

A large, gnarled, leafless tree stands in the foreground, its intricate branches reaching across the frame. The background features a mountain range under a sky with a warm, golden sunset glow. The overall scene is dramatic and evocative, suggesting a sense of history and nature.

# Rosierucian Heritage

No:1-2013

# Experience Cosmic Consciousness

**Y**OU ARE ONE WITH THE UNIVERSE, and share the beauty, harmony and symmetry in all things. The conscious purpose and direction of the Cosmic instructs and directs everything, and you can learn the direction and purpose of life meant just for you.

The psychic self is an innate faculty of human consciousness and volition that all humans possess but few understand and fewer still can put to good use. If you want more in life than just the daily grind..., if you are seeking a way of accomplishing the most fulfilling and rewarding you know for the rest of your life..., if happiness,

peace and justice for all is what you seek..., then learn to attune your consciousness with your psychic self, and thereby find the Cosmic Consciousness that is already, fully formed, within you.

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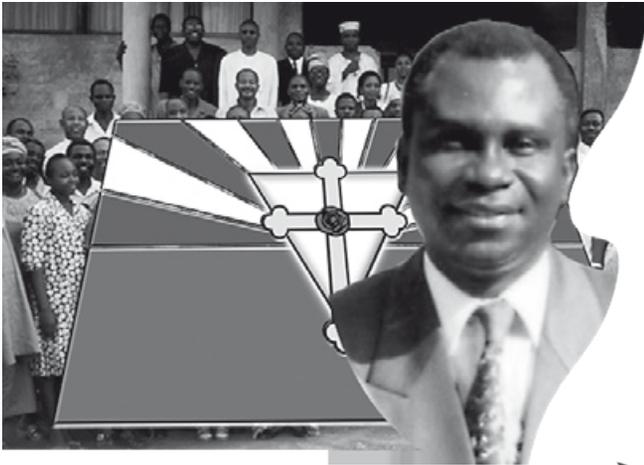
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“A Prayer for the Nation”





# Sanctum Musings



by Kenneth U Idiodi, FRC

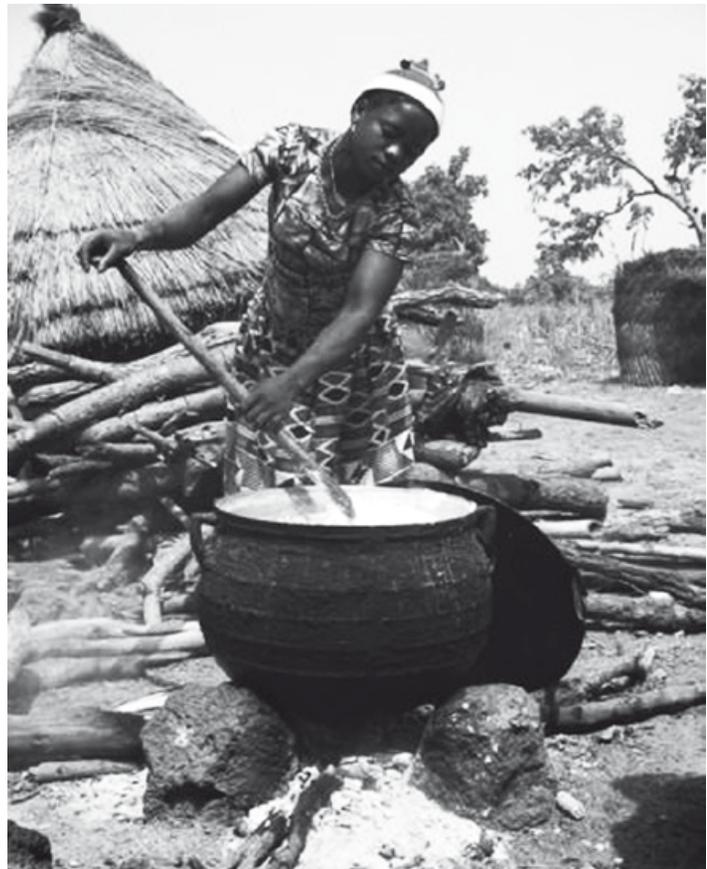
*Grand Administrator for English speaking West Africa of the Rosicrucian Order*

## Awakening National Conscience

*Edited keynote address at the Lagos Zonal Conclave, 22 September, 2012*

**O**UR WORLD IS far more complex today than it was at the time of our grandparents. In addition to natural disasters, people suffer in every country from artificial, man-made, or self-imposed disasters. We have brought upon ourselves these disasters by our individual and collective misdemeanours, greed, discrimination, and man's inhumanity to man. In traditions, all over the world, myths and folktales have been used for conveying important principles in an entertaining and striking manner. A well-told folktale can serve as a point of reference and guidance through an entire lifetime.

There is a little known African folktale called "*The Herbalist and the Fair Maiden*". It is about a certain herbalist who lived alone. On a fateful day he returned home from the forest and was surprised to smell the aroma of cooking and it was his favourite food. Entering the compound he saw the most beautiful maiden he had ever set eyes on doing the cooking in a large cauldron. She welcomed him with a warm embrace and led him into his hut. After assisting him to remove his rucksack she bade him to sit down and place his feet in a bowl of warm water. The herbalist was dumbfounded. He wondered if he was dreaming. Strangely the young maiden seemed very well known to him, yet he was sure that he had never set eyes on her before. Soon food was ready, and eating together from the same bowl, they engaged in delightful small





talk. That night the herbalist slept like a baby in the warm bosom of the mysterious lady.

The next morning he awoke to find that his breakfast was already prepared. While he was eating she advised him on which herbs to pluck from the forest. Mysteriously these herbs were just what were needed by the clients who came to him. As the months and years went by the young maiden continued to live with the herbalist guiding him and attending to his needs. He became filled with peace and contentment. One fateful day some clients from a faraway village came to the herbalist anxiously in search of a particular herb that was required to cure a deadly disease that was spreading in their community. As usual he had the necessary herbs and was about to bring them out when he had a second thought. Was this not an opportunity to become very rich?

So he decided to lie to them, saying that he did not have the herbs but would be prepared to travel to a very distant land to acquire them if they were prepared to pay his expenses which would cost a fortune. Being desperate, since the lives of their loved ones were at stake, the visitors accepted and the herbalist made a small fortune out of them. From his ill gotten gains, the herbalist bought some expensive gifts to bring to his beloved, but resolved not

to tell her how he had so suddenly acquired the means to acquire such lavish gifts. He knew instinctively that she would not approve of what he had done.

Arriving at his home, he was greeted by a foul odour and the sound of groaning from his beloved maiden who was lying on the floor afflicted by an illness that had deformed her beauty. She was bloated and covered with a scaly rash, her eyes were red and puffy and she was vomiting. The herbalist asked her what had happened to her but she was unable to talk. All attempts by the herbalist to treat her illness were in vain. His new found wealth immediately lost value to him and he felt the heavy weight of guilt descend upon him.

Then suddenly it occurred to him that the symptoms of the illness were identical to those described by the visitors from afar who he had crooked. He nearly collapsed when he realised that he had sold his entire stock of herbs to them, and immediately embarked on a journey to the far away village where he met his clients and explained his predicament. He was prepared to pay any amount for the herb. The villagers considered his plight and out of compassion decided to give him some of the herb free of charge at which point he broke down and wept profusely.

As he cleaned his tears, he heard the voice of his beloved calling him gently. He looked about frantically to see where the voice was coming from but he could not see her anywhere. The voice seemed to be coming from behind him but whenever he turned there was no one there. Finally he calmed down and standing still, he listened to her voice. She told him that she was now well but that he would never be able to see her again. However, she would remain with him thereafter but only as a voice as long as he cared to listen to the voice of his beloved conscience.

## Conscience

The sense of right and wrong that governs a person's thoughts and actions is what is generally called conscience. It is supposedly a universal faculty of moral insight. This idea is reflected in Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states: "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*" However, some persons can be described as having no conscience judging from the things they do. Also the notions of what is morally acceptable and what is morally reprehensible may have major differences from one community to another. So an act that would produce a sense of guilt in a member from one community may be carried out by a person



in a different community without producing even the slightest twinge of guilt.

Where then does conscience come from? Is it of Divine origin or of human making? The most satisfactory answer to this is as follows: *the basic impulse behind conscience is of Divine origin, but the interpretation or expression of this impulse is of human making.* Furthermore, there are two fundamental motivations behind every human activity: the motivations of pleasure and pain. The experience of life teaches us what to do to avoid unnecessary pain and what to do to sustain greater periods of pleasure. Over the ages there has been an unconscious accumulation of this knowledge within the subconscious mind of the human race. This subconscious knowledge guides us as feelings which are aroused within us which we may call the conscience. The subconscious mind is an



*The Dove has for thousands of years represented the 'voice of conscience'.*

extension of the Divine Intelligence of God in man. The development of the skill required to tap into the potentials of the subconscious mind varies from one person to the next. These impulses of the subconscious mind can only be expressed in terms of the knowledge and intellect available to an individual and the pervading circumstances in which he finds himself.

This is why the conscience will vary in expression from one individual to the next and is also an accurate indication of the level of individual development attained. This principle is clearly demonstrated in the case of children. It is common knowledge that children easily bully the weaker ones among them. They can sometimes resort to persistent mocking or deriding of children who

appear to be different in looks or behaviour. When the victimised children show signs of distress, mostly by crying, the bullies sometimes intensify the attack with delight. The children who carry out these unfortunate acts cannot be said to have no conscience but rather it could be said, quite correctly, that they are intellectually unable to understand the actual harm they are causing. Just like the individual expression of conscience, the expression of the conscience of a society or Nation also varies. The moral code of rules and regulations of living established in a society represents an expression of the society's conscience.

## Selfishness

In a community where knowledge is limited, intelligence low and the conditions of life stressful, the expression of conscience is bound to be crude. Selfishness emerges as one of the most prominent indications of a limited conscience. Selfishness is the basis of many unsavoury forms of human behaviour such as *corruption, racial prejudice, religious persecution* among others.

Selfishness is found in persons who are unable to see the connection between the welfare of others and their own welfare or the inability to realise the connection between the detriment of others and their own detriment. When a person commits an act that is harmful to others he will eventually become the victim of a corresponding harm. This can be proven even without making any reference to spiritual laws which support this. A harmful habit of thought is behind every harmful action. Such habits are related to weaknesses in the mental posture of an individual.

## Corruption

For example, a person who routinely embezzles money from his place of work may be in the habit of thinking that his immediate personal needs must always be given priority in all matters at all times. This kind of thinking could come easily from a person who has an over bloated ego. His large ego blinds him to the fact that he is undermining the organisation he is working for and the society in which he lives. Corrupt persons are obstacles to the development of society especially when they happen to work in the government. Their wealth is acquired in a manner that denies people in their community the amenities they deserve.

This is then used by them to enjoy the privileges offered by more developed communities. They travel to advanced countries and spend money buying goods and services there. Their children are sent to schools in more developed countries because the schools in their own country are below the required standards, having been





*The actions of a single corrupt official can do more harm to a nation than the actions of ten thousand law-abiding citizens.*

neglected by a government whose officials are distracted by the allures of easy money. The children graduate and secure employment in developed countries, offering high level expertise to them. In this way they drain the human and material resources of their country and donate these to the growth of other countries.

The problems posed by corruption are so damaging that it is worth taking some time to consider the excuses made by those doing it. A common excuse normally given is “everyone is doing it, I alone cannot change things, if you cannot beat them, join them”. Firstly, it cannot be true that everyone is doing it. If this were so, the system would have long ago collapsed. There will always be some persons with integrity in any operational system. These are the people who serve as props to a failing system. With regard to the excuse that one person alone would be unable to change the system, this is certainly true. However, nobody would reasonably expect one person to change a system but the issue to be considered is whether one is contributing to the improvement of the system or to the failure of it. What excuse can a decent person really give to himself for wilfully joining in the efforts of persons who are causing harm to society? Another excuse that is given is “*I cannot stay here and suffer*”; meaning that the opportunities to make quick illegal money should be taken to alleviate personal suffering.

If we go back to the basic motives behind all human action; pleasure and pain, we will agree that the complexities of life sometimes go beyond a simple choice between the two. We may sometimes have to choose to suffer pain in the short term in order to have pleasure in the long term or on the other hand choose to enjoy immediate pleasures in spite of the fact that these would

lead to suffering pain in the long term. Mature minds see clearly the wisdom of enduring immediate discomforts for the purpose of securing comfort in the future. Man is an immortal being. The future of Man spans into eternity. Therefore, if the pleasures he is working towards do not manifest within his current incarnation on Earth they will do so in the life beyond it. Apart from corruption, the other unsavoury types of human behaviour earlier mentioned were racism and religious intolerance.

## Racial Prejudice

Racial prejudice, tribal discrimination and worse still ethnic cleansing are all also based on weakness of character and ignorance. Persons who practice these usually have a selfish motive which is disguised in the form of racial or tribal sentiments. Even when left with only members of their race or tribe, they continue to discriminate against perceived sections or groups within their own race or tribe. They seek personal advantage over others at all costs as their primary goal of life.

## Religious Persecution

Religious persecution is also a product of the ignorance and character deficiency that is related to a poorly developed conscience. Selfishness again rears its ugly head as the major hidden factor behind this. Many persons who carry out attacks in the name of religious differences believe that they stand to enjoy material gains from such attacks. Some are so short sighted that they believe that when they get rid of the affluent members of the society, they will be somehow better off. They fail to recognise the positive contributions of persons from other religions, dwelling instead on blaming them for all their woes.

Eventually every individual will be exposed to a situation that requires strength in the area of their weakness. When this happens the individual is bound to experience suffering. For example, a government official who has made it a point of duty to embezzle official funds, eventually resigns from his place of work and decides to begin his own business. His large ego could easily cause him to have a poor sense of business acumen with the result that he may suffer huge losses. If receptive, the suffering may cause him to repent and lead him to develop the strength of character that he was lacking. The person will then be unable to act in the harmful manner that he had previously been used to.

There is a true story of a well known African business man who was formerly a government official in his country. He duped his government of a huge sum of money and left for another African country where he



invested in a business. Incidentally he turned out to be very successful even though he may have had a few initial challenges. In fact he built up a chain of businesses in this other country and was a large employer of labour. However, he remained ill at ease until he made a trip back to his country to refund the stolen money with interest. He further made investments in his own country, built up big businesses there and resettled in his home country with his family. What may have led to such a dramatic turnaround should not be difficult to imagine. Similar scenarios could be predicted in the cases of persons who commit racial crimes or religious persecutions. The growth and spread of knowledge, the profound knowledge which the Rosicrucian refers to as the Greater Light, is a fact. With the growth of the Greater Light of knowledge the human race will eventually come to take altruism or the offer of sincere service to others as the norm.

## Conscience and Science

The effects of conscience are not limited to the social and administrative activities of man. The fact that a good conscience can be a direct aid to scientific development may not be a point usually considered. Conscience is generally taken into account when considering issues that are emotional. The impulse of conscience comes as an emotional feeling.

