parties, fireworks, balls, theater, or concerts. Amusement was not only a right, it was a duty. The court was filled with mistresses and superficialities. Once a beautiful court lady asked an older woman for advice as to a marquis who made advances to her. The answer was: "My dear, mademoiselle, marry him….then you will be rid of him."

To finance the extravagant luxuries the king's Minister of Finance Colbert unscrupulously collected taxes from the common people, while royalty and clergymen were exempt from such annoyances. Long before Louis XIV died in 1715 the peasants of France were outraged. At his funeral march the masses cursed his dead body.

We advance to 1788. It was a terrible year. The grain harvest was a total disaster, and by autumn bread prices rose dramatically. The following winter was the hardest in memory. The rivers froze to ice; even the ocean outside of Marseille froze; frozen human bodies along the roads were a common sight. By spring the situation was desperate. People stood in long lines outside the bread stores—perhaps in vain— to get bread they could not afford. On July 14 they stormed the Bastille and the Revolution began. Excitement, great expectations—human rights, in light of the times—were sanctioned on August 26, but that was not all. Continual reforms were demanded and patience declined when they were not approved immediately. For five years the revolutionary tribunal declared war on all "enemies" of the people. They were arrested on mere suspicion and decapitated. Blood flowed and finally the revolutionary leaders Danton and Robespierre were guillotined, and Marat stabbed to death. In June 1791 a flag was flown carrying the words: "Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood." Inscribed just below were the words: "or death." These words had never before been used publicly together.

The ideals of Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood were first nurtured in closed circles. Historian Karl Heyer has tried to prove that those famous three words first appeared in Freemason Lodges in the early 1700s, and from that secret background the ideals were brought forth during a revolution. They were ideals from a spiritual sphere whose time had arrived. Mankind should

understand them. The call from on high was heard but not understood. The ideals were not placed in proper relationship. An abyss opened. The monster arose. Instead of freedom, equality and brotherhood, it was death. Heyer has also shown that none of the fashionable philosophers before the revolution placed all three ideals in the proper relationship to each other. Voltaire understood a part of freedom, but had little respect for the other two ideals. Rousseau had great knowledge of equality and brotherhood but little understanding of freedom. The legal-minded Montesquieu was most concerned with equality.

Causes on three levels

After describing the events from Louis XIV through the Revolution's final phases during a couple of main lessons, the time is right to contemplate the causes of the insurrection which turned into a catastrophe. A student will quickly point out that the reason was extravagant luxuries under Louis XIV that impoverished the people. Another pupil will call to attention to how the terrible conditions in 1788 and the winter of 1789 made the people desperate. One teacher had a pupil explain a third cause: the need of humanity to realize the ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood "because," as he said, " if mankind had been as animals, they would not have let themselves be led by such ideals." Now that sounds exciting!

Here we are dealing with causes on three levels: ideals on a spiritual level and in the soul, inter-human sphere, natural causes in the physical, and wanton, wasteful behavior at court and the resultant impoverishment of the masses. A natural continuation of this study in the high school would be to work with all three ideals in relation to Steiner's concept of the Threefold Social Order. We can observe the status of society's spiritual/cultural life (education, schools, universities, research, church, art) in relation to the state and economy during the past centuries. How was the spiritual/cultural life financed? Then we can observe how business and capital became independent and, in our global economy, beyond control. What are the possibilities for civil society, for those who are not included in the state and the marketplace? These themes engage the students.

Impulses through the unconscious

Throughout all historical time one can wonder about events that appear simultaneously in quite different lands but make a common impression, thus indicating that it is fruitless to search for causes of events in outer, social conditions. Rather, we are led to search for the active impulse in the supersensible sphere.

Here are a few examples. Around the year 500 B.C. strong personalities appeared simultaneously but independently of each other in different lands and

cultures: Lao Tse and Confucius in China, Buddha in India, Daniel in Israel, and Heraclites in Greece. In their spiritual orientation they prepare the way from a mystical picture consciousness to a more brain-focused, conceptual thinking.

We can also take an example from modern times. In 1966 a cultural revolution began under Mao and at the same time, student revolts broke out in one university after the other—Berkeley, Tokyo, Paris, Berlin, Oslo. Professors who entered their auditoriums and began to speak were interrupted and confronted by their students. He should rather walk out on the streets and teach the people! Professor Daniel Haakonsen explained how he was constantly interrupted during his lectures in Oslo between 1968 and 1970, but when he entered the auditorium in 1972 and said, "Good morning" to his students, they wrote in their notebooks, "Good morning." The insurrection was obviously over.

When we compare both historical periods—500 B.C. and 1966–70, you may see an important difference. In our time we have newspapers and electronic media, which rapidly inform of us of the events around the world. "They have started an insurrection in Paris, we should do the same!" But that is not why it happens, for such movements do not occur except in answer to something which moves people from within. Steiner points out in various lectures on historical symptomatology that historical processes do not play out in our daily consciousness, but in much deeper levels of soul where dreams and willpower evade our consciousness.

History as soul development

The awakened part of our soul life has a number of levels. Steiner calls the first one the sentient soul. Here impressions create sensory images in which the experience is immediate without creating conscious concepts. More conscious concepts arise at the second level called the rational soul when we penetrate our sensory impressions. The third level is called the consciousness soul. Here we form concepts in our consciousness and learn to recognize ourselves as the creator of concepts. As long as an individual is developing his soul life he moves through these levels, and mankind moves through the same levels during historical processes.

Each cultural epoch's pecularities are outer symptoms of mankind's inner development. People awaken to new soul levels in phases. They create new cultures that are not extensions of the previous epochs.

Early history

Around 3000 B.C. the Egyptian Epoch began. Something new broke through with elementary force. Within a few decades many events had taken place: an empire was formed, Memphis became the capital, Menes became the first pharaoh, the calender was created and hieroglyphics appeared. Soon thereafter

the monumental buildings arose: pyramids and temples with picturesque relieves, sculptures and decorated columns. This was a sentient soul culture.

The Greek-Latin culture

Around 750 B.C. the Greek-Roman cultural epoch began. It was time to lay the foundation for the city of Rome. From the beginning a practical, organized ability appeared. It reached full manifestation in the Roman republic. Already at the beginning their impressive legal thinking shone forth. They were very concerned with creating clear, legal rules for human interaction. This is task of laws. The Romans strove for clear agreements, order and control. This shows that human development entered the phase of the rational soul. While the sentient soul level is nourished by multiple imagery impressions, the rational soul orients to the centered point. It wants to focus. All roads led to Rome!

The rational soul expresses itself through the great Greek philosophers. The natural philosophers reflected on natural elements. They began to "ab-stract," to pull apart one element from the other in order to understand the multiplicity of nature. Thales was convinced that all four elements are created by water while Heraclites believed that fire is the primary element of nature. This is not evident in nature. This is thinking.

Then Socrates entered the world stage, walking among citizens of Athens, speaking with the people, awakening them to clear thought processes, something which may even be painful. Socrates became the father of conceptual analysis. His pupil, Plato, further developed philosophy in the form of dialogues in which people wrestle with thoughts. And finally, Plato's student, Aristotle, described the laws of thinking in his logic and categories. The level of soul development at this time was double-sided and is the rational or openhearted soul. In the analytical, rational operations we find one quality of soul, while the openhearted quality is expressed in ancient art that could not be created by mere logic. This cultural epoch also includes the Middle Ages during which time philosophy was further developed by Augustine, Scotus Eriugena, Abelard and others, culminating in the cathedral-like thoughts of Thomas Aquinas. At the same time heart-felt forces were developed in church art and religious beliefs. Latin remained the language of education until the end of the Middle Ages, so we call this cultural period the Greek-Latin Epoch.

Modern times

Modern history began around 1400 as the Renaissance brought renewal to Europe. It was a time of great discoveries, and God's majesty no longer resounded from the throne in the sky. In the arts perspective drawing is developed and physical landscapes gain importance. Science pioneered experiments and

mathematics as essential resources. Everything must be counted, weighed and measured. More than ever thinking reached deep into the physical world and observation established natural principles. Technical discoveries created new conditions for mankind, in particular the printing press. The mechanical clock, the compass and gunpowder wee further developed and used in war.

The human being of the Middle Ages had a dreamlike character to his daily consciousness, and in the modern times a new ability appeared—the curious removal of the threshold between the physical senses and supersensible mental pictures as Columbus noted in his diary as he reached land in the new world—he had arrived in Paradise! He made physical observations of rivers that ran together, and where salt water and fresh water met. He compared the astounding nature with the description of the Garden of Eden in the *Bible, Moses Book 1: Paradise.*

Roughly one hundred years later Galileo Galilei walked to church in Pisa and sat on one of the rear benches. Before the mass began, he observed a churchman standing on a ladder lighting a huge chandelier and noticed how the chandelier began to move. The holy mass began with God's message from heavenly heights, but all Galileo can think about is the swing of the chandelier. This observation became the basis for his law of pendulum movement. How many millions of people had seen a moving object previously but not observed the law of movement? Galileo had the ability to observe keenly that is a prerequisite for the science of physics.

The consciousness soul and it phases

Steiner called the period that began at the beginning of the fourteenth century and continues today the Epoch of the Consciousness Soul. It includes many paradoxes. In his book *Theosophy*, Steiner explains that the consciousness soul is that which enlightens the soul with eternal quality. The truths with which individuals live have an eternal character. One paradoxical aspect is that thinking is directed towards the earth, not the heavens. Humanity turns away from the eternal truths and concentrate on the external, purely physical, space. The explanation is that the consciousness soul evolves during a number of phases. In order to awaken, it first unites with the material, lifeless aspects of reality. Each person must develop his own thoughts and gain the courage to believe in his own convictions. In history we notice the *individual* enters the world stage. At the beginning of the fourteenth century Jeanne d'Arc appeared; she dared to stand before the majority of church and royal power blocks. One hundred years later Martin Luther was summoned to the parliament at Worms, Germany, to retract his theses nailed on the church door in Wittenberg. Luther declared that he can neither believe in the Pope or the Church nor retract his theses, because

"it is not wise to act against mt own conscience. Here I stand, I can do nothing else." Jan Hus, Giordano Bruno, Columbus, Magellan are also examples of the new, sovereign personalities who resisted the prevailing mind-sets. Their courage and self-confidence were not based on something they had done, but rather on something they believed they could do.

When people awaken and eventually achieve the necessary inner strength on the foundation that materialistic science has prepared, the next phase of the consciousness soul is possible: the ability to approach the spiritual as a free choice made by each individual. When people are freed from old family, nationalistic or religious connections, some choose to go for money and simplistic values while others choose to approach the metaphysical world. During the final decades of the twentieth century we observed many people searching for spiritual experiences. Some called these New Age alternatives. People experimented with paths that do not align with Western philosophical traditions.

We have a long way to go before we can realize the methods Rudolf Steiner mentions in the subtitle of his book *The Philosophy of Freedom: Some results of introspective observation following the methods of Natural Science.* Such methods will help us to retain the power of observation and the consequent attitude for the objective that we have won in our studies of Natural Science while we expand our observations towards spiritual realities.

The new spiritual reality is created on shaky foundations. The Self within the consciousness soul has nothing to rest its head upon. In recent years we have also seen many people taking steps backwards. While we speak about a new renaissance, we reawaken ideals from ancient times. The experiences of freedom in the fifteenth century were followed by authoritarian tyrants in the sixteenth century. After the celebration of the French Revolution and the search for freedom, equality and brotherhood, Napoleon turned the country into a military dictatorship. The New Age movement during the past years has actually been a return to ancient forms of consciousness: shamanism, yoga, and so forth—more accurately, Old Age.

Reviewing the events and consciousness of the twentieth century we find a mixed picture: individualism, avant-garde, the chase for modernism, protest movements and youth rebellions, but also periods with totalitarian governments that annihilated all progress. Let us compare those social movements with ones we find at the beginning of the nineteenth century when efforts were directed to communal, long-term national goals. In Norway, as in other lands, literature was part of life. Wergeland, Ibsen, and Lie were spiritual leaders with authority due to their creativity. In America artists such as Whitman and Emerson helped build a nation and a democracy.

The isolated cultural life

Many of the literary high points in the twentieth century were created in a state of advanced reflection, deep analysis of the times and great psychological insight. Consider the works of novelists such as Marcel Proust, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Robert Musil and Hermann Broch. Thoroughly reflective analysis was also the basis for paintings, sculpture, architecture and music. Yet the great advances in the arts remained outside of mainstream; it was not the artists creating history. What created history were the technical, industrial events driven by the powers of economy, culminating in today's globalism. There is something compulsive about the technical-economic culture; an inhuman intelligence drives competition, unemployment, urban sprawl, pollution, a greater separation between rich and poor, mental illness and widespread use of pharmaceuticals. This culture is in direct contrast to the progress we see in a cultural life wherein people create novels, paintings, music with artistic skill combined with a high level of reflection, all which remains, at present, powerless in light of the compulsive commercialization of civilization.

Just as one cannot judge a biography merely from the individual's years as a teenager, so may we not judge the consciousness soul development based on just its present phase. The consciousness soul is not yet anchored in adulthood. We must accept the trials, detours and progress made today and in the coming years. Humanity can define its potential for true values when the consciousness soul is developed, but a meaningful development in the future is not guaranteed. It is a question of freedom.

History teachers are challenged to understand the deeper, developmental forces and present the historical events so pupils can view an open future filled with possibilities for their own meaningful contributions. This takes the children beyond the narrow definitions of conventional historians, be they Marxist or Darwinist in approach.

The Waldorf school

The larger fields of modern society are mirrored in a smaller arena: the work of the college of teachers at every Waldorf school. Teachers consider themselves free workers in a collegial community. They work to create and maintain a free expression of the curriculum, the school organization and productive lessons. A plethora of challenges arises and many teachers revert to old ways with textbooks and politics that often undermine the progress that is always possible. When one first experience what a free culture can accomplish, it is impossible to move backwards. Ultimately the Waldorf school is an arena in which we practice living in the consciousness soul.

Fairy Tales and Legends

The First Two Years at the Waldorf School

by

Jens Bjørneboe

Translated by Ted Warren

Some questions are difficult to answer. And those questions that arise unbidden, after you have followed thirty children through their first two school years, belong to the especially difficult. Ideally I would tuck them away in a black box, carefully bolted and chained.

- What was my goal in these first two years of school?
- And what has happened to the children during these years?

The first two years were spent creating a solid relationship between the children and the teacher. An equally large role was strengthening the social relationships between the children. The relationships between people are determined by what they share in common—inside themselves. When children can share the same pictures, they can also have common feelings to think back upon. The best way to establish a good relationship with children is to focus on the most free and inward part of their lives.

True relationships follow the rule: What I hold onto, I lose. What I give away, I retain. The path to that inner point goes through reservation, not intrusion. The shortest path is not a direct line; it makes a bow around the point. Children create a relationship with their teacher when he captures their attention in something else. So paradoxical is human nature.

- What captures the attention of first graders?

"I do not like the well-behaved kids!" This message came from bottom of a young boy's soul, whispered in my ear. It was hard not to admit that I also like the misbehaved children best. But that does not mean I feel sorry for the well-behaved children. For to the "naughty" belong all of the problematical natures.

When you look closer, that entails everyone in the class, for everyone has forces in their soul that are not well behaved. When we discover those forces, then we discover each other. In the darkness among the creeping plants sit our secrets. If the teacher moralizes directly into that jungle, using scythes and insecticides, he can be sure he will learn nothing about the secrets.

For some reason adults are always in a hurry. The part of the world they take seriously—taxes, income, repairing the kitchen sink, the mirror in the entrance and all of the thousands of other trivial aspects of life are precisely connected to what adults consider "time." Their concept of time is a measured quantity. If you have a lot to do, there is too little time. For children it is different. If too much happens in a day, their day becomes a universal space of time, with no beginning and no end. Time opens up.

For children the kitchen sink also exists but it is not trivial. If it leaks, the drops create horses or trolls on the floor. And that is important, very important. Trolls are more important than floorboards and paint. But the most important thing is the plumber who brings an arsenal of wrenches, screws and other iron objects. These are heavy things and cold to hold in your hand. The plumber is a mythological figure, a fairy tale being as high as the church spire. He is terribly friendly, as strong as three bears, and much more exciting than the average uncle or aunt. The plumber does something. He does not come to eat dinner or drink coffee and talk about clothes, but he plays an uncanny game with the sink; he pulls weird and foul-smelling objects out of the pipes; he is the general who wins or loses. And while the battle is waged, the sun stands still and the birds stop singing. The afternoon in the kitchen is as long as a season; the kitchen becomes a magical landscape. For the adults the plumber is done in half an hour, and then he presents his shamefully high bill before leaving.

The mirror in the hall also exists for children. But it is a mystery that entails the whole world. Against an ocean of darkness, one has seen one's own face, curiously small and pale, but recognizable. It is the real mirror, the intimate, and the only confidential mirror among all of the world's mirrors.

Our lives are divided between two planes: one is tragic and the other is trivial. The tragic plane contains both good and evil; it contains the powers of hate and love and all of the struggles between light and darkness. In short, the tragic plane contains the riddles of life, the battles between good and evil in the human soul.

The trivial plane entails the endless ocean of meaningless activities that fill our time, that which makes us adults without strength and old without honor, that in which we drown and lose ourselves. The objects are never meaningless. Only our experience of the objects is meaningless. The trivial plane is just as much within us as it is in the world. It is a state of mind, and our adult state of mind moves between the tragic and the trivial.

Until the eleventh year our children live totally in the tragic world. It is important to consciously cultivate the deep and useless, the tragic and the outstanding aspects of our children's lives, the fruits of which will appear later in life. Fairy takes are the most important source of health in the souls of children before the ninth year.

For children fairy tales play the same role as Aristotle considered tragedy should play for adults. But while only a few adults care for the great tragic works, all healthy children live with fairy tales in their hearts. For fairy tales that truly represent the eternal goodness are the only source that offers children a world that relates to their own. All children have an abundance of what adults call education, culture, and the love of art. Therefore children are more fun to be with. Perhaps one adult in a thousand has the same depth to their life of feelings, the profound thoughts or as serious a relationship to good and evil as most children possess. We merely need to meet them with a language they understand. From an artistic point of view fairy tales are on the same level as Shakespeare's, Goethe's, Dante's or Homer's poetry. For adults they are not easily accessible. In *Poetics* Aristotle emphasizes the purifying effect tragedy has upon the soul. He gives it an antiseptic role; it cleans the soul of wounds, smallness, jealousy, hate and all other remains of everyday stress. The composition of tragedy aims at creating a catharsis. That is its mission. Aristotle was convinced that the most complete tragedy combines the play's content with a catastrophe that is avoided in the last minute: with a good ending. Fairy tales meet the same criteria. While tragedy must be violent and awaken fear and compassion, fairy tales must be deeply felt.

Art provides healing. For children fairy tales are the closest art form in addition to other activities they enjoy at the Waldorf school; painting, drawing, singing and forming. It is important not to read fairy tales for children. Nor should they be retold the tales. Rather the tales should be performed and demonstrated. The speaker should be in constant movement, each word expressed with movement. If not the fairy tale will not have the all effect it can have. Only when children are carried away, when they forget everything else, will the fairy tale become a window into a greater reality.

One may ask: When you tell so dramatically, will not the cruelty be even stronger? Will the children be scared? Will they have a hard time sleeping? If the tale is told well, the children will be peaceful, content and happy. Children need to feel safe in order to unfold themselves because fear among children has no reasonable limit. Fear for children always becomes the fear that the good will not win. It lies deeply within the human being where it should neither be ignored nor awakened.

When a fairy tale is told properly, fear begins to move. It remains for awhile in the form of uneasiness, fright, and then the excitement intensifies, their mouths

open, their eyes become larger and then, then the troll is killed and the evil is once again removed from the surface of the earth. Until the next time the world is a safe home, a place where goodness always conquers. There is no reason to explain with which attitude such a fairy tale fills the soul of the children.

Just consider for a minute Lillekort's (a young hero in Norwegian folklore) immortal comment to the troll when he is asked if he knows how to fight with a sword: "If I cannot, I will learn." Lillekort's words explode into the mountainside. A man, who brings such words to his heart will always win over the trolls, no matter how many heads they have. Once you have told the fairy tale of Lillekort to the first or second graders, there no linger exists attitudes such as: "I cannot, I dare not, I do not know." The teacher, who represents the forward-moving, world-conquering principle, can at any time lead the class in: "If I cannot, I will learn." Not only the story of Lillekort but almost all fairy tales have a moral influence that is much more effective than a twenty-hour scolding.

Fairy tales must be used—hat is why we have them. We have so many types of fairy tales that there are few human situations or moral problems that are not addressed in ideal form and solved by them. Yet many of the same motives are repeated in the European and Asiatic tales. Which motives are these?

One archetpe appears in Askeladden (the Ash Lad), the main character in many Norwegian folktales, a character similar but different from Lillekort. It is easy to characterize these half brothers. Both have techniques for conquering evil—Askeladden by using kindness along with his own unconventional awareness and his ability to observe reality different than all others, and Lillekort with his unbending courage. Askeladden pauses and ask questions about it first, but Lillekort walks right over the mountain. Both are the youngest child and both are extremely poor. They both help kings, conquer evil, and free princesses. The archetypal motives are that power and strength lie where no one looks for them.

Both boys have good luck on their side. They have attributes, not power. Those who help them are friendly animals, enlightened trolls, the forces of nature and other beings. "The Helpers" are a very important aspect in the logic of fairy tales. But who are they?

In the story of the "Seven Ponies" the messages are so clear that they send chills down your spine. The King's seven sons are under a spell—they become ponies. Every morning they gallop away and are gone for the whole day. Not until late afternoon do they return. No one knows what they live on. Both the older brothers of both Askeladden and Lollekort want to know what is going on and so fall into the trap—their lack of genuine interest leads them to believe that the horses live from grass and water like other horses. But Askeladden and Lollekort, respectively, follow them over the river and see that the horses eat at

a table and drink wine in a church—they live from bread and wine. But what are do bread, wine and the river represent?

It is not merely theoretically interest to ask whether fairy tales contain objective truths. To the contrary, it is of great importance for those who tell fairy tales for children that ”only a fairy tale” is not part of their vocabulary or attitude. If one does not believe in fairy tales, this will certainly come through in a tone that does not belong. If one tells children something that one does not believe in, it will always carry the nuance of a lie. Children will notice, and they will act accordingly.

If fairy tales teach us how to look into the world, what role do legends play? The term *fairy tale* lies deeper in a world of blue shadows and golden light; the heroes are pure pictures. But in legends the heroes are historical figures who lived there and then, but, due to their attitudes, have become larger than themselves. We look back at Catherine of Sienna, St. Francis and many more, the low-profile, secret leaders who have influenced history more than popes and emperors. They expressed themselves through their actions. Legends emphasize the human, free deeds: but beautiful deeds.

