

— ROSICRUCIAN —
BEACON



September 2024, Vol 33, No.4





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Cover spread

The village of Grassington in the Yorkshire Dales is mentioned in the Domesday Book.





by James Wilson

Gratitude



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Butterflies: istock.com / Vladimir18



I am enjoying a walk in the beautiful countryside of East Sussex. I caught a bus to Lewes from my home village of Isfield. The walk takes me from Lewes, along the River Ouse for about a mile and a half to a quaint hamlet called Hamsey and, from there, cuts across cultivated fields, through the village of Barcombe, follows a disused railway track and then picks up the river again back to Isfield. The route is approximately seven miles and it is a walk that I have done many times over the years during all four seasons and I never tire of it.

Today though it is mid-May, the temperature is a comfortable 18 degrees, and the sky looks peaceful with low cumulus clouds hovering quietly above me, so low in fact that, with a little imagination, I feel I could take a deep breath and blow them away. It is a pleasant day and so agreeable to be able to walk outdoors once again in a T-shirt after what seems to have been an interminably long, cold and wet winter.

Spring truly is the most wonderful time of the year. During the last three miles, I have witnessed so much of the very finest of God's creation.

Spring truly is the most wonderful time of the year. During the last three miles, I have witnessed so much of the very finest of God's creation. The trees and hedgerows are now fully awake, expanding and filling the landscape after a period of skeletal dormancy and my surroundings are a lush green once more. Birdsong fills the air all around me, washing over me and delighting me with its variety, uplifting my spirits. I stop to listen and I can hear a wren, a blackbird, a song thrush, and a blackcap, all striking vocalists. They are not trying to compete with each other, they are merely making their presence known to their rivals of the same species while at the same time hoping to attract a mate.

After all, it is spring and time to act. And among these musical superstars, trying their very best to make themselves heard above this sublime ensemble, I catch the monotonous squeaky call of the chiffchaff, the plaintive call of a cuckoo and the sweet and ubiquitous song of the robin. The birds too are making the most of

this short season; they are instinctively looking for mates now, which will then lead to nest building and brooding – perpetuating the life cycle.

The riverbanks and the surrounding fields and hedgerows are teeming with wildflowers, each a little jewel of vibrant and joyful colour huddled among the gentler and more serene green of the grasses and leaves. The horse chestnut too is in full bloom, standing tall and looking proud with its white and pink flowers standing upright on the stem and providing a rich source of pollen and nectar for the many insects that will take advantage. And, as if all this isn't enough, I have the butterflies and dragonflies to keep me company too. I am always charmed by the presence of these colourful and charismatic creatures.

It is at times like this, alone with Mother Nature, when I feel completely at ease in Her company, and I am able to empty my head of work-related thoughts, trivial matters and the daily news of alarming worldwide events. As I walk, my surroundings offer an endless source of pleasure for my senses but, after walking some distance and enjoying nature, I make a point of turning my attention inward and try and connect with a deeper part of myself; I begin a walking meditation if you like. As I do so it is not long before I feel a sense of gratitude welling up within me and I begin to cogitate on the things that I have to be grateful for, just so I can still achieve a walk like this of several miles at the age of 62.



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I am not yet old by any means but, as we are all aware, the body changes with time and age. As a young man I undertook many physical challenges. I walked 500 miles across northern Spain. I also ran a full marathon and even climbed Mont Blanc! I don't relate these things to boast, merely to make a point. The body changes, as do the desires and I couldn't imagine doing such things now. A seven-mile walk is more than enough for me these days and the gentle countryside of Sussex is actually more appealing to me now than the dramatic mountains of the Alps! Yes, I am getting older and I am no longer drawn to such adventures. It is as it should be I suppose, and I accept it.

So, as I walk, I feel an immense gratitude; but why should I be grateful that I can walk these few miles?