When considering issues that belong to the realm of scientific thought, most people may feel that conscience has no real part to play. However, scientific thought or contemplation is not devoid of emotion even when the scientist tries to always remain objective when working. Scientific revelations or discoveries are usually accompanied by a rush of emotion. This kind of experience is portrayed in the popular story of Archimedes the scientist who was said to have discovered the laws of buoyancy when in a bath. It is said that he was so excited with the realisation of the law that he jumped out of the bath and ran into the streets naked shouting "eureka, eureka!"; meaning "I have found it, I have found it!"

Sometimes the observation of a mistake in technical or scientific work comes first as an uneasy feeling before it is reasoned out. This is more common with persons who have reached levels of mastery in their chosen field of science or technology. Equally, scientific work carried out with excellence is accompanied by an uplifting emotion of harmony. These feelings come about in a manner very similar to the way conscience works, so it may not be too farfetched to believe that the emotional impulse of a well developed conscience could also serve as a guide to

scientific accuracy and discovery. Small wonder then, that the term conscientious, which is derived from the word conscience, means diligence.

## A National Conscience

The benefit of a good national conscience which is the result of the individual consciences of the population clearly enters into all aspects of life. To awaken the national conscience there must be an increase in the profound knowledge and understanding of the principles of life. The foundation for this kind of knowledge is laid in the home during the first seven years of a child's life. This is a big responsibility for all parents. The standard of education in schools should be maintained at the highest possible level and made compulsory for all. This will help to improve the average intellectual level of the population. Adequate employment opportunities should be made available to enable the average person earn an income and live a life of dignity. Finally the link between the outer objective mind and the inner subconscious mind should be developed to permit a free flow of the impulses of conscience. The techniques that can be used to achieve this are taught in the lessons of the Rosicrucian Order.

A man is strong in nothing who is weak in character! No individual can rise in character above the level of his consciousness in terms of his capacity to

**Just as every individual has a sense of conscience, so too a whole nation has and should ever refine its senses of conscience.**

respond to the dictates of his conscience. Just so, a country is strong in nothing if devoid of national conscience! There are many things we are witnessing in our contemporary society; hitherto alien to our national character. In a rather very interactive world, courtesy of internet, television, social media and net-working audio-visual gadgets, the minds of our young ones have been polluted to the extent that they commit dastardly acts of kidnapping, armed robbery, and all manners of terrorism as if they have no conscience!

If grown-ups in all works of society are suffering from adult delinquency with no personal example to inspire the youths, is it any surprise that we currently experience and witness so much violence in today's environment as if we have no national conscience or national character? The erosion of our cultural values can only be remedied with the awakening of our national conscience and the rebuilding of our national character based on universal truths and pristine values. Therefore, the awakening of our national conscience is not negotiable. It must be done, as it is a necessary precursor to the achievement of development, security, peace and happiness in all nations.





# Faithfulness, Loyalty and Gratitude

*by Christian Bernard*

*Imperator and President of  
The Rosicrucian Order®*

**T**HE DICTIONARY definition of faithfulness is: “*Loyalty in the keeping of promises, in obeying the rules of honour and integrity.*” The concept of faithfulness is often accorded to the Knights, just as loyalty and gratitude may also be. To be faithful means not lying to someone who is expecting honest advice from us.

It also means respecting a commitment made to another person. To be faithful is to respect the Master,

the work colleague, the spouse or friend we have chosen, or by whom we have agreed to be chosen. But it is above all to be true to oneself. We all know the saying “*...charity begins at home*”. This can be changed slightly to “*...faithfulness begins with oneself*”. It is easier to teach others what we already know, easier to respect the other person, if we respect ourselves. And it is therefore easier to be faithful to someone if



we are already demonstrating this faithfulness to our own inner being.

Being faithful does not mean stopping thinking about things, or being subservient to a person, a thing, or an idea. Being faithful does not involve just blindly pursuing a dangerous path which we unintentionally started out on. That cannot be called being faithful, but rather being unthinking, or stupid even. While some people with a naturally quick mind can make a commitment within seconds, others need to refrain from speaking too quickly and making token promises without having thought through or weighed and assessed the consequences of their commitment. Once a commitment has been made, we must do everything possible to honour it. We also say of course that *“No-one can be held to the impossible”*, and the concept of faithfulness justifiably comes into play at this point.

### Failing to Adhere to our Commitments

If we are unable, for some reason, to adhere to what was agreed, then we must have the courage to recognise our inability to carry out what was expected, to give the promised help, or simply to continue an unsatisfactory relationship. The examples are numerous, as are the circumstances and unexpected problems which can prevent us from doing what we had promised.

In such a situation, we must have the moral and intellectual honesty to question ourselves and recognise that the problem may come from us, from our poor assessment of what was demanded, even from our being tired or lazy. Of course I am not referring to extreme cases where we might have been abused by an individual or group that was Machiavellian or unscrupulous, immoral or manipulative. Once our eyes are open, we should first of all and above all else remove ourselves as quickly as possible from the danger, become detached, reflect, meditate, and ask the Cosmic for wisdom and guidance in what choice to make.

When we have become sure that we are on the wrong course and are obliged to break a promise, we should do so with calmness, without anger, and with a certainty which means that there is only one possible outcome for the matter. No compromises, no complicated arrangements, just straightforwardness, strength and determination.

### Intuition and Faithfulness

I would like to emphasise the importance of being quite sure of the veracity of what might have been reported to us and might lie behind our withdrawal from a commitment.

There is a sign which is not usually wrong, coming as it does from the deepest part of ourselves: it is that feeling, that sense of unease we feel when faced with such a person or situation. This is simply called ‘using your intuition’. But let us not make hasty judgments in this area either, for many factors can mislead us and distort our faculties, even our psychic ones. We should therefore always properly analyse and weigh and assess, as I mentioned above. Beware of the Siren’s song of deception.

In summary, it is not being unfaithful to withdraw, but it has to be done with honesty, with a sense of the responsibility involved, and without criticising the other person or persons for the choice we have made, or are now making. Let us not feel we have to run down what we once liked, followed and cared for, in order to justify what we merely be our weakness or lack of understanding. It is therefore possible to be faithful, even withdrawal becomes necessary. It is a question of what is noble, upright and honourable.

To be faithful, is to not keep changing our mind or *“going across to the other side”* as we say more familiarly. I know of course that we also say *“only fools do not change their minds”*, but this expression ought not to encourage us to give up our convictions or faith. Nor should it give us an excuse for what may be a deceitful, hypocritical, damaging and consequently unfaithful attitude.

Faithfulness can also be a form of gratitude. When we have received something, whether great or small, we should, according to our appreciation and ability to gauge the positive effect of this gift, show our gratitude to God, to life, and to our mother Earth, as well as to the thing, event, or person that brought about the benefits received.

### Loyalty

To faithfulness, can be added the concept of loyalty. Those qualities are certainly very close, but we can nevertheless glimpse some subtle differences. Loyalty is perhaps gentler than faithfulness. What I mean is that it manifests naturally with some people. It is part of their temperament, and they cannot imagine it being any other way. My view is that loyalty in this form is not a choice, is not a considered thing. It quite simply “is”.

Some people do not like changing their habits. They are loyal to certain brands, shops, restaurants, authors, and so on. They are also generally loyal in their friendships and in love. It comes easily to them. Disloyalty does not come into their thinking. They stick to their convictions, do not allow themselves to be impressed or influenced by flowery words, by what is fashionable, or by any sort of pressure. Since this article is published by The Rosicrucian Order® let me use the example of being a Rosicrucian. People



who are loyal by nature become very attached to the way that suits them once they have found it; and they are very fond of it indeed.

If Rosicrucian members draw satisfaction from reading their monographs and books, if they are happy to be members of an organisation such as ours, and they feel the benefits and mystic force of its egregore, if they should have the chance to contribute to the work of a Rosicrucian group such as a Lodge, Chapter, Pronaos or Atrium Group, and thereby have the opportunity of giving the best of themselves in service to others, then why on earth would they give it up? Why would they seek something else, or another way, when they are happy with the Rosicrucian path they have chosen? Such people therefore remain loyal, they support the ideal they have chosen and it suits them, despite the inevitable ups and downs, little disappointments in friendships, a touch of fatigue and disheartenment when they have to take on the duties of being an officer for the tenth or twentieth time or even more, for example, or have to take charge of a committee within their group. Nothing affects their faith and their loyalty, not even an opportunity lost due to a delay, a brother or sister forgetting to give back a borrowed book or other item, the odd harsh word, misunderstanding or disappointment.

Such people demonstrate wisdom; they continue supporting the Order until the end of their incarnation; for even if they cannot get to a convention or other meeting hosted by the The Rosicrucian Order, they continue their spiritual work at home in the privacy of their home sanctums, and then from their armchair or their bed. When finally the moment comes for them to depart this world, it is under the auspices of the Rosy Cross that they prepare for their final journey. They then leave their body in the hope and indeed the certainty that they will find the Rosicrucian path again at a very young age in a future incarnation. Such people are loyal and the question of faithfulness does not really concern them, as they are naturally faithful.

### Faithfulness as a Virtue

Faithfulness may be thought of as a virtue more active than loyalty, for it requires considered commitments, the taking of oaths, and sometimes making a stand. It is our duty to be sincere, and to show moral, and sometimes even physical, strength. We must say no to scheming, and ignore gossip. We must remain upright and straight in the face of the trials and temptations that flatter our ego and take advantage of our weaknesses. We must not allow ourselves be taken hold of by the dark forces which can lead us to betray, to lie, to falsely accuse, to renounce

our faith, to destroy what we have built, to abandon that which we have loved, our friends and our family.

To disown someone is to disown ourselves. This leads me on to reflect on the denial and the ungratefulness which sometimes result from disowning someone. If we are faithful and loyal, then in principle we are not ungrateful. Gratitude can express itself in several ways: first of all, in its simplest and loosest form, it can consist of just being happy; and secondly of remembering from time to time that whatever blessing we receive, it more than likely comes to us through a particular person. It is usually an event or a problem outside of ourselves which prompts this recollection. It is not a voluntary act, thought about, deliberated upon; it is just the situation of the moment. And this involuntary reminder is in itself very commendable, as it shows that neither in our memories nor in our hearts have we deleted anything.

### Appreciation, Active Gratitude and the Law of AMRA

Appreciation in its active form is more engaged, more tangible and expressive. It does not just go away, and it needs to manifest itself in a way that is more visible and concrete. As a result, it may be directed towards God, the great Cosmic Consciousness, Nature, etc. The *Rosicrucian Code of Life* calls upon this concept in several places. If you do not know this text, you may be interested in knowing the Order has available a book version of it in several languages, including Esperanto.

We have undiluted appreciation for the life we have been granted, for the experiences we have been through, and for the sure evolution which is the result. This daily thought is deliberate, and put into operation; it is active gratitude. But while this is its most perfect manifestation, gratitude also reveals itself in other forms. In all places of worship in the world, prayers are given, incense, oil, and candles are burned, and offerings are made in the form of fruit, money or help. Appreciation is shown materially at this point, by a concrete and tangible act or gift. Once again though, this is a general appreciation intended for the divine principle, even if it is to do with a particular blessing. In The Rosicrucian Order<sup>®</sup> we call this the *Law of AMRA*.

The Law of AMRA was a common practice in Ancient Egypt, in particular among the adepts who attended the Mystery Schools. It was perpetuated in Judaism in a slightly different form, and nowadays certain aspects of it are found in Christianity. It consists in simply expressing in some way one's appreciation for a blessing or benefit received, though the blessing need not necessarily be a material acquisition or a financial gain.



Whether we are aware of it or not, we are indebted to the Cosmic for everything that contributes to our well-being. This is why some people put the Law of AMRA into effect when they have been helped by someone in some physical or emotional trial. Yet others apply the Law when they have received the support of the *Council of Solace*. Each person has his or her own reasons for participating in AMRA, for what is considered by some as a divine gift, and for others as the just fruits of their own endeavours. However, we should always see that every blessing or benefit, even when we put it down to what we have thought, said or done, is ultimately just the result of what the Cosmic has enabled us to accomplish. For it is the Divine Intelligence that is at work through each person, enabling them to receive Its benedictions.

### Applying the Law of AMRA

Before considering the manner in which we may apply the Law of AMRA, we must emphasise that it is never obligatory to do so; for this great Law should always only be applied if done so willingly and without reservation. Unless done in this spirit, whatever is given in the name of AMRA has no spiritual value at all. Also, whatever is done as part of this Law must not be tinged with any form of superstition. In other words, we must not think that if we do not apply the Law we will not receive any more blessings. While ingratitude certainly does not bring us luck, we should not apply the Law of AMRA merely out of fear of becoming unlucky. Fear of this loss of luck should not be what makes us apply the Law of AMRA. Nor should we think that all we have to do in order to receive spiritual assistance is to express our appreciation to the Cosmic as we use the law, before we have even received the help. Such an approach is itself tinged with superstition.

In the same way that a benefit or blessing does not necessarily amount to financial gain, AMRA does not operate as a matter of course purely because we have given a certain sum of money or material asset. Putting this another way, we can apply the Law by giving service to those who are in need of it, by taking the time to give comfort to those who are suffering, by striving to be better in our relationships with others, and by generally making every effort to do good around us by using our qualities and talents. This can also be done by participating as regularly as possible in the work of the *Council of Solace*, as this work contributes to the well-being of others. Here you have the Rosicrucian meaning of the Law of AMRA and some examples of its application.

Still about gratitude, I think that we ought to express this more often towards people who help us,

who give time to us, who provide us with different services or give us gifts. The expression 'thank you' exists in all languages. Saying thank you, whether in words, gestures, or with smiles, is universal, and as old as humanity itself. This is so because the feeling of gratitude is much deeper than simple politeness, or the shallow gestures that people have come up with through the course of history.

For centuries, discretion, tact, and the concealment of feelings have gradually become second nature for human beings. When the accumulating of wealth and possessions, and an abundance of leisure activities are added in as well, we can only conclude that this leads to many things appearing silly and unimportant to us. In our so-called 'civilised' and 'modern' societies, we often consume things and enjoy things without realising that back of it all, real people have sacrificed a lot of themselves and have done much work to make our consumption and enjoyment possible. In short, we are unfortunately too often unmoved and unappreciative, as well as blind and deaf to the hard efforts of others in the service of humankind.

### Saying 'Thank You' with True Appreciation

And so, there has to be genuine appreciation behind your 'thank you'. Be sure to express this, for beyond the act of politeness itself, you will feel the gentle, joyous feeling of having not shown ingratitude. Use a family event, a meeting with friends or at work, to express your gratitude to one or more of the people present, who warrant it. Tell them how well you think of them, and why you appreciate them; make known your appreciation, and give it greater validity with others present. This reinforces the effect and highlights its value to you.

What good is loving or appreciating someone in silence and in secret, if the person to whom one's affection or appreciation is directed does not know about it? I encourage you to reveal your noble feelings. This will bring happiness to the recipients of your kind and positive thoughts, and you will feel real happiness yourself, because having received, you will in turn have given. In short, to be appreciative is good, but to express this appreciation is better.

Faithfulness, loyalty, gratitude: three virtues to work on, three principles to apply, three concepts to develop, but just one spirit! May these qualities drive you throughout your life, and may you be in contact only with people who have them. If this cannot be so, then may you have the clarity of thought, strength and wisdom needed to protect yourself.