But legends raise us into air that is too thin to breath. It is actually encouraging for the teacher to see the children act disorderly when they have heard too many gentle legends. As heroes they are useless. If one wants children to be nice and peaceful, one uses the opposite of legends—animal fables. For soul hygiene both parts are necessary, in the right dosage and the proper balance. While legends provide nourishment—eventually too much nourishment—to the highest human qualities in children, fables provide satisfaction for the natural, animalistic qualities within a light of good humor.

The true “animal” in a fable appears, surprisingly, as a close and human half-brother or relative. Not only archangels and saints but also snakes, wolves, turtles, mice and especially foxes belong to the picture. Children feel a close relation to fauns. This coincides with St. Francis’ words: “brother swine,” “brother crow,” and “brother wolf.” That he also acknowledged “brother sun” and “brother angel” makes the scene more complete. No one knew better than St. Francis the place animals take in the human soul.

In addition to the many fables and stories of the saints, we often introduce Reinike Fox. Everyone is born with both St. Francis and Reinike Fox in their heart. In the stories we meet them from the outside, as independent figures. I do not know whether or not Francis and Reinike experienced the same joy over the reunion as my class certainly did. No joy is greater than seeing a brother again.

One day Francis was walking in the woods together with his disciples. They came to a green glade, an open plain in the forest. Nearby they heard the noise of some dogs surrounding their prey. Between the trees they could barely glimpse a jumping bundle that came closer and closer. It was brother hare, alone and scared to death. He walked into the glade, looked around and sighted Francis. As quick as lightning he crossed the opening and with one great jump was in Francis' arms. Francis felt the hare's heart beat against his chest. When the hounds arrived they were forced to turn around and head home. Once the hare had rested, he sprang on the grass and hopped into the forest.

The children loved drawing Francis speaking with the birds and the fish, the same motives Giotto never tired of painting.

In the fox Reinike we meet a dreadful contrast to Francis. A more powerful concentration of disgracefulness and meanness has never stood on four legs. He is beyond description. Consider all sin, all falseness, all deception and all slyness that can fit in a fur, and you have a notion of the fox Reinike. But he is still a brother, a brother degraded and inadequate, with his ideals and hope for improvement and a painful understanding of his weaknesses. His understanding does not stretch very far. The arts of repentance and hypocrisy, plus his love for intrigues control him. He has climbed the Himalayan summits of guilt, and therefore no one appears more innocent than he.

In the final devastating crime he is always the last one suspected guilty. This is because he cries so much for previously proven crimes. (Tartuffe is a shepherd boy compared with Reinike.)

Here are some glimpses into his biography.

Under the leadership of the lion King Nobel, all of the animals are gathered for a trial. Reinike has degraded and tormented Mr. Brown the bear, Isegrim the wolf, Hinze the cat, the female wolf and others. The problem is how to prove the guilty one's participation at a trial and arrive at an appropriate punishment. The bear, the wolf and the cat try to convince Reinike to come to the trial to answer a couple of questions concerning a couple of dead chickens. Who will be next to try and get him? The group decides to send the beaver who unenthusiastically sets out, for everyone knows that Reinike is the incarnation of intelligence and pure reason. No one can face him. He tricks them into traps, sorrow and accidents. And he always answers them as if it is their own weaknesses that are their downfall.

An old history of tribal hate, antipathy and revenge is in the background, for everyone knows Reinike does not like Mr. Brown, Isegrim and Hinze. Does he also detest the beaver? We will see. Everyone waits at the trial, and, to everyone's surprise, Reinike appears with the beaver. He is accused, found guilty of everything a lying being can be guilty of, and is sentenced to death at the gallows. Though he would have preferred to be found innocent, this is just the moment Reinike has been waiting just forthis moment though he had hoped to be found innocent.

Once the rope is around his neck, he is in his element: May he now speak, now that he will die? He wants to tell them that since he will be departing it is important to lighten his heart by admitting everything. King Nobel will not prevent him from admitting, but the bear and the wolf sense problems. Reinike looks too devastated.

His worse sin, says Reinike, was that he knew about the conspiracy without telling everyone. Now he may as well, since he is going to die anyway. . . .

Which conspiracy? King Nobel woke up.

Oh, Reinike's father, the old, peacefully sleepy Reinike had once been tempted by. . . .

Which conspiracy? The lion wants to know more.

Oh, it was the treasure that had tempted him. Mr. Brown and Isegrim had convinced the old and reliable fox to join them.

Treasure? Conspiracy? Will you immediately come down from that gallows!

And this is when the bear and wolf's path of pain begins. Reinike has them imprisoned in the deepest dungeon of King Nobel's castle.

As a reward for exposing the treason, Reinike is pardoned and set free. The innocent Mr. Brown and Isegrim are chained to the walls, but Reinike is satisfied. He would have to atone his sins, Reinike tells the king and therefore he must wander as a pilgrim to Rome. King Nobel gives him permission. For his way he needs a backpack and shoes. He thinks he could make a backpack out of bear skin and if the pack was not too big the traitor, Mr. Brown, would survive, since bears have such fast-growing meat, as Mr. Brown had demonstrated previously. And the shoes can be taken from Isegrim's paws. If he cut them off, they would be big enough to pull over like socks around his own paws.

Go ahead! He could help himself, said the King. And Mr. Brown and Isegrim almost died from the operation.

But Reinike needs spiritual communion for the way, since he still has some small things of very intimate nature to repent. He could imagine that the goat Pastor Bellyn and the pious hare Lampe could follow him for a couple of miles south, and so both men of God followed him. And this is when Bellyn's and Lampe's tragedy begins.

For the first part of the journey Reinike entertained them with godly conversation, focusing on the cleansing pain of regret. But along the way they came to Reinike's castle and he needed to visit Mrs. Reinike before the long trip to Rome. Lampe wanted to join him in the castle while Bellyn waited impatiently outside.

Bellyn heard Lampe's voice outside. It was not happy. When he knocked on the castle door, Reinike answered that Lampe cried out because he was so happy to see Mrs. Reinike again, a distant relative he had not seen for quite a while. Now they hugged each other. Would Bellyn do them all a favor?

Yes, that he will.

Reinike said he had used this time to write a long letter to King Nobel. If Bellyn would bring it to the castle, he would be allowed to say that he co-wrote it and helped Reinike deliver it.

Writing was Bellyn's weak point. He had often tried to learn to write but it had never worked out. His greatest wish was to write, and now the temptation was too great. Reinike put the letter in the backpack, sealed it and made Bellyn promise not to open it on the way.

The devoted Bellyn took the unopened backpack to the king. He did not hide the fact that he had written it together with Reinike. From the backpack the king pulled the bloody fur of Lampe. Since many witnesses had heard Bellyn brag about his participation in the "letter," everyone knew that Reinike and Bellyn had murdered and eaten the innocent and pious hare.

Reinike's wiliness was proven once again. Mr. Braun and Isegrim were set free and in redress they were served Pastor Bellyn on a platter, fresh from the royal kitchen, executed as punishment for the disgusting deed of eating Lampe. No one got hold of Reinike, but they were happy punish his accomplice.

And so Reinike traveled on in the dark, the pure, absolute intellect in the figure of an animal.

This is just a small part of the one hundred-page story. When the children have heard enough of Reinike they no longer want to hear more. They are tired

of the cowardice, lies, and cruelty. The children become gentle, but that is not the most important effect. The most important thing after three weeks with Reinike fox is that they are no longer the same children. They know more; they have received a lesson in hypocrisy and irony. It is more difficult to be a teacher after this block. The children have laughed a lot, but they also feel badly for Reinike's victims. The fox would have been impossible to present without Francis. The children have seen two extreme possibilities among animals and saints.

Selma Lagerlof presents a synthesis of the animal and saint in her legend of Raniero de Raniero, a weaponsmith in Florence, later a warrior and a very tough guy. He became a crusader and one of the first to climb the wall of Jerusalem. He is the most courageous, strongest and brutal warrior in the crusader army.

During his bloody career he sent his greatest trophies to a certain Madonna picture in his hometown to make his successes known. He was just as arrogant when he lost. After the conquest of Jerusalem he received a special reward for his bravery, to be the first to light a candle from the eternal flame on the altar of the Holy City. But that same evening, during a feast the jester dares him to carry the candle to Florence without letting the flame go out.

"You think I can not do so!" replies Raniero.

And so the bet was on. The next morning the crusader rode off alone on his horse in his armor with weapons and a unlit candles on his belt, carrying the holy, burning light in his hand. The dangers he encounters bringing the candle to Florence are much larger than the usual pains and dangers of a soldier. The flame shall not go out! He withstands insults, pain and grief. He cannot defend himself because the flame must be protected. He cannot flee. He cannot sleep. He cannot rest or his armor, weapons and horse could be stolen. Raniero becomes sick, weak, thin and grungy. They call him *pazzo*, the idiot. But that does not matter to one who protects the flame. He soon learns his lesson: he who carries a flame can only succeed if he forgets all other thoughts, if he, in the morning, at midday, in the evening and in the night thinks only of the flame.

When Raniero returned to Florence the flame burned brightly, but he was a changed man. He still had the powerful forces but his goals were different. This legend includes one thousand years of history. The road from Jerusalem to Florence is very long. The story of Raniero is the story of humankind.

These stories give children a lively, direct and very exciting drama. They provide nourishment, from which the children can live and grow. Every glance, every handshake, every drawing and every question exposes relationships with "birds," "boats," the "hare," the "witch," or the "saint." The children meet themselves.

Through the Golden Forest

by

Leif Wårenskjold

Translated by Ted Warren

On my fireplace is a glazed clay pot. In the pot is a withering, ochre golden leaf. A branch, black as soot, casts a Chinese symbol shadow against the red firewall and the braided-iron, shaped in stone gray leaves. The leaves fold together, pale and dull. When the door is open, light from the hall falls between the leaves, and they shine like lights in a fog, a distant reflection of light in the golden forest.

Askeladden (the ash lad) rode a blue ox through a copper forest, a silver forest and a golden forest. We drove a gray car.

The reader may protest: it was Kari Trestakk who rode the blue ox, not Askeladden. That may be true, or almost true. But who is Kari Trestakk and who is Askeladden? Can you interchange them? Would that not cause confusion in the folk-tales?

Our well-fashioned fairy tale images come from Asbjørnsen and Moe, the great storytellers who have created pictures of the figures that follow the Norwegian people through history. We can find no better in world literature. But that does not mean that all of the mystical figures in fairy tales, sagas and legends represent are described. Asbjørnsen and Moe would be the first to protest their fairy tale figures becoming static in time.

Pictures rise to life, light up and fade away. Askeladden is one such picture, known throughout history among all people. In the Norwegian fairy tales, we see one side of him—the Norwegian side! But even this side has unlimited facets. From storyteller to storyteller, from village to village, the fairy tales change form.

Asbjørnsen and Moe set themselves the task of collecting the many facets into a picture. As with all pictures, Askeladden finds himself in a process between rigid and dissolving, between the cold pole and the warm pole. Every artist stands in those processes: to enliven without dissolving, to form without becoming rigid. In pictures, what appears is that which is always moving between energy and form. Only the great artists can recognize the moment of attendance and hold the picture, suspended between life and tradition. And Asbjørnsen and Moe were great artists.

From his summer journeys in Ullensvang in 1846, Jørgen Moe tells us of the storyteller, Blind-Anne:

> *... under the hanging birch tree's agile, shining-leaved flutter, sat Blind-Anne absorbed in her story, her snow white hair loose under her bonnet. She ran her hands across her forehead; at her feet sat the barefoot, bareheaded, short-sleeved Bjørn whose eyes hung on the old lady's mouth, wanting to snap up the words before they left her lips. Outside, in the sparkling July light, the reflection of the steep walls of the south fjord's green mirror sparkled upon the water, and the lightly rippling sunrays played, glistened and shone in thousands of reflections towards the fjord's distance that closes into looming, gigantic crevices.*

Jørgen Moe had Blind-Anne's trust. He shared her respect for tradition in storytelling. In every fairy tale he saw an artistic whole that would unfold in his own writing style. Like all parents who tell the fairy tales, he had certainly experienced the children's demand for a true version of the original, and their intolerance of the free poetry from adults: "Now you fell out of the fairy tale, Mother!" But there are many more storytellers than Asbjørnsen and Moe. So when our images of the fairy tale figures become fixed, it can be helpful to work with other sources. The stories about Askeladden are such an opportunity

Who is Askeladden? He has many names: the ash lad, ash-dust, little boy, little worker, Hans, the youngest son of the king, the widow's son. He is even called Cinderella. Even the gender can change; mythology and its folksy expression, the fairy tale: "Cinder-ella, as they called him, because he constantly lay in and dug the ashes." These names are enough to suggest the danger of "dissolving" if we relate merely to the accessories and not the representation.

Askeladden's helpers also have no fixed pattern. A variety of people, animals and things weave into his stories. He travels through the countryside and various kingdoms on a horse, mule, bear, wolf or ox: "Look in my left eye, you, it is dull," said the ox. "But we dare not be here tonight; get on my back so we can leave. Do not worry about food," said the ox. They took off.

The storyteller from Telemark, Olav Tjoenstaul, remarks that Askeladden rides on an ox. This boy has only one brother, not two, as Espen Askeladden usually has. He experiences something that breaks every picture scheme: the ox transforms into a colorful virgin! Researchers of fairy tales face the same

challenges as any other researchers: The deeper you dig the more complicated it becomes. Who is Askeladden, either dressed in rags or a clown outfit? What does he do? Either he gives his crumbs to a poor woman or he picks up worn out shoe soles or chops off the heads of trolls.

Askeladden is the human being. The lonesome, unknown, and boundless human being. He leaves the pile of ashes and sets out into the world. He does not make haste like Per and Pål. He sees birds under the sky, flowers along the way and an old lady in a ditch. “I am curious about what is happening, what is chopping up on the hill,” he says. “What are you lying here and running after?” he asks the creek that falls out of the cave. Askeladden is interested in looking closer, and he takes the time to ask questions. He picks up what the others leave behind, not only in fairy tales but in his daily life as well.

Once a boy was with his mother and father in a restaurant, eating Sunday dinner. After dessert, he picked up a paper napkin and two burned-out matches. “What are you going to do with that?” his mother asked.

“ I am just going to keep them,” replied the boy.

While the family was taking the streetcar home, something happened. A young man wanted to pay for himself and his lady, but when he stuck out his hand to give the money, a twenty-five cent piece fell to the floor and settled in a groove where the conductor could not pick it up. The lady said it was the conductor’s fault and they exchanged angry words. The passengers woke up and listened. Meanwhile the boy rolled up the napkin he had put in his pocket, took out the matchsticks, pushed the coin forward along groove until it rolled out, and handed the money to the conductor.

“Here you are,” said the boy.

Askeladden does not stress out. He does not travel in order to get there. He travels in order to travel. With a good heart he shares the little he has with those who have nothing. He does not carry a heavier load than the future expects of him. He sails across the sea, rides through forests, fights with dragons, trolls and the Red Knight. Because he helps others he is also helped. Because he thinks clearly before he acts, he hits his target. The poor receive powerful helpers. He conquers fear, temptations and enemies. He wins the princess and half the kingdom. He is the Ash Lad from the worker’s farmhouse. But he is also the knight Parsifal, whose name means “he who rides through the forests!” Parsifal fights against the Red Knight. He wanders through the dense forests, finds his helpers, fights against injustice, and wins in the end.

The many fairy tales are like streams and rivers that run through various landscapes. They take on the form and the taste of the landscape through which they flow. But they all carry water from the same source, from the abundance

in heaven. Through hundreds and hundreds of years fairy tales have spread a sparkling net through human souls that would have dried out had they not been sprinkled by these life-giving streams. Fairy tales are variations on a single theme: Humanity's path through trials and transformation. Askeladden is Norway's variation of the theme: the free, searching human being.

Here our reflections are interrupted. Our car swings into the Gausdal Valley over a bridge and down a road that clings to the cliff above a river. The mountainside has received its first evening tones—a cold glaze over red patches. The birch trees along the road display aged leaves. The farms become smaller, the slopes steeper. We climb steadily but carefully to the sky. The motor strains. A brook falls right from the side of the road. Rock and crags reduce our view. Yet we climb. Further up the trees thin out. With a surge we reach the top and drive out on the plateau. The birch trees give way to crab apples trees with white trunks and black spots. Colors spread out upon the plateau and flow into each other like wet aquarelles. We stop at the highest point, 3095 feet above sea level. The air is clear and cold, an icy breeze coming from the west. The horizon is cloudless. The Jøtunheim Range reaches its peaks at Glittertind and Galhopiggen, while blue mountains bulge out to the sides, clear and close above the plateau.

The sun stands low. We drive right into it. The road sinks down between green, gray ridges and swings into the sun again. In narrow plunges the car dances forward to a sea of trolled trees, mountain birch dressed in coal black trunks of rude shapes. The sunburned leaves are in gold. We are surrounded by an enflamed landscape. The light of summer has ignited it. The leaves are blooming.

Mile after mile the golden forest stretches across the mountain. It sparks and lightning flashes with supersensible light. We enjoy every new swing in the road and new sights. The colors are pushed to their limits, a sea of gold with light waves against violet mountains. We stop and break a branch off the nearest tree. Soon the gold turns more ochre. The splendor runs out.

On my fireplace is a glazed clay pot. In the pot is a branch of mountain birch. Yet somewhere stands a flaming, golden forest, waiting for Askeladden to ride through on a blue ox.

1. See George Webbe Dasant's edition of Asbjørnsen and Moe, *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*, *Old Tales from the North*, New York: Dover, 1970, ISBN 486-22521-6. Also available from Kessinger Publisher, ISBN 978-141904358, Amazon.com., 2005.

Asbjørnsen and Moe met at school when they were 13 or 14 years old, and became very good friends. They shared a common interest in fairytales, songs and legends. Asbjørnsen made up his mind to collect as many folktales as possible, and the two young gentlemen decided to work together on this project. While visiting different villages in Norway, they wrote down everything they were told and worked with the material until they were satisfied. It was difficult to retell the stories in written form, as they were all spoken in various Norwegian dialects, but Danish was the only written language in Norway at the time. Since Asbjørnsen and Moe wanted to remain true to their sources, we find a lot of dialect expressions in their books. They published their first collection of folk tales in 1852. Asbjørnsen was also a teacher and Moe was a clergyman.

What About the Old Testament?

by

Dan Lindholm

Translated by Ted Warren

Few subjects are more difficult for us to relate to than the stories in the Old Testament. Traditionally these images are presented during religious instruction and thereby come, at least partially, with a belief system. This may create difficulties for teachers. For is it part of our religious life to believe in a creation story? Or in the fall of man? Or in Jonah and the whale? Or that Abraham, in order to please the Lord, was willing to stick the sacrificial knife into Isaac?

These portrayals are powerful and sometimes frightening. And even though one occasionally finds lovely stories in the Old Testament, all too often even these are over-laced with unreasonable and unsavory elements. Whether we are guided by religious feelings or we look at the events in light of scientific inquiry—both methods are equally inadequate in helping a teacher get hold of the content that he or she must truly bring to the children in the classroom.

Many have tried to solve the problem quietly by cutting out the most alarming parts of the Old Testament, but censoring the text is not feasible. If our goal is to trace human consciousness back to the common origin, no other story comes near the Jewish tradition. The idea of common roots is significant for all of us and for all children.

These reflections may be weighed up one at a time, but the question remains: What do you do with the Old Testament in the Waldorf school? Rudolf Steiner wanted lessons taught from the Old Testament, preferably in the third grade. He was convinced that this material presents strongly formed pictures that speak to the age appropriate development children. It should be presented in a universal context and not as religious instruction.

The Israelites were commanded never to make a visible picture of God. Instead a powerful pictorial force is found in their language. The Old Testament speaks with strong pathos that our children can feel. When the teacher truly represents what he brings in the lessons, these stories can reach a part of life for the children that fairy tales and legends can not reach.

Those who have taught in the third grade a number of times may have noticed that children pass through a small threshold at that age. In the first two school years the teacher often feels that children follow him on "invisible strings." He belongs to them and they belong to him. In a sense the children swallow the words spoken by the teacher. Once a child came to a teacher at the Waldorf school and said, "You know what, Teacher? I dreamed last night that I ate you up." The teacher was not upset but rightfully enthusiastic.

In the third grade the children no longer "swallow" the teacher's words. They are more critical. "Who are you?" they ask. "Are you always correct? Will you always decide over me?" The threshold is not severe, but there is more distance, not only to the teacher but also to everyone else in the child's life. A pseudo-estrangement occurs. The teacher becomes just one of the teachers and the parents become just people among other people.

The continuous and underlying theme of the Old Testament is a similar estrangement, but it appears between people and God. The people in the *Bible* lived under the pressure of God who commanded strictly, "You shall and you shall not!" We are aware of an almighty, invisible power as God's fingers write the universal laws!

Now that the children no longer live so closely to their teacher, the question arises—there must be something all mighty, something beyond the teacher and humanity! What is that? This question cannot be answered with traditional, biblical history instruction. It must become pedagogically active in the child's life. That is when a selection of Old Testament stories can be effective. We are back to the challenge for modern teachers: How do I truly represent the *Bible* stories?

The first thing we learn in the *Bible* is that the world was created:

BERESHIT BARA ELOHIM ETH HASHAMAJIM VETH HAREZ

which is customarily translated: "In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth." Steiner pointed out that much more is said with these words than can be expressed in modern language.[1] Bara that is translated with the word created could be expressed in the dictionary by a number of other words: produced, yielded, or generated. It is just a choice of words but the mental image generated by the word Bara in the Old Testament created an immediate experience of picture-sound and sound-quality in the language. A lively, imaginative process was thereby generated in the human soul. Such a sentence was true for ancient people. Therefore they did not need any proof.

What about those of us who are trained in abstract concepts that do not give us any picture-sound experience? Can we, with a good conscience, tell the

children how the world was created? How can we convey to our children that God brought forth the whole visible world of nature?

Many of us were taught that God did not create the world, it created itself. The world and everything alive was created by its own inherent force. Let us use a parable. Two friends sit and listen to a violinist. When the concert is over they begin to discuss from where the music came. One of them is a materialist. He explains how the music is created physically, when the bow strikes the strings, the strings vibrate, the sounding board gives resonance, and so forth. Nothing in this argument can be opposed. But the other friend is not satisfied. He says: You are forgetting the composer! Without the composer we have no music no matter what acoustic principles are used. They cannot agree. Music is created in the violin, says one. It comes from the composer answers the other. Who is right?