So, as I walk, I feel an immense gratitude; but why should I be grateful that I can walk these few miles? After all, I make a point of looking after myself by eating healthily, drinking plenty of water, keeping active and daily practising certain Rosicrucian exercises to maintain good health and strength. These are my decisions, and it is my will and self-discipline that makes it possible. So, for what and to whom exactly am I grateful? Well, it is quite obvious to me; it is the knowledge I have been blessed with that makes all this possible. It is the knowledge that I am grateful for. A strong will and discipline are of no



use for maintaining health if you don't actually know how to do it! The exercises we are given in the Rosicrucian monographs are indispensable for our wellbeing, the knowledge regarding both our physical body and psychic being and the power of thought is a blessing indeed.

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The daily concerns of eating, drinking, exercising and thinking correctly to keep our bodies properly maintained should be common knowledge and easily applied, but are they? My experience and observations over the years tell me otherwise. I have to question if I would be so concerned about these matters if I had not become a Rosicrucian. Probably not. So, yes, the knowledge and the source of that knowledge that allows me to maintain good health and gives me the strength to enjoy long walks is something that I should most certainly be grateful for.

What else should I be grateful for that allows me to enjoy this walk? I decide to sit and rest for a while and think about it. I remove my boots and socks and let my hot feet feel the cooling moisture of the long grass and contemplate this question. Let's see, how about the fact that I live in a country that is not currently at war and my home environment is not beset by the terrible troubles that beleaguer some countries. I am able to roam freely, without having the fear of a missile attack or a sniper, without the fear of landmines scattered indiscriminately around the land where I walk. I am not limited in my movements by imposed curfews or guarded barricades. The only barbed wire I encounter on my walks is placed there to prevent the sheep from roaming. Something to be grateful for indeed. My heart starts to sink as I think about these matters and I am reminded just how many people suffer such horrors. But enough! This is not a day for such gloomy thoughts. I say a prayer for the afflicted, put my boots back on and continue walking and thinking.

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So, living in a peaceful country allows me the freedom to live my life as I wish, free from the awful fears that many have to live with, and free to walk the picturesque footpaths of the Sussex countryside. And I realise that it is the word **FREEDOM** that is the real key to my gratitude. Freedom is perhaps the greatest of life's gifts that we could possibly receive. Freedom to roam safely, freedom to think as we wish and to express those thoughts without persecution, freedom to be



independent in the way we dress and freedom to read what we wish, freedom to vote for our leaders and freedom to peacefully protest without fear of arrest, imprisonment and torture. Freedom to make choices. Yes, freedom is indeed a precious gift. Yet, how many people who have



this freedom actually recognise the fact that they have it, are grateful for it and don't take it for granted? I'll leave you to answer that question.

I have now reached the river again that will lead me back to my village, and as I don't need to think about the route that I know so well, I continue with this line of enquiry. After further thought, I realise that another factor that allows me to enjoy this walk is prosperity. I have the freedom and health to be able to earn a reasonable living. This living gives me the means to enjoy the liberty to take a Friday off and savour this fine weather while it lasts. I'm not obliged to work two jobs, working 70 or 80 hours a week just to make ends meet or even just to sustain a certain level of poverty and allowing for little personal time.



My living gives me the means to buy a decent pair of walking boots and a waterproof jacket should I need it. It also means I was able to purchase a quality pair of binoculars which enhances my ability to watch the wildlife that I love so much. It means I can put food and clean water in my rucksack to sustain me over these miles, I need not go hungry or thirsty. I don't have, what would be considered in this country, great wealth, but it is enough for a comfortable life and allows me to do many of the things I want to do. I have so much to be grateful for.

Let's face it, most of us do have such a lot to be grateful for if we but stop and think about it and perhaps constant gratitude should be practised by all, even when life is difficult because one can always find something to really appreciate in their lives; the very fact that we are imbued with life itself, could be reason enough for being grateful and expressing that gratitude frequently. As Rosicrucians we are advised that our prayers should always begin with an expression of gratitude and regularly expressing this emotion is certainly an important mindset for anyone treading a spiritual path as it aids in the spiritual evolution and development of the personality. It is not an onerous thing to do, in fact it is remarkably



simple; we just need to make it a daily habit.