# A Pilgrimage

## The Way of St. James

by James Wilson

*El Camino de Santiago de Compostella, (the Way of St. James of Compostella), could be described as a long distance walk; but a long distance walk with a difference. Nowadays, many people walk this route purely for sportive reasons and they view 'the Way' purely as a physical challenge, for it is without doubt physically demanding. But the majority who undertake this arduous journey are serious pilgrims and their motives for embarking on it are far from mundane.*

**P**EOPLE HAVE BEEN walking the path to Compostella for at least a thousand years and possibly a lot longer. It is said that the pilgrimage route follows a major ley-line and that the ancient Celts were aware of this and were among the first to travel its length. Indeed Galicia, the North Western region of Spain, still has a strong Celtic tradition that is very

apparent in the traditional dress, music, dance and architecture.

The route I walked is 500 miles from the little French town of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port nestling at the foot of the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostella the "City of the Apostle" in Western Galicia. It is twice this distance if starting from the traditional starting point



of Le Puy-en-Velay in the Department of Haute Loire. While there have been many changes along *El Camino* (as it is known in Spanish) over the centuries, it still follows the same traditional route as walked by our predecessors.

The *Camino* is also a long distance walk with a difference inasmuch that many, if not most, of the pilgrims who undertake this journey, are people who have never walked any great distance before and are never likely to do so again. I made a point of questioning almost everyone I met along this route about his or her experiences. Most of the Spanish and French *peregrinos* (pilgrims) are devout Catholics and their reasons for walking the Way of St. James is usually obvious. If the pilgrim being questioned was from a non-Catholic background then the answer to the question "*Why are you here?*" was invariably met with the same answer: "*I don't know what I'm doing here. I read (or heard) about the Camino and I just knew I had to come here.*" In fact many people are completely disorientated and frightened when they arrive at their chosen starting point.

They have no idea how or if they would make it through even the first day, and yet they have a sincere belief or conviction that they should be walking to Compostella; it was simply a prompting from the God of their Hearts that they could not ignore. It is interesting to note that many today are on pilgrimage for *spiritual* rather than *religious* reasons. In the Middle Ages,

**The further and harder the pilgrimage, the more likely they were to receive this forgiveness and have their slate wiped clean.**

pilgrims had one aim in mind. They sought indulgences, forgiveness of their sins. The further and harder the pilgrimage, the more likely they were to receive this forgiveness and have their slate wiped clean. But non-Catholics generally seem to walk the *Camino* with no such aim in mind. They are simply seeking, perhaps on the threshold of a spiritual path, and they are simply responding to their inner being in search of something they are perhaps not yet aware of.

There are also many whom I suppose one could call "pseudo-pilgrims" who cycle, drive or even use public transport to reach their destination. There are also those who start just 2 or 3 days walking distance from Compostella and then boast that they have walked the *Camino*! To my mind, the real pilgrims are those who knowingly put themselves in real hardship and even danger (for there *are* still real dangers in some of the remoter areas of Northern Spain), those who know they will have to draw upon the strength of their belief in

God to accomplish what they have set out to do. There are those who, as in the case of many pilgrims I met, left behind their jobs, their loved ones, their security and luxuries to attempt alone, and with very few basic belongings, something that they feel sure at the time they have not the physical, mental or emotional strength to accomplish, and yet they do it to prove their loyalty and sincerity to the God of their understanding, and having complete faith that God will protect them and carry them when they are too weak to continue. These are true pilgrims indeed!

## History and Legend

When the disciples dispersed to different parts of the world to continue the mission that Jesus had begun, St. James (San Tiago), we are told, went to Spain where he spread the word of Christ for a couple of years. He then returned to Jerusalem but was beheaded by Herod shortly afterwards in 44 CE. Immediately following his martyrdom, his followers are said to have taken his body to Jaffa on the coast where, of all things, a stone boat was miraculously awaiting them. They returned to Spain and landed at Iria Flavia, present day Padrón, on the coast of Galicia, just a few miles from what is now Santiago de Compostella.

The fact that they made this journey in just a week and in a stone boat is said to be proof of divine assistance. St. James' body was then buried on a hillside and then forgotten for 750 years. Early in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, a hermit, by the name of Pelagius had a vision whereby a *star* revealed to him the whereabouts of the remains of the Apostle. When King Alfonso II heard of this he declared San Tiago the patron saint of Spain. He built a church and a small monastery over the tomb in honour of the saint, around which a town grew. It was known as *campus de la stella* or *campus stellae*, later shortened to *Compostella*. The remains of St. James are now believed to be housed in Compostella cathedral.

As a Roman Catholic pilgrimage, the Way of St. James was very popular during the Middle Ages, particularly during the Crusades, and especially after the Arabs had seized the Holy Sepulchre in 1078, thus putting a stop to pilgrimages to Jerusalem. It was certainly considered to have merit as a pilgrimage as it fulfilled the various criteria considered necessary for a pilgrimage. It was far away (from most parts of France) and required a good deal of hardship and endurance. And it had its dangers: wolves, bandits, fever and, of course, the presence of Moors (Muslims) in Spain at that time. As it became more popular, more people flocked



to the area, either to offer genuine assistance to the pilgrims or to make money from them. More towns and villages appeared or existing ones grew larger. Monasteries and other forms of refuges were built in order to offer a bed and a meal to pilgrims passing through their doors. Many of these are still in existence today and offer a real sense of history and significance to modern pilgrims who are sheltered in these dwellings, helped by the fact that they are usually very basic if not austere.

Largely due to the Reformation, after 1500 its popularity waned. For the next 500 years it was barely known but has been popularised once again recently, largely due to two books: *The Camino* by Shirley MacClaine and *The Pilgrimage* by Paulo Coelho. The numbers of pilgrims have increased dramatically over the last few years, to the point where it can become very difficult to find accommodation in one of the many *refugios* (refuges) to be found along the way. I would very strongly advise anyone not to attempt this journey during the *Año Santo* (Holy Year). This is the year that St. James' day, July 25<sup>th</sup>, falls on a Sunday, the next being in 2004. Tens of thousands of pilgrims and festival-goers descend upon Northern Spain during this time.

### The Lone Pilgrim

I began my journey from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, a beautiful little town on the French side of the Pyrenees. I felt that 500 miles was a considerable enough journey to attempt on foot carrying an ample weight on my shoulders in my rucksack. I am no stranger to long distance walking but this was to be twice the distance of the longest route I had ever walked before. I was to walk in a strange country, having little idea of what sort of terrain I was to encounter.

I had read about the dangers to walkers, I could neither speak nor understand the language and I was not feeling particularly fit, having done no real walking for several years. So I was filled with a fair share of trepidation. Compostella seemed a huge distance away and I had to keep reminding myself that this city was merely the end of my journey and not the goal. The path itself was the goal. Every day would offer new experiences, both good and bad, and I should be grateful for each kind, because all experiences offer one a chance to learn and to grow.

The evening I arrived I was escorted to a bunk in the *refugio* where I was to spend my first night. Once there I soon realised that this need not be such a lonely



*Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port*

experience after all. There were many other pilgrims waiting to start the next day, just as I was, and I knew many more would begin their journey at various points over the border. However, it was important for me that I should walk alone each day, and I was determined to do so. I was certain though that if I should want company in the evening to share a meal and a glass of wine and to exchange experiences, there would be ample opportunity. Indeed, one of the rewarding aspects of this pilgrimage is meeting people from all over the world and experiencing the tremendous international community spirit that thrives among the walkers.

Lying on my bunk, I was contemplating what the next day would bring. I had over 20 miles to walk across the snow-covered Pyrenees (it was early April), across the border into Spain to the monastery at Roncesvalles where I would spend the next night. I knew that for the first day it would be a real baptism of fire. The dangers of the way were suddenly brought home to us when we were told by the wardens of the refuge that a pilgrim had died of exposure in the mountains that day. We were told we must take the road rather than the mountain path to Roncesvalles and that we must not walk alone. I was immediately met with what I felt was an important decision. I was determined to walk each day alone and being a lover of the mountains I could not bear to contemplate taking the low-level route and walking on tarmac for over 20 miles. Most importantly, I knew that it was a test of courage and something that I suspect all sincere pilgrims are faced with at several points on their journey.

### The Walk Begins

Early the next day I set off down the narrow street with the walls of the citadel towering above me, on the



other side of the cobbled road. There is a simple and exquisite little church in Saint Jean. It was from there that I decided the true journey would begin. I walked into the church and it was empty. This was ideal as I wanted to be absolutely alone whilst I tried to commune with the God of my Heart.

I know nothing of the history of this church but it has a vibrational quality that is very tangible and uplifting. I immediately felt at one with these vibrations and as I knelt in front of the altar, I, a pilgrim, began to pray earnestly. A remarkable thing then happened. Suddenly I knew, without any doubt, the real reason why I was there, why I had been “influenced” to come here. It was a revelation that immediately gave me strength and courage and I knew that I must walk every step of the way to Santiago de Compostella and follow the path that *my* heart was to dictate. I walked out of the church, through the town and began to follow the mountain path, alone.

My courage, as courage always is, was amply rewarded. The walk through and over the Pyrenees was very satisfying in many respects and I arrived at Roncesvalles without any serious difficulty. I arrived at the beautiful and ageless monastery in time for the Catholic Mass. Although I could not understand what exactly was being said, it was easy to recognise the Lord’s Prayer and a special blessing given to all pilgrims present. The language spoken was irrelevant; it is the spirit of such rituals that moves one. After a meal, I retired to my bunk in the large, unsegregated dorm, exhausted but grateful

**However, when the snoring refused to cease, it became very apparent that the Australian had chosen the wrong bed!**

and excited about what the next day would bring.

### The Snorers of Roncesvalles

That night, I was to become acquainted with one of the most challenging and serious problems experienced by pilgrims walking the Camino; having to share a dorm with world class snorers! Whilst it is easy to laugh at this, it does pose a real problem for the lighter sleepers, such as myself, who can lose many hours of much needed sleep as a result. It also severely tests one’s patience. In fact, on many occasions, I had to resort to taking my sleeping bag outside, and to avoid sleeping on the damp ground spent a few fitful nights sleeping on very hard



*The Monastery at Roncesvalles*

and narrow benches or tables.

But there is also a comical side, such as one episode that night at Roncesvalles. One very burly Australian decided that enough was enough after enduring for too long the cacophony of one man who was certainly excelling himself this night. He angrily strode up to the bed of the perpetrator and shook the end of the bed violently. The occupant, being very rudely and abruptly awakened, sat up completely confused and startled, to find a very ominous looking figure bearing down on him. God only knows what must have gone through his mind at this point. However, when the snoring refused to cease, it became very apparent that the Australian had chosen the wrong bed!

Despite having very little sleep, I was walking again by 6:00 am the next morning. I was unfit, I had had a very challenging walk the previous day and only 2-3 hours sleep that night. I had read that, possibly due to the concentration of energy along this route, that the *Camino* has a certain vitality that is “absorbed” by its walkers. As I began walking this day with a sure pace and a surprising lack of fatigue I had to give this notion serious consideration. In fact, there were several moments upon this journey where I felt a “force” that gave me much needed energy and strength at times when I felt a distinct lack of both. I had aimed to stay the next night at Larasoaña. However, even though I had arrived early, the *refugio*, being very small, was already overflowing. I decided to continue walking for several more miles to the next *refugio* at Arre.

Of course, there are times when making a certain decision can have negative consequences. This was one such time for myself. By the time I arrived at my destination I had walked over 30 miles on only the second day. It was a mistake. My feet were not hardened



to it and they began to blister badly. Blistered feet need not cause a serious problem when walking. However, as the climate began to change as I moved away from the mountains I began to suffer. For the next three weeks I was to walk, in extreme heat, on feet that got no respite from hot boots. The constant damp from sweat caused my feet to blister as I have never known them to before with no chance of them healing in such hot weather as long as I continued walking. The suffering became quite severe. But this, as it turned out, was for me, to be an important symbolic aspect of this pilgrimage.

As you can no doubt imagine, when walking 500 miles over the course of a month, meeting lots of people, visiting many towns and historic buildings, and having many important or interesting experiences, there is a lot to relate. It would take many more pages to share all my experiences. Indeed, many are too personal or too difficult to put into words. Rather than concentrating on the mundane and purely physical aspects of this journey, I would like to share with you a few experiences that were important for me because of what they represented symbolically.

### The Meseta

Between the Pyrenees and the western mountain ranges, extends a raised flat plateau of many miles known as



*The Meseta or plateau*

the *meseta*. It begins after Burgos and ends more or less when one reaches Leon. It takes several days to cross the monotonous, flat and dusty plain where it can be impossible to even find a little shade to get relief from

the relentless sun. It is arduous and severely tests one's physical and mental strength. A German lady whom I met at Pamplona, and with whom I spent many an evening, has a very mystical and philosophical approach to life. She likened the *Camino* to a microcosmic spiritual path that could symbolically be divided into three phases: Life, Death and Resurrection. The *meseta* represented the Death phase of the journey, whilst the ascent of the mountains toward the end of the journey represented the Resurrection.

It is while walking the *meseta* that the most interesting experiences seem to occur for pilgrims and walkers. I met a few walkers who were walking the *Camino* purely for sportive reasons, accepting it as a physical challenge and nothing more. These were people who were hardened walkers, very fit and used to walking long distances very quickly. And yet, *every* one of these types that I met had either to drop out through injury or had to take time out to recover and slow down. My own experience too was one of being *forcefully* slowed down during this leg of the journey.

One could argue that it was the heat and physical conditions that forced people to slow down or stop occasionally. This is undoubtedly true, but my feeling is that it is more than this. I felt very strongly an energy that can be quite overpowering mentally and physically. The *Camino* is a spiritual path that should not be rushed, one should take time to reflect and look inward and there seems to be a power there that forces one to do this! It depends on the sensitivity and awareness of the individual as to just how effective this is in terms of encouraging inner searching and analysis.

This same force or energy also seems to affect the emotional self very strongly during this phase. I have seen many a tear fall on the *meseta*, and I too have added my share to dampen the earth. This is a symbolical death, where negativity in many forms (regrets, anger, guilt, doubt etc.) are brought to the forefront of one's consciousness and dwelled upon for as long as necessary until finally released in a burst of emotion. I have experienced it and witnessed it amongst others. This is also the period when I was experiencing tremendous and relentless pain for days due to my feet being so badly damaged. An American lady I met told me that this also was my negativity returning to the earth. An odd statement to make? Yet the pain diminished and disappeared rapidly once I was off the *meseta*. More importantly, *for me*, the pain represented



the cross I must bear whilst utilising this physical body before any resurrection can take place.

## Early Start From Boadilla

There is one astonishing experience that I would like to relate that I had whilst walking this phase of the *Camino*. I was attempting to sleep in the refuge at Boadilla. I was hemmed in by two champion snorers who made sleep almost impossible for me. At 4:00 am I decided I had had enough. In the dark, I silently packed up my belongings, slipped out of the dorm and into the night air. I was exhausted and in a great deal of pain. I had serious doubts that I would make it to my next destination this day.

Fortunately, there was a full moon that made navigating in the dark easy and for the first few miles I was following a canal. I do not remember ever feeling so isolated and alone and yet the combination of full moon and water gave a magical quality to the next few hours. These conditions also had a remarkable effect on me. Being utterly alone with my inner thoughts at this hour, I felt attuned with something higher than myself that I have felt on many occasions but seldom with such intensity and ease.