We see that they are talking about two different things. One truth does not negate the other. In modern science we often speak of complementary truths. Can we consider the creation story in the *Bible* a complementary truth? We should at least consider this. It is true that the *Bible* stories are told in pictures and written in a language that is from our sensory world. It could not be different. But it is also a reality that the *Bible* tells of a creation that takes place in a pre-earthly realm. Therefore, we can partially understand the pictures as borrowed from the invisible world. The teacher needs to find possibilities for presenting the pictures and occurrences so that the unreasonable aspects fade into the background and the meaningful perspectives become accessible for the children.

First let us approach the creation stories and the occurrences in Paradise. Para dies, from the Latin meaning "over the day," suggests a direction. We are challenged to look back to a cosmic, embryonic condition in which the world and the human being were yet unborn. Just as it is hard to understand an embryo through the mental images you use to comprehend an adult, so is it difficult to understand the story of Paradise with mental images based on our daily cognition. Steiner indicated the relationship between his interpretation of the creation and the *Bible's* creation story as follows:

We must imagine that at the Earth's beginning neither man nor animals existed but something more undifferentiated. At first the creatures materialize that become the animal kingdom. The human being remains behind in a pre-created condition, still within the Being of God. The human being must wait until it can receive the form it shall have. If you try to envision this you can say: In the form the human being later receives it has forced the animal kingdom out and down to the Earth. When the conditions are right for the human being to develop its soul, then does he first appear in physical form. If you understand these relationships you will again find the deepest respect for religious documents that are not otherwise easy to relate to."[2]

There is no lack of mythical-legendary content in the history of the Jewish people. This content can be understood as windows into the room that lies behind. Through those windows a spiritual light falls on earthly events. It is not always easy to decide what must be understood naturalistically and what must be given a symbolic, imaginative meaning.

In the story of the fall of man the interpretation is decisive. The fall of man results in mankind entering onto the Earth. We can also say that the human being received an entirely different consciousness. And how is that? From the context we can understand that the human being in Paradise has not discovered himself, has no idea about his own existence. The human being in Paradise is one with all life. The pair of humans is one, all are one. "Man-woman was created by Him" is the text, not "man and woman," as it is often translated so we can better understand! In Paradise there is no death; death only exists on Earth. When humans become earthly and individualized, they can die.

When humans first eat from the tree of knowledge, they discover themselves—"their eyes were opened." They become aware of their existence, their "nakedness." Therefore it is said that humans in the beginning were self-less creatures, mirror images of the creators. (I use the plural because in *Moses, Book I* the plural is used for Elohim.)

From another side a being appears called the "snake." The snake tells the humans: "Eat, so you will be like God and know the difference between good and evil." An enormous paradox lies in these words. To be like God, free of sin, should that be wrong? Is that not for what all good people strive? Theologians have tried to loosen the knot by saying: It was a challenge to disobedience. But that gives us no explanation as to why it was prohibited to help one's self to the tree of knowledge. An important question is left unanswered: What is inside a human being that can differentiate between good and evil?

Our first answer can be conscience, or, more precisely, the self that whispers to my conscience. On the Earth there is only one creation that can say to itself: I am! It is the human being. Steiner pointed to another place in the Old Testament that sheds light on this answer: when Moses received the task of leading Israel out of Egypt. He stands before a burning thorn bush and asks: "Who shall I say has sent me, what is his name?" Then God said to Moses: "I am who I am! (*Eje asher eje*—I am the I!) Tell the children of Israel I am has sent you. That is my eternal name, my memory from generation to generation." (*Book of Moses 3*. 13–15)

Here is named the godly character of the human being before the tempter intervened. The fall of man means that consciousness of the Self was anticipated; it was an early birth. "The eyes of man were opened," the senses were engaged,

and they became so comprehend the world. But desire of Adam and Eve was also ignited. The conscience Self was overpowered by the egotistical ego.

From then on humans have perceived and sensed the world from the outside. They have felt their own Self from within. Both activities create incomplete knowledge and create great illusions into which human beings are woven. The mental images of the world become overpowering to the same degree that helpless overcomes the human being within. The fall of man is thereby fulfilled. At the same time the possibility for awakening to the Self during life on earth is begun.

Of course, we do not present these thoughts to our children in the third grade. They listen to the stories with the naïve pathos which lives in their age group. The pictures speak for themselves. But the teacher is far from naïve and must strive to comprehend and carry the deeper meaning.

If we compare the *Bible*'s ancient stories with the myths of other peoples, it is remarkable how clearly the Jewish prophets painted the biblical pictures. The way of thinking and the soul characteristics of those who wrote the *Book of Moses* were much more oriented to the physical world and thereby more logical than those of other peoples. Therefore we are tempted to pull many of the stories of the *Bible* down to earth and give them a naturalistic truth, when we should rather strive for a pictorial understanding of them. The difference between ancient Jewish and hedonistic consciousnesses becomes clear when we compare the *Bible's* creation story with that of the Greek Hesiod:

> "First of all Chaos appeared, but also the broad-breasted Gaia, she the eternal point that holds us all, and the dark Tartaros in the inner of the broad-breasted earth—and Eros, the most beautiful of all eternal gods, he who removes limbs and overpowers the reasonable will in humans' and gods' breasts. But Chaos gave birth to Erebos and the dark night, and thereafter gave birth to the night ether and Hemera (the day and the day's god)—whom the night brought forth after she made love with Erebos.
>
> Gaia also gave birth to the star-covered Uranos so he could surround her and also be the holy god's home. And she gave birth to the effervescent Pontos, but without yearning love, and the deeply whirling Okeanos, and so forth."

Hesiod is supposed to have lived at the same time as Homer. His Theogoni is a main source for our knowledge of Greek mythology. The strange, and for us incomprehensible, fact is that we cannot differentiate between object and being in his work. Gaia in the meaning of goddess, mother earth and the earth as physical object become absolutely the same. Pontos, the sea and god of the Sea, are one

and the same thing. Uranos, the visible starry heaven and the godly being, are one and the same revelation.

We find much of the same in all non-Jewish myths. Therefore they are confusing to the way we think today. That is not case with the *Bible's* creation story. From the standpoint of natural science, the stories remain "hanging in thin air." But they do not confuse us. The creation of the world is seen from an earthly perspective, but the stories do not describe earthly realities.

The same is true if we compare stories of the fall of man in the Old Testament with other mythologies—over fifty stories are collected. Once again the stories within the Jewish tradition are clear, naturalistic stories, even though no one today would believe they pertain to naturalistic events.

How should we work with such stories? The core in each story is usually the same—an old world is destroyed and a chosen few are saved from the catastrophe by higher powers to later establish a new culture. This reminds us of the saga of Atlantis that Plato mentions. In the Old Testament our attention is guided to the Ark with all of the animals. A wonderful picture! In our childhood naïvete we thought the animals that were not part of man's corruption were being saved. That may be the truth, possibly in another context than we believed back then.

Emil Bock calls our attention to the biblical word for Noah's ark, *tebah*, which means the same as the basket in which baby Moses was laid when he was sent out on the Nile.[3] This gives us a path to follow. When initiated in ancient mysteries people who were to be guided beyond the illusions of the earthly life were placed in coffins. The physical senses were to be totally closed for the moment when the spiritual reality was revealed to the soul. Jonah in the stomach of the whale is the same theme, as is the ancient Egyptian Osiris myth.

Can we be on the right path when we realize that the *Bible* with the word tebah is something that the uninitiated missed? Only he who knows how to read the meaning of the pictures understands that Noah is a high initiate. What about the animals? Zoology was very different in the mystical, ancient times when people named other people after animals: Horsa (horse) who lead the Angles to England, Åre (eagle), Ulf (wolf), Bjorn (bear) and Leo (lion). The names of animals in earlier times meant particular characteristics or soul qualities. In every type of animal man saw an extreme aspect, a fraction of a human, but in superhuman form. We can view the animal kingdom as an enormous mirror to our own being. Thereby the animals became something more than pure nature. They became "symbols," living expressions of soul forces in the world! Even the superpowers of certain cultures expressed themselves in animal figures, for example the Egyptians' depiction of gods with animal and bird heads.

What remains of that instinctive knowledge is found today in the fables. As with every other science zoology has become materialistic. Today characterizations have become simplistic and crass: we use it in abusive words such as: dumb as a goose, slow as a turtle, or stubborn as an ass.

Noah in the ark surrounded by all of the animals is an initiate picture, or, to use Steiner's expression, an imagination. Wrapped within tebah Noah experiences the soul forces which stand behind the animal kingdom spiritually and which mankind is challenged to develop to a higher level than in nature wherein animals can live out their soul forces as desires. Human beings can refine and transform their desires and raise them to a higher level.

Children in the third grade have a new relationship to the concept of time. During the first two years of school they do not have strong feelings of time. After all, they have just arrived from eternity! Everything happens "now," and the worst thing they know about is everything that happens "later"! That something happened previously, that something follows, even history's path through "time," they now begin to comprehend in clearer mental images. To make everything totally clear would be a mistake. Rather we are satisfied to let pictures of life arise in their natural sequence. That is where the biography of a folk begins.

So far children in the third class have heard " stories." With Abraham, the *Bible's* first down-to-earth person, history begins. This also corresponds to the child's developmental needs. To the threshold I mentioned earlier. In the man chosen by God, Abraham, not only the Jewish people, but the whole of humanity can look to the archetype of the father. In sorrow and joy, he always meets us just as warmly. And what does it mean to have the father image before children at this age? It becomes a life-long model for them. When you think of Abraham it gives you support and strength!

Abraham's life is woven into many sagas and legends—far beyond the Old Testament. The excavations at Ur in Caldea prove that the land from which he traveled enjoyed a high, refined, but also cruel culture. Apparently Abraham's father served a severe despot, Nimrod. In Jewish, non-biblical tradition we are told that astrologers predicted that a specially chosen child would be born, and that Nimrod would be ready to take its life. He murdered children randomly but this child was saved in a cave. This is how the motif appears, veiled half mystically for the first time as a Jewish saga.

Abraham was seventy-five years old when God spoke to him: "Go from this land and from your people and your father's house to the land I will show you." Emil Boch believes it is unreasonable to assume that Abraham left the hedonistic Babylon suddenly in disgust. Rather, step by step he grew into a relationship to God that became the basis for the chosen people and later for all of humanity.

Perhaps one of the most important steps is the meeting with Melkisedek, "King of Salem and priest for the most almighty God." This king carried forth bread and wine and blessed Abraham, a ritual act that foreshadows modern sacraments. And Abraham silently gave him everything he owned. More is not said. That Melkisedek is known among initiates is expressed in letters to the Hebrews, where Christ is called "the priest according to Melkisedek's nature … To that Melkisedek …. Who, when his name is first named, is the king of justice, and then the king of Salem, is the king of peace, who is without a father, without mother, who neither knows the beginning of day nor the ending of life, but can be compared to God's son—he becomes the eternal priest." (*Hebrews 7*, 1–3)

Who was this? A deep riddle. The *Bible* gives no answer but let us assume that only initiates knew the dimensions and meaning of he who is here mentioned. We dare believe that Abraham through his meeting with Melkisedek and the blessings achieved a greater clarity concerning the God he should serve.

The next step is described in relation to the sacrifice of the son. The Lord demands Isaac, and, out of Babylonian tradition where such sacrifices occur (we can recall the Phoenicians' Moloch who demanded the sacrifice of children), it may be that Abraham does not decipher the meaning. The meaning—that appears in the following story—can only be that Isaac and the entire people called "the chosen ones" shall serve the Lord. But Abraham believes that the world where the human soul has its origin, demands Isaac's soul back.

The Waldorf teacher should resist presenting the story as a situation in which the Lord creates a "show" to prove whether or not Abraham is willing to comply—the usual translation that The Lord "tempted" Abraham. The words would be more fittingly translated: "Abraham was put through a test of knowledge."

A more reasonable question would be: What did Isaac experience in this moment and within this context? In non-biblical, Jewish tradition it is told: "As the sword neared Isaac's throat, his soul flew away. But as the Lord spoke through the Cherub's voice: 'Do not lay a hand on the boy,' Isaac's soul returned to his body. Abraham released the ropes and pulled him up by his feet. In that moment Isaac experienced a life beyond death. He opened his mouth and said, 'Praise be to the Lord who awakens the dead to life!' " This is an expansion of consciousness, known only to initiates.

But we should not forget that Abraham had an older son. We remember that Sara was long without children and began to doubt the Lord's promise of a large family "after the numbers of the stars." She asked Abraham to go to Haga, her Egyptian fortuneteller. The fruit of that meeting was Ishmael. And then Sara gave birth to Isaac, and Ishmael was shunned. "And Sara said to Abraham: drive out

the fortuneteller and her son! But that made Abraham's sore worse for the sake of his son."

The story tells us that the Lord consoled Abraham and said: "Listen to Sara's voice in this…. But also from the fortuneteller's son I will make a great people, for he too is your child." The *Bible* tells that Ishmael became the father of the Arab people, and Isaac the father of the Jewish people.

Myth, says the scientific world. But what does the story tell? From a historical point of view the Old Testament is the most remarkable document we possess. For on this earth no people, compared with the Israelis, have stood under a more directed upbringing and felt such a higher guidance. The moralistic education that the Jewish people were given has continued through the ages. And through the stories of the Old Testament, countless generations of children can learn as the children of Israel. It is an education that no generation can do without if it wants to become human.

Endnotes

1. See Rudolf Steiner's lecture series *The Secrets of the Creation Stories in the Bible*, Leipzig, Germany, 1910.
2. See Rudolf Steiner's lectures *The Gospel According to Matthew*, SteinerBooks, Great Barrington, MA.
3. Emil Bock's books include *Ancient History, Moses and His Age, and Kings and Prophets,* SteinerBooks, Great Barrington, MA.
4. See Rudolf Steiner's lectures *The Gospel According to Matthew*, SteinerBooks, Great Barrington, MA.

Moses

by

Karl Brodersen

Translated by Ted Warren

All Waldorf schools teach the Old Testament in the third and fourth grades. Why is this material especially suitable for ten-year-olds? Naturally you must choose parts of it. If we concentrate on the five books of Moses they are neither in form nor content suitable for children. Even shortened versions contain a lot of indigestible stories for children, but if you leave out certain parts, you do harm to the total picture and you leave a lot hanging in the wind. You will not be satisfied with just a selection of stories, in addition you have to tell the stories to the children as has been educational practice for hundreds of years.

In 1824 the author and priest Johan Peter Hebbel presented the Old Testament for small children in his Biblische Geschichten. The stories are in line with the *Bible* but also presented in simple terms for folks as we see on their ”walls and chest of drawers.” In his stories we meet the patriarchs and the prophets in their local, rural surroundings and the relationship between God and human beings is presented it its timeless, broad truth.

Yet the Old Testament is a historical document. Many people have asked me if the Old Testament is of any historical interest at all and whether it should no longer be presented to children. They mention scary and immoral motives such as Abraham’s sacrifice or Jacob’s tricks. In that respect the Old Testament is no different than any other people’s recorded bloody history.

Decisive for any pedagogical material is that the teacher knows what he is speaking about and what he wants to attain. The teacher must present the material in such a way that the children have a positive experience no matter what grade they are in. Hebbel places emphasis on the religious aspects; the Norwegian Folk School version edited by Volrath Vogt presents a dogmatic version. For the Waldorf school’s presentation of the Old Testament in the third and fourth grades we let the historical aspect stand in the foreground.

The Old Testament needs no pedagogical defense. Its pictures have enlivened and enriched generation after generation and many adults remember the lessons in *Bible* history as their best memories from school. You notice it the moment you begin to tell the stories: the children become completely occupied with the material, they can barely get enough of it, and their excitement for recreating the stories in paintings and drawings is shown in wonderful pictures.

So why is the material especially relevant for ten-year-olds? As teachers and parents we have to ask that question so we, to some degree, know what we are doing.

The opening chapters of the Old Testament are saturated with the elements of mystical-imagery. They are closely related to fairy tales and sagas. We are not dealing with documented, historical presentations or with plain facts in a scientific respect. We are dealing with pictures and visions; the stories are based on inspiration and god-like revelation. From a very broad perspective the *Bible's* descriptions relate to the pictures we create of the creation of the world and mankind's historical development on a purely scientific basis, but everything is wrapped in a dreamy veil. This vague contour is what makes the material so accessible for children. The children's spiritual development follows the same path as mankind: from the mystical to the concrete consciousness of things on the earth.

We should not feel obliged to rip aside the veil for our children, as continually happens, in for example Vogt's *Bible* history description of the parting of the Red Sea. Children to not expect, nor is there any reason to add, a natural scientific interpretation of the picture of the sea that parts at God's command. If such questions are asked in class, you may use the explanation that the wind parted the waters, but when such questions arise we must view them as symptoms that the child has hatched too early from its egg, or the teacher has not been able to guide the children into the appropriate "soul-space" where *Bible* history belongs for that age group. In other words: in the *Bible's* half mystical form the children in the third class meet the earth's and mankind's history for the first time, and they meet in a deep, meaningful way, providing a clearly moral, spiritual direction. Our sense for the moral-spiritual can subside over the years, but the child's is normally not weakened and therefore dominates over the so-called real and objective orientation in the world.

In another third grade subject, regional studies, we study the local environment as it is today. But also regional studies for ten-year-olds should take into consideration their mystical orientation: it should never be objectively realistic.

I have indicated the way to teach third graders using the *Bible's* original style. The next question is: What do we give children when we move to other stories—

from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the pictures of Joseph and his brothers, the judgments of Moses, to the kings and the prophets?

It is so rich, comprehensive and unlimited that we hesitate to emphasize one story over the other. It is a feast but we can only mention a few things. We start with the patriarchs: Abraham leaves the powerful Babylon, a little flock trustingly enter the unknown following the message from God. We follow the flock, more like a family, for three generations down to Joseph. There is a strange atmosphere surrounding the patriarchal times. It has something comparable to the paradise of childhood. God sits at the table with Abraham, challenges him and provides eternal promises. The figures in the story are so to say, "carved into trees," clear and simple. They rest in God and in his destiny.

It is totally different for Joseph and his brothers. The twelve brothers, a familiar motif of the twelve wild geese of the fairy tales, no longer represents something well casted. They create a rough group with very earthly faults. First with them and their descendents can we speak about a folk, and that particular folk, due to Joseph, is taken in by another folk, the Egyptians.

This strange genesis story, that begins with the emigration from Babylon and ends with the immigration to Egypt, is the genuine expression of a historical process. But what is more important is the historical expression of a soul transformation: a little flock of people is dependent on themselves in the tension between two world cultures, homeless on the earth, foreign wherever they move. For a short while they are allowed to feel at home in Canaan's land, in the tent camp of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the land of childhood, then out in the unknown again.

But the Jewish people forgot their fathers' God and worshipped the Egyptian animal-shaped gods and became servants under the Egyptians. It is at this point that Moses appears, the central figure in the entire Old Testament, he who gives his name to the religion of the Jewish people, the mosaic.

If we consider the pure Jewish tradition a lot will become clearer for us and easier to present to the children. There is a wonderful collection of legends and wisdom books within that tradition, especially Ben Gurion's collection and Edmond Fleg's book, *Moses*. Fleg begins his book with descriptions of the activites surrounding the birth of Moses:

> It is written: A new king came to Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph. And he spoke to his people: Look, the Israelites are greater and more populous than we. To that our elders spoke: In the three hundred and fifty-third year after the Hebrews came to Egypt, the pharaoh had a dream. In the dream he sat on his throne and looked at the sky. Two

fingers came out of the night, and between the fingers shone a staff, longer than the sun's rays, and from the staff hung two cups, like a weight. The one way below was as big as the world and made of gold; the other, way above, was as small as a bird nest and woven in straw. He saw that out of the the golden cup came a flood, and out of the flood arose the crops of the field and workers, warriors arose and wagons, cities and pyramids and out of the pyramids arose kings and queens.

"Then he saw in the straw nest a little newborn child.

"And the golden cup with the flood and the crops, warriors and cities, pyramids and kings rose while the straw nest sank, sank as if the child were heavier than all of Egypt's land with workers, warriors and kings."

Fleg's telling is filled to the brim with wonderfully poetic pictures and is in accordance with the words of the scriptures. It is just as meaningful for the Jewish people then as for us now, but this folk, who by their laws were not allowed to paint artistic pictures, created an incredibly beautiful world in its religious poetry.

Considering our children in the Waldorf school once more, we must use this poetry carefully in the lessons.

The history of how Moses was taken in from the river and grew up as one of the great Egyptian princes, how he defended his Hebrew brothers and killed an Egyptian slave driver, how he came to the priest Jethro and wed his daughter, how God spoke to Moses in the burning bush and sent him to Egypt to lead his people out, the departure, wandering through the Red Sea, through the Sion desert to the foot of the mountain—all of that is wonderful for children. The history contains creative motifs but also a serious theme: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob's descendants had become a people of doubt. Moses barely convinced them to follow him. They were discouraged and more doubtful with every new difficulty, they complained, threatened, and even stoned some of his leaders when crisis set in. Even some people wanted to return to Egypt.

Only Moses was steady, he disciplined his people and continually prayed to God for them. Only at the end of his life, after uncountable trials and forty years of desert journeys did Moses become, according to God, unreasonably strict and needed to be reminded of his own vulnerability.

The people thought of returning to the land of childhood, to the land that flowed in milk and honey. They were counting on a good life, in which they could live out all their desires. Only Moses understood that they must first earn it, that the people must submit to the law that God revealed at Mount Sinai. Moses embodied a moral principle, and the land to which the Jewish people journey lies somewhere between law and desire.

When Moses came down from the mountain with the tablets of laws, he found the people in ecstatic dance around a golden calf icon, for Aaron had given in to their wild threats. Moses had to discipline his people, convince them, and create new wonders. When the scouts return from Canaan's land with reports of horrible drought, pestilence and terrible giants, the people rebelled, everyone wanted to return to Egypt.

God threatened to eliminate the rebellious and leave Moses alone to guide the tribe, but Moses prayed for the them. So God decided that no one over twenty years of age shall reach the Promised Land: "In this desert your dead bodies will fall, everyone among you who serve and are over twenty years of age, you have angered me." Finally even Moses and Aaron were found unworthy; they also must die in the desert.

The Jewish sagas provide a dramatic description of Moses dying at the foot of Mount Nebo. He does not accept death because then he could not lead his people over the Jordan River. As a final blessing, he was allowed to see into the Promised Land, his eyes received the power to see from the Jordan to the sea, he saw all of the mountains and valleys and it was a beautiful sight. He also received the power to see into the future: David placing a stone in his sling and dropping Goliath, Solomon building the Lord's temple and much, much more. He cried out: "Lord, Lord you keep your promises, and your children keep their promises. You have led them to the land you chose, and they have followed you so you may live among them!"

But he saw even more: he saw their decadence, their loss of faith, their evil, and all the punishment and disaster that followed in the path of sin. And Moses moaned in his heart's torment: " Lord, Lord, how can you watch in peace the wretchedness you have brought over them? Why have you lead them out of slavery, opened twelve paths through the sea for them, transformed sand to earth and the cliffs to spring water, why set your mountain on fire and call your message to your people, if you want to destroy yourself on the earth by destroying them?"