I have done thinking on these matters for now and my walk is coming to an end, and as I approach my village, walking through a sea of yellow created by the tens of thousands of field buttercups all around me, a small flock of lively linnets fly right in front of me, chattering away as they pass as if to say:

Yes James, we know exactly what you're talking about. We are well fed and watered too, our feathers are healthy and we are flying freely. Our lives are also good.

It is the perfect end to a perfect walk and I am grateful. I express this to the God of my Heart. I have freedom, peace, health and prosperity. I wish these things for all. So mote it be!





The Language of Music

istock.com / Urupong

by **Amelia**

The following article is in memory of the Italian-American Rosicrucian composer Paul Creston (1906-1985) who wrote over 100 major works, some of which were conducted by such luminaries as Stokowski, Toscanini and Szell. He once wrote an article for a Rosicrucian audience about the universality of music as a language, and this article ends with a brief excerpt of his thoughts on this.

What is meant by the word *'language'* is something we all think we know; and up to a point, we do, at least the verbal part. We know it involves the vocal use of different sounds that carry specific meanings, such as the sound *'mama'* which may be one of the very first sounds with meaning that our human species used. How old is language use, the verbal sort? We may never be certain about this of course, but a minority consensus among anthropologists is that as far as our species, *homo sapiens*, is concerned, verbal expressions of communication, using specific words, is likely to pre-date our emergence as a distinct hominid species.

In modern times, with the verbal or written use of words and sentences forming small packages of meaningful information, and steadily larger and larger





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Below: istock.com / Daisy-Daisy

assemblages of words, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, books, volumes of books, etc., we acquire ever more complex and useful forms of information that assist us in uncountable ways to navigate our way safely through life.

Apart from our verbal and written expressions of meaning, are there other means of transmitting information that do not involve verbal or written forms of information exchange? Well, where do we start? If we consider information exchange between animals, as well as humans, then there is a very wide range of *'languages'* available and, by far the majority of these, we know virtually nothing about.

In the case of humans, take for example the art of *'correctly'* looking at people in order to convey accurate though subtle messages to them. Then there are hand gestures that convey meaning too, almost without our knowing it, often combined with our verbal expressions to enhance the meanings behind the gestures. And then there are olfactory *'words'* and even whole *'sentences'* that give us indications about the state of health of a person, even without looking at them or even hearing them speak. Many animal species are expert at this and get to know the nature of their neighbours simply by smelling the scent markings they left behind. Can these scent markings be viewed as forms of language? Yes, they can, for they convey information to specific target audiences and, not only a word or two, the markings provide vital information about each creature that left a scent marking, information such

as the sex of the depositor, its health, how long ago the scent was deposited, etc.

When it comes to hand gestures, these were long-ago formalised into sign-languages which are essential for deaf people when communicating with the world. And even the manner in which we walk also conveys meaning, even if we are not objectively conscious of that meaning. An arrogant swagger, indicates a difficult person to deal with. The dainty skip and hop of a child conveys carefree, happy,



innocence. A hobbling gait tells us of a person who has a mobility disability and tells us as well of the strength of character of the person to continue through life on equal terms with all others.

But for us humans, the most important language, from an emotional and spiritual standpoint, is the *'language'* of music. It is, without doubt, close to the top of all the more subtle means of conveying emotional and spiritual meaning between people that humans have devised over the hundreds of millennia we have been part of the species homo sapiens.