I have no hesitation in saying that I was “carried”

**We were fortunate, this particular evening, to have with us a French couple who were choristers. They sang, in perfect harmony, a beautiful blessing for all present.**

this day, my reasoning mind telling me that I physically should not have been able to walk the distance I did. Throughout the day, my mind was an explosion of activity. I was bombarded with thoughts and impressions that seemed to be arriving from “outside” of myself. All the negativity that was locked in my psyche was being dredged to the surface and thrown around in my mind, and the combination of these two experiences left me in such a mental state that my physical condition was barely noticed and I seemed to “float” rather than walk.

This was happening during a period of my life when I was experiencing a lot of self-doubt that was quite debilitating in various ways. All this mental and emotional activity, although agitating and very disordered, left me with one very clear message or impression that seemed to be repeated again and again. It is a message that is important for every human being as well as being of great importance to myself at this time: *Know thy worth!* In other words, never doubt your abilities as a human being, always be aware of your

potential to help yourself and to help make this world a better place. This simple message is of immense value to every person.

## Special People I Met

I would like to end my narrative with a mention of just a few of the people I met upon this journey, people who have left a lasting impression on me, meetings that were harmonious and meaningful. At Najera, I stayed in a *refugio* that is attached to the Franciscan monastery. There I had the honour of having my feet tended by a “foot doctor” who is a member of the Franciscan Association allied to the monastery. If ever I have felt humbled by the presence and act of kindness of another human being, then this is the time. This remarkably humble man, has for the past 15 years, arrived at this refuge every evening to tend to the feet of pilgrims. His length of stay is simply determined by the number of casualties who need his help. It is impossible to reward him or compensate him for his time in any way, because he simply will not accept. His is a spiritual duty that requires sacrifice and love of his fellow man. There is no act simpler or more noble.

At Torres del Rio, there is a wonderful little *refugio* owned and managed by an Italian lady. She explained to me how walking the *Camino* had changed her life and that building and managing this refuge was her way of helping other pilgrims to find *their* way. She is just one of many who have returned to this location in order to *compensate* for the blessings that they have received on pilgrimage. The little gift she gave me was a simple act of love and well wishing, simple yet moving.

At Grañon, there is a tiny church with a bell tower. The tower is a simple resting-place for pilgrims who sleep on thin mattresses laid on the floor. If it is busy, the mattresses are abutted to form one large bed, because no one is turned away unless it is absolutely necessary. A young German lady who is quite remarkable manages this refuge. She speaks several languages and makes every effort possible to see to the needs of weary travellers. With a single part-time helper, she prepares breakfast and an evening meal for as many as 30 plus people, meals that are eaten communally and are free of charge. This is quite unusual on the *Camino*, for in most refuges you are left to look after yourself.

After the evening meal we were taken by our host into the church where she officiated over a simple *non-religious* ceremony during which the congregation were invited to add something appropriate to the proceedings. We were fortunate, this particular evening, to have with us a French





### *El Burgo*

couple who were choristers. They sang, in perfect harmony, a beautiful blessing for all present (they also sang Grace at dinner). The evening spent in this little bell tower was the most perfect of all evenings spent along the *Camino*, and again I was greatly humbled by the self sacrificing service of a single individual who simply could not do enough to make people feel welcome and comfortable. She was a volunteer receiving no salary, her room was a simple cell, and her lifestyle very basic. She had been there for three years when I arrived. I suspect she is there still.

At El Burgo the refuge is managed by a Frenchman, again a volunteer. His simple acts of kindness and respect toward pilgrims leaves one feeling blessed. From late afternoon to late evening each day, he sits by the door of the refuge waiting for the pilgrims to arrive. He greets each one with a glass of cool water then sits each one down on a chair and removes their boots. Then he directs them to the kitchen where there is always a large pot of soup warming for those in need of sustenance. It would be nice to be able to say that such was the norm on the *Camino*. But such attention is rare, and such individuals are rare, which makes them and the experience all the more special.

### **O Cebreiro**

There is one more place I would like to mention before I end my journey. Nestled in the western mountains at 4,000 feet, just before entering the province of Galicia, is a little village consisting of just a dozen buildings, named O Cebreiro. The Celtic influences are obvious, a few Celtic roundhouses being still in existence. The vibrational atmosphere of this village is very uplifting. The village houses a small church, which I found to be very special (this is the church incidentally, in which Paulo Coelho found his sword). This was the peak of the ascent. Just

having the opportunity to spend a little time in this remarkably peaceful and beautiful village and church is reward in itself after facing and overcoming the trials of the *meseta*.

The last leg of the journey after O Cebreiro proved to be relatively easy and calming on the mind. My arrival into Santiago de Compostella was triumphant! What a day on which to arrive. As I approached the outskirts of the city I could hear bagpipes, which at first I thought I was imagining. When I arrived at the city centre, I realised the origin of the pipes. There was a festival. Around every street corner I turned I was met with traditional music, costume and dancing.

It was as if the whole city had arranged this welcoming just for me! I couldn't think of a nicer way to end my journey.

The Celtic pipes have always stirred my blood and send shivers down my spine (maybe a past life stirring). I was in heaven as I slowly made my way to the cathedral where I tried to find a quiet place amongst the many

**Thank you for seeing me safely upon my journey, thank you for the experiences that have proven to be of value, thank you for all the blessings that I received, and thank you most of all for showing me my worth.**

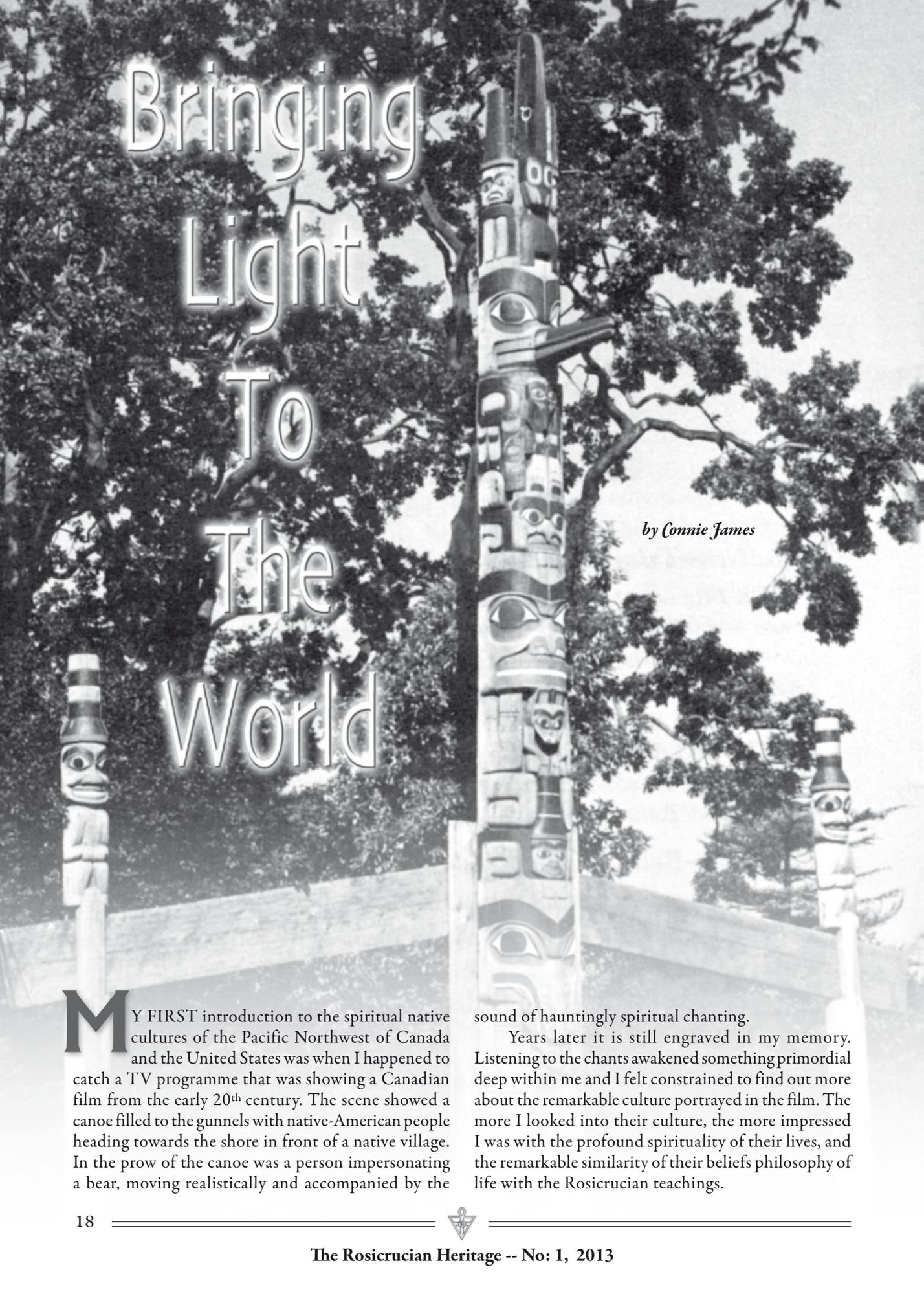
hundreds of tourists. The *Camino* had been an emotional affair for me at several stages and as I sat quietly and prayed fervently to San Tiago, the emotion was again intense. Thank you for seeing me safely upon my journey, thank you for the experiences that have proven to be of value, thank you for all the blessings that I received, and thank you most of all for showing me my worth.

### **Further information**

For up to date information on travel and accommodation contact *The Confraternity of St. James*: Marion Marples, Secretary, Confraternity of St James, 27 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NY, United Kingdom. e-mail: office@csj.org.uk; website:www.csj.org.uk; Tel: +44-(0)207-9289988; Fax: +44-(0)207-9282844

*The Way of St James: Le Puy to Santiago* by Alison Raju. Cicerone Press, Milnthorpe, 1999. 286 pp. This is a walker's guide prepared by one of the most experienced pilgrims, on this and other routes to Santiago, with bibliography, glossary, sketch maps, and notes on other routes





# Bringing Light To The World

*by Connie James*

**M**Y FIRST introduction to the spiritual native cultures of the Pacific Northwest of Canada and the United States was when I happened to catch a TV programme that was showing a Canadian film from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The scene showed a canoe filled to the gunnels with native-American people heading towards the shore in front of a native village. In the prow of the canoe was a person impersonating a bear, moving realistically and accompanied by the

sound of hauntingly spiritual chanting.

Years later it is still engraved in my memory. Listening to the chants awakened something primordial deep within me and I felt constrained to find out more about the remarkable culture portrayed in the film. The more I looked into their culture, the more impressed I was with the profound spirituality of their lives, and the remarkable similarity of their beliefs philosophy of life with the Rosicrucian teachings.



## Primordial Myth Time

The Northwest Coast native cultures, that began long before the Greek and Roman civilisations of Europe, possessed an art, songs and material culture imbued with human, animal and supernatural beings who were created somewhere at the edge of the universe in a primordial myth time, reminiscent of the Dreamtime of the Australian Aborigines. Images known as petroglyphs, chipped into stone, were used by generations of native teachers to record their history, foretell events and transmit knowledge to the young. Like our Rosicrucian monographs, they taught the mystery of the universe and strategies for dealing with life.

Myths can be interpreted from a variety of perspectives. They tell stories that explain natural phenomena, such as how the world was made, how plants and animals came to be the way they are, and how humans should behave in caring for the Earth and each other. On another level, myths are a rich source of insight into society and the human condition. Although these stories may not seem real, they describe truths that are universal for all humanity. Myths have meaning because they represent archetypes, patterns of life and thought that are universally valid. Today, there is a growing interest in looking at myths to uncover their hidden meaning. The stories reflect underlying psychological and spiritual processes at work in the human psyche. They are said to be the collective dreams of society which influence people's behaviour, attitudes and daily lives.

An underlying principle shared by all indigenous cultures is that all things and all life are connected: the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual. All worlds are seen as interdependent rather than as separate entities. Life is perceived as eternal, and death is but a pause in the continual cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Re-enacting myths was an important way in which native people experienced the wisdom and power of their ancestors. As old myths were retold, new ones continued to be created. Those that had universal benefit survived to instruct, delight and respond to the deep human need to be connected to something greater than themselves.

In the Pacific Northwest of British Columbia and Alaska, *Raven* was the culture hero, the trickster, transformer and most important of all creatures. *Raven* put the sun and moon in the sky, created the rivers and lakes, brought plants and animals to the land, and released humans into the world by opening a giant clamshell. He gave people fire, and brought light to the Earth by stealing it from the Spirit of the Sky World, just like the Ancient



*Nuu-chab-nulth dancers, c. 1935: Wolf headdress (centre) flanked by humanoid masks, dance screen in background.*

Greek myth of Prometheus. Although *Raven* brought life into the world, he is not the Creator who conceived the universe out of chaos. Capable of doing both helpful and harmful deeds, *Raven* taught humans important skills, as well as causing them trouble through mischievous antics. He is a paradox, an embodiment of the creative tensions that exist between two opposites.

## Daily Life

From south to north, the Pacific Northwest tribes of present-day British Columbia and Alaska were the *Coast Salish*, *Nuu-Chab-Nulth* (formerly known as the Nootka), the *Kwakwaka'wakw* (formerly known as the Kwakiutl) the *Nuxalk* (formerly known as the Bella Coola), the *Haida*, the *Tsimshian* and the *Tlingit*. Each of these tribes has a distinct language group, and within each group there are many dialects. Language is an important key to the



understanding of legends, religion, artistic expressions and lifestyle of traditional cultures. For all the native communities on the coast, maintaining a relationship with the spirit world was a priority and the history of each family was rooted in encounters between ancestors and spirit beings.

Traditional native villages were often built on the narrow coastal plain only a few steps from the sea. Behind the villages were mountains, places associated with wisdom and power, and rain forests, both of which provided many of the necessities of life. The people of the coast were seafarers who travelled between villages in their canoes, sometimes even as far south as California. There was one myth told about *Raven's* magic canoe that could shrink to the size of a pine needle or expand to hold the entire universe.

The practice of shamanism is as old as human consciousness itself, and is manifested in a variety of different forms in many of the world's indigenous cultures. In part, the role of a shaman is to intervene with the spirit world, heal the sick, find lost souls, predict the weather and the future, and ensure the success of hunting expeditions and other community endeavours. From a young age, the hunters learned how to kill without causing unnecessary suffering. They prepared for the hunt by purifying themselves in ritual sweat baths while the shamans communicated with the spirits that controlled the animals, asking for their release so they would present themselves to be caught by the hunters. Ritual songs were sung over the dead animals, and thanks were given for the food they provided.

The mainstay of their diet was fish, primarily salmon. When the native people ate them, they believed they were consuming their souls. They were taught that humans must also show their gratitude and respect for them by performing dance or song rituals as a means of reciprocity or payment. Can we discern here a form of Karma in action? Rituals were an expression of gratitude,

acknowledging a debt to the Creator and to all the creatures that contributed to sustaining life on Earth, just as Rosicrucians give thanks for the food they eat and hope that it will sustain all those who are in need.