Look: before the prophet's eye the world was filled by a huge temple. Its walls were of onyx and beryl, its doors of jasper and satdonyx, its rafters of smaragd, its roof of topaz, its columns of agate, crystal and amethyst, its altar of rubies, carbuncle and sapphire. Before the temple waited the Messiah.

And Moses whispered: " Is this a temple of heaven? Is this a temple of the earth and not a temple of heaven, but a temple of heaven that the earth will build?"

Moses saw all the people of the earth wander towards the temple, all the living and all the dead, and the Messiah spoke to the prophet: " Moses, my

father, how could you enter the Promised Land? Look, it lies not only beyond the Jordan, it lies beyond love, beyond hope. Look, it is the whole earth with all mankind."

When Moses saw this and more, he accepted his death, and God spoke to Gabriel and said: "Go and bring his soul." But Gabriel could not give such a powerful soul over to death. Nor dared Michael to consider it, but the angel of death, Samael offered and was allowed to try.

Moses rose in anger and with the force of the holy name that only he knew, he forced Samael to his knee. But God interceded for the angel of death, saying: "Moses, my son, do not kill death, for the world needs him." And Samael disappeared and the Eternal appeared. The Eternal pulled the soul of Moses from his mouth and in this way the prophet died with a kiss from God. At the end of the fifth book of Moses we read: "But there no longer stood a prophet like Moses in Israel, he who knew the Lord face to face."

We should not miss this opportunity to describe these figures to the children in their tenth year. These figures of supernatural dimension cannot be understood through reason, but rather through story pictures. Plato says that to understand something is to recognize it. And children recognize something in the stories of the patriarchal times and of Moses and the Jewish people. They can identify with the presentations; they can understand Moses and the obstinate, forever dissatisfied and rebellious people. Their inner capacity to resonance with the processes we describe is significant. It is not only the Jewish peoples' and mankind's history that is conveyed, but the history of every human's soul. In their tenth year children are ready to take a huge step out of childhood, driven by resistance and challenges. A large part of the unease and rebellion that children feel at this stage can be transformed into a deepening of the forces of comprehension, understanding and reconciliation with the world through an appropriate presentation of history recorded in the Old Testament.

Francis of Assisi

by

Dan Lindholm

Translated by Ted Warren

Storytelling in the second grade in the Waldorf schools usually consists of fables and legends. Were it only fables and legends it would be as one-sided as merely fairy tales in the first grade. We readily discover that fables and legends are opposites. Fables express human weaknesses masked in the characters of the animals. There is little to look up to and little to admire. A weak, pharisaic-like attitude might arise: We are not like them! As counter-weight we need stories with honorable characteristics, and these are found in legends. Not only because of their heartiness but also their drama, the legends of the life of Francis of Assisi are special. They have a historical core, yet he was already legendary in his own time. People must have felt the supersensible power in Francis's messages. They experienced courage and love that won over everything else. There were miracles. People witnessed actions that did not have their origin in human desires but in spiritual, moral impulses. Where such actions take place we often have miracles. That is what children learn to admire.

One fall day in 1182 in the town of Assisi a woman was giving birth to her first child but could not deliver. She labored in severe pain. That she was from a rich family did not matter; the child did not want to come forth. A pilgrim knocked on the door. When he saw the condition of the woman, he said, "This child does not want to be born into a wealthy house. Carry the woman to the barn and have her lie in an empty stall. The new child must be born on straw. For he who shall be born shall be unlike any other who has journeyed in the Master's footsteps." The pilgrim left, no one knows where or who he was.

The father of the house, a wealthy merchant named Pietro Bernadone, was abroad at the time. The mother, Donna Pica, moved quickly to the stall where she painlessly gave birth to a healthy boy. The child was baptized Giovanni, Johannes in Norwegian. When the father returned from France he was very happy. For his love of France, which was also his wife's native country, he called the child Francis. In world history we know him as Saint Francis of Assisi.

As Francis grew up the pilgrim's prophecy was forgotten. No one in Assisi could imagine that Francis would become a saint and spread his light over his hometown as well as all of Italy. There was a huge difference in Assisi between the rich and the poor. The rich had many servants, plenty of food and fancy houses. Most people were so poor they suffered from hard work, poverty and illness. Though Francis's parents were not nobles, they belonged to the most illustrious class in town. Young Francis learned that for him, life would be a dance upon roses. He was a happy boy who sang and danced with the best of them. As a popular friend he often led the jovialities at the local inns. They say he never spoke a nasty word no matter how wild a party became. With plenty of money he paid for friends' drinks so often that his father remarked, "You would think you had holes in your pockets!"

Pietro Bernadone decided to raise Francis to be a successful merchant like himself. At an early age Francis accompanied his father on business trips and he learned to please difficult customers with a smile. When Francis bought fancy clothes and took part in every possible gaiety his father proclaimed, "You act as if you are royalty more than the son of a merchant!" Francis was not big and strong but confident, good-looking and persuasive. When neighborhood women complained to Donna Pica about his flamboyant lifestyle she replied, "I believe he will one day become God's child."

It seemed there was no rush for Francis to do so. These were difficult times in Italy. The poor in Assisi revolted against the nobles. When it appeared the nobles would lose their control Assisi, they sought help in Perugia. There were old enmities between Assisi and Perugia. When war broke out Francis decided to save his hometown from the "helpers." Francis and all of his comrades lost the war and were imprisoned for one year in Perugia. Francis played tricks on the guards, laughed about the chains and kept his spirits high. The others could not believe how enthusiastic he remained. "Just wait, said Francis. "One day the world will be at my feet."

Peace was declared and the prisoners were sent home. One day while working in his father's house for noble customers, Francis showed a beggar the door. He felt a jolt in his heart. Had he not heard the words, "What you do unto my people, you do unto me?" It burned in Francis. He sprang out the door and onto the street where he filled the beggar's pockets with money.

Prison did not make Francis shy away from war. He dreamt of heroic acts upon the battlefields, becoming a knight and declared royalty. At night he dreamt his father's store was no longer filled with bolts of cloth, but shining weapons, helmets and armor! He thought he heard a voice proclaiming: "All this shall belong to you and your followers!" This is what Francis wanted to hear! He

would no longer be a foot soldier but join one of the most famous warriors in the world.

His conquests were over quickly. A burning fever left him stricken in a bed while his comrades disappeared in clouds of dust. That night while half awake another voice spoke to him: "Francis, where do you want to go in this world?" He thought he heard himself reply, "In the world to become a knight."

"Answer me, is it best to serve the Lord or the servant?"

"The Lord," answered Francis.

"Then why have you left the Lord?"

Francis awoke. Had his angel spoken? He realized the warhorses, armor and weapons were meaningless, he gave them all away and returned home. A few days later a more humble lad entered the gates of Assisi. His friends did not recognize their generous joker but found another person. "He walks in poisonous thoughts," they thought. "No wonder he had fever during the battle. A beautiful virgin must be teasing his thoughts." His parents felt it was time to find one of the local beauties to be his bride. Francis agreed but was in no rush.

One evening his friends tumbled out of the local bar and found a beggar for whom they felt contempt and pity. They pointed fingers at him and laughed. Francis distanced himself from them. Feeling his heart opening, he ran over to the beggar, wrapped his expensive coat around him, and put all of the coins he owned in his pocket. A new sense of joy filled the boy. He realized the truth: "It is better to give than to receive."

Francis thought day after day about his wealth and others' poverty. One day he told his parents whom he would marry. His parents were excited to hear the good news. They asked, "Is it she?" A prominent name was suggested.

"No, not she."

Another prominent name was proposed. They continued guessing eagerly, but none of the names was correct. "Tell us who it is Francis," inquired the parents curiously.

"Poverty," answered Francis.

"Poverty? Have we heard correctly? Do you want to marry poverty?"

"You heard right. Poverty and nothing else will be my bride." The words was spoken and could not be taken back. But how would he find his bride? Until this point Francis had appreciated wealth and everything it gave him. He loved the clothes, the money, the generosity, to hear himself sing and talk. In truth he loved himself. He was a slave to this love. Now he realized it was all in his way.

We do not know whether Francis knew the story of the youth who asked the master what he should do to enter the kingdom of heaven, "The Expensive Pearl" as the parable is called. The youth was told to leave everything behind, to give

everything away. If Francis married poverty, would he have anything to give away? He found no answers and decided to make a pilgrimage to Rome to prove that he knew what poverty really meant.

Before the entrance to St. Peter's Basilica stood a raggedy group of beggars. They stared at people and grabbed whatever was handed to them. Francis caught the attention of one and asked him to step aside where they could exchange clothes. Standing among the beggars in Rome, Francis felt awkward. He was not a beggar; rather it was he who was always asked for help.

When Francis returned to Assisi, his father was trading for goods in France, and Francis was responsible for conducting the business at home. At this time he made a mysterious friend who regularly followed him to a cave in the mountains. There he would wait until Francis finished praying. No one knows about what they spoke or to where he disappeared.

Francis waited patiently for a word. He visited God's house often, a small, impoverished church where he spent long hours contemplating. Above the altar hung a picture of the Christ. One day he felt the picture speak to him: "Rebuild my house!" It was the same voice he had heard earlier. Looking about the rundown church, he realized it needed repair. Not long after Francis helped the priest repair the foundation and he actually became a decent mason.

At that time leprosy was prevalent allover the world. The medical profession did not know how to treat it. Lepers were kept away from healthy people because of contagiousness, the smell and the ugliness of their wounds. If they ventured into areas where healthy people traveled, they warned them by ringing the bells they carried. Francis had never thought much about these wretched of the wretched. When he returned to the cave in the mountains, he prayed: "Lord, show me Your path and let me follow it."

One day he rode through the countryside so deep in thought that he did not notice that his horse wandered from the path. A bell rang and he stopped suddenly in his path. Along the road sat a leper. Francis wanted to turn around and ride away from the awful sight but considered that this meeting may be the answer to his questions. The Lord had taken him seriously and was now testing his commitment to follow the path shown him. Carefully Francis dismounted the horse and approached the leper. A disgusting sight met him. The leper's nose was gone, from his mouth came a terrible smell, the hand with which he greeted Francis had a few remains of fingers. Francis bowed, kissed his hand and laid a coin upon it. When Francis remounted his horse he felt penetrated by deep thankfulness. He now hoped to win a great victory, the greatest victory a human can win, victory over himself.

Many rumors spread in Assisi about what had become of the young Bernadone. People consoled his parents on their struggles with the boy.

Whenever the father traveled abroad, Francis ran the family business. One day he decided to rebuild the church by taking a couple bolts of expensive cloth from the shelves, packing them on a horse and selling them in a nearby town. He also sold the horse. Francis gave the money to the priest who felt uneasy receiving such a large sum, so the coins were left untouched on a windowsill. When Bernadone returned home and learned of the sale, he became enraged! “Where is Francis?” he cried throughout the house. But Francis was gone. He realized he had done wrong and his conscience burned. Rather than look his father in the eye, he hid in the basement of the priest’s house for a couple of weeks, fasting and praying to God and his Savior.

When he finally showed his face in public, the former handsome boy looked terrible. Only in his mid-twenties, the young man was ugly, pale, skinny and dirty. As he approached his father’s house, a gang cried out, “Crazy man!” Bernadone saw his son on the street and was filled with anger. He ran out and pulled Francis into the house, threw him into a dark room and locked the door. Francis said not a word, not even when his father beat him and cursed him.

The next time Bernadone left the house on a journey, his wife pulled Francis out of the room, whipped him brutally and gave him decent food and clothes. Francis recuperated but knew his days at home were over. A totally new life lay ahead of him. He returned to the priest’s house and continued to help him repair the church.

Was his father relieved to have him out of the house? Not at all. He took Francis to court and wanted him convicted of theft even though the priest returned all of the money. Francis refused to attend the earthly court. By rebuilding God’s house he considered himself under the protection of the Church, as was accepted custom. People assumed the kind Bishop of Assisi felt sorry for the young man. Before the Church’s court, father and son met; many curious spectators attended. It was a trial like the world had never seen before. Pietro Bernadone accused his son of theft and wanted compensation for his losses. The Bishop turned to Francis and said: “If you want to serve God’s house, young man, give your father his mammon in return. Who knows whether the merchant’s gold is honestly earned and should enter the house of God?”

The accused was asked to speak, “ Listen everyone,” began Francis. “Not only what I have left of money and other goods will I return, but also the clothes on my back. Until now I have called Pietro Bernadone my father. From this moment on, I no longer say father to him, but rather: ‘Our Father who art in heaven…’ “ Before everyone he took off his clothes and stood before the judges in almost naked. Collecting the clothes in a pile he handed them to his father who took them and he fled the court pale in the face.

The Bishop laid a cape around Francis's shoulders and led him to the nearby church where he accepted leftover clothes from the gardener. Francis was now free. He had found his bride. Behind him lay his youthful errors, ahead lay the way of the Lord.

Francis left his home for Gubbio, a nearby town farther up the mountains. With chalk he drew a large cross on the back of his cape. Now he followed in the footsteps of the Christ. The first day robbers in the woods captured him. "Who is there?" he heard.

"I am the great King's herald!" answered Francis. "What do you want?" The robbers wanted everything he owned. They searched his clothes, found nothing and threw him down the bank into a snow bank. "Thankfully you received me softly, snow bank," Francis spoke as he climbed the hill where the sun already stood low upon the horizon. Praising the Creator he wandered towards Gubbio.

Late that night he pounded on the door of a cloister high up in the mountains. The monks were reluctant to take in the stranger but gave him the floor on which to sleep. Francis remained a couple of days to work to repay the favor, but they were happy when he went upon his way. Once Francis became famous, they proclaimed they had been the first to give him shelter.

So many stories chronicle the life of Francis that we call them Fioretti, meaning "little flowers." In this article are included ones in which the history surrounds the core of the huge spiritual power that worked into his life.

* * * * *

Francis arrived in Gubbio where he had a friend. The villagers were in bad shape. A wolf roamed the forests and women did not dare look for wood, children dared not pick berries and farm animals were in danger. Even the woodsmen armed themselves when they went to work in the woods.

"I will enter the woods and speak with Brother Wolf," declared Francis.

"No, you should not do that. The wolf is so large and smarter than any other animal. It is dangerous for people and animals," the people of Gubbio warned him. Francis did not obey. He walked into the dark forest followed by some armed men to se where he went. Not long thereafter the wolf walked in his path opening his wide mouth.

Francis walked up to the monster and crossed himself, saying "Brother Wolf, what do I hear about you? Sit down and sharpen your ears to hear my message. You are guilty of horrible deeds. Not only have you ripped animals to shreads, you have killed people that are made in God's name. No wonder the whole village hates you. You deserve to be hung. Would you like to be hung as a lousy scoundrel? I know that you also belong to God's creations. Now I want to create

peace between you and the townspeople. But you must stop damaging. In return the people will forgive all of your evil deeds. Do you want that?"

By waving his tail the wolf showed he agreed to the deal. Francis continued, "Brother Wolf, as long as you accept the deal you shall not be hungry. The people will give you all you need to live. I know you have only ripped apart animals because of your hunger. You must stop that now. Do you promise?" And as Francis gave his hand, the wolf gave his paw to demonstrate accord. "Follow God's name, and you shall see how well you will be treated by the people." Together they walked into town, Francis first, the wolf after him. The people were scared to death at first, but when Francis and the wolf stood quietly in the marketplace, curiosity became so great that large and small approached them.

Francis preached that worse dangers awaited all souls after death if they did not turn their backs on evil. "Now the wolf has new thoughts and will begin a better life. It is also time for people to change their lives. Forgive your enemies. Give the wolf voluntarily all he needs so he will no longer rob you. Do not save the goods you own they may be alms for sins you have committed. Look here, now Brother Wolf will give me his paw so you witness his promises. Then you must be good to Brother Wolf. Do not forget that you are all God's creation."

Again the wolf gave his paw. They say he lived two more years in Gubbio and became a trusted playmate for children. His coat grew thick from all of the good food they fed him. When he died many people mourned.

* * * * *

Francis received many followers but never tired of declaring he was a self-learned follower of the Master's footpath. The path was small and steep. Those who wanted to take part in many heavenly riches must say farewell to earthly pleasures. But soon there were so many that an order was created. Life was tough for his younger brothers, the Franciscans. All of the new brothers promise to be true to poverty, own nothing of their own, live as beggars, and work for others. "They have neither money nor purse on their path," told a contemporary, "No bread in their pack, and no shoes on their feet. They have no vineyards, household animals, not a bed to rest upon. All they have are some wool clothes, a cape, a hood and a belt around their waste."

There are many stories about the Franciscans, how they quickly grew in numbers, fought among each other, became powerful and authoritative. But power and authority were not in Francis's heart. Living with the Franciscans he experienced both good and bad. He was also tempted. The Savior remained his model through all of the temptations.

* * * * *

Francis loved all creations, from the smallest birds to "Brother Sun." He saw the Creator's revelations in everything that lived, and he sang his "Canticle of the Sun."

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, honor and blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong;
no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.

We praise You, Lord, for all Your creatures,
especially for Brother Sun,
who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
of You Most High, he bears your likeness.

We praise You, Lord, for Sister Moon and the stars,
in the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

We praise You, Lord, for Brothers Wind and Air,
fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.

We praise You, Lord, for Sister Water,
so useful, humble, precious and pure.

We praise You, Lord, for Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night.
He is beautiful, playful, robust, and strong.

We praise You, Lord, for Sister Earth,
who sustains us
with her fruits, colored flowers, and herbs.

We praise You, Lord, for those who pardon,
for love of You bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
by You Most High, they will be crowned.

We praise You, Lord, for Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in their sins!
Blessed are those that She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.

We praise and bless You, Lord, and give You thanks,
and serve You in all humility.

We often hear of Francis's friendship with all creations. Once he came to a village called Alviano. As night approached Francis wanted to share some comforting words with the villagers who collected in the marketplace where he stood. But around the village's gray walls and towers many flocks of swallows flew back and forth to their nests. As the birds sang Francis and his companion tuned their voices. The villagers came closer as the swallows gathered above Francis's head whose voice was drowned out by their song.

Speaking kindly Francis asked, "Dear Sister Swallows, I think we should soon be given a turn to speak. You have spoken a while. Be quiet now and listen to the words of God." In that moment they all remained quiet while he preached. Apparently the miracle was so convincing that all of the villagers wanted to follow Francis. But he told them, "Rush not into leaving house and home. We will all be saved in God's name. Who will give bread to the poor who wander like me?"

He spoke with the birds on another journey. By the road stood fruit trees with a large flock of birds at the top. "I must say a few words to my small sister Birds." proclaimed Francis to his companion. The birds flew down to the field and stood before the wanderer. He preached, "Birds, my sisters! Praise be to the Lord who created you. He gave you life, the air to fly upon and the freedom to go wherever you please. You need to neither sow not harvest. The Creator gave you food to eat, streams to drink from and the trees to build your nests. And because you cannot spin, weave or sew He gave you feathers to keep you warm. Yes, the Creator loves us all and does great things for us. Therefore my sisters, do not be unthankful. That would be a shame. Do all you can to praise and please the Lord." As Francis spoke the birds opened their bills, stretched their throats and flapped their wings. Finally they bowed their heads to show their thanks. Francis was no less happy. He wondered how many of them were collected and admired their feathers.

* * * * *

A few hours from Assisi a band of brothers sought lodging in an abandoned house, among them a former knight. Like the others he had given up all he had to live in poverty and piety. The area was not free from robbers who also had little on which to live. Once a couple of them knocked on the door to the brothers and asked for bread. The old knight opened the door, but told them he had no bread or crumbs for robbers. "Get out of here, the sooner, the better!" he thundered.

That same evening Brother Francis arrived at the house. They received him with honor and great love. When he heard what had happened earlier that day he

explained, “Everyone who knocks on our door, friend or foe, walking or riding, beggar or thief shall be received with kindness. But that did not happen today. If you will do as I say, there may still be hope for the robber’s souls,” he continued. ”Go out in the forest with bread and wine and call out, ‘Brother thieves and robbers, come her! You shall have the best food we have. Come and be our brothers!’

“And when they come spread out the table clothe on the field, cover it with goodness and kind words. When they have eaten all they can, speak the words of the Lord and finish by asking them never to kill or hurt anyone again. If they promise to that, reward them by spreading out the tablecloth the next day with wine, eggs and cheese. Again when they have eaten, ask them, ‘Why walk around all day, suffer hunger and spread evil to others? It must be better to follow God’s message. Do so and live well. He will forgive you and in the future take care of you like all the others on the earth. And if you repent, he will save your souls.’ “

The brothers follow his advice. The old knight became humble and offered bread and wine in the forest. He asked the robbers for forgiveness. They were astonished that he meant what he said. They all ate and drank. In the end the robbers repented, and they helped the brothers with forestry and other useful deeds. Once they had been robbers, now they were helpers.

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Among the countless lepers the Franciscans took care of one was so impossible that the brothers thought he was beyond help. He made fun of God and the Virgin Mary. He had ugly words about everyone. The brothers could no longer tolerate his behavior and they left him alone. ”If only he criticized us we would have tolerated him,” they told Francis. ”But the ugliness to others was too much for us.”

Francis entered the sick man’s room silently: “God’s peace be with you, dear brother!”

The leper answered: “ What kind of peace has God given me? He has taken all I own and turned my body into a smelly corpse.”

Francis answered: “Be patient, brother! Remember that sickness in this world is given us to save our soul and health in the kingdom of God.” The sick man did not want to listen to this. Instead he complained about the brothers who did not bathe him. “I will wash you,” said Francis. He quickly warmed up water with fine-smelling herbs in it. He unclothed the man and cleansed his body. As Francis touched the man’s body with his hands, a miracle happened. The man’s illness departed and his skin was healed. As his body healed so did his soul.

Regret filled the once angry man, and he cried for all of his sins. “Poor me, I am not worth such a great miracle, after so much ugliness I have spread, so much

pain I caused those who wanted to help me!" He cried for forty days before his sins were forgiven, and he became healthy in body and soul.

* * * * *

On one of his many journeys Francis met a young man who had trapped a flock of wild doves and was on his way to sell them at the marketplace. Francis felt sorry for the little birds. "Good young man," said Francis, "Will you give me the mild birds, those who are like the souls of compassionate people?" The young man saw the love and light in Francis's eyes and realized if he sold them they would be killed. Instead he gave them to Francis.

"O, my sisters, pure doves! How could you allow him to capture you? Now I will help you make nests so you can lay eggs." He blessed the doves and made nests for them. They became as tame as chickens. When Francis called them they sat on his shoulders.