The literature on music is massive, especially as an art form, though also as a thoroughly intellectual and decidedly dry scientific and mathematical enquiry into its many other forms of symmetry formation and breaking. The actual *'language'* of music is something we are seldom directly aware of, even though it transmits information to us in the form of heightened intellectual, emotional and elevated synchronisation between our outer, conscious self and our inner, spiritual self. But when referring to literature about music, the communication of information about it is still shared through words, sentences, paragraphs, etc., which describe the music for us in intellectual terms. But that is

not what is meant by the *'language of music.'* So, let us forget, for now, any written or spoken information transmission in music, for the *'language'*, if we can call it that, is subtle in the extreme and far from similar to what we ordinarily understand as information exchange.

Hands as Communicators of Information

As referred to above, sign language is crucial in modern society, for without it, there would be no way for hearing-impaired people to communicate with the world outside themselves. Rudimentary forms of sign language can be seen in active use in all the higher primates, particularly in our closest primate relative, those endearing and highly intelligent creatures, chimpanzees. It is profoundly touching to watch documentaries on chimp interactions with each other and to realise that we humans, before we had gained the ability speak, were once powerfully dependent upon sign language too.

And even more touching is the realisation that simple things like holding hands, as expressions of affection or loyalty towards each other, as chimpanzees and other primates do among themselves, have come down to us,



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touch someone we love. But when it is done, it is often done with a great deal of entirely subconscious, emotional outpouring of love and affection. That expression of love is indeed information of a very high, extremely complex sort, the sort of *'language'* that only the deepest parts of our being can appreciate, understand and delight in.

Music is much like this. We listen to it, conscious, alert attention, or more often, as pleasing background sounds entering our subconscious mind without our knowing specifically what the information is that is being transmitted to us. That information, that message we are receiving, is through a sort of language in its own right, just as sign language is a true language and even eye movement and the manner in which we look at each other, or the manner in which we walk or act in the presence of others, transmits information and are therefore languages in their own right.

almost entirely unchanged, into the modern era as things that humans still do with each other every day. Just imagine if we could somehow be transported for a few minutes back 200,000 years ago to see an early homo sapiens mother walking through the savannah of Africa, hand-in-hand with her child. Or even further back, to the early emergence of Homo Erectus, some 1.9 million years ago, and witness the same scene of a mother walking upright, hand-in-hand, with her much loved, vulnerable child.

That unique use of a primate's hand must be one of the most endearing, beautiful expressions of love that we have inherited. Hand use, for humans, is almost always done automatically, without deliberate thought, yet with meaning. And it is a powerful extension today of our verbal and written expressions of information exchange, even though those primaeval hand motions almost certainly far preceded our ability to communicate through speech.

Music as a Language

And now, back to the main theme, namely, music as a language, as a communicator of deep emotional and spiritual content between the inner, subconscious mind and the outer subjective and even objective consciousness. Like hand movements with sign language or hand use, when caressing the hair of a deeply-loved life partner, for example, there is no objective thought process involved in those automatic expressions of meaning. We do not think in an objective manner what we are doing when we casually

With music comes, not only inspiration, but meaning and purpose too...

As long as information is transmitted from one creature to another, we have language; and with music, that language is one which affects us at a very deep, though primarily subconscious, level. For thousands of years, music has been played by composers with the specific purpose of transmitting information of a very rare, special, even spiritual sort. Music is pre-eminently one of the very few genuine languages of the emotions. A tender glance at one whom we love, or a gentle hand placed on the shoulder of an old person whose welfare we care for; these are languages too, though only occasionally are they as overwhelmingly powerful in the transmission of information and emotions as music can be at its best.

Pure music, without the verbal parts of operas or songs, tell no stories; there are no pictures to paint, no visual images, no poetry, no tales to tell, except in very rare instances where such things are conjured up without even trying, and purely as a result of the exquisite beauty of what is being heard. What music is so overwhelmingly good at, is allowing the emotions to express themselves in fluid, wholly subconscious ways that both heal us and bring peace, happiness and harmony into our being. This it does especially for those who understand the language of music more precisely and



convincingly than anything spoken that they hear; for music begins where all other languages end. As the revered French poet and novelist Victor Hugo put it:

Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent.