The same respect was shown to trees that were felled for building, clothing and medicinal purposes. Trees they

believed, like animals, possessed souls and were therefore living beings. When taking the leaves, bark, wood and roots from trees for human use, native people followed ritual practices that demonstrated their deep appreciation for the glory of trees and the spiritual bond that existed between them and the trees.

The *Haida* of the Queen Charlotte Islands and southern Alaska built traditional houses which had a central hearth and four corner posts that represented the four corners of the world. Here there are similarities to our Rosicrucian Lodges with their four geographical stations. Two invisible lines can be drawn through the hearth, one from the back to the front of the house and the second from one side to the other. These intersecting lines are seen as the axes of the world. The line that runs from the back to the front of the house continues out into the ocean, joining all the houses at a common point in the

sea. At the back of the house, this line continues up into the mountains, joining the sky world to the sea world.

The line that runs from side to side travels around the world, joining all the houses of the same lineage together. In addition to the horizontal world axis, totem poles and the smoke that rises from the hearth were seen as vertical axes. Smoke rising from the central fire carried messages to the upper world. In many indigenous cultures, smoke, which is both visible yet intangible, is seen as an important means of communicating with the spirit world. Through ceremony, ritual burning of tobacco over an open fire and smoking ritual pipes, prayers were sent skywards through the medium of the smoke, asking the spirits to intercede on behalf of humankind, and creating a momentary unity



*Skils top a Raven pole at Masset, Haida Gwaii, British Columbia*



between two worlds. The central fire that heats and lights the home was humanity's first altar, the primordial shekinah.

Doorways symbolise the concept of transformation. According to native accounts, in distant myth time, human beings and animals lived together, spoke the same language and were able to transform themselves from one form of life to another. For example, *Raven* could change into a human being who, in turn, could be transformed into numerous other creatures. According to legend, the *Sisiutl*, who is similar to the Rosicrucian concept of the *Guardian of the Threshold* struck terror in human hearts. He was a soul searcher who saw from both front and back. He was continually searching for truth and seeking people who could not control their fear and who did not yet know the truth. If people did not know how to deal with fear, they could be killed or turned into stone.

The *Sisiutl* myth taught the importance of staring fear in the face. They believed that if you fled from fear, your soul would spin aimlessly without direction. But if you stood firm, the *Sisiutl* would attach his face to yours, and when his second face turned to do the same, he saw his own face and truth was revealed. So it is with humans. When we see the other half of ourselves, our shadow side, we see truth and fear dissipates.

## The Dual World

As stated previously, totem poles were perceived as visible axes analogous to the Great Tree found in other cultures such as the Maya. They were seen as lines of communication that allowed humans and spirits to meet. The union of humans and spirits can, it was believed, guide, empower, heal and purify humankind.

A recurring theme in native art and literature is duality: the dynamic tension between opposites that brings about transformation and wholeness. *Thunderbird* the Lord of the Upper World, and *Killer Whale*



*A northern chief in his regalia: Chilkat blanket and leggings, Eagle frontlet, holding a Raven rattle, at Skeena River, British Columbia, c. 1900.*

Lord of the Undersea World, were pitted against one another, representing the conflicting forces of the upper world and the underworld. *Raven* embodied the cosmic struggle between light and darkness, creating the possibility of union between two equals. Another central belief was that all life is connected, the visible and invisible, a belief that implored humans to continue communicating with the spirit world by performing rituals in order to maintain the cycle of life, death and rebirth. The two opposing figures, *Thunderbird* and *Killer Whale*, symbolised the notion of duality, a dynamic tension that acts as a catalyst, making the irrational union of opposites possible.

Although these native peoples lived in what we would regard as the Stone Age, the more we learn about their lives and beliefs, the more we come to question our own preconceptions. We pass over a threshold into a completely new world, a new universe and a new way of looking at things. From

now on, the way we look at the ancient world will never be the same again.



*Thunderbird, Killer Whale, Lightning Serpent.*





# Hyperspace

*Dr. Michio Kaku is an internationally recognised authority in theoretical physics. He is the author of many books, and scores of articles in physics journals. He is also a co-founder of string field theory. This article is from "Hyperspace and a Theory of Everything" which can be found on his website at [www.mkaku.org](http://www.mkaku.org). It is reprinted with the kind permission of the author. It is said that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, physics and mysticism grow closer together.*

*by Prof Michio Kaku*

**W**HEN I WAS A child, I used to visit the Japanese Tea garden in San Francisco. I would spend hours fascinated by the carp that lived in a very shallow pond, just inches beneath the lily pads, just beneath my fingers, totally oblivious to the universe above them.

I would ask myself a question only a child

could ask: what would it be like to be a carp? What a strange world it would be! I imagined that the pond would be an entire universe, one that is 2-dimensional in space. The carp would only be able to swim forwards and backwards, and left and right. I imagined that the concept of 'up', beyond the lily pads, would be totally alien to them. Any



carp scientist daring to talk about ‘hyperspace’, i.e. the third dimension ‘above’ the pond, would immediately be labelled a crank.

## Moving into Hyperspace

I wondered what would happen if I could reach down and grab a carp scientist and lift it up into hyperspace. I thought what a wondrous story the scientist would tell the others! The carp would babble on about unbelievable new laws of physics: beings who could move without fins, beings who could breathe without gills, and beings who could emit sounds without bubbles. I then wondered: how would a carp scientist know about our existence?

One day it rained, and I saw the raindrops forming gentle ripples on the surface of the pond, and I understood. The carp could see rippling shadows on the surface of the pond. The third dimension would be invisible to them, but vibrations in the third dimensions would be clearly visible. These ripples might even be felt by the carp, who, in trying to describe this, would invent a silly concept called “force”. They might even give these “forces” cute names, such as “light” and “gravity”. We would laugh at them, because of course we know there is no “force” at all, just the rippling of the water.

Today, many physicists believe that we are the carp swimming in our tiny pond, blissfully unaware of invisible, unseen universes hovering just above us in hyperspace. We spend our life in three spatial dimensions; confident that what we can see with our telescopes is all that there is, ignorant of the possibility of 10-dimensional hyperspace. Although these higher dimensions are invisible, their “ripples” can clearly be seen and felt. We call these ripples gravity and light. The theory of hyperspace, however, languished for many decades for lack of any physical proof or application. But the theory, once considered the province of eccentrics and mystics, is being revived for a simple reason: it may hold the key to the greatest theory of all time, the “theory of everything”.

## The Theory of Everything

Einstein spent the last thirty years of his life futilely chasing after this theory, the Holy Grail of physics. He wanted a theory that could explain the four fundamental forces that govern the universe: gravity,



*Michio Kaku*

electromagnetism, and the two nuclear forces (weak and strong). It was supposed to be the crowning achievement of the last 2,000 years of science, ever since the Greeks asked what the world was made of. He was searching for an equation that was so powerful that it could explain everything from the Big Bang, exploding stars, to atoms and molecules, to the lilies of the field.

He wanted to read the mind of God. Ultimately,

*In Hyperspace Theory, ‘matter’ can also be viewed as the vibrations that ripple through the fabric of space and time. Thus follows the fascinating possibility that everything we see around us, from the trees and mountains to the stars themselves, are nothing but vibrations in hyperspace.*

Einstein failed in his mission. In fact, he was shunned by many of his younger compatriots, who would taunt him with the ditty, “What God has torn asunder, no man can put together”. But perhaps Einstein is now having his revenge. For the past decade or more, there has been furious research on merging the four fundamental forces into a single theory, especially one that can meld general relativity (which explains gravity) with quantum theory (which can explain the two nuclear forces and electromagnetism).

The problem is that relativity and quantum theory are precise opposites. General relativity is a theory of the very large; galaxies, quasars, black holes and even the Big Bang. It is based on bending the beautiful 4-dimensional fabric of space and time. Quantum theory by contrast, is a theory of the very small, i.e. the world of sub-atomic particles. It is based on discrete, tiny packets of energy called quanta. Over the past fifty years, many attempts



have been made to unite these polar opposites, and all have failed. The road to the Unified Field Theory, the Theory of Everything, is littered with the corpses of failed attempts. The key to the puzzle may be hyperspace.

## Gravity: The Warping of Space-Time

In 1915, when Einstein said that space-time was 4-dimensional, and was warped and rippled, he showed that this bending produced a “force” called gravity. In 1921, Kaluza wrote that ripples of the 5<sup>th</sup> dimension could be viewed as light. Like the fish seeing the ripples in hyperspace moving in their world, many physicists believe that light is created by ripples in 5-dimensional space-time. But what about dimensions higher than 5? In principle, if we add more and more dimensions, we can ripple and bend them in different ways, thereby creating more forces. In ten dimensions, we also introduce a host of esoteric mathematical inconsistencies (e.g. infinities and anomalies) that have killed all previous theories. The only theory that has survived every challenge posed to it is called Superstring Theory, in which this 10-dimensional universe is inhabited by tiny strings.

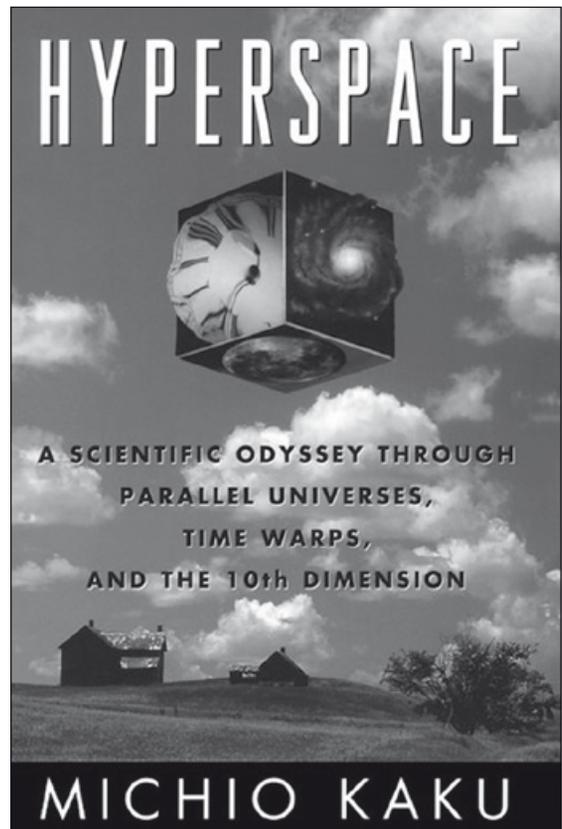
In fact, in one swoop, this 10-dimensional string theory gives us a simple compelling unification of all forces. Like a violin string, these tiny strings can vibrate and create resonances or “notes”. That explains why there are so many sub-atomic particles: they are just notes on a superstring. This seems so simple, but in the 1950s, physicists were drowning in an avalanche of sub-atomic particles. J.R. Oppenheimer, who helped build the atomic bomb, even said, out of sheer frustration, that the Nobel Prize should go to the physicist who does *not* discover a new particle that year! Similarly, when the string moves in space and time, it warps the space around it just as Einstein predicted. In a remarkably simple picture therefore, we can unify gravity (as the bending of space caused by moving strings) with the other quantum forces (now viewed as vibrations of strings).

## A Theory of Creation

Of course, any theory with this power and majesty has a problem. This theory, because it is a theory of everything, is really a theory of Creation. So, to fully test the theory requires re-creating Creation! At first this might seem hopelessly impossible. We

can barely leave the Earth’s puny gravity, let alone create universes in the laboratory. But there is a way out of this seemingly intractable problem. A theory of everything is also a theory of the everyday, so when fully completed, this theory will be able to explain the existence of protons, atoms, molecules and even DNA. Therefore, the key is to fully solve the theory and test the theory against the known properties of the universe. At present, no-one on Earth is smart enough to complete the theory.

Although the theory is perfectly well-defined, Superstring Theory is 21<sup>st</sup> century physics that accidentally fell into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was discovered purely by accident, when two young physicists were thumbing through a mathematics book. The theory is so elegant and powerful, we were never “destined” to see it in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The problem is that 21<sup>st</sup> century mathematics has not even been invented yet. But since physicists are genetically predisposed to be optimists, I am confident that we will solve the theory someday soon. Perhaps a young person reading this article will be so inspired by this story that he or she will finish the theory. I can’t wait!



*Available on <http://www.amazon.com>*



# PERGAMON

Ancient Centre  
of Learning

*by Pensator*

**T**HE PERIOD IN history between the death of Alexander the Great and the Roman conquest of Egypt, some 300 years, is known as the Hellenistic Age. It was Zeno of Kition, the founder of Stoic philosophy, who in Athens introduced the concept of dynamic cosmopolitanism that transcended mere patriotism. He taught that the whole world was a community embracing all rational beings, Greek and non-Greek, and that it was one state to which all humankind belonged.

From the Mediterranean to the borders of India, Greek culture dominated and a traveller could expect

to find in most cities many of the familiar institutions of Greek life. Not only was city life similar over this vast area but so also was much of cultural life. Everywhere, Greek was the language of government, culture and diplomacy, and one could travel from Southern Italy all the way to Afghanistan without fear of being misunderstood.

Greek and Hellenised intellectuals shared a common reverence inculcated by their teachers for the works of the great authors of the Greek Archaic and Classical periods whom they viewed as models of perfection that could never again be equalled, let alone surpassed. In



their own works, Hellenistic intellectuals affirmed their status as Greeks and their role as upholders of the Greek tradition by filling their writings with learned allusions to the masterpieces of the past.

Pergamon (the Pergamum of the Romans) was an ancient city of Mysia in North West Asia Minor, (modern Turkey). It lay in the fertile valley of the river Kaikos. People had flourished in organised settlements in this area since at least the third millennium BCE and possibly as far back as the tenth millennium BCE! The first historical mention of Pergamon occurs in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, when it was part of the Persian Empire. It was not a Greek city at that time, most of those lay on the Aegean coast to the south, but in Hellenistic times it became thoroughly Greek in every way.

## Renaissance

On his march into history in 334 BCE, Alexander the Great crossed the Dardanelles and marched into Anatolia. At Pergamon, the governor paid his respects to Alexander, who spared the city. Two hundred and thirteen years of Persian rule ended, ushering in a new era in the history of the city, while Alexander continued his journey into Egypt and ultimately overthrew the Achaemenid Persian empire. In 323 BCE, Alexander died in Babylon, leaving his empire to be divided among his successor generals.

One of these generals, called Lysimachos, married Arsinoe, a daughter of Ptolemy I of Egypt, and moved his treasury to the hill fortress of Pergamon. His immense wealth was to form the basis of the city's flourishing in the coming years. After her first husband's death, Arsinoe returned to Alexandria, where she married her brother Ptolemy II, the founder of the famous Library of Alexandria. After Lysimachos' death in 283 BCE, Philetairos, the commander of the fortress of Pergamon, took the throne in a coup d'état, and inaugurated the glorious dynasty of the Attalids of Pergamon. The city became a brilliant academic and cultural centre of Hellenistic civilisation.

The function of the Acropolis in Pergamon was never the same as the function of the Acropolis in Athens. In Athens everything was focused on religion, whereas in Pergamon it was on social and cultural activities..., in other words, on daily life. As a result of this contrast, major buildings in Pergamon were reserved for public daily use, not merely for use by a privileged priestly elite. And even in the temples, religion was of secondary importance.