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Great sorrow troubled Francis when he learned how much his brothers disagreed. Some thought that the Franciscans should also study and acquire great Knowledge. Some respected knowledge while others found it the cause of arrogance. They were convinced, as was Francis, that the Franciscans should remain with humble knowledge but great deeds of helpfulness and the fear of God.

Not only men wanted to live like Francis but also women. They respected the rich man's son who owned nothing, ignored the riches of the world and wandered in the footsteps of the Master. Clara Scifi, a rich young noblewoman, was the first female follower. Although her mother had taught her daughter to love God, she never expected her to become His poor servant.

At the age of twenty Clara heard Francis speak. A flame was lit in her heart that never stopped burning. In secret she decided to serve his mission. Her father had died and she had a large inheritance waiting for her. According to the traditions of her day, her uncle had authority over her hand and her inheritance. He wanted her to marry a man of her standing, become the dame of a castle and enjoy the riches of the world. But Clara could not imagine that life and instead spent every night praying. From prayer she became strong enough to seek out Francis and ask for sisterhood among the Franciscans.

That was impossible. Francis could not tempt his brothers with a beautiful woman among them. Before the altar of a church he cut her hair and took her to a cloister for nuns. Her uncle hoped he could at least keep her inheritance.

She wanted none of it but wanted it to be given to the sick and poor. The Bishop supported her.

When Clara's younger sister left home and entered the same cloister, the uncle arrived with armed soldiers to take her back. He tried to pull her by the hair. The sister cried for help and Clara fell to her knees to pray. Neither the uncle nor his soldiers could lift the sister. The uncle had to leave her alone. Later the Bishop gave Clara and her sister their own place to live. They soon converted it into a hospital for the sick and homeless. So many women joined them that Clara became an admired saint. The women sewed, spun and wove for the poor.

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Francis of Assisi did not live long enough to become an old man. He nicknamed his body "Brother donkey." It was the only creation he was not kind to. His daily bread was hard work, little rest and no care. His friends tried to make him take care of himself, but he did not want to listen to them until an illness made him so weak he could not stand on his own two feet. His eyesight failed and he could barely see other people. But his soul light unfolded. He could see the world of angels. It was so beautiful he was constantly in joy. As death appeared he asked those at his bedside to sing the "Canticle of the Sun." After the final verse he added, "Welcome, Brother Death who shall inherit my body."

The brothers and sisters wept but Francis's face was clear. At his departure he blessed each one of them. Before their eyes his soul sailed free, his face was transformed, the traces of illness fled and a beauty none had previously seen appeared over him. The church bells rang as the heavens opened for the soul of Saint Francis.

Sparta and Athens

by

Jørgen Smit

Translated by Ted Warren

What do we remember best from our early history lessons in school? Some say they have forgotten everything. Others have diligently memorized dates, names and events. Some can name kings and presidents in the right order. Yet in the midst of that dry, gray intellectual material, most of us have a few shining, dramatic pictures that were painted indelibly in our memories for the rest of our lives. Even today we can see them so clearly that they could have happened before our eyes!

They may be Martin Luther before the church doors in Wittenberg or Marie Antoinette's unsuccessful escape during the French Revolution. They may be Julius Caesar walking to the Senate on March 15 or the Joms Vikings battle with Haakon Jarl at Hjorungavag in 986.

Why do some pictures last a lifetime while, for example, the status of farmers in England in the seventeenth century can hardly be recalled the next day? Is it because we remember the important world historical events while randomly forgetting the less meaningful events?

It is not that easy. Neither Catholics nor atheists deny the fact that Martin Luther's brave protest against the papal state played an important role in world history. Yet we remember the Joms Vikings equally well. And Marie Antoinette just as well. But have they had any influence on cultural development? Undoubtedly not. Yet they are archetypes for the human events that are the core of historical development.

The Joms Vikings showed reckless, unbreakable courage where personal death played no role whatsoever. Marie Antoinette was the powerless and frail human placed in a central position without the ability to create any resolution that could avert the catastrophe. All of world history takes place in human beings, in mankind's battle with his environment and with himself, including victories and defeat.

The traditional, objective recorded history is not true history. When a teacher presents world history to the children, he stands to the task of penetrating to the

core of the issues so they are expressed as concrete events involving particular people. Very often that is difficult, almost impossible, and it often requires many years of serious study and reflection. In other cases the core appears almost by itself, as in the following picture of Sparta and Athens in the fifth century B.C.

I.

We are fortunate to be able to look at an epoch with such fundamental meaning for future cultural development concentrated in a small area and when men lived who could record accurate descriptions of what took place. Teachers can work with the plethora of sources and grasp the core historical developments that lie just below the surface.

Our modern culture would not have been possible without its Greek foundation, including the arts and sciences. In the Roman Empire, throughout the Middle Ages, and during the past five centuries, we have lived off the fruits of the Greek civilization. We have developed and found ourselves by experiencing the Greek spirituality, beauty, clear thinking and a wealth of knowledge. Practically every concept we find in modern philosophy and science was already available in clear Greek thinking. What would the art of the Renaissance be without Greek art? Indeed, it was a rebirth, a "renaissance" of the classical culture.

Christianity does not come from Greek culture. But how might it be understood in light of Greek spirituality? If we look at the fateful days in the years 490, 480 and 479 B.C. at Marathon, Thermopylae, Salamis and Plataiai, where all reason predicted that the small Greek society would be smashed by the Oriental giant (the Persian Empire in coalition with the Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Etruscans), we see how our future of two thousands years was at risk in those days! How little could have altered the outcome of those events. The prerequisite for the victory at Salamis was a collective effort by the Athenians and the Spartans, which was spearheaded by Themistokle's famed cunning. If his brilliant intelligence had not mastered the situation, the Persians would have won. If we can imagine that one person's efforts were not present at that crucial moment, we could realize that the subsequent flourishing of the Greek, especially the Athenian, culture would not have taken place. This is a bold but critical thought. This is an example of one individual's efforts that are irreversibly connected with the cultural development that followed.

What a huge impact this event had compared to the Joms Vikings battle at Hjorungavag. In their efforts, in their unconquerable and conscious courage the individual's eternal being appears. Otherwise their efforts remain on the periphery of historical development.

In contrast, the battle at Salamis was a turning point in world history. At that moment the scale of history hung in the balance. Themistokles was not just

a simple person, but rather the organ for the entire Greek people and also for cultural development into the future. In the midst of the battle the Greeks said—with a clairvoyance they did not have under normal circumstances—that angels from heaven partook in the battle and helped them. With the strength of that vision, they became unstoppable. They fought for their own existence, and they fought for something greater.

Xerxes, the emperor of the great Persian empire, ripped his clothes apart as he stood on the banks of the Bay of Eleusis watching the battle unfold. He panicked when he saw the unbelievable surprise; all he could do was flee as fast as possible. The victory was complete.

Shortly thereafter Themistokles left the Athenian stage, a personal tragedy for him but an absolute necessity for the Athenians. With the secure instincts of a sleepwalker the Athenians elected the calm, reflective and just Aristeides, a man the diametrical opposite of Themistokles and exactly the man they needed. Themistokles might have become too high-handed through his brilliant but personally ambitious intelligence. The Athenians put him aside. The best man won.

In history lessons, as in all subjects, we face the challenge of "working economically." What shall we teach and what shall we leave out? If the teacher has even a slight "cover everything mania" by which he feels committed to include a little bit of everything, the quality of instruction and the whole pedagogical benefit of the lessons will be affected adversely. To concentrate on the essential core points is critical. If these core historical points come alive, they will create paths of knowledge which will provide the children with new prospects they can pursue in many directions.

Once the teacher has carefully selected a core point, a very special preparation is made. He needs to understand the point from the inside by meditating upon it. For example, Themistokles must be so well described that he is, in a sense, personally present in the classroom. Herodot and Plutarch give accurate descriptions of this figure that provide an excellent starting point. Traditional history books are not well-suited to this task. They usually provide only a little bit about many things.

When the class has arrived at these events at the end of the fifth grade and the children know Themistokles in all of his sly and aggressive behavior, the teacher can create reflective dialogues with the children by characterizing him. It is enough to set the tone, then the children stream in with adjectives of their own; smart, sly, courageous, aggressive, ambitious, and so forth. Comparing him with his opponent, the upright, easy-going Aristeides who has also been equally well-described, can sharpen the characterization.

But the teacher should not stop at characterization. Such an observable archetype can be used to help children develop a conceptual relationship between the individual and society. For, without the Greek society, especially the Athenians, Themistokles would have been nothing, and without his efforts the people would have been as helpless as a body without eyes or arms.

Here some may question if another Athenian could have helped the people had Themistokles not made his contribution. The Athenians had plenty of agile, quick-thinking, aggressive people. That is an important possibility, but we will never know, for it was Themistokles who carried out the deeds.

By working through such sequences of thought, the children sharpen their ability to observe large parts of life—necessary tasks demanded by peoples or historical epochs can only be carried out by individuals who become organs for their people in the decisive epoch. From the fifth and sixth grade on, the children need to awaken and practice an especially strong consciousness of the individual and the larger social reality. This is in contrast to the earlier school years' experience when the children are part of a larger group soul.

II.

Themistokles walked an influential individual path in his life. At the same time he was a typical Athenian. "Did something new happen?" ask the Athenians when they met each other. Curious and inquisitive they were always receptive to new impressions. Venturesome, they took on great plans. Even though they were exaggeratingly boisterous and funny, they also had large portions of ambition "always to be the first and conquer the others." Everything was a competition between individuals to serve the gods and their own honor and to never forget their honor for their dear "violet-surrounded" Athens.

But even as they loved their city above all others, they loved to travel and throw themselves into adventures on the wavy sea. They soon became the best seamen of their times. With the spirited commerce in the seaport at Athens, Piraeus, the center soon spread across the entire Mediterranean Sea.

Along with commerce the Attic production of art and handicrafts spread across the world, and what a luxurious production unfolded, especially within the ceramics industry. What quality! The remaining pieces are only a tiny fraction of the actual output.

Of the thousands of vases with different forms and drawings, only a few remnants survive, now in large collections in Athens, Tarent, Naples, Rome, Paris, and London, where every single vase is a wonderful piece of art to admire again and again. This unbelievable production in fantasy and handwork expertise is perhaps the best testimony to Athens's activities. And what did that small group of people in the fifth century B.C. leave to humanity from its horn of plenty in sculpture, architecture, painting, lyricism, drama, science and philosophy?

Compare that with the Spartan's contributions. What cultural goods streamed from the other main Greek tribe? Compared to the Athenians, we are tempted to say: Nothing! But the Spartans were just as important for the Greek people as the Athenians.

Without them there is no doubt that the Greeks would have been crushed and the Athenian culture would not have developed. The individual Spartans meant nothing to their people, only as servants of their people. This considerable, unlimited gesture of service and sacrifice is the archetype of the Spartans. What counted was winning or dying. The Spartan mother said: " Come back from the battle, my son, with your shield or upon your shield." A representative picture is the Spartan King Leonidas with 300 chosen men at Thermopylene, surrounded in a celebration of certain death before him. When one visits the site today, one can notice that nature speaks without words. From time immemorial until today sulphuric, Thermopylene warm (38 degrees Celsius) water streams right out of the mountains. One can feel a stream of youthful health and power when you bathe in these springs.

The Spartanic power of sacrifice is not productive culturally. It is an inner concentrated, unbreakable, consolidated power. It is not interested in the outside world. Shipping and commerce were repressed, actually forbidden. Few, but accurate words were spoken, few movements taken. Their brown skin was so hardy that wind, burning sun, hail or lashings had little effect. The Spartan's attitude was equally unmovable.

To the contrary, the Athenians kept their skin soft, open and pliable. Their attitude to weather changed dramatically from exaltation to desperate helplessness. A gray, permanent cloudy sky was foreign to them. Storms with lightning, thunder and heavy downpours were known, yet the sun shone for the most part.

Let us further consider their landscapes. Arriving in Sparta from Arcadia's changing, dramatic and romantic valleys, one gets the impression of a peaceful landscape. The flat plateau, Lakedaimon, was once the bottom of an inland sea six miles wide and twelve miles long. But the river Eurotas dug itself through the valley southwards to the ocean and the earth rich. "Wide plateaus you own, where clover grows and spicy herbs, wheat, spelt and broad-leaved barley in golden fields," says Telemachos to King Menelaos (in the *Odyssey, IV,* 602–604).

Even today that plateau is very fruitful with luxurious oranges, lemon trees, fig and olive orchards, cotton plantations, and vineyards. This broad, flat plateau is limited and closed on all sides. The south wall is very low. The western wall is more than 2000 meters high and includes Taygetos with eternal snow on the highest peaks (2400 meters above sea level). On a ledge on Taygetos are some beautiful Byzantine cloisters and churches, Mistras. They flee from the sinful world to the soul's inner god-like source. The Spartans did not flee; they did

not care about the world outside Lakedaimon's walls. They had enough within themselves, in their own space.

On the highest ledge lies a thirteenth century castle. Here people from the Middle Ages hid themselves in armor from the attacks of the world. The Spartans needed no walls. The men themselves with hard skin were Sparta's walls. Sparta's temples were not placed on heights, even though they had hills everywhere. The holy temple for their goddess of fertility was built on the plateau on the banks of the flowing Eurotas. (The humble ruins still lie there.)

The Athenians on the other hand lived on the peninsula Attica that stretches out into the Aegean Sea with a number of fantastic harbors on all sides that provide the starting point for worldly travels. If one sails into the bay of Piraeus, one can immediately see the main holy site of the Athenians, the Parthenon Temple on top of the Acropolis lit against the sky.

Attica's changing hills, and hillcrests are simple, worn down, naked and open. Here there are no walls. Everything is open against the sea and the world's vast space. With a slight exaggeration one may say there are no trees. The landscape's formations are unveiled in sparkling "classic" clarity. And the naked formation's lightly waving surfaces live in endlessly shifting colors, especially at sunrise and sunset on the Acropolis and over the violet, heather blankets where energetic bees collect nectar for the incomparable Attic honey. There is no "romantic" forest breeze that speaks to the ear as for example in Arcadia. Here everything speaks to the eye. Slightly fertile, almost barren with poor soil Attica could never support many people. Yet it is rich due to handy, imaginative and worldly-oriented people. Here we find silver and lead in the mines at Laurion, the finest marble in Pentelikon and Hymettos and, last but not least ,the finest clay for the ceramic industry.

The unimaginative Spartans would have been helpless here and probably have hungered despite the Spartanic way of life just as the Athenians would have stagnated by the Eurotas River. (To be more accurate they never would have settled there.) Both tribes migrated from the north and found the landscape that best suited their inherent tendencies as well as the latent forces not yet developed by them. The landscapes in turn contributed to developing these forces. Therefore the Athenians and the Spartans are archetypes conforming to the cultural, historical possibilities and their geographic landscapes. The Greek people and culture were strengthened by these main contrasts in addition to the many small tribes and their characteristic landscapes.

III.

Once the teacher has told the children in the fifth grade history lessons about the Spartans and the Athenians and their landscapes, it falls naturally to lead

them in practicing comparisons. In that way the qualities come forth better and the children's abilities to see them are developed. This is in no way an exercise in cause and effect, rather we practice observing qualities that belong together in pairs.

In the botany block in the same grade we can practice the very same thing but using plant forms and the earth in which they belong. The marigold family's many related forms provide an easily observable transition: from marsh-marigold's water-filled, swollen, round shapes on the edge of a stream or in the swampy soil to meadow-marigolds tall, thin freely-unfolding shapes down in the valley and to the icy crowfoots' compact, little rugged shape on the barren mountain soil.

To practice observing such changes in qualities as well as metamorphoses in relation to environments (the soil, etc.) gives flexibility and a sense for reality to the the children's thinking. Had the teacher presented the fifth graders abstract theories about the cause and effect, either of the meadow-marigolds or the Athenian cultural life and landscape, he would have given the children stones for bread, something they would in the best case ignore.

At this age thinking is in its first phase of vulnerable independence. It needs juicy nutrition and down to earth practice. The only fruitful way to exercise is with qualities that have already been directly and strongly experienced. With this nourishment, the children's first "thinking sprouts" shall grow and thrive. Everything else is only empty scheme.

How appropriate to practice this in history lessons about Hellas! For this is where thinking first appeared in its pure form, especially in Athens that opened to the rest of the world but did not lose itself. During the previous cultural epochs—Egypt, Babylon, Persia, India—we find an abundance of wisdom. But at that time thinking was woven in the form of mystical pictures. It is in Hellas that thinking is first seriously released from the cosmic, mystical pictures and appears as thoughts. Thinking is thus born as something independent.

This raises many questions: fifth and sixth graders cannot yet understand any philosophy in general or in the form of Greek philosophy in it simplest form. That is true in a certain sense, for philosophy requires a very different ability in thinking than eleven to twelve year olds can perform. Yet there are some exceptions. Greek philosophy did not merely unfold in various thought forms. It also appeared in an individual's way of life: Socrates. The fundamental power of thinking appeared in his attitude to real-life situations.

Especially clearly it appears as the life of Socrates is woven together with the dramatic life of Alkibiades. These simple life pictures are understandable for children at the beginning of the sixth grade. In Socrates we find united the

best qualities of the Spartans and the Athenians. Mankind no longer has merely instinctive, naturally given soul forces. He is filled with consciousness. He no longer has merely warlike, sacrificial willpower; he sacrifices random, personal desires for the truth. And his love for learning opens new worlds while it is free of personal ambition.

Socrates becomes the "eye"

As twelve-year-olds approach the "birth" of their thinking, we have them meet the man who called himself the "midwife" to thinking. At this point in fifth of sixth grade, the teacher can also begin melting together the most diverse subjects in the curriculum to strengthen each other and become more interdisciplinary.

In the midst of the stories of Socrates and his friends (among them the uncontrollable, careless and ambitious Alkibiades) who all strove for the "birth" of thinking are Socrates' own words concerning his task as midwife. Here the teacher can add a detailed description of a human birth, maybe even an especially painful, difficult birth. The thoughts for the children quickly condense when the teacher moves from the concrete physical birth to the soul-spiritual birth of thinking. Thoughts are not "nothing." They are truly alive so they may be given birth and they may grow. They need nutrition, care and love.

Precisely in this "oscillating" form of observation we practice down to earth thinking, a thinking that may be constantly grounded in the living, emerging human being. As the Greeks reached their purist and highest development in Socrates, they surpassed themselves and sentenced themselves to death as they handed Socrates the chalet of poison. This conventional, withering, dying quality is something we all have inside. And it can only be overcome by continually awakening and caring for the sense of the living, toughest emerging human being.

The Romans in the Sixth Grade

by

Christian Faye Smit

Translated by Ted Warren

Rome was not founded in a single day. Yet the Romans themselves appeared in history distinctively on the scene with their first contributions.

Romulus ploughed the borders for what would be “the eternal city.” He set the plow in the earth, drove the horses forward and lifted the plow where there whould be a gate crying aloud, ”Porta.” In origin, Rome was the effort of a single human being—the boundaries and restriction an area created by an act of will—this is my area, the manifestation of power: the emergence of “I will!”

Conflicts arose with everyone outside of the defined area, beyond the walls. The first conflict was with his brother, Remus. Twin sons of the war-god Mars who had visited the vestal virgin, Rhea Sylvia, in the temple—the holy Vesta-temple of families and homes—they were thrown into the Tiber River to drown with their mother. But Mars guided them safely to a cave in the cliffs where they were nourished by a female wolf.

When the brothers were grown, Romulus was chosen by the gods to be the ruler over the new city. Twelve mighty birds of prey flew over their heads, and first six birds swerved above Remus. A disagreement arose as to how to judge the event, but Romulus was convinced he should build walls where he had plowed. Remus made fun of his brother and jumped over the wall. Romulus killed him and declared, “This will happen to anyone who jumps over my walls!”

Romulus invited everyone to live in his city. Assylants, criminals, homeless and other people streamed in. The city grew but there were no women, so the Romans invited their neighbors to a great festival—with the purpose of stealing their women. Thus Rome was created: with the visit of Mars, with the death of the mother, through the milk of a she-wolf, by fratricide, and by stealing women. These were acts of will by the founders of the city.

Rome’s walls were strong, and the Romans were men of action who stood on strong legs. Harm to those who came too close. Their self-esteem grew with their consciousness of personal power and strength. “Not you, but I” was the Roman attitude.

A true Roman had respect for himself and his actions. His personal qualities were fully developed. In his inner life he felt power, fortitude, endurance, fearlessness, trustworthiness, and a whole gallery of other personal qualities that were the source of power in his soul. Soul forces were inspirations from godly beings to which he called.

He had personal possessions as well, but he was convinced they also came from the gods. The Roman's relationship to his gods was to invoke them to lower themselves to his personal earthly level, to give him strength, not merely in cloudy generalizations but to participate at certain times for certain purposes.

On one occasion when Romulus realized that he could possibly be trapped by an enemy's invasion, he asked Jupiter to give him the strength to carry on. He received the power and named the origin of that source, Jupiter Stator. A temple was named for that god. It was not Jupiter in his usual figure as the almighty god, but a very special side of Jupiter that could send human beings power for independence, to stand erect and unbeatable on the earth. No one could best a Roman so inspired by the power of Jupiter Stator; the power of the god had become a personal quality. In this way Romans related to their gods. They believed that these qualities could not appear on their own, but were the work of gods gifted to man and made private property.

The Romans called upon the god Mars before and after war. This was not the general celebration of a war god, but rather an invocation to be filled with special power in order to go invincibly into war. The Romans felt this power came from Mars Gradivus, from Mars that storms into battle. This quality te Roman soldiers proclaimed with the words: "Attack, to victory or death!"

For the Romans, every thing, every action or activity, had a certain god. They saw special godliness in all natural phenomena. The entire world of gods was specified—earth, water, air, spring, forest, flood, cliff, and so forth, all had their assigned protective and inspiring gods. The same was true of the state, the tribe, the family and the individuals. Every human being had his "genius" that appeared just for him. Every house had its own gods, lares, that protected them as long as the family survived. Every action was connected to gods: when the farmer ploughed he called a certain god; another god was called when he sowed; and others when he harvested, thrashed or harrowed. The Romans even related every stage in the life of a plant to a specific god: one for the seed, the sprout, the leaf, the stem, the bud, and so forth. Colorless and pictureless, the gods appeared in special activities on the sensory experienced earth and in the Roman's soul life as characteristic qualities. Romans had strong feelings of dependencies on the help and inspiration from the gods. One had to behave in such a way that the gods would appear, and one had to create the basis upon which the god could

manifest itself. Ceremonies for the act of calling the gods became more and more specialized. They became almost pacts. Any change in the ceremony would affect the god's ability to participate in the action.

In this way the Romans not only separated himself from his fellow man but also from the world of the gods. There was also a specified godly origin within this separation: the god Terminus, the god of borders, the purely earthly as well as the purely human borders. Harm to those who messed with the border signs! Harm to those who entered private property and personal rights! Terminus gave the Romans the power to say: "Not you, but I! Here I am the man of this house."