Of course music alone is not always the peak, for that requires words as well. Words, expressed as song, are a fusion of two extremely powerful language forms which, on rare occasions, take us to the deepest and most sublime fusion of emotions and information that we can experience in human form. But even when there are no words, no singing, no story-line, when music is expressed purely as a non-verbal art form, it is a language almost exclusively of the emotions, devoid of all intellectual analysis and, in many cases, existing primarily to heal. Pure music without a story-line, without words, is one of the greatest human-created transmission forms of emotions and often self-generated information between the soul and the deepest recesses of our earthly being. With pure music comes, not only *inspiration*, but subliminal *meaning* and *purpose* as well. Almost always though, it is so deeply embedded within the chords, rhythms and instruments that no intellectual analysis can fully do justice to what is being experienced.

Summarising

In summary, I see the sharing of information of all sorts as coming to us through just a few essential *'languages'*, only a tiny fraction of which we understand. Although they differ from each other, and are often entirely overlooked, they all operate through one or more of our five primary senses: sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.

Sound is perhaps the most dominant and expressive one. But remember always that we are multi-layered beings ranging from our outermost frivolity to the greatest depths of meaning and purpose residing in the heart of our being. The languages of smell and taste are more than likely the most *primaeval* of all our senses; any dog or cat can tell you that! And our tactile sense, the ability to touch something and gain information about the object we are holding or stroking, that too is from our deepest, most ancient past. And finally, as for the things we can see, what an extraordinarily complex and massive amount of information comes to us through that language too. It is probably the most wide-ranging and useful of all our senses, and possessing languages as well, a multitude of

them, all adapted and suited to our vision of life and how we believe it should unfold.

The audible and visual languages, those involving sounds and visual representations of sounds, these are the most vital of all languages we use daily, almost constantly, without any objectively conscious direction, and with only the slightest of effort. If we could not, so effortlessly, communicate with each other through written words, spoken words, or though words expressed through sign languages, or words set to beautiful music, we would be massively disadvantaged and certainly, we would, in evolutionary terms, be far below the levels of our closest primate relatives.

And finally, within those audible languages, and quite specifically and to the point, the languages of music and their ability to communicate with us through our emotions and our deepest spiritual yearnings, that language group, those languages of music, are, in a spiritual sense, of as great importance for our survival as balanced emotional, spiritual beings as are the languages of our other physical senses.

Written and spoken languages are the most useful of all languages when dealing with information of historical importance. Whereas they enable us to remember our past in this life, they also, through written literature, enable us to *'pseudo-remember'* multiple pasts that far pre-date our present lifespan on earth. They are the most dominant, logical and clear methods of sharing the sort of information that is of immediate, practical benefit on a day-to-day basis, and are the essential bread-and-butter nourishment we constantly need in order to live as the successful species we are.

I am sure you know, and maybe daily experience, the subtle healing that music brings into our lives through the highly refined, subtle *'Language of Music.'* Before I end though, I will present a short excerpt from an article written by the Rosicrucian composer Paul Creston (1906-1985). His approach is very much that of a composer with mastery of the technical intricacies of music.

Spoken Language

Interestingly, a careful analysis of the elements of spoken language has revealed historical, structural and functional parallels in the language of music. I shall touch briefly upon the historical parallels. There are seven principal theories of the origins



of language, and there are seven as well for the origins of music. The changes in semantics, the meaning of words, are paralleled in the changes in the use of chords. The evolution of verbal language from simple to complex, from monosyllabic to polysyllabic words; these are analogous in music to the use of triads (three note structures) to complex chords, and from complex chords to polychords. We must consider at length, however, the structural and functional parallels between verbal or written languages and the language of music. As an introduction, I quote a passage from the *'Voices of Man'* by the great linguist, Mario Pei:

As with verbal language, the function of musical language is to communicate.

All [verbal] languages, without exception, have a set of phonemes or sounds, which are distinctively significant to the speakers. They have a set of words which betoken actions and concepts; a set of grammatical forms which may be chiefly morphological [consisting of endings or changes within the words to convey modifications of basic meanings], or chiefly syntactical [based on the order in which the words are uttered].