Buildings had large areas for the public where they could meet, walk or join in social affairs. Pergamon was the first city to react against the functional urbanism of Hippodamos, the chequerboard pattern of streets,

preferring a more ornamental kind of town planning. The Pergamenes may have agreed that functionalism was necessary, but they insisted upon aesthetics being given much greater consideration. The buildings of their Acropolis, including the Library, were designed to be seen from below and to impress those viewing the city from the valley.

## The Attalids of Pergamon

Philetairos and his descendants spent a lot of money in transforming and beautifying the city and its Acropolis, turning it into a magnificent capital. Unusually for the time, their Kings were greatly loved by their people. Their rulers lived simply, but showed their magnificence instead in public works. It was Eumenes I Euergetes (263-241) who turned his city into one of the leading cultural centres of the Greek world. After his death he was deified for his efforts. Pergamon was a centre for Hellenistic arts and sciences. Eumenes' son Attalos I Soter (241-197 BCE), expanded the frontiers of the state until it encompassed all of Western Asia Minor.

The new money that flowed into his treasury enabled him to further beautify the Acropolis of Pergamon, where he constructed some of the city's most famous buildings



*Frieze of Zeus Altar (detail)*



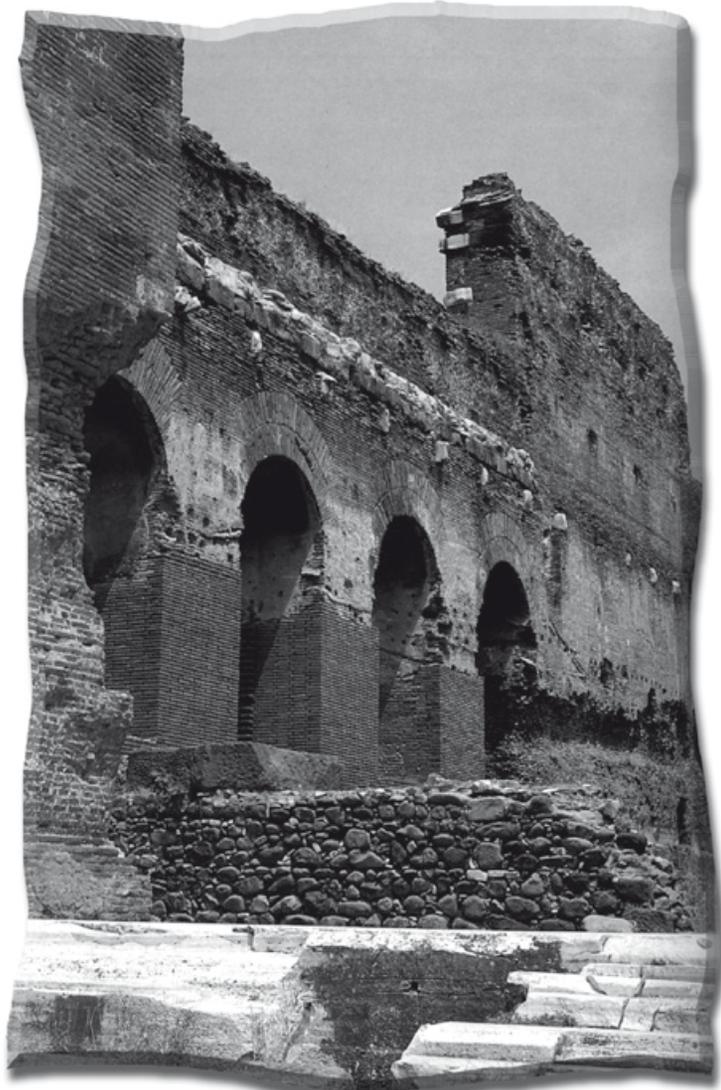
including the Temple of Athena, and he started the construction of the famous Altar of Zeus, which now lies in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. The Altar of Zeus stood 800 feet up the hill on a terrace. It was 90 feet square and 20 feet high, approached by a grand staircase 66 feet broad. Surrounding it was a great frieze representing the battle between the gods and giants. More importantly, Attalos I was the founder of the Library of Pergamon, which stood behind the north stoa, on the summit of the hill next to the royal palaces and the Temple of Athena, goddess of wisdom.

It was under his son, Eumenes II Philadelphos (197-159 BCE), that Pergamon entered its golden age. He encouraged poets and artists from all over the Greek world to come to his court. The historian Pythias and the philosopher Menandros were among his best friends. The study of philosophy, literature, mathematics and astronomy flourished in the city, but considerable advances were also made in more practical studies such as mechanics, shipbuilding, architecture and leather manufacturing. The Library, founded by his father was enlarged and enriched. The Library's halls were embellished with beautiful Hellenistic monuments and statues, in a conscious effort to rival the Museum in Alexandria. It contained a copy of the famous statue of Athena Parthenos by Pheidias (the original was in the Parthenon in Athens), and also a bronze statue of Homer and a bust of the poetess Sappho.

Attalos III Philometor (138-133 BCE) followed in his forefathers' footsteps. His main interest was in biology and zoology. He researched into natural drugs, and his doctors used a chemical he had discovered to treat skin illnesses. On his death, he bequeathed his kingdom to Rome, with whom the Attalids had maintained friendly contact. The citizens rebelled when they heard this, but a Roman army put down the rebellion and the new Roman province of Asia joined the empire. After the death of Julius Caesar, the eastern provinces were given to Mark Antony. It was he who in 41 BCE, handed over the Pergamene library of 200,000 books to Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.

### Rivalry with Alexandria

The main academic rival of Alexandria was not Athens, but Pergamon. In both cities, this rivalry centred on the Great Library. Attalos I aimed to turn his city into a second Athens; and it always maintained close links with the Aristotelian Lyceum and the Platonic Academy. Distinguished scholars flocked to the city from all over the Greek world: the Mesopotamian astronomer and



*The Red Palace (Serapeion)*

astrologer Sudines, the engineer Biton, and the great mathematician Apollonius of Perge, the historian Neanthes of Cyzicus, the sculptor Antigonos of Karystos, and the Stoic philosopher Krates of Mallos, who became chief librarian.

The rivalry came to a head during the reign of Eumenes II, when the Egyptian court cut off supplies of papyrus. Faced with this great problem, they devised another medium for their books. It was a preparation that they named Pergamene after their city and was as thin and light-coloured as papyrus, but as durable as tanned leather. It was made from sheep or goatskin and soaked in water, scraped to remove the hair, stretched, scraped again, dried, scraped to the desired thinness and lastly, buffed with pumice stone to whiten the surface.

The finest type, known as velum was made of calfskin. The name has become corrupted to become the word "parchment" in English. It was a revolution in book production, as it was thicker and more durable than papyrus, but unlike papyrus, both sides could be used,



which was more convenient, though more expensive. The papyrus roll, consisting of sheets glued together to form a continuous roll, was replaced by what we now think of as a book.

The Library had a large reading hall, surrounded by many shelves. They left empty spaces between the walls and shelves for air circulation to prevent humidity. The manuscripts were rolled or folded and placed on the shelves. There ensued a great hunt all over the Greek world for books or texts. For reasons of prestige, it was often merely a race between the Pergamenes and Alexandrians to see who could obtain a book first. Acquisition could and did include dirty tricks and paying lots of money, just to enable their Library to get the “only extant” copy, or even an “original” work.

Such was the rivalry between the two centres that many forgers found a lucrative trade at this time offering counterfeit “antique scrolls”. Unless it was an obvious

was founded in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, it attained its peak during the Roman period.

The healing centre, of the Asklepieion, was something very similar to a modern natural healing clinic. Patients were given exercises, drugs, herbal remedies, or they could take the honey cure, drink the waters of the spring or be treated by suggestion. They could walk among the trees and be calmed by the scent of pine. Over the entrance gate was inscribed the words: “*In the name of the Gods, Death is forbidden to enter.*” Snakes were sacred to Asklepios because of their power to renew themselves and there was a relief of snakes at the entrance to the Sacred Area of the medical centre, symbolising health. The most famous of the many physicians of the Asklepieion was Galen, whose work influenced doctors for a thousand years. It also had its own library, with reading and resting rooms for the patients. The Asklepieion had a totally holistic approach to medicine, with which modern Rosicrucians can identify.



*Ruins of the Sacred Stoa and Library*

forgery, the librarians could not take the chance that the other Library might acquire the book. Sometimes though, considerable skill and effort went into the forgeries, and it might take considerable effort to uncover it. Some of these famous pseudo works became so celebrated that they were kept on the shelves, as fakes, for the public to marvel at.

## Centre of Healing

The Asklepieion lay just outside of the city, to the west. This Sacred Area became one of the most famous centres of healing in the ancient world. The Asklepieion was a sanctuary and a healing centre built in the name of the god of healing, Asklepios the son of Apollo. It was similar to the one in Epidauros in Greece. Although this place

## School of Sculpture

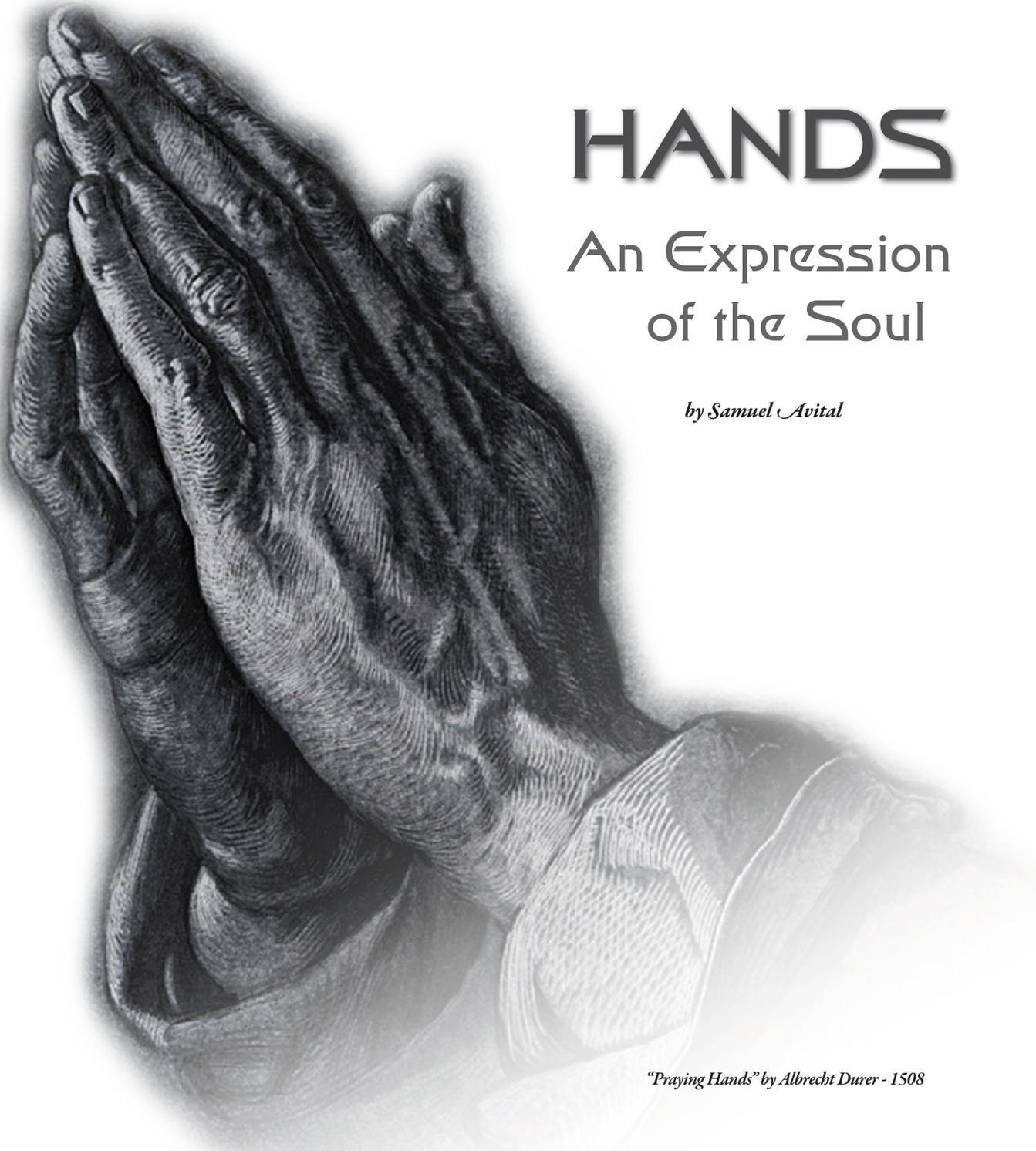
The Hellenistic Age was a period of searching. This also included the celebrated Pergamene school of sculpture, one of the city’s chief glories. There was a restlessness in the air, sculptors were looking for fresh subjects and experimenting with complex compositions. After the wars against the Galatians (Gauls), a Celtic-speaking people, Attalos I built a monument to his victories over the Galatians, and commissioned a group of bronzes, the supreme example of which is called the “Dying Gaul”, these bronzes are a masterpiece of the sculptor’s art, known to us today only through Roman copies.

## The Spread of Knowledge

Pergamon was one of the most beautiful and cultured cities in the Mediterranean world. Its rulers were great patrons of the arts, literature and philosophy. The Roman writer Pliny called it “the most illustrious city of Asia.” In the Hellenistic Age education became more widely spread. There was an upsurge in both specialist and populist literature, for those who just liked a good story.

The production of papyrus and parchment, combined with the employment of educated slaves, enabled books to be produced on a scale unknown before. The improvement of communications and the spread of a common civilisation meant that even cities as far away as Bactria (Balkh in Afghanistan) and Samarkand (Uzbekistan) could participate fully in the Greek cultural sphere. The rulers of Pergamon, through their Library, contributed to this and actively helped the spread of knowledge.





# HANDS

## An Expression of the Soul

*by Samuel Avital*

*"Praying Hands" by Albrecht Durer - 1508*

**W**E ALL KNOW the magnificent painting of hands held in an attitude of prayer by Albrecht Durer, said to have been sketched in 1508. A simple drawing like this brings forth a wealth of emotions not only about the meaning of prayer itself, but the miracle of our hands. Inspired by a visit to the Musee Rodin and by the work of this great artist in

general, I was particularly inspired by *The Cathedral*, Rodin's famous work of hands joined in the fervor of prayer, their slow movement rising like a song of praise to God. In viewing this inspiring work of art one is drawn in heart and mind to the inner realm to acknowledge and appreciate the simplicity of these hands that serve us.



Visualise for a moment the hands of Rodin which shaped this beautiful sculpture, or the hands of Rembrandt while painting, or Michelangelo's hands while taming the stone to give it form. Visualise the hands of Arthur Rubinstein, or of Yehudi Menuhin, or Ravi Shankar performing on his sitar, and you will see how, through the hands of great artists, a human heart can come to appreciate and admire the work of God.

The creation of great paintings, calligraphy and hieroglyphs with the hands of man has preserved for us today the greatness of civilisations. It can be noted that nothing could manifest without the touch of the human hand. As the Kabbalist sage would say, "In touching, man wants to be touched", touched by the hands of the Creator and blessed by the hands of God.