The Romans developed strong self-esteem and powerful egotism. That independence was carefully regulated in relationships with each other. The Romans had to follow their laws, the twelve tables of laws. They wrote down the correct and necessary behavior for a citizen, a slave and the state. All relationships were defined and determined, woven into certain obligationes. Their affairs were so detailed that a misguided formality could change an agreed-upon contract. For example, when one entered an obligatio, one was asked: "Do you promise?" If he answered, "Promitto," the contract was not binding, because the only valid answer by law was, "Spondeo," which actually meant the same. Precision was demanded in every detail.

In Roman history we find many individuals who exemplify characteristic Roman qualities. Horatius Codes single-handedly stopped the enemy's access to the bridgehead until the bridge was destroyed. He then called to the god of the river and received the power to swim across the river in full armor. Mucius Scaevola let his right hand burn to coal without making a grimace. The Roman Consul Fabricius did not allow himself to be seduced by Pyrrhos's gold or scare his elephant. Nor did he allow himself to be tricked into using Pyrrhos's doctor, when he offered to give the king poison for money. The letter was sent to Pyrrhos, for he shall be conquered in open battle. When the Romans heard about Alexander the Great, they wanted him to come to Rome so they could improve their reputation by defeating that great conqueror.

When Rome was endangered and was forced to find a dictator, they sent for Quinctius Cincinnatus. He was plowing his field when the messenger arrived and told him of the Senate's choice of him as dictator. He dried the sweat off his eyebrow, asked his wife for a clean toga, placed himself as dictator of the Roman army, defeated his enemy and after sixteen days returned home to his land and continued plowing.

Not only particular individuals embodied the archetypical Roman characteristics but almost everyone did. When one died another appeared from the masses and proved himself a great leader. As Brennus brought his Gauls into the city they found eighty senators sitting on their chairs at the Forum. They

looked so honorable, so majestic in that circle that the Gauls could not tell if they were human beings or statues. Only by pulling the beard of one of them and receiving a hit with an ivory stick were the Gauls sure that the senators were alive, - then they cut them all down. When King Pyrrhos asked his messenger what he thought of the Romans he replied: “They are all kings!” They all had the majestic posture and dignity in their movements. The worse humiliation a Roman could imagine was to bow one’s neck under the yoke of servitude for they had to physically bend over, a posture which was totally self-demeaning.

In olden times the royal attitude among the Romans inspired them to act only for the best for the state. They considered themselves as functions in the life of the state. They had a strong self-consciousness but were always subjects of Rome. No single person whould steal the highest power for his personal best. They transformed royalty into a form of government with a consulate whose power was shared according to who was voted in.

Roman egotism was a strength because they held it within certain creative limitations. The Romans developed generalized morality or limited egotism. In later periods Cicero cried out in desperation: “*O Tempora, o mores*! What has become of the old Romans?” Egoism no longer functioned as a positive characteristic in a larger context. Individuals began to act from their own desires and their entire character was placed in the service of their own good, for their egotistical self. In the emperor years that followed, Roman strength became unlimited egotism, the god Terminus was offended, and moral decline set in. It is enough to remember the Roman emperors. The time had come when human beings needed a new reality as a higher power. The time was gone when humanity could legitimately view the state as most the important power.

We teach Roman history in the sixth grade at the Waldorf school. The children have reached an age when inner skepticism appears. They no longer feel fulfilled with the pictures from fairy tales and the mythology of their fifth grade studies, when they experienced the richness of Greek mythology with its independent gods. With their budding skepticism the children begin to disconnect from their surroundings and clarify their own positions. They make themselves known as “sprouting” personalities. Like the Romans they acquire personality characteristics and become more and more “private people.” Their senses awaken more fully and their own observations engage them in new ways.

Now they want to grasp the world from their own starting point. In order to meet these needs among children and to find work in which they can try out these new characteristics, we bring them Roman history. It can appeal to their growing personality. We bring physics whereby they can sharpen their capacity for observation and awaken to new sensory experiences. We bring woodworking

in which activity they can use their own forces to master the hard, earthly materials.

At the same time we as teachers should keep in mind what happened to the Roman Empire when it transformed from limited, moral egoism into unlimited, immoral egoism, for they did not succeed in establishing peace in the world. We try to teach a healthy perspective of the world where human beings belong to a larger unity which allows for both an independent outer entity like the Greek gods and also the Roman-like inner source of will in each human being.

Jeanne d' Arc

An Enigmatic Figure in thte Middle Ages

by

Jørgen Borgen

Translated by Ted Warren

"There are more things in heaven and on earth
than are dreamt of in your philosophy, Horatio!"
– Hamlet

If we compare ancient chronicles with modern history books, a significant difference appears. From the Middles Ages through the end of the nineteenth century myths, sagas, legends, prophecies and wonders were taken seriously. They were considered as realistic as everyday occurrences. For modern historians, in most cases, these sources are no longer considered authentic for modern historians. Now they belong to another science, folklorists shall classify and interpret myths, sagas and legends.

Are all of our ancient heroes useless for today's history lessons? A few have survived all forms of criticism. As late as the fifteenth century we find Jeanne d'Arc (1412–1431). No one doubts her existence. For modern historians she is an enigma because her unbelievable but factual actions challenge the theory that occurrences can be explained. Even if one burned the documents that prove she had lived, she will not be ignored. Even the most objective researcher will allow himself to be charmed by "La Pucelle." Some go so far as to write: "She believed she was sent by God." Historians must admit that her actions during the English-French Hundred Years' War were decisive for the future of Europe. Bernard Shaw did not exaggerate when he said: "She took her own King under her wing and let the English King know that all he could do was obey her orders. She spoke defiantly to statesmen and churchmen. She disobeyed generals' plans and followed her own in order to lead her troops to victory."

Her biography makes a big impression on twelve- and thirteen-year-old children. Teachers realize that the goal of history's lessons is to demonstrate how

individual's actions leave deep tracks which are still active today. And for once it is not a man but a woman, a young nineteen-year-old girl, whose actions affect the history of two powerful nations for many centuries.

Anecdotes are stories of human idiosyncrasies. Children will test each history teacher's attitude to the mystery of Jeanne d'Arc by expecting them to answer the same question her judges were faced with: Who was she? Was she, as her judges proclaimed, a lying seducer of the people and the royalty, a pagan, a false prophet, a witch? Was there reason to label the hat she wore at the stake in Rouen with the inscription: Heretique, relapse, apostate, idolatre? Was she a devil or instrument of the forces of evil? Did she play a fantastic but fatal game with the highest military leaders on both sides? Or was she what she always professed? Was she indeed guided by higher, godlike powers that gave her the abilities and courage to act in ways that defied human reason?

The class would laugh if the teacher would try, like Anatole France did, to avoid these questions by glossing over all irrational elements of Jeanne's life. France claimed that her revelations were nothing more than hallucinations, the voices she heard nothing more than he own unconscious. How did Jeanne d'Arc explain her inner voices, that gave her the meaning of her life and mission? Were Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine present? The archangel Michael named them both.

In order to accept her explanations of the voices, let us listen to an answer she gave the investigation commission in Poitiers. Professor Sequin asked her in which language the voices spoke. "A better French than yours," she replied. Sequin was from Limousin, well-known for its ugly dialect.

The judges also asked her about the voices: "How can voices speak with you when you have no voice organs?"

"I leave that for God to answer."

"Did Saint Margaret speak French?" they asked

"Why should she speak English when she was not on the side of the English?" was her reply.

When we first consider Jeanne d'Arc's supersensible revelations, it is tempting to dismiss her as an exalted young girl in a state of ecstasy who forgot everything about herself in an unconscious trance. Her biographer Curt Wallis speaks to the contrary: "Jeanne d'Arc never fell into an unconscious trance. It is clear that she observed her surroundings while she viewed her visions." He goes on to say that she had the visions while she was in meetings or battles or when under attack. She heard the voices on the executioner's platform as she was led to the stake, and she heard them as she was in the fire, as she exclaimed to the onlookers that her voices had never deceived her.

We have her assurance that she hesitated for a long time before following the voices' unequivocal orders. They demanded that she put on armor and hasten the King to action. Jeanne spoke soberly of her natural reaction to this unnatural order: "I am just a poor farmer's daughter, I have neither armor nor a horse, and I cannot ride." Further, the King was hundreds of miles away, in Domremy. What should she do? The voices were clear and relentless. She finally decided to follow their orders. Since it would be dangerous to travel so far alone, she approached the commander at the fortress in Vaucouleurs, Robert de Baudricourt, and asked for help. He was a brave warrior, a jovial, practical man, and immediately skeptical of her visions. When he asked her who had sent her, she answered, "On behalf of the master."

"Who is the master?" asked Baudricourt boldly.

"It is God," answered Jeanne and told him that God ordered her to ride to the King and lead him to Reims to be crowned. She also explained that the "dauphin" did not own France but was asked by God to administer the land as best he could.

The commander was surprised, considered the whole story a joke at best. He told Lassois, a cousin of Jeanne's, who had followed her to the fortress, that he should give his cousin a few slaps to the face and take her home where her respectable father could punish her further. Thus ended her trip to Vaucouleurs.

Jeanne neither gave up nor lost her courage. In the fall of 1428, when Orleans was occupied by the English and France appeared conquered, she visited Baudricourt again. Explaining once again her mission from God to free the city, the commander listened with new interest. Baudricourt had just heard from the King's residence in Chinon that the French had suffered a terrible loss at Rouvray, not far from Orleans, and he was convinced that everything in God's power must be done to prevent the English from taking the final fortress.

Baudricourt did not escort her, but wrote a long letter to the King. Jeanne put on the armor, mounted her horse and defied all warnings about the dangerous journey. "The road lies open for me, I trust my Master. He shall show me the road to the King in order to carry out His command." She suffered through fatigue and earned the respect of her escort of three young nobles and soldiers.. The men were sworn by Baudricourt to treat her fairly, but they agreed to test her courage one day. On the first night, the soldiers awoke her unexpectedly by screaming in her ear that the others had abandoned them. Jeanne sat up and cried out, "Stop, do not run. There is no danger, for God is with us."

Her escort were surprised how well she managed in new situations. She rode very well and mounted a horse as if she done it all her life. She was practical and quick to give advice.

Jeanne was eager to reach her destination. There was no time to lose, for the King's position was desperate. The English had conquered Northern and

Western France, including Paris. Everyone knew that if Orleans fell, the enemy would easily conquer the rest of France. The French Parliament in Chinon advised Charles to make an alliance with Duke Philippe of Burgundy, a former ally of the English who ruled over the eastern part of France and Flanders, but Charles did not trust the unfaithful Duke whose intention was to depose him. The French finances were in turmoil; Charles did not have even enough money to pay his tailor. Only the fat, rich and sly financial advisor La Tremoille had money available. This man kept one foot in each camp and enjoyed an alliance with Burgund. The few friends of the King were poor and exhausted from the unsuccessful war, and Charles knew not what to do next.

It was at this critical point that Jeanne arrived in Chinon. She had to wait three days before she could speak with the King, whose advisors knew not what to make of Baudricourt's letter. The whole world would laugh at them if they allowed a little imposter to lead them by the nose. When they finally decided to let her into the castle, they wanted to test her first. The King hid behind three hundred knights, and they asked her to find him as she entered the court. Gaucort, a court officer at the time, observed this historical moment and reported that Jeanne walked directly to the King and bowed upon her knee saying, "Honored Dauphin, I am sent by God to serve you and your kingdom."

In a subsequent confidential conversation, Jeanne convinced Charles VI that he was the rightful King of France. No one knows how she proved it to him. Historians have been left with what they call *le signe du roi*, and there have been numerous attempts to explain how she did this. Not even the judges at Rouen were able to get it out of her. In any case the melancholic Dauphin was convinced beyond question. He returned to the court more joyful and confident than anyone had previously seen him.

After Jeanne won the King's trust, she became a guest at the Castle of Chinon. The two had many conversations before the King tested her once again by making her appear before a theological commission at Poitiers who had previously sent messengers to her hometown to research her background. They had learned only good news about her childhood and teenage years.

Jeanne respected the lower and poorer priesthood that carried the heavy load of the Church. She held in contempt the rich, well-educated professors who wielded the interpretation of God's word. She was impatient. Upon meeting the theologians of the commission she proclaimed, "In God's book there is much more than in yours."

Professor Seguin probed the most. To his question: "Do you believe in God?" she answered sharply, "More than you."

As he asserted that "if God wished France to win, they would need no soldiers," she countered by saying, "Soldiers shall fight, and God shall give them the victory!"

Insulted, Seguin proclaimed they could not suggest sending her to battle before she proved that she was sent by God. “I have not come to Poitiers to make signs and wonders,” replied Jeanne. “Send me to Orleans and you shall witness a wonder.” The theologians ruled that she was a good girl and that she should be used in battle, especially since the situation was so dire. Curt Wallis comments that during her hearing Jeanne described her mission in four prophecies: Orleans shall be freed, the King shall be crowned in Reims, Paris shall be reclaimed, and Duke Charles of Orleans will be freed from prison.

On the evening of April 29, 1429, Jeanne d’Arc solemn entered the besieged Orleans. A witness described the historical moment:

> Escorted by France’s most distinguished General Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans, Jeanne rode slowly into town on a white horse. The masses received her with joy. They had suffered and feared losing life and limbs. Now they felt comforted—it was as if the siege was already lifted. They been told that within the simple virgin a Godlike power lived. Women, men and children watched her with great love. They pushed forward to see her and touch her horse. A torchbearer came too close to her banner which caught on fire. She spurred her horse so fast that she extinguished the flames. The people were so impressed by her horsemanship that they thought she had followed armies for many years.

Jeanne rode gracefully through Orleans in full armor, something only war-proven knights could display. On her banner, woven in white cloth, were embroidered a French lily, a picture of God surrounded by angels, and the inscription: *Jesus Maria*. On her belt hung a battle-axe and a sword, but she never used her weapons in battle and never killed a soul.

Before the entrance to Orleans she was greeted by Commander Dunois on the banks of the Loires. Their meeting has been described as follows:

Jeanne asked: “Are you the Bastard of Orleans?”

“Yes,” answered Orleans, “and I am very glad you have arrived.”

“Did you give the command that I should enter on this side of the river and not ride straight so I could meet the English and their commander Talbot?”

“Yes, for the sake of safety, and for those who are wiser than I are of the same conviction.”

“By God, Our Lord’s advice is safer and wiser than yours. You wanted to deceive me, and you have deceived yourself! For I bring better help to you than any commanders have received—help from the King of the Heavens.”

From that moment on Dunois followed her orders. He believed in her and supported her throughout the war. The day after he entered Jeanne’s quarters

with news of reinforcements led by Sir John Fastoff on the way to strengthen the English army, she burned inside for battle. “Bastard, bastard, in the name of God, I order you to inform me as soon as you know more about Fastoff’s arrival. If he arrives before I know about it, I will have your head cut off.” Even though she was joking, Dunois promised to honor her request. (We have these conversations recorded thanks to d’Aulon, a French Knight. From him we also have the stories of the dramatic battles that soon followed.)

Both Jeanne and d’Aulon were exhausted from the long journey that morning and rested shortly in the same room when d’Aulon was suddenly awakened by Jeanne who cried out, “Praise God, my voices have told me to engage the English. But I do not know whether I should attack their buildings or attack Fastoff who is bringing reinforcements?”

From the street they heard cries that the English were attacking Fort St. Loup to the east. Jeanne ran out of the house, was brought her horse by her page Louis de Coutes, and took her banner, which was handed down through the window as she mounted the horse. She rode through the town to St. Loup. Just outside the town gates she saw French soldiers in wild retreat towards Orleans. Jeanne reached them and ordered them to turn back, for she would lead them to victory. The soldiers’ confidence returned and they obeyed her command. They were consumed with anger toward the English. Jeanne rode before them, holding her banner. As she arrived at the moat, she planted the banner firmly in the ground and stood calmly as the arrows rained down upon them. The French followed with a charge, blasted an opening in the walls and entered the fortress. As she gave commands, no resistance could stop them. After three hours of hard battle, St. Loup was reclaimed. Forty Englishmen had been killed. Those who fled were captured in a tower and brought to safety by Jeanne, who allowed them to stay in her barracks and receive the care they needed. This was the first victory for the French in the battles of Orleans. Decisive, it proved the English could be beaten and the fortresses conquered.

Jeanne would not let her landsmen go to battle the next day because it was Ascension. Instead they visited the churches. She also commanded that all loose women who followed the soldiers be sent away. A knight who swore near her was grasped by the throat and told, ”You shame God, and you may not leave until you beg for mercy.” The people of Orleans loved La Pucelle, the virgin who championed the weak and the strong.

Even the war council was conspiratorial. When one of the high lords, Cousinot, described only half the plan for the attack on Fort St. Laurent, she discovered it immediately and scorned him: “You hide a part of the plan from me? Let me hear the whole plan. I can hold a confidence in events greater than these.” In her room, she paced back and forth. Dunois decided to inform her:

“Jeanne, we thought we could not trust you with everything at once” A few minutes later he set the whole plan before her, Jeanne was reconciled, approved the plan and dismissed the war council. Dunois proclaimed her as talented a strategist as two or three of his most experienced warriors and accredited all success at Orleans to Jeanne d’Arc.

On her behalf during the process of her rehabilitation (1450–1456), De Termes, another famous French commander during the Hundred Years’ War, provided the following report: “In the battles for Orleans Jeanne demonstrated battle skills that no one else could surpass. The officers could not comprehend her courage. When she led men into battle, she acted like the most experienced commander, one who had spent a lifetime learning the art of war.”

A decisive act in liberating Orleans was conquering the castle Les Tourelles. An eyewitness commented: “The attackers climbed on the walls in many places and fought so hard you would have thought they believed they were immortal. Many times they were thrown back by the English and fell from the tops of the wall to the field.” Jeanne stormed up a ladder and was hit by a crossbow arrow that sliced its way between her plates of armor in one shoulder so the point stuck out her back. She fell to the field. The Englishmen cheered for they thought that the feared “witch” had been killed or at least knocked out of battle. Jeanne was pulled out of the worst fighting; they removed her armor and treated the wound with olive oil. When she found her strength again, the French had been thrown back for the fourth time by the English, and defeat seemed certain. Dunois and his war council had already decided to sound the retreat when Jeanne walked forward and stopped them: “Bastard, stop the retreat immediately. We will attack again. Both fortress and Les Tourelles shall belong to us before nightfall.” Dunois gave in to her confidence. Jeanne found a place to spend a few minutes on her knee in prayer before she hurried up to the walls. She planted her banner and climbed up a ladder. When her landsmen saw this, they climbed up their ladders wildly. The English saw Jeanne, whom they thought was dead, and fled into the fortress in panic.

The brave Glassidas and his comrades covered their retreat with heavy axes against the French. Jeanne d’Arc saw danger and yelled to him: “Glassidas, Glassidas you have fought me hard, but surrender and I will spare your life!” Glassidas and his comrades did not listen to her, continued the battle and fell into the water shortly thereafter. In their heavy armor they sank quickly to the bottom. Jeanne fell to her knee and prayed for the lost souls. Her landsmen were also sad, for as the English knights drowned, so the large reward sums were lost.

The French stormed into Les Tourelles from two corners, and by evening all resistance was silenced. Everything had happened as Jeanne had predicted.

From Orleans the people had watched the battles. After the victory all of the church bells rang, "*Te Deum*." The French burned down the castle as Talbot and his Englishmen witnessed that Orleans was wrested out of their control. The very next day, May 8, 1429, the French retreated from the walls of Orleans, and the British army retreated to Paris, followed by the French led by Jeanne d'Arc.

Talbot was captured, Fastoff escaped with his troops. In a letter to the British Parliament, Bedford reported: "Everything was successful until the occupation of Orleans, where God punished our large army. As far as I know it is due to the fear some had for the devil's disciple, called the Virgin, La Pucelle. She used magic and witchcraft, reduced our forces but also strangely discouraged the survivors."

With Jeanne d'Arc at the front of the troops, the French Army rode to Reims. Town after town opened its gates for the King's successful warriors. On July 16, 1429, Charles entered the old coronation town and was proclaimed King of France. The ceremony was described in a letter sent by Pierre de Beauvais to Charles' wife and her mother, Yolande of Sicily: "It was magnificent to witness the mysterious ceremony. Marshalls de Rais and de Boussac, Admiral Culen and many knights rode in full armor with banners waving towards the majestic cathedral bringing with them *la sainte ampoule* which contained the holy oil. They rode past the doors into the church and forward to the holy altar where they dismounted. The Archbishop of Reims asked the King to read the Royal Oath, anointed him and set the crown upon his head. The crowd cried: "Noel! Noel!"

The trumpets blared with such force that one might think that hell would be blown to pieces. And during the whole mystery of this holy ceremony, Jeanne stood straight as a candle, holding her banner at the side of the King. D'Albret held the sword while d'Alencon proclaimed the King a knight, an honor he had not yet received. Guy de Laval was named an Earl.

After the King was crowned, Jeanne fell on her knees and, with tears flowing down her cheeks, spoke: "Honored King, now God's will is done, after He ordered me to take Orleans and crown you as King of France in Reims. You are the rightful King of France." Once the ceremony ended the festivities began. Two of her brothers rode next to her. Their stern father was met by the King and awarded a large sum of money. Jacques d'Arc remained in Reims for two months at the expense of the city. Jeanne d'Arc had now reached the height of her enlightened but short mission.

Let us try to understand what she looked like in the eyes of her landsmen. There is no existing portrait of her. Reports describe her as strongly built with a robust body, sunburned face, dark eyes and dark hair cut short above her forehead.

In his letter of July 8, 1429, Guy de Laval, a young nobleman from Bretagne, tells of his arrival in Loches to offer his service to the King. He meets Jeanne d'Arc who is preparing for war. She offers him some wine and portends that she will next offer him wine in Paris. "She appears and sounds like a goddess. Together with Marshall de Boussac she rode at the head of a troop of cavalry and bowmen. I saw her mount her horse in full armor. The black stallion did not want her to mount so she spoke soothingly to it: 'Bring me to the cross in front of the church over there.' She swung her legs over its back and headed for the church door speaking with a mild female voice: 'Priests and churchmen, make a procession and offer prayers to God.' She turned around and cried: '*Avant! Avant!*' A page carried her banner while Jeanne brandished her little battle-axe in her hand."