Language and Music

To juxtapose the structural parallels of language to music:

1. In language, we have letters and symbols for sounds; in music, we have notes and symbols for tones or musical sounds.
2. In language, we have etymology, the origin of words; in music, we have the origin of chords.
3. In language, we have words, diction [choice of words], and syntax [order of words]; in music, we have chords, harmonic progression [choice of chords] and order of chords.
4. Grammar is the part of language which deals with the principles governing the correct use of

language; the theory of music is analogous to grammar.

5. With language, a sentence is a related group of words expressing a complete thought; a musical phrase is a natural division of the melodic line comparable to a sentence of speech.
6. Tone of voice and inflection govern, to a great extent, semantics or meaning; similarly, dynamics, nuances and inflection govern expression in music.
7. Finally, we can juxtapose language dialects with folk-songs and popular ballads, and written and extemporaneous speech with composed and improvised music.

As with verbal language, the function of musical language is to communicate. Verbal language can express and communicate ideas, describe scenes, relate stories, discuss philosophical theories, and also engender emotions. Music, without the benefit of text, can express and communicate only emotions or moods. That is the only difference between verbal language and music.

It is commonly believed that music is a vague, esoteric language. On the contrary, the meaning of a well wrought significant piece of music is so precise that there is not one word that can fully express a particular emotion. As Mendelssohn so aptly put it:

The thoughts which are expressed to me by a piece of music which I love are not too indefinite to be put into words, but on the contrary, too definite.

Musical language begins where verbal language ends. It is vaster by far, and a single chord can engender a feeling which no word or synonym can effectively describe.

That is the spiritual quality that even the most humble of humans instantly recognise. Without thought, and swept up to great heights of attunement with the source of all existence, the deep emotion of the moment is often one remembered for life.





Faces of the Bayon temple in Angkor Thom.

istock.com / AKDAWUT14

by Mary Jones

ANGKOR

Microcosm of Heaven on Earth

Angkor has long been a fascinating mystery to Europeans. Like ancient Rome, the city was not built in a day; it evolved over the centuries. Today, its ruins lie in a park that covers some 300 square kilometres. Previous archaeological mapping work of the city and its surroundings identified it as the largest settlement complex of the pre-industrial world. Recently, following a LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) survey, which found an entirely, previously

undocumented, formally planned urban landscape on a vast scale, Angkor is now known to be much larger than we previously thought.

The name Angkor always seemed mysterious to me. What did it mean? Was there some special inner meaning behind the name? Well, no, it is a Khmer form of the Sanskrit word *nagara* meaning 'city.' But what a great city it was, ruled by generations of *Devarajas* (god-kings). After



the god-king had formally consecrated the city, he received a 'royal name' similar to what was done in ancient Egypt, where a prominent feature, inherited from India, included the suffix 'varman', meaning 'shield' or 'protection.' When the god-king died, he received a posthumous name, like the Chinese Emperors did. From then on, they were known and remembered only by that name.

Khmer architecture is cosmological in design. Each temple is an image of the universe, a microcosm of the greater macrocosm. Their temple sanctuaries, in the form of towers, are not meant to be places of assembly like Christian churches, and the layout of the temples parallels the ancient Hindu concept of the cosmos. George Coedès explained it as follows:

In the Brahmanic concept of the world, there is a central continent, called Jambudvīpa, at the heart of which rises the cosmic mountain, *Mt. Meru*. On its summit are five peaks, surrounded by the planets. Jambudvīpa is encircled by six continents in the shape of concentric rings and by seven oceans, the seventh of which is bounded on the outside by a large stone wall. On the summit of Mt. Meru is the

city of Brahma, the world of the gods, surrounded by the eight guardians of the points of the compass.

When you walk into one of the great complexes such as Angkor Wat, you are in fact crossing the threshold into another world, a world of the mysterious and the divine.