In the language of the prophets, we find this common expression: "...and the hand of God was upon me." This expression does not necessarily mean that God has physical hands, but it does suggest that the power of God was upon him, upon his soul. The priest blessing the community with his hands outstretched, the knowing hands of the healer, these examples suggest without doubt the wonderful power that is within each one of us, manifested through our hands.

We are made in the image of God and express our gratefulness of being by giving with these hands, caressing the beloved. Hands hold a head to think, hands clap to express joy, hands form attitudes of prayer in the beautiful Indian mudras. Please note that in all these actions the hands are doing their work in a mighty and dignified silence.

If we, just for a moment, bring to the forefront of our awareness the human hand, and meditate on how it serves us in our quest for self-knowledge and practical life, we come to acknowledge the hand's importance.

Our hands may seem common because we all have hands, and yet, how often do we appreciate the sheer joy of having these hands at our service at any time to translate our thoughts into those beautiful

creative actions of writing, drawing, sewing, cooking and playing. Look for a moment at these hands, and see how they live freely, listening to an unknown command to serve you, to scratch your face or to brush your teeth in the morning, or even to be still. It is observed that the hand is most natural and expressive when it is not doing anything specific. When at rest, the fingers, slightly bent, seem to surrender to the sheer joy of relaxing. And yet, when in action, they respond amazingly and immediately to our inspirational thoughts in a beautiful, awesome silence.

In mime and in dance, hands design the space and sculpt the air into a moving illusion, creating a beautiful dimension of reality. From one creative impulse, the air is given movement, the space takes shape, and when the hands grab the rock, we can climb the mountain. The silhouette of the hands is known to be an art form in the theatre of shadows. Hands become autonomously alive imitating animals, human faces and other objects. When the spirit works through the hands, allowing their creativity the freedom to move, hands can mysteriously move us to laughter and tears.

## The Instrument

In French, the word human is spelt: *humain* (hu-main). *Main* is the word for hand. *Hu*, the divine sound, along with *Main* reads "*He is hand*". Is it a coincidence, or does it mean the He (God) is very near us through our hands?

In Hebrew, the word for hand is *Yad* (יָד). *Yod* (י) is also the

tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. *Yod* (י), the first letter of *Yad* (יָד) [remember you read from right to left in Hebrew], designates the ten fingers, the ten Sephiroth. It is with his ten fingers that man learns to count; his hands then are the basis of geometry and mathematics.

Now *Yad* (יָד) numerically in Hebrew comes to 14, designating the 14 phalanges of the human hand. We have two hands, 14 and 14, which means in two hands we have 28 phalanges. This number 28 creates the word *Qoah* (קוֹחַ) meaning power,



*"The Cathedral" sculpture of hands by August Rodin - 1908*



or action, the power that we possess in our hands. Therefore, is given to man the mighty power to create and expand.

And so comes the discovery that we have two hands, the right and the left. When both are grasping or working at something, they are in the act of creating. With a potter, for example, his two hands form the clay. Clay in the hands of the potter, and directed by his intelligence, might become a useful container for our very life. A cup, it is known, is an imitation of the human hand. One cups one's hand to drink.

The right hand without the left hand is not complete. One complements the other and together they represent the polarities of our being, the positive and the negative. It is the left hand of the violinist which holds the strings and the right which draws the bow over the strings to create sound. Or, it is one hand which holds the paper, in order that the other hand can write upon it.

In prayer, these two hands resemble two branches on the tree of life, growing from the trunk's heart centre and reaching toward heaven with their finger leaves outstretched. In prayer, the hands and fingers reach out to master the ability to shape matter with their service; and by this they cause the raising of the consciousness of man and unite it with the consciousness of the Cosmic through their work on the earth plane.

## The Servant

What a miracle! This phenomenon that is taken for granted by many, the hand, a magnificent grouping of bones, muscle and skin formed in such a beautiful way, has as its ultimate goal, the very purpose of life, to serve.

We do not separate the hands from the body and the spirit. There is a simple relationship that has been emphasised here, namely, obedience and silent service. The spirit makes the hand and the hand makes the spirit. That reveals a state of conscience



*"The Hand of God" sculpture  
by August Rodin - 1907*

in every action in which the hand is involved, even that of stillness. The hand organises the expression and the action directed from within.

The gentleness and innocence of the small hand of the newborn baby, closed and suggestive of holding a secret in its tiny fist, seems as though it is saying: *"I have come to give; I have something in my hands."* The hands of a dying man are open, as if saying, *"I have given; my soul can now soar to other planes."*

In observing nature and its laws, the Creator in action, we find the truth that man is the tool of God, and his hands are the instruments through which creation is expressed.

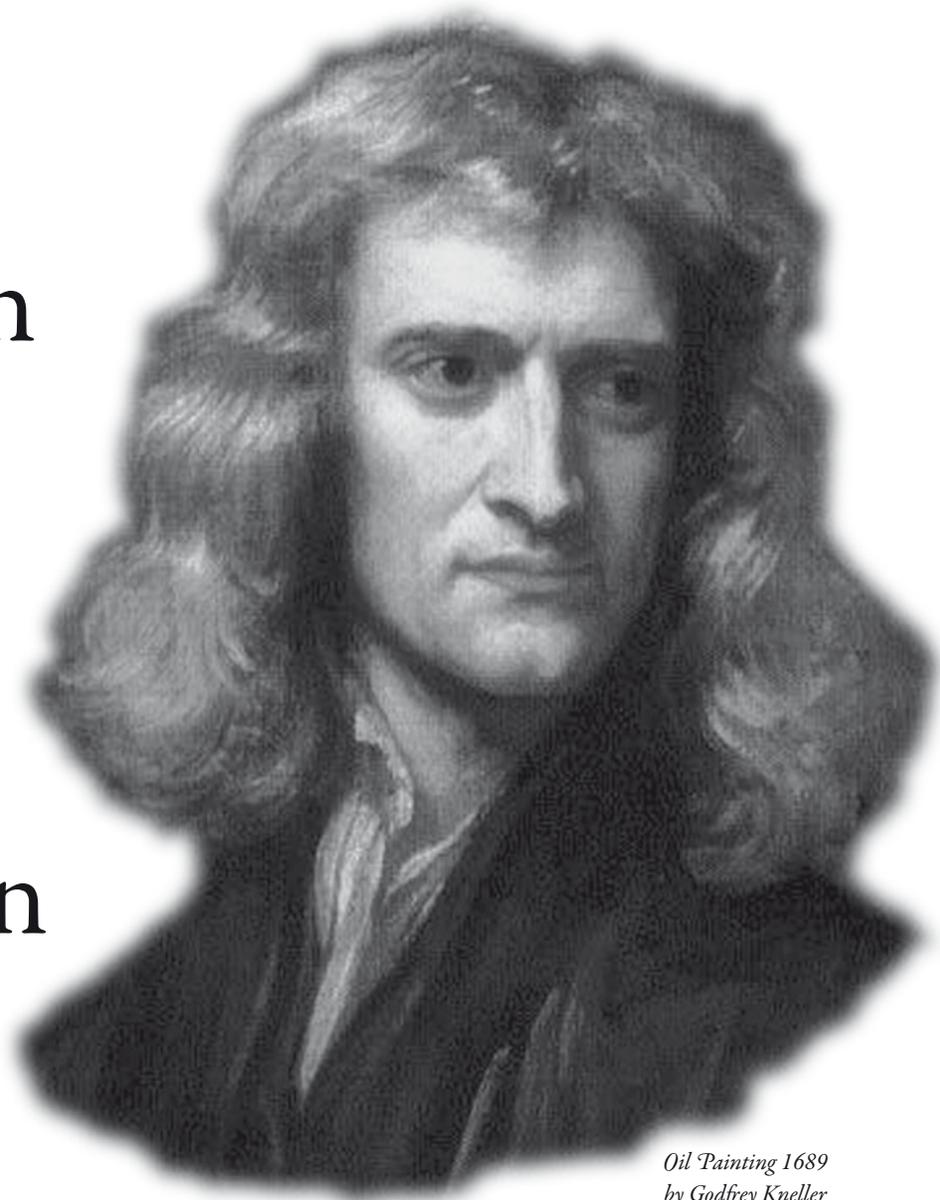
The human intelligence invents other tools, and a friendly relationship develops between them and man, who by mastering the gestures of the tool can expand. The tool is being held by five fingers that adapt to it, while the tool serves to create. Visualise for a moment the hands of the scribes of old and their magnificent work. Even in our technologically developed society which seems to take man away from his nature, we still need these hands to operate the machines which are made in man's image.

The leader within man, his will, has the ability to choose. He can direct his hands to do negative things, such as killing, or into positive channels, such as hugging his beloved ones. If man is awakened to this realisation of choice, then he will use his hands to serve, to give and work for the benefit of others as well as himself. Just as the hands feed by bringing food to the mouth, so too are they fed. Therefore, the law of giving and taking is expressed in the same breath.

By constantly becoming aware of our hands and our fingers, we come to the thought that they are actually transmitters of energy and knowledge in which our fluid thoughts take form. If we but take this into consideration, we will see a positive transforation in our lives. Every movement and gesture becomes of utmost importance to us. Poise is gained, and calm envelops all life within and without. We pray with these hands; we write our poems on the walls of history with these hands; and we build for mankind the continuity of our future being with His mighty hand.



# The Human Side of Isaac Newton



by Henry Macomber

Oil Painting 1689  
by Godfrey Kneller

**D**ESPITE THE existence of a few excellent books on the life and works of the brilliant 17<sup>th</sup> century British scientist Isaac Newton, it seems that the average person today has only a vague notion of Newton as the man who discovered the law of gravitation. There is a feeling that he was a monument of ascetic austerity, a notion I hope to contradict with these less familiar glimpses of the human side of Newton.

Emerson said that a great man is one who

administers a shock to the world, and he named Newton as an example. Lagrange called Newton “the greatest genius who ever lived” and Conduitt, his nephew-in-law, described him as “a national man.” In his life of Newton, Andrade remarks:

*“From time to time in the history of mankind, there arises a man whose work, whose viewpoint changes the current of human thought, so that all that comes after him bears evidence of his spirit... Such a great pioneer, such a leader was Newton... one of the strangest*



and most baffling figures in the history of human thought.” (Andrade, *Isaac Newton*, Chanticleer Press, New York, 1950.)

## Character

During the last years of his life, in his positions as president of the Royal Society and Master of the Mint he was, to a degree, unprecedented for a man of science, the idol of the British people. But the general opinion of him has been that he was a very serious, cool, dignified and unapproachable man, almost puritanical.

Caution was a distinguishing part of his character. There were no humorous books in his library. He sharply rebuked Halley for joking about what he considered a serious subject. His niece, Catherine Barton Conduitt, told how he liked to discuss chemistry with his friend Vigani, at Trinity College, but when Vigani tried to tell him a risqué story, he broke off all acquaintance with him. His secretary, Humphrey Newton, who knew him only during a few years when he was working hardest, said he saw Newton laugh only once

“...upon occasion of asking a friend to whom he had lent *Euclid* to read, what progress he had made in that author and how he liked him. The friend answered by desiring to know what use and benefit in life that study would be to him, upon which Sir Isaac was very merry.”

On the other hand, Stukeley, who knew Newton in his later years, goes on to say:

“According to my own observation, tho’ Sir Isaac was of a very serious and compos’d frame of mind, yet I have often seen him laugh and that upon moderate occasions. He had in his disposition a natural pleasantness of temper and much good nature, very distant from moroseness, attended neither with gayety nor levity. He used a good many sayings bordering on joke and wit. In company he behaved very agreeably; courteous, affable, he was easily made to smile, if not to laugh.”

There is no doubt that Newton was easily irritated, had a morbid sensitivity and an abnormal dread of controversy. Whiston, who quarrelled with him, said that “he was of the most fearful, cautious and suspicious temper that I ever knew.” And Flamsteed, who also quarrelled with him, said he was “insidious, ambitious and excessively covetous of praise and impatient of contradiction.” His friend, John Locke, described him as: “...a nice [meaning difficult and over-precise] man to deal with, and a little too apt to raise in himself suspicions where there is no ground.”

## Altruism

Newton certainly had a very human side. He was generous in the extreme. While at college he spent 4 shillings 6 pence “for oranges for my sister” as he enters it in his notebook. Later he gave 50 pounds toward the building of a new library at Trinity College, which was a large donation for a professor. He provided a fund, from the income of which Bibles were given each year to poor people, administered by the father of his roommate John Wickins. When Newton left Trinity, he gave Wickins all the furniture in his rooms.

For some years, Newton supported the family of his deceased nephew-in-law Pilkington. He made many gifts to his niece, Mrs. Conduitt and her husband, and gave their daughter 4,000 pounds shortly before he died. He gave Samuel Clarke 500 pounds for translating the *Opticks* and paid Pemberton 200 pounds for editing the third edition of the *Principia*. The Reverend James Pound furnished him with astronomical information and received more than 100 pounds as a free gift. In 1720 the Royal Society lost 600 pounds by subscribing to the South Sea stock, and Newton offered to reimburse the society, but his generous offer was refused. More reveals that “Newton could not bear the sport of hunting and objected to one of his nephews because he killed birds.”

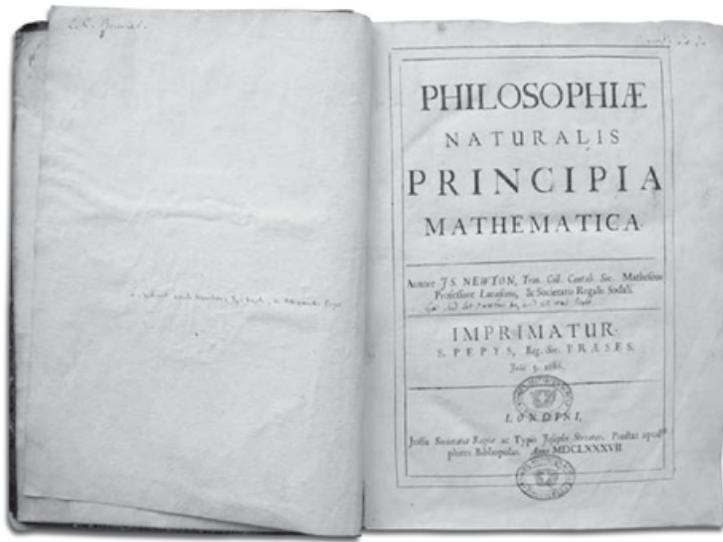
## Recreations and Pastimes

A notebook that Newton had during his last days in school and his first at Trinity College (1659-61), which first reappeared at the Lymington sale in 1936, was purchased by the Pilgrim Trust in 1950 and presented to Trinity College Library. As might be expected of a college freshman, he records in this notebook how much he “lost at cards” and spent “at ye Tavern,” but also that he purchased “ye *Hystory of ye Royall Society*, *Philosophicall Intelligences*, a chess board and *Chesse Men*” and so forth. Among “idle and vain expenses” he includes, “*Bottle beere*, *China ale* [tea], *Marmolet* [marmalade], *Custords*, *Cherries and Tarte*.” Seward reports that Newton used to play “backgammon” with Flamsteed, the astronomer.