Jeanne d'Arc's next mission was to take Paris and throw the English out of France. The uneasy King Charles had made plans to surround the city, but they did not dare enter the city. After an early skirmish the King gave the order to retreat. Charles decided to negotiate with the Duke of Burgundy, but Jeanne wanted a quick battle to decide the matter. (It was only a few years after her death when her will was accomplished and Paris opened its doors for the King in 1436.) In the meantime Jeanne did not let the indecisive King thwart her. With a small group of loyal troops she attacked the enemy's positions around Paris. Knowing well that her time was near, Jeanne heard voices telling her that her mission would soon be over. They warned her of the danger of falling in the hands of her enemy. Indeed, the English had declared that their highest wish was to burn her at the stake, in grotesque revenge for the losses she had given them. Despite the warnings Jeanne attacked Compiegne with her small forces. The town was under the control of Burgundy and completely surrounded by enemies. Her friends warned her but she would not desist: "*Par mon martin!* I will see and help my good friends in Compiegne!"

On this campaign she was surrounded by Burgunders and captured. A Burgundian recorded: "She surpassed the forces women possess and tolerated great resistance to defend her company. As the strongest of them all she fought until the last. There fate ended her honor. For the last time she would carry weapons."

Jean, Earl of Luxembourg and the highest commander of the Burgundian Army, handed her over immediately to his allies, the English. They paid him 10,000 *livfes tournois* in ransom. Jeanne tried to escape during the transactions by throwing herself out of a tower, but she was found unconscious at the foot of the tower and placed in heavy security. She recuperated, but her voices had not lied. She was transported to Rouen and placed in prison for seven months where

she was chained to the wall in a tiny, dark prison tower. Her only protection was the fact that the guards believed the superstition that touching a witch would sentence them to eternal death.

As Curt Wallis mentions, her worst torture was being denied mass, communion and confession. Everything that had given the devout girl strength was taken from her. She was accused of witchcraft. The only time she breathed fresh air was between the court and the tower. The path passed a little chapel where she fell on her knees and prayed. At first the guards allowed this but were then ordered to prevent it.

She received a visit from the Lords of Suffolk and Warwick. Jean of Luxembourg, who accompanied them, promised she could be ransomed by her countrymen if she promised to never take up arms again. Jeanne replied: "In the name of God, you play games with me. I know very well that you cannot do what you offer!" When Luxembourg repeated his proposal, Jeanne countered: "I know the English will kill me. They believe they will capture France, but even if they had one hundred thousand more troops, still they would not be able to take our kingdom."

Lord Suffolk was enraged. He pulled his knife and wanted to kill her on the spot. He would have succeeded had not Lord Warwick held him back. He did not want Jeanne to be murdered in that fashion. Rather, she should be sentenced by a church court comprised of French clergymen whose job was to sentence her to burn her as a witch. The literature on this part of her death is unimpeachable. The trial was a hypocritical attempt at justifying a murder.

The trial began in February 1431. For more than three months one cardinal, six bishops, thirty-two theological doctors, sixteen theological teachers, seven medical doctors and one hundred three professors tried to press a confession from Jeanne that her mission had not been inspired by Godly powers but by the prince of darkness. Jeanne defended herself courageously during the one-sided trial. The president of the judges was the sly Bishop of Beauvais, Cauchon. The protocols are preserved, from which is taken this short exchange between the uneducated farmer's daughter and the Bishop of Beauvais:

"Do you hear voices often?"

"A day does not pass without my hearing the voices. I would have died a long a time ago had I not been comforted by them."

"Which words comfort you?"

"They tell me that I will be freed through a great victory. Or, they tell me to be quiet, receive everything with composure, and in the end I will come to paradise. 'Answer bravely. God will help you.' "

"Do the voices ever change their meaning?"

"I have never experienced that they speak with a double meaning."

"Do you have other revelations as you hear the voices?"

"I am not obliged to answer that. You say you are my judges. Take notice of what you ask. I am sent by God, and it is you who are exposed to grave danger!"

"Do you believe you are at God's mercy?"

"If I am not in it, my God send me to it—if I am in it, may He keep me in it."

"Is St. Michael accompanied by a light when he approaches you?"

"Yes, he is accompanied by light from all of the corners, but they do not reach to him."

"Does everyone who belongs to your party believe in that you are sent from God?"

"I do not know if they believe that. But if they do not, I am no less sent by God."

"And if they do believe it?"

" They make no mistake."

Thomas Courcelles, doctor of theology and professor at Sorbonne asked her so some political questions: "Do you believe that the Englishmen will be less successful in war?"

"The English will lose a larger stake than Orleans, they will lose all of France! From my visions I know it will happen within seven years. I am sad that it will take so long. But as surely as I sit her now I know it will happen. The day and hour I do not know."

For many months the judges tried to trap Jeanne with well-formulated questions. Against his will, Cauchon decided he would show her which torture methods he would use if she did not confess that she was part of the devil's work. She was brought into a torture chamber where the executioner stood with glowing tongs: "Now, Jeanne, how would it be if I let you become familiar with fire?"

Though Jeanne had a panic fear for fire since childhood, she answered: "Even if you pull apart my limbs so my soul flies from my body, I will say nothing more than I have already said. And even if I were to say something different, I would shortly thereafter declare that you forced me to say it."

Once Cauchon successfully coerced Jeanne to confess when she was threatened to be burned alive, and indeed, a few days later she told Cauchon that her confession was a lie, and she retracted everything she had said under pressure. But her fate was forever sealed. Two Dominicans, Ladvenu and Toutmouille, had the task of pronouncing her sentence. Toutmouille witnessed that Jeanne pulled her hair and cried: "O, shall you treat me so horribly and so grotesquely that my body will be destroyed and turned to ashes! Oh! Oh! I would

rather be guillotined seven times than burned. I cry to the highest judge, O Lord, and complain over the injustice and persecution I am subjected to!"

When Cauchon visited her in prison, she said: "Bishop, I die because of Him and before Him I shall file my complaint for God." Wallis records that Cauchon "suffered a fit of anger."

Jeanne was granted the opportunity to confess her sins and receive the sacraments before she was sent to the execution platform. To a monk who attended her, she asked: "Maitre Pierre, where shall I be this evening?"

He answered: "Do you not have comfort from the Lord?"

"Yes," she answered, "and through God's mercy I will be in paradise."

As Jeanne was led away she cried so loudly that everyone who heard her could not hold back their tears. One of her most avid prosecutors asked on his knees for forgiveness. Before she climbed to the stake, Jeanne was strong enough to forgive not only the evil he gave her but also Cauchon and all of his fellow judges. She appealed to the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary and all of the saints in paradise. She asked for a cross on which to gaze in her final moments. An English soldier made a cross of two pins and extended it to her. As the flames burned around her, Jeanne cried to the judges that her voices had come from God, that they had never deceived her, and that everything she had done was upon His orders. The final word they heard from her lips was "Jesus."

Of the life of Jeanne d'Arc, the King of England's secretary cried aloud: "We are lost, for we have killed a saint!" The executioner was so devastated that he confessed his sins: "I have burned a saint, and God will never forgive me." According to French legend, shortly after Jeanne's final breath, a white dove flew from the fire into the sky above.

I and the Others

Strengthening a Seventh Grader's Relationship to the World Through History and Geography

by

David Brierley

Translated by Ted Warren

The great explorations are a central theme for history and geography in the seventh grade in the Waldorf school. The climax of this historical epoch was reached in the period between Columbus' explorations in 1492 and Magellan's circumnavigation of the globe in 1522. Exactly in the middle of these events falls the year 1507, when a new cosmography appeared, the Copernican heliocentric view of the cosmos with the sun as the middle of the universe rather than the earth.

Now that the globe has been mapped out to the slightest detail, is there anything left to explore? New discoveries are made by teens that "feel" their way into the world. From this perspective history and geography support the student's drive to explore the world.

The geographic path

Geography can easily become a system that we use to collect, absorb and record information. The subject is so encompassing that it may resemble a journey in the desert. As teachers we must search for the subject's themes and we must define its methods. Is geography a science or does it belong to the humanities? Not until the middle of the nineteenth century was it treated as a separate subject. Geographic literature at that time was basic information with no explanation or deep scholarship. The only explanations offered fell under the more established subjects of: astronomy, mathematics, history, biology, and so forth.

In the Waldorf schools we teach geography from the age of nine until the age of seventeen. A turning point in geography instruction comes in the seventh grade. At that point a leading motive for fourteen-year-olds is to be different, and traditional, geographical facts do not offer enough substance to those motives.

In the first stage of the seventh grader's explorations we give them opportunities to search for knowledge of their own journey into the unknown. We concentrate on people and lands, geography's anthropological and geomorphologic sides. From both the humanistic and the scientific sides of geography our pupils receive the associative quality for which we are searching.

The scientific method in the seventh grade includes the study of the physical globe, while the humanistic view addresses the peoples on the earth. If you look closely at the seventh grade curriculum you find both aspects. The work with the peoples of the earth appeals to inner picture creativity, while the scientific work deals with the shape of the continents based on map observations together with the children. The instruction is not aimed at a goal but to develop a learning process that will continue in the children. Nowadays we are so concerned with goals that we often believe that the shortest way is the best solution. Our youth are used to a world with immediate results, "instant coffee and instant happenings." Too often we shut down the learning process and thereby prevent valuable experiences.

Because we are so concerned with doing things, the importance of "being" is neglected. Without the quality of "being" the spiritual strivings of our youth are weakened as well as their search for truth. The truth appears in the learning process because truth is a process, a path.

The great explorations yielded great material benefits for the participants but also provided important consequences for their spiritual development as a seed for the future, an awakening, and a renaissance. For the ocean sailors new activities taught them that a breakthrough into the unknown of the physical world could not take place without a breakthrough in the spiritual world. These men were motivated by an intuitive belief that their actions prepared the way for profound changes. That the journeys were very dangerous is reflected in much of the literature of their day that includes themes of storms and shipwrecks. Shakespeare used this in *Pericles* and *The Tempest*, perhaps two of his greatest plays. *The Tempest* is not the product of gifted fantasy but the story of an inner battle in relation to outside forces. Fourteen-year-olds should learn about such dramas in their English lessons.

Youth are most concerned with the future. But the past is learned through history that flows through each individual. It helps fourteen-year-olds become anchored in their own time and to be creative in the future. They will become better explorers in their own lives when inspired by all that others have discovered in the outer world.

The sense of space among the great explorers

What was Columbus's starting point? He had great a imagination and an absolute belief in himself. Before he made his decision in 1492, he studied the

maps of Paolo Toscanelli and Martin Behaim. Both showed Asia west of Europe but the distances were not accurate. At that time everyone struggled with the enormous concepts of world circumnavigation. They faced a new relationship to distances and space.

Quite often navigational errors resulted in great discoveries, the case with both with Columbus and Magellan. The question for the classroom is "What are distances?" From one perspective distances deal with space between objects. From another perspective distances are between human beings, between my Self and the other's Selves. This is a fundamental element of early puberty that pupils find in geography's humanistic and geophysical aspects. After conquering enormous distances, Magellan lost his life on the island of East Mactan due to errors in his social distances. And Columbus's biography is filled with struggles for self-knowledge when breaking through the unknown.

Columbus also met new peoples! Indeed, few have met such radical differences. America's nature and natives were totally foreign for him. The discoveries of Asia and Africa took longer periods of time and were therefore not as much of a shock. Even landing on the moon was prepared for with photographs and satellite measurements. The discovery of America brought Europeans face to face with human diversity. In naming the natives, "Indians," Columbus not only committed a geographic mistake but acknowledged that the Indians were less different than he imagined. He wrote that they were not barbarians but simply people who spoke another language. With these observations Columbus initiated a new science; ethnography became a part of geography. This subject is introduced in the seventh grade and is completed in the twelfth grade in the Waldorf schools.

Columbus's experiences proved that human diversity was no longer limited to the imagination, it could be observed in the physical world. A huge question arises: "What do I see and what do I not see?" The ability for accurate observation in the physical world is essential during puberty. Our pupils can observe how Columbus struggled between fantasy and solid observations, just as they do during their seventh grade year.

Space and social distances

The question is often raised, "Why do you teach the discoveries of foreign continents from a European point of view?" In the meeting between known and unknown the opportunity arises to reflect not only over the diversity of nature all over the globe, but also the totality of nature. In addition the great distances between Europe and the newly explored continents are important. Compare this with the Islamic relationship to the world that grew from an ever-expanding empire without such great distances involved, or the problem concerning mankind's diversity and differences which developed in China.

New people and the unknown must be discovered if we are to have social dimensions in the modern world. Our teens grow by discovering the world. Human life is thereby stretched between two extremes: one in which the Self enters the world and the other in which the world enters the Self. During puberty our teens struggle to correlate both extremes.

The sense for diversity cannot be nourished without first the feeling of belonging. Nor can the pupils properly experience the curriculum in the seventh grade if they do not already have a feeling of belonging. The geographic path moves from the feeling of belonging to the feeling of participating and then from the known into the unknown. Belonging gives security and creates the basis for geography. Local geography is therefore very important in the fourth and fifth grades. We eat, rest and bathe at home. We go home when we are tired. The home nourishes life processes and has a great influence on our sense of space. But one's hometown has no lasting meaning until one discovers it in relation to other towns.

In the transition from childhood to adulthood it is necessary to relate to the unknown. At the Waldorf school the first stage (fourth, fifth, and sixth grade geography) is based on the methods of comparative geography first taught by Carl Ritter in the 1950s.

For the seventh grader we compare the known with the unknown. For example the students listen to the following passage from Columbus: "The beauty of the new land far surpasses Campina da Cordova. The trees shine as they do in Seville and carry fruit as fine as the best harvests in Trujillo. The air is just as warm as it was in Castile in April, and words cannot express how beautifully the nightingale sings." (October 14, 1492)[1]

We find such comparisons not only with nature but also with peoples: "They are more white than from the other island. We saw two girls who were just as white as the Spaniards." (December 13, 1492)[2]

From Cortes they read:

"Concerning their behavior and relationships, they have about the same standard as the Spaniards at home, just as much harmony and order when one considers they are barbarians and stand far from God and any contact with reasoning nations.

"It reminds me of the silk markets in Granada. The main tower is higher than the tower on the cathedral in Seville. The marketplace at Tenoxtitlan is a huge place, surrounded by columns bigger than those in Salamanca."[3]

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1. See Colon, C. *Journals and Other Documents*, NewYork: the Heritage Press, 1963.

2. Ibid.

3. Cortes, H. *Letters from Mexico*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001.

The individual and the world

Geography deals with two types of communication between individuals and the world. The first is from human to human and the second is between humankind and nature. The first explorers used mostly inter-human communication. They considered themselves civilized and related to written reports based on past events. On the other hand, the native peoples related to the interchanges between humankind and nature. Medicine men interpreted nature before native peoples acted, and they related to the future using magic, signs and fortune-telling.

Every day our students observe foreigners and landscapes by discovering that the others are either identical or different. In the worst cases, students take a superior or inferior attitude. They swing emotionally between the past and the future. If teens can not integrate these forces through a pedagogy that brings the appropriate methods of learning, the emotional forces can become destructive and thereby limit the individual's growth. Examples appear when seventh graders become aloof or when they hide themselves in groups.

These tensions between the known and unknown, between the same and different, provide the basis for geography lessons in the seventh grade but not in the eighth grade. When our pupils strive to discover abilities they already possess but can not yet access, the teacher's most important task is to make "public" the abilities that are in the process of developing! This gives them security, trust and confidence in themselves. If individual abilities are not grasped teens often experience the tragedy of unresolved talents fading away or appearing falsified.

The individual is only one side of the teenage years. The other is found in group activities. Teens learn group psychology in the balance between their personal expression and repression in favor of group mentality. If parents or teachers notice that a teen is no longer acting in line with his or her individual strengths but is sliding into a negative phase, it may be due to the fact that his or her emotions dominate over reason. Teens will always have a seat in this arena.

Leon Battista Alberti

Before the Renaissance human consciousness was in general terms more dream-like. Today we think of the mentality of the Middle Ages as childish, naïve belief and an illusory world perspective. During the Renaissance Italians were lifted to a clear separation between the individual and his surroundings. The well-rounded human appeared, the "L'uomo universale." One example is Leon Battista Alberti who was famous all over Italy at the end of the fifteenth century. As a young boy he was known for his physical skills. At the age of fourteen he could leapfrog over a man standing upright! And he loved to show off that feat. In an open piazza in the middle of the city, he would collect his audience. This was a game for young Alberti, a battle with the natural elements. Until puberty he

practiced with the enthusiasm of a child. Later he trained his systematic, athletic skills until people came to see the young man ride wild horses from town to town. Or he would throw a coin so high onto the church roof that they could hear it cling on the stones. These are just snapshots into his fascinating biography.

At the age of twenty-four he dropped athletic feats in favor of learning trades. In the shoemaker trade he worked with materials from animals. As a carpenter he worked with materials from trees, and as a blacksmith he worked with materials from the mineral kingdom. He was so gifted that he earned a good reputation in all of those trades.

At the Waldorf school students follow the same path from woodworking in the sixth to leatherwork in the seventh and metalwork in the eighth. They take part in transforming nature into culture, adding their own personal touch.

Returning to Alberti, he developed further from nature to culture and then to art. His doctrine of "eurhythmia," the aesthetic proportions, was an outstanding contribution. With it he wandered through architecture, sculpture, and painting before reaching poetry and music. Finally he worked at various artistic, craftsmanship tasks, which demanded all of the skills he had so far developed. As an architect he was awarded acclaim for his construction of the St. Maria Novella Church in Florence (1470). He was a significant composer of music. The highest honor he received was the position of author and artistic advisor for the Pope. Now his signature had power!

But Alberti did not reach fame without challenges. The motivation for his athletic feats was to be seen, as all children need to be seen, by adults. The question is always how. Later Alberti was confronted by his personal nature—his frugality, his ambition, wealth, and his thirst for greatness. Recklessness surfaced in his personality. How much did his success occur at the expense of others? And how much jealousy and deceit did he face?

Renaissance Italy was influenced by people who grew up taking active part in the inner battles of their day. Their personal actions had great importance for the public. "To the Afterlife," a letter written by Renaissance poet Francesco Petrarcas is a personal testimony of the deep search for self-knowledge that isolated renaissance men from the world of nature. Therefore, new cultural impulses emerged. We find the inner battles for self-knowledge in our seventh graders where we observe these two categories in youth: those who adapt to other's needs and personalities and those who project their personality onto their environment and meet strong responses! In the biography of Girolamo Cardona (1498) we find both struggles. He described in detail his physical appearance, his personality and his spiritual strivings. In that way he exposed himself to the public in Milan, something brand new at the turn of the sixteenth century!

For further reading see *The Not Yet in the Now, Reflections of a Teacher and His 13-Year-Olds*, by David Brierley. The book may be ordered from the Sunbridge College Bookstore in Spring Valley, New York.

Modern History in Light of the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution

by

Svein Bohn

Translated by Ted Warren

After six years of lessons on the ancient cultures and the Renaissance, the Waldorf curriculum covers modern history in the eighth and ninth grades. Our concept of modern history should not be limited to the centuries following Napoleon's reign but should cover the span of time from the Renaissance to today. One decisive aspect of history lessons is to bring forth the new occurrences, the differences and the symptoms of each age. The modern age is distinguished by its roots in the Renaissance. Technology is the fruit of the natural sciences that were born in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; colonialism and imperialism are the fruits of the great discoveries, just as the modern impulses towards freedom are an extension of the Renaissance man.

It is impossible for an adult to approach the fundamental problems of our times without personal convictions and engagement. Therefore "objective" instruction in history is not always possible. The teacher's engagement with the subject is especially important to educate children. At the same time the teacher can avoid propagating personal opinions and educate toward freedom when he has an eye for the child's inner being. Educating towards enthusiasm is not to be confused with spreading political propaganda.

In modern history the teacher meets a dilemma that he must overcome to the best of his ability—our world is in crisis. The crisis is defined by overpopulation, hunger, pollution, emotional strain, superpowers, the chasm between rich and poor, weapons of mass destruction, and not in the least pessimism and apathy. How can we educate children to hope and carry moral values without pretending the world is better than it is?

I believe we can view the entire Waldorf curriculum as an attempt to overcome that dilemma. These problems remain daily challenges in our history lessons. The teacher may not lie, but he knows that educating children to a positive future may not happen if he speaks continually about war, revolutions, concentration camps, famines and Hiroshima.

Our curriculum for history in the eighth and ninth grades acknowledges that at around this age, teens cross an important threshold in their lives. For some this may bring new maturity; they may become adults overnight. Eighth graders are often lazier than ninth graders. It is as if they have a reservoir of unresolved forces. They remind one of steam that is under pressure! The typical ninth grader has leveled off his pressure and shows greater concentration and an active intellect. Subject teachers play a larger role in their education than class teachers. Pupils engage more intensely and approach the teacher's level of knowledge in each field of learning.

In the eighth grade we concentrate on the vast exterior changes our civilization has made, how science and technology have transformed an agricultural society into an industrial society. In the ninth grade the focus is on the social, political and cultural changes. In Norway the eighth grade curriculum is the industrial revolution and the ninth grade is the French Revolution. These broad parameters leave the teacher with many possible avenues. He can choose the history he feels will best prepare his students for our modern times. The following themes are merely suggestions.

A dark moment in history is the bloody, slave trade that flourished in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to import labor for the sugar plantations. This is a picture of humanity spinning along the wheel of racism, colonialism, the money machine, world trade and the decline of civilizations. I chose the Danish historian, Thorkild Hansen's powerful book on the Danish-Norwegian slave trade, Step for Step, One by One. Silent and sweating in the humid, tropical heat, no, they were not chained together as reported in popular journals. Iron was too costly and who would they get to carry the heavy chains back when the trade at the fort was over and they returned to the forests for more Africans? The Dane L.F. Romer reported in 1754: "The slave's right arm was fastened with an iron vice to a huge piece of a tree, which the slave could barely lift, let alone carry upon his head and run away." That is how they traveled through the rain forest. He takes us to the white fortress along the coast, onboard the slave ship during the month-long transatlantic sojourn in tropical heat, sardined together until they reached the Danish island in the West Indies. He takes us to the sugar plantations and the slave's share of hard labor. The picture is clear before our inner eye—the sugar mill blown by the wind, long rows of blacks weighted down by exhaustion, the human being reduced to a machine, a thing, a mere product. This is truly a heavy but extremely important message for the children. As an artist, Thorkild Hansen uses the written word to bring us inner experiences of man's inhumanity to man. If one can express this all to students with compassion, they may feel the urge to help resolve our conflicts.

In the middle of all suffering we must be able to find something human. The antithesis must be there. Among thousands of scoundrels there must be one who is just. For example a human fate shines forth in the doctor Paul Isert. His story brings hope. Some opposed slavery. They were not merely cowardly, introverted but willing to fight for justice, to think constructively. Isert's short life cannot be retold here but it ended tragically and unsuccessfully. This was in the midst of the French Revolution and Denmark would not end slavery until fifty years later. Were his deeds therefore useless? In class we discuss the value of a seemingly unsuccessful life such as Isert's. Could he not have forgone the setbacks? Would slavery ever be stopped without the sacrifices made by people like Isert?