As evidence of Newton’s shyness, he himself said: “I see not what there is desirable in public esteem, were I able to acquire and maintain it; it would perhaps increase my acquaintance, the thing which I chiefly study to decline.”

At the age of 30, Newton’s hair was already turning grey, but he never became bald, never used





*Title page of Newton's Principia Mathematica, one of the greatest mathematical and astronomical treatises ever written.*

eyeglasses and lost only one tooth. *"His breakfast was orange peel, boiled in water, which he drank as tea, sweetened with sugar, and with bread and butter."* His cure for a cold was to stay in bed for three days to rest and perspire. When Newton was offered snuff or tobacco, he declined, saying *"that he would make no necessities to himself."*

His secretary said of Newton: "I never knew him to take any recreation or pastime, either in riding out to take the air, walking, bowling or any other exercise whatever, thinking all hours lost that were not spent in his studies." However: *"...he was very curious in his garden, which was never out of order, in which he would at some seldom time take a short walk or two, not enduring to see a weed in it... When he has sometimes taken a turn or two, he has made a sudden stand, turn'd himself about, run up the stairs like another Archimedes, and with a eureka fall to write on his desk, standing without giving himself the leisure to draw a chair to sit down on... In his chamber he walked so very much you might have thought him to be educated at Athens among the Aristotelian sect [the Peripatetics]... In winter time he was a lover of apples and sometimes at night would eat a small roasted quince."*

In two letters to Oldenburg in September and October 1676, Newton is seen in the role of a country gentleman inquiring about the best apple trees for making cider. He says that the famous Red Streaks, which make fine cider elsewhere, make harsh cider in Lincolnshire. He asks with what fruit they

should be mixed, in what proportion, and what degree of ripeness; should they be pressed as soon as gathered, or should they be pared. *"Our gardeners,"* he says, *"find more profit in cherry trees."* The famous apple tree at Woolsthorpe was the variety known in Lincolnshire as *Flower of Kent*. The apple is shaped like a pear, red streaked with yellow and green and rather flavourless.

Newton had considerable ability as a mechanic. As a boy he made kites, paper lanterns, sundials, windmills, wooden clocks and water clocks. Later he ground and polished lenses, prisms and burning glasses to make two reflecting telescopes. De Villamil thought he might have made the "Newton Chair" now in the Royal Society Library, the only piece of his furniture that has come down to us. He sat for portraits in this

chair; it was later used by Sir Joshua Reynolds and at the dedication of Newton's statue at Grantham in 1856. Newton's secretary said that he made and altered his brick furnace himself without troubling a bricklayer. He made a fine improvement in optics by observing some boys blow up soap bubbles.

## The Arts

Newton was not interested in poetry, although he may have written the ten lines of indifferent verse under the portrait of Charles I that he owned. Lord Radnor said that a friend once asked him: *"Sir Isaac, what is your opinion of poetry?"* His answer was: *"I'll tell you that of Barrow; he said that poetry was a kind of ingenuous nonsense."*

Newton was also not particularly interested in art and despised collectors. He said of Lord Pembroke: *"Let him have but a stone doll and he is satisfied. I can't imagine the utility of such studies; all their pursuits are below nature."*

He had his portrait painted by Charles Jervas and presented it to the Royal Society, *"for which he had their thanks."* The inventory of his possessions listed 210 prints, 19 lithographs, 4 pieces of tapestry, a figure cut in ivory of Sir Isaac in a glass frame, 13 India prints, 6 gold rings, 1 cut onyx stone, 39 silver medals and 1,896 books. De Villamil believed that Mead, who was Newton's physician and a famous collector, commissioned David le Marchand to make for him, from life, the fine ivory bust of Newton which is now



in the British Museum and, at the same time, had him make the small relief portrait listed previously, which he presented to Newton. Crimson seems to have been Newton's favourite colour, or perhaps it was that of Mrs. Conduitt, his niece and housekeeper. The inventory mentions crimson mohair curtains, a crimson mohair bed and crimson "sattee."

The artistic side of music does not seem to have interested Newton, but Stukeley heard him say that operas were very fine entertainment, though there was also too much of a good thing, like a surfeit at dinner. *"I went to the last opera. The first act gave me the greatest pleasure. The second quite tired me. At the third I ran away."*

### Mathematics

Newton found in musical harmony the principle of law and order of the cosmos. According to More: "He thought Pythagoras' music of the spheres was intended to typify gravity, and as he makes the sounds and notes depend on the size of the strings, so gravity depends on the density of matter." He believed that multiples of harmonic ratios, based on Euclid, furnished those ratios that afford pleasure to the eye in architectural designs and to the ear in music.

He also made an ingenious attempt to construct a universal language based on philosophical principles though he never completed it. His main principle was the formation of words from arbitrary roots by the addition of prefixes and suffixes that modified their meaning. About 1699, he drew up a plan to rectify the Julian calendar, which he demonstrated to have advantages over the recently adopted Gregorian calendar. Newton made the first satisfactory life insurance tables and laid the mathematical foundations on which our textbooks in algebra and geometry are still written.

A curious piece of information pertaining to Newton is found in a book published in 1714, *The Inn-Play or Cornish-Hugg Wrestler*. The author, Sir Thomas Parkyns, who lived in the town of Bunny, near Grantham, says: "The Use and Application of the Mathematicks here in Wrestling, I owe to Sir Isaac Newton, Mathematicks Proffessor of Trinity College in Cambridge, who seeing nay Inclination that Way, invited me to his public Lectures, for which I thank him."

### Mystical Leanings

Newton was a mystic too, and quotations from Jacob Boehme's works were found among his papers. His affinity to the Rosicrucians is perhaps suggested by the addition in his own library of *The Fame and Confession of the Fraternity of R.C., Commonly of the Rosie Cross* by Eugenius Philalethes (Thomas Vaughan). On the flyleaf is inscribed in Newton's hand:

*"Is. Newton. Donum Mr. Doyley. R.C. the founder of ye Rosy crucian society (as the story goes) was born anno 1378 dyed anno 1484, his body was found anno 1604 & within a year or two (when ye new Starrs in Cygnus & Serpentarius shone) did ye society put out their fame, Or rather anno 1613 as Michael Maierus affirms in his book de legibus Fra ternitatis R.C. cap 17, printed anno 1618 & in his symbola aurea mensa dated in December 1616 where (pag 290) he notes that ye book of Fame & confession were printed at Francford in autumn 1616."*



*Newton's birthplace at Woolsthorpe*

Newton may also have had an interest in the Society of Druids. It is said that a Druid meeting was held at his London house and Stukeley, who was one of Newton's closest friends during the last nine years of his life, was the Arch-Druid. In the *London Journal* (1762-1763), James Boswell quotes Dr. Johnson as saying: "Sir Isaac Newton set out as an infidel, but came to be a very firm believer."

### His Universal Stature

One of the first American appraisals of Newton is found in the inaugural oration of one Walter Minto



at Princeton University in 1788. He says:

*“Perhaps no man was ever more praised than Sir Isaac Newton; and perhaps no man ever deserved so much to be praised. For, to the most penetrating sagacity, the most exalting genius, and the most unwearied patience, he joined the highest degree of modesty, temperance and uprightness. He loved science for its own sake, and because it conducted him to the Supreme Cause of All.”*

In one of Newton’s manuscripts entitled *Notanda chymica* he makes one of his very few allusions to America in saying: *“Populi Americani in Peru aurum mollificare norunt ut instar cerae digitis tractetur.”* [The American people in Peru have the knowledge of a method to mollify gold so that it can easily be kneaded by hand].

Newton appears almost in the role of a war correspondent in a letter he wrote from London on 20 October 1711 to a Mr. Greenwood at Rotterdam. The British had sent an expedition against Quebec, consisting of 10 ships of the line, with several smaller vessels and transports carrying upward of 5,000 soldiers under Brigadier General Hill. Ignorance of navigation and a violent storm caused a heavy loss in transports and men.

Benjamin Franklin came very near to meeting Newton. Franklin had arrived in London on December 24, 1724, just before his 19th birthday. He took work as a compositor at S. Palmer’s and continued there during most of 1725. He says in his *Autobiography* that a Dr. Lyons, *“...introduced me to Dr. [Henry] Pemberton, at Batson’s Coffee house, who promis’d to give me an opportunity, some time or other, of seeing Sir Isaac Newton, of which I was extremely desirous; but this never happened.”*

He did, however, meet Sir Hans Sloane, who was secretary and later president of the Royal Society. There is a story in England that Franklin set part of the type for Pemberton’s *View of Newton’s Philosophy* printed by Palmer in 1728. Franklin mentions composing Wollaston’s *Religion of Nature* but no evidence can be found that he worked on Pemberton’s book while at Palmer’s.

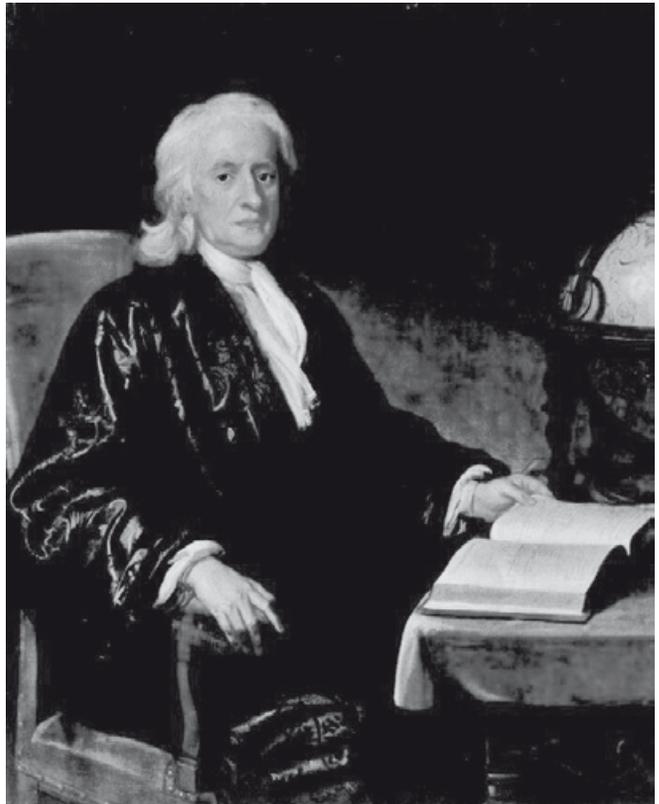
Sir Henry Dale, then president of the Royal Society, said at the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1942: *“We in Britain regard Isaac Newton as still, beyond all challenge, the greatest of our men of science.”* On the same occasion, Professor Vavilov, president of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., wrote:

*“The fundamental principles of Newton’s physics... have stood the hard test of time marvellously well and have fully retained their vast significance to this day... There is no doubt that Newton’s atomistic conceptions raise him to an even higher level in our eyes, and make him an even more attractive and unique figure. It may be said that Newton saw through classical physics, right down into its profoundest depths and right out into its ultimate scope.”*

And Andrade followed in saying: *“Newton was capable of greater sustained mental effort than any man, before or since.”*

Perhaps there is still a vast wealth of ideas lying hidden in Newton’s works, awaiting zealous students to discover and use them. Buffon said *“genius is patience”* and Newton modestly remarked, *“if I have done any service this way, it is due to nothing but industry and patient thought.”* Laplace said of the *Principia*: *“This is the best book that ever was written.”* When it was published in 1687, the price was about 9 shillings.

*Isaac Newton, it has been said, changed alchemy into chemistry, legend into history, astrology into astronomy, and magic into physics.*



*Painting of Isaac Newton in his later years when his academic works had been acknowledged as being among the greatest ever made to science.*



## *Discipleship on Trial* by Raymund Andrea

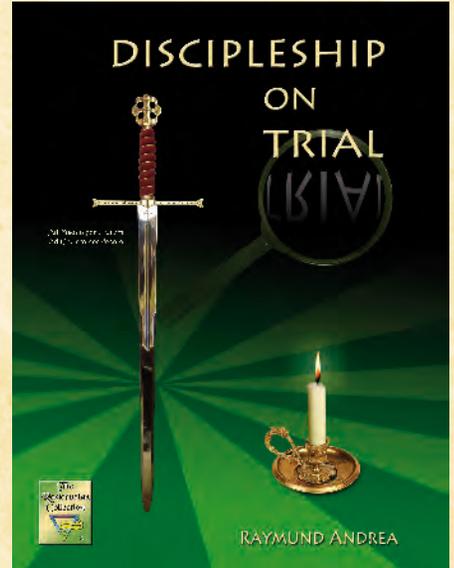


THIS BOOK WAS written against the backdrop of the darkest days of the Second World War, when cities across Europe were being bombed from the air each evening. The momentous events of two world wars in the space of twenty five years had markedly affected the psyche of nations and brought humanity to a crossroads in history.

What was also facing a crossroads was "discipleship," a concept the author eloquently develops in this book. No longer could spiritual and esoteric orders remain safe behind their outdated traditions and theoretical musings. A time for radical transformation had arrived, but few had embraced it.

During the two great conflicts of the period, statesmen led the way in adapting to a rapidly changing world while many esoteric aspirants were tied to worn out slogans of esoteric philosophy and secrecy, and proving themselves utterly incapable of bringing about the changes needed.

Forcefully advocating a disciple "warrior spirit," Andrea does not imply militancy for its sake alone, but encourages a "fighting mentality" to be used in the service of others.

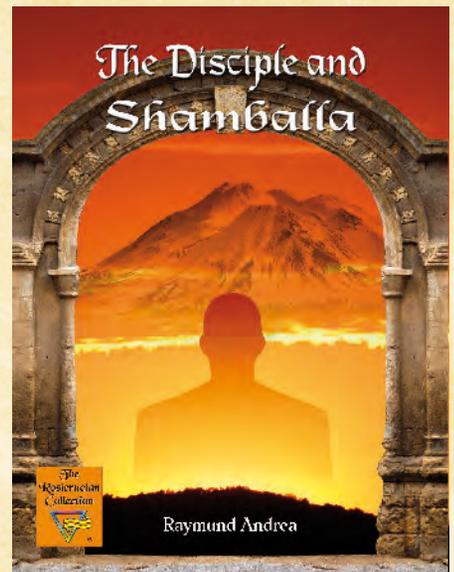


## *The Disciple and Shamballa* by Raymund Andrea

WRITTEN IN 1960, Andrea's last major work gives an unsurpassed account of the highest altitudes of the "mystic way," the universal path of spiritual enlightenment. One cannot help but be moved by the gentle urgency of his spiritual devotion to the highest realms of holiness.

Through proximity to the spiritual realm of Shamballa, the humble soul overcomes the "nemesis of Karma" and draws upon the source of infinite creative power to accomplish a remarkable transformation. Andrea outlines the life of the advanced student who has passed through a hidden portal to a secret inner life of instruction, far from the comforts of the armchair mystic. The living experience of such a person is replete with trials and tribulations that serve as catalysts for ever greater advancement and achievement.

Mental creation through visualisation and the application of will is a crucial part of the technique of spiritual advancement given by Andrea. When applied correctly, an inner alchemy is begun as the student increasingly comes under the numinous influence of Shamballa. The student's life from that moment on is redirected wholly and exclusively in accordance with the holy will of inner Master.



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