We have spoken about sugar. In the chemistry lessons the teacher goes into depth its properties, but already with a historical and human background. The work on the plantation and in the sugar mills is in the students' minds when the chemistry lessons bring forth an understanding of the products we all desire. Will it help us to better understand our for-father's motives and actions for which we are still paying dues?

The industrial revolution is very much an English phenomenon. The breakthrough was here; nowhere else did it happen so quickly and with such manifestations. Carlyle maintained that Napoleon would never have been defeated without England's surplus won of cotton spun by Arkwright's spinning machine and woven in Cartwright's loom, both of which were driven by Watt's steam engine. Teachers can present with economy by concentrating on that country including the Empire's world domination. It is important to study biography, the lives of one or two inventors. What inspired them? Technical competence? Idealism? Coincidences? Honor? Financial reward? There are many human motives! Most important is the atmosphere of the times that surrounded the great inventors: excitement for the new discoveries happened side by side. And remember the skepticism, for example the riots against locomotives when the steam mill in London was burned down in 1791.

The technical principles can be studied in relation to the machines before we enter the social consequences of the first industrialization: poverty, child labor, and slums. The proletariat, the new working class took its place in world history. It is time to read Dickens! Out of desperation awakens the positive social conscience awakens. We can be sure that Oliver Twist did not "live" in vain!

Another huge revolution headed down the tracks. On the Manchester-Liverpool line excited journalists held on to their top hats:

> At the moment of departure the locomotive pours out an explosion of steam, it seems to pause for a few seconds, but the explosions continue with shorter intervals, until they follow so

quickly that you no longer can count them. These explosions remind me of the growls of lions and tigers. When it reaches a hill it slows down until the locomotive works like an exhausted working horse. The speed is reduced until the highest point is reached when the machine can work no faster than you could ride beside it on a horse. The breathing of the locomotive slows down as the movements slacken, it groans until the animal is finally exhausted and gasps like a tiger beaten to death by a buffalo.

At the height where finally the decent begins, the strokes come faster, the machine and train pick up speed and take only seconds to fly down the hill like lightning under continual artillery fire. The train storms away at a speed between thirty-five and forty miles an hour. The whole situation is overwhelming, almost scary.

The thunder from Vesuv and Etna's volcanic explosions were enormous, but the scenes our locomotives awaken bring a better self-image and awaken our admiration for mankind's spiritual strength. It is more alive than the works of authors, painters and philosophers.

As teachers, we ought not emphasize great moments from technology's childhood for romantic reasons. Many children today experience at an early age adults who are critical of the other side of technology—noise, cars, traffic, and pollution. Young children may sit in cars listening to their parents share their hate for cars. Buckled in to their seats, how would children handle that situation? Usually distrust, fear, cynicism grow from their parents' hypocritical attitudes! The same can occur when children live with an uncritical attitude toward technology. Both sides can be addressed and explored when learning the history of technology. Otherwise there would never be an opportunity to go to the depth of those forces that release technological gains and cause decisive consequences for human beings and for nature. Educating the children to think critically must be based on the nature of technology. We want to whole-heartedly admire Stephenson's first locomotive and be carried away like the first passengers. Whatever one wants to overcome, one has to know. Disconnected hate, dislike or fear will never help us overcome the backsides of technology. It is very dangerous for teachers to stir up feelings in favor of one side or the other, no matter how clearly the truth may be proven. Our task as teachers is to present material and explore symptoms so they may occur in the child's life according to his or her prerequisites to gain knowledge, experience feelings and act. As teachers we must trust that each generation will find its own way to freedom. In addition to history, physics and biology lessons contribute to the children's deeper understanding of technology.

The unsuccessful revolution by the citizens of France in the 1790s is a main theme in the ninth grade. Is it necessary to spend so much time on those chaotic events that ended with Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbon family? The French Revolution is confusing on the outside, and it is easy to get lost in the names, political parties and concerns about who guillotined whom. On the other hand, one should not be perplexed about what the French Revolution inaugurated in world history (See a thorough examination of the subject by Hans Jorgen Hoines, "The Ninth Grade and the French Revolution").

Because it was the first revolution in history that turned social status upside down it has received much attention. Oddly what interests us most deeply is everything that did no happen but remained in the world of ideas: the unrealized ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood. The French Revolution made new demands on feudal society but was not able to realize those demands. Rather, it can be found in the content of consciousness during the following centuries, in all political, social and cultural expressions—the battles for national liberation, socialism, communism, suffrage, human rights, and so forth. This demonstrates how careful we need to be with the idea of cause in history. This does not mean the revolution did not have its cause in previous conditions. We should give the pupils strong pictures of the Sun King's Versailles and of the desperation of the people in Paris of 1789. At the same time it is the effects of the revolution that brought about new expressions of human equality, of each individual's personal integrity, and of the dream of brotherhood. It is the essence of new global and universal thoughts that became a major threat for the rulers of Europe. Yet the ideas that arose during the revolution were not new! They grew from the seeds of ancient civilizations, now reaching expression at the level of consciousness mankind reached by the end of the eighteenth century. People were receptive to a more tolerant view of the human being but not able to realize those views in the social realities of the day.

The French Revolution is a great theme for raising important questions with pupils, such as: What were the consequences of the events? What goals did they try to achieve? What goals did they achieve? It is important to ask even difficult questions, for the process helps the children differentiate historically. For example, what shall we think concerning Bismarck? What happened in the Russian Revolution and how did it differ from the French Revolution? A major area we can never avoid is the role of individuals in history. One should not get lost in generalizations about groups of people, such as the French, the English, the soldiers, the proletariat, and so forth. Naturally, groups of people play major roles in history, but individuals carry an increasing amount of responsibility. His

limits are pressed, in a few minutes he must make decisions for many people no matter how well the democratic processes are developed.

In the ninth grade we also study German history. We start with Prussia and emphasize the successful attempts for democracy at the Frankfurt Parliament after 1848 and how Germany fell under Prussian premises. We learn about Bismarck and the Empire, authoritarian democracy, the rivalries between European superpowers and the many events preceding World War I.

It is also very interesting to discuss how the old and shaky regimes in Austria, Turkey and Russia played a role at the turn of the twentieth century. The pupils need a multi-sided view of the moment the shots rang out in Sarajevo. The teacher should make a big effort to help the children not be "happy" about the "exciting events" that follow. Historians agree to share the blame for World War I is shared evenly among the countries involved. And we learn that World War II is directly related to the peace agreements and conditions that led to economic disaster between both wars. The goal is not to remove blame from Hitler or the Nazi ideology, but to help the discussions reach some neutral ground where we can ask: What is Nazism? It is something that may reappear in political events, our disdain for the weak.

We need to approach the goal of history lessons—to develop a comprehensive, universal perspective of humanity. We should not get lost in unimportant events for history is full of them, but point to the changes during past four hundred years that have brought us together while the questions remains in each individual: Have we come closer together?

The Ninth Grade and the French Revolution

by

Hans-Jorgen Hoinaes

Translated by Ted Warren

All historical descriptions must awaken the feeling of re-experiencing the events. The French historian, Jules Michelet, made this demand on himself. While the 1848- revolution tore through France he sat and wrote about the great French Revolution. During his long work on that overpowering theme, he said: "I am busy with a difficult task, namely to relive, to re-experience and re-suffer the revolution."

To truly bring a historical reality into the classroom is very difficult. The teacher faces two main challenges: The theme must be one that suits the children's age, and it must also be taught and learned with that goal in mind.

In the ninth grade at the Waldorf school in Norway, we work with historical themes from the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These three centuries are filled with phenomena that help us understand our own situation today. For two- or three-week main lesson blocks (one and a half hour lessons each morning), we cover the French Revolution. For children in this grade it is not enough to present detailed, colorful descriptions of the personalities and events. In the ninth grade questions arise in a different way than in the seventh and eighth. The students want to penetrate, to understand what they are told. The belief that they can penetrate the world with their own thinking sprouts forth in their soul, though fully unconsciously.

We also find this belief in the European people of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is "The Age of Enlightenment." The belief in the intellect was greater than the belief in God. Only with reason (*ratio*) could humans comprehend and solve their problems. This was carried to such an extreme in the French Revolution that they renamed the beautiful, Middle Age Notre Dame Cathedral "The Temple of Reason!"

At that same time, Goethe and Schiller were expressing the power of comprehension differently. The life stories of Goethe and Schiller make a good contrast to the French Revolution.

Now we should not think we are dealing with the history of philosophy in the ninth grade. No, far from it. Rather it is the pupil's ability to judge and think about the relationships and total picture of history that must be stimulated.

What was the unique character of the eighteenth century? "The more reason wins ground and reveals mistakes, delusions, prejudices, and superstition, the closer mankind nears the golden age where reason has conquered, leaving harmony and peace to govern." The enthusiastic revolutionary and thinker Antoine Condorcet wrote these words in 1794. The French looked up to the enlightened, thoughtful and educated men. But "enlightened" expressed itself in different ways for different nations and individuals.

Especially noteworthy is the way in which it appeared in Benjamin Franklin from the newly created United States of America when he arrived in Paris in 1776! In Franklin we find the citizen, scientist, enlightened philosopher and statesman united in one person. He was a totally self-educated man. What moral training did he obtain before he dared present himself as a statesman! He conceived and systematically practiced nineteen moral virtues. Franklin's autobiography can awaken excitement in young people who are just starting their own development.

But "enlightenment" can also deviate into the rudest materialism and the airiest fanaticism. The prerequisites for the "Age of Enlightenment" are found in the types of people who lived in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in the consciousness that created the Renaissance, led to the great explorations (both the geographical and the natural scientific ones) and the Reformation. We find the new feeling for life and consciousness that does not fall into extremes expressed in he biography of Pico Della Mirandola.

> (God the Father speaks to Adam) No important place, no finished shape or inheritance have we given you, Adam, so you may choose your home yourself, your shape and the path of our being. All other beings we have placed under certain laws; only for you have We set no limitations. You can choose, with your own will you can be who you choose to be.
>
> In the middle of the world I have placed you, so you may freely look around to all sides and observe whatever pleases you. Not heavenly, not earthly, not deathly nor immortally have I created you. With your own will and to your own honor create and educate yourself and form your being of the content that you choose. In that way you are free to sink down to the lowest animalistic level or raise yourself to the gods' highest spheres.

Should not that new feeling of life and consciousness usher us into new social orders? The Middle Ages were over!

A characteristic quality from the eighteenth century was that people were still spun into ancient social orders. In some places the ancient orders were legitimate, in other places no so. For the most part the remaining ruins of the feudal and vassal society that were based on lineage limited the development of humanity into enlightenment. In the time of Louis XIV the disintegration had progressed so fully that an absolute royal state was created to hold society together. A feeling of dust and stiffness streamed as an undertone in the "Sun King's" festive France.

In a gigantic, symmetrical castle, surrounded by an artistic and well-kept park, the Sun King held court. In the most refined, historical scenery a gigantic play unfolded: a luxury of superficial excitement and splendor. Halls and rooms were filled with works of art, orange trees in silver planters, enormous galleries covered with "charm's advisors"(as mirrors were called then). Processions, parades and pageants with masked balls were celebrated in the illuminated park, and people embalmed in powder and wigs constantly changed their costumes throughout the day. To the castle at Versailles came the nobility to bathe in the Sun King's favors. But in the winter it was so cold in the royal halls that both wine and sauce on the King's table froze to ice.

"The State—that is me," proclaimed Louis XIV. What did that mean? The Sun King's predecessor Louis XIII and his talented minister, Cardinal Richelieu, had set the foundation for an effective, centralized royal state with public servants. Just as the stone frogs in the park garden at Versailles spat out streams of water to the center of the fountain, so did money, through complicated taxation laws, stream into the Sun King's treasury. Who was the state? At the castle at Versailles everything that happened and all who partook were woven into an extraordinary arrangement called etiquette. This etiquette was a pattern, a set of rules that regulated every detail of the day: how one should present oneself, what clothes to wear, which interests and attitudes to pursue. The system became so dominating that even the King could not break etiquette. A superior principle seemed to control France.

A history block on the French Revolution can begin with a description of Versailles and Louis XIV's state. In direct contrast the teacher can describe life in the cities and the provinces. The Englishman Arthur Young's travel journal from the provinces paints a gloomy picture of life in the farm villages. Tremendous poverty arises as a growing shadow over the glittering Versailles. Drama is in the air and it grows as time progresses. In the cities, especially in Paris, the sparks of enlightenment and the ideas of freedom shoot into the sky. Politicians, professors and artists meet in the salons. They plan and intrigue until far into the night. It thunders and lightnings in human souls. The needs of a new age brew forth and

struggle to find their form apropos for the changes that have occurred in the inner life of man as they manifest in the outer world.

The French Revolution

To understand what a revolution is, it will help us to acknowledge our own unpeaceful times. Two powerful historical examples are the French and the Russian revolutions, even though they were very different. The Russian Revolution, which is related directly to the events of World War I, is often taught in the tenth grade. The French Revolution (1789–1799) that ends with Napoleon Bonaparte is part of a continuous line of dramatic events. Behind the scenes are the powerfully inspired ideas: Freedom—Equality—Brotherhood.

Here is one brief synopsis: During the reign of Louis XIV trouble brewed all over France. The state treasury was empty and state debt grew continually. "After us comes the Deluge," people said at the court. They sensed an inevitable catastrophe. It was as if all outer events, even nature created the prerequisites for the drama. The autumn of 1788 saw the worse grain harvest in memory. But in Versailles the days continued in festive splendor. On the throne sat Louis XVI with his wife Marie Antoinette. Louis was a pious, but weak and unconscious person. The inherited blood forces no longer produced qualified kings.

On May 4, 1789, the King was forced to allow the consultative chamber to meet for the first time since 1613. The citizens took over and refused to leave Versailles until they had a new constitution for France.

Unrest broke out in the streets of Paris on July 4. The Bastille prison, an old castle from the Middle Ages was stormed and the commander's head carried off on a pike. The revolution was begun. No one was spared. The deepest longing of the people ran freely—but appeared distorted and unrestricted. The people's feelings swung from one extreme to the next. One minute a whole parade of people marched to Versailles to dethrone the King, but after Louis calmed the crowd, the very same people enthusiastically escorted the entire royal family to the city! A new constitution, inspired in part by the American bill of human rights, was sanctioned. It brought limited monarchy and equal rights for law and justice—no matter social status. Taxes would be shared equally among all of the people, the nation was divided into eighty-three departments, and the church became a state church. In this phase of the revolution there was still some idealism in the air.

The National Assembly proclaimed: "Freedom is the right to do everything that does not hurt other people." Flyers with the ideals: Freedom—Equality—Brotherhood circulated. July 14, 1790, one year after the revolution broke out, it was celebrated ceremoniously before a huge fatherland's alter. Idealism was now

over-heated to fantastic enthusiasm. And the people lost control in the exaltation. The pendulum swung the other way and the revolution moved into its horrific phase. Revolutionary leaders, with Robespierre, Danton and Marat in the lead, fought for power in the new consolidation. The revolution became a caricature of what had been intended. The Republic became the next goal. And by the majority of one vote, Louis XVI was sentenced to the guillotine. After a painful imprisonment the rest of the family shared his fate. In an atmosphere of joy and fear, France was proclaimed a republic.

The next phase was the dictator phase. The revolution never became radical enough—it sent its own leaders to the scaffold. Enthusiasm turned into fear. What would happen now? Could anyone bring order to the chaos? A new government tied down the people. Posters in Paris read: "Freedom-Equality-Brotherhood—or death." The people swung between hope and fear, but fear was strongest. Europe's royalty shuddered in fear, and France became involved in a war with Austria and Prussia. Finally we see the fall of Robespierre (1794)—the people moved into a final phase—reaction. Through the masses a voice was heard: Peace at any price—give us peace and order, whoever can! And there stood a compact young general, a man who later said of himself "I am the French Revolution!" France became one nation under the emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. The great revolutionary pendulum swing was complete.

How can we recreate the concepts of the French Revolution with our pupils? Has our presentation been successful? Do the pupils wonder: Was that a revolution? What thoughts can unfold here? Through questions and conversation in class we try to create concepts together.

Let us look back upon the revolution and identify the phases it went through. Hopefully we will understand it later on. Once as my tenth grade class worked through the Russian Revolution, one student exclaimed, "Now I see it! The Russian Revolution stopped too soon. It never progressed beyond the dictator phase!"

Many interesting questions may arise: Why did the revolution take place? Could it have been prevented? Even if there are no complete answers, at least the important questions have been raised. The questions do not always arise, but hopefully the teacher has sown the seeds for future questions.

When pupils in the ninth and tenth grades begin asking about historical causes, how shall we react as teachers? What kind of thinking do we want to develop? Here we need to tread carefully. Causes in history are not easy to approach. One must take roundabout routes, based on experiences and events, so one can continue to develop flexible mental images. In the case of the French Revolution the teacher would have thought through the following line of

questions: What set the revolution into action? What were the motives and the intentions behind the activities? Ordinarily the teacher will point to economic and production-oriented causes: the failing economy of France, widespread poverty, unjust government and the old-fashioned social orders may have set the French Revolution into action, but they were not the causes. If we want to approach the causes we need to inquire more about the motives and intentions of the actions. What did people want to happen in 1790?

Let us look at the French Declaration of Human Rights approved by the National Assembly on August 26, 1789. The first three points are:

1. People are born and remain free with equal rights. The social differences can only be explained in relation to how they serve the public.
2. The goal of every political institution is to protect mankind's natural and inalienable rights. These are: freedom, property rights, security and the right to resist repression.
3. The basis for power rests on the nation; no social class nor person may exercise power that does not specifically come from the people.

Freedom and equality! In the American Declaration of Independence (1776), the inalienable human rights are recorded as "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Behind these unclearly defined demands we also suspect greater impulses.

In eighteenth century France the feeling for responsibility and the power of freedom were unfolding in individual form and required a new social order that gave them space. But a new society is not created in one day and may not be put into place by paragraphs of human right declarations. That is the problem for the French Revolution.

Freedom and equality were two of the demands during the French Revolution. The third was brotherhood. Rudolf Steiner explained that future social orders must allow the possibility of freedom so every individual may unfold his creative skills, his individuality. Within the law and the legal institutions (also the state political institutions), equality must rule so that each person can be co-responsible for and active in decisions that concern the entire society. And in the economic sphere the principle of brotherhood must break forth (production and needs must meet in cooperation, not at the mercy of power interests). How these impulses will be realized in the future is totally up to the people. Even though the French Revolution forced these ideas on the cultural development, the tendencies were already there. But, despite their "enlightenment," the people of the eighteenth century were not able to take up

and work on these ideals. Therefore enormous chaos set in. From this perspective teachers can create the right mental images on why the French Revolution exploded and what it actually meant.

In the ninth grade the teacher cannot introduce to the children the prerequisites for new social orders. But by taking a look at human rights, the class can approach the outer phenomena and direct their attention to questions concerning what people needed in 1790 and which motives were expressed in the actions. This is not a direct answer to the questions concerning causes but if the children's thinking receives support, their understanding can eventually grow.

The teenage years are a time for unrest and enlightenment that also includes the drama and explosiveness of a revolution. From history we can learn that if catastrophes in the social life are to be prevented, the problems and tasks of every age must be solved in each individual's consciousness. For the subject of history is the human being himself.

The Minute Man

An Aphorism of the True American Spirit

by

Wolfgang Schuster, M.D.

He shows presence! It is a statue by Daniel Chester French at the Minute Man Park in Concord, Massachusetts, a small town west of Boston. It represents the self-confident American settler who resisted the repressive colonial domination of England.In Concord the first shot was fired to free America from the English yoke, a shot, as it is written in stone there: 'that was heard around the world'.

In fact the results were the wars for freedom and independence leading especially to the French Revolution but also the European independence wars—the revolution of 1848 and the development of democracy well into the twentieth century. The first shot fired at that time in small Concord was the starting shot, so to speak, or a kindling flame, in to an explosive new level of consciousness.

The statue by French is of a young man standing erect, well balanced.[1] He makes one step forward and his weight is on his left leg. The right one has not completed a step yet but is in the process of it. The left hand is resting lightly on a plow—more touching than resting. He is carrying in his right hand a rifle pointing somewhat upwards to show his capability of defending himself.

The figure is lean and youthful, nothing oppressive about him. Plow and rifle are two symbols of his activity. He is standing on the side of the plow and in spite of his steadfastness, it shows lightness in the way he treats the earth with his plow. There is no weight or burden as today our western civilization burdens the earth! The right side of the man—in the process of walking—is the stronger side, here shown in the moment of armed fitness, from which slowly emerges the effect that he is ready to fight if he has to. There is nothing aggressive in the posture only preparedness! He looks straight ahead, with an open face and clear eyes, expectant and cautious. His eyes look neither up nor down but straight ahead. The whole posture shows presence.

The settlers in those earlier days were not only busy as farmers and artisans but also defenders of their land and their rights. The rifle was always nearby, and in a minute they could be defending warriors. The abilities to make a quick change

and a clear assessment of the situation were necessary. This is a true expression of 'presence of mind!'

It is no accident that the first shot was fired in Concord: as small as the place may be by today's standards, even a town perhaps, as important were the spiritual deeds of its citizens. Here lived early on what was given form later on in the Declaration of Independence Here was the birthplace of the 'school of philosophy' whose members brought forward the most important representatives of the American spiritual life (e.g., the Alcotts, Emerson, Thoreau, etc.). Until the late nineteenth century, the 'American spirit' was cultivated here.

Interestingly, Ralph Waldo Emerson's most important work *The Natural History of the Spirit* lost for the last 130 years, was found very recently in the Harvard Library, many hundreds of pages, tightly written, which had to be painstakingly deciphered. What may be the meaning of it—that one of the most important works of American spiritual history was lost for so long and in these 100 years (since the Spanish-American War) the United States has tried consequential politics and reached a status of imperial power not seen since the old Rome.

What may it mean that at the basest point of these politics, Emerson's writings were newly found? It seems that within total darkness, about which everybody has complained, someone lit a light and the darkness will have to vanish.

Emerson lit this light after 130 years of silence and gives those lost in darkness, the opportunity to find a new way. His spirituality, honesty and straightforwardness toward a modem Christian spiritual life—all typically American characteristics —could be a saving grace for the United States and show a way into the future. The young, over-bubbling strength of this nation needs the curbing spirituality and depths of this master. (Emerson had a deep spiritual bond with Goethe, who did this deed for middle Europe!)

The American will find his equilibrium in his soul as represented in the Minute Man. The spirit of freedom that is obvious to everyone who has visited America, and that in its depths is like love, will reemerge in the future through presence of mind.

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1. The sculptor Daniel French also carved the statue of Abraham Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.