Angkor Wat

Khmer art reached the height of its glory in the 12th century, when *Angkor Wat (Temple City)*, the most balanced, harmonious and perfect Khmer temple, was built by the great warrior king, *Suryavarman II* (1113-1150 CE). It was his crowning glory. Although I visited many of the temples while I was there, this one temple epitomised for me the ancient Egyptian concept of 'Maat' or the similar ancient Persian word 'Asha', both words denoting 'Cosmic Order.'

Of all the Khmer temples, Angkor is the most ordered and harmonious. It is also the largest, occupying a rectangle 1189 metres from north to south and 1371 metres from east to west. Unlike most other Khmer



Angkor Wat Temple, Aerial View.





istock.com / eifred

Ancient Bayon temple in Angkor Thom.

temples though, it faces west and is surrounded by a moat 183 metres wide, crossed by a raised causeway. This serves to increase the feeling of crossing a threshold into an unknown world, the same sort of feeling one gets when entering a modern Rosicrucian temple.

In the jungle at sunset was the best time to sit and look and feel joy at seeing Angkor Wat. I was awed by the ruins, bathed in a golden light, the silhouetted grandeur of its five towers against the sky, and the last rays of the sun glistening on the waters of the moat. I had been amazed by the skill and patience of those long dead artisans who had chiselled breathtakingly beautiful bas-relief murals on its walls and towers, each facial expression subtly different from its neighbour's. The temple is beautiful, even romantic in a way, though incredibly impressive and grand.

One really needs to be there, on the ground, to appreciate what magnificence and order once infused every stone and carving in the buildings. I could never look upon it without experiencing a thrill of delight, a feeling of being caught up in the heavens. It was easy to believe that I was standing in the exact centre of the universe, for the temple was deliberately designed to be a miniature replica of the universe, set in stone, and representing an earthly model of the universe.

What great respect I felt witnessing the deep reverence shown by local, humble Cambodians, removing their shoes before approaching the sanctuaries in the topmost towers to make their obeisance to the ancient statues. I was moved by the mystery of life itself, the journey I had made through life and which had brought me to that mystical place, at this time. And the lives of all the generations who once lived and died here, and who, in some mysterious way, still inhabit these wonderful ruins. All these thoughts and feelings surrounded me in that temple. It was a truly marvellous place to sit and meditate and contemplate the deeper things of life. The feelings I experienced at Angkor Wat will stay with me for the rest of my days. They have changed my life at a very deep level and, for this, I am grateful.

Angkor Thom

The following day I visited another enigmatic part of Angkor, a grandiose work of *Jayavarman VII* (1181-1218 CE), regarded as the greatest Khmer king of all and a fervent Mahayana Buddhist. The king had 200 cyclopean stone likenesses of himself made, each with a facial expression denoting compassion. These were placed on top of the 54 towers of the Bayon, his great temple-mountain in *Angkor Thom (Great City)* an immense square with sides 3.2 kilometres long.





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Ta Prohm (Ancestor 'Brahma') Temple

It is surrounded by 17 kilometres of moats and contains more stone than all the Egyptian pyramids combined. It too was a symbolic microcosm of the universe. In the early morning, the temple was lost in mist; but by midday it shimmered in the dazzling light. By the evening, gilded by the setting sun, it was a scene from a fairytale, gradually fading until all that was visible was its silhouette in the darkness of night.

Later that day, I saw hope and optimism in the window frame of a small, isolated temple, the roof and walls of which had caved in long ago. Portions of a crumbling stone pillar were fastened together with stems of dried grass. There, I experienced complete peace, strolling quiet paths between temple ruins, looking up into the giant vine-hung trees. I was alarmed suddenly by a huge water buffalo gently being led by a small boy along a jungle path. Then, on impulse, he compassionately sidestepped a busy line of ants, and even the buffalo stopped briefly to ensure no ant was harmed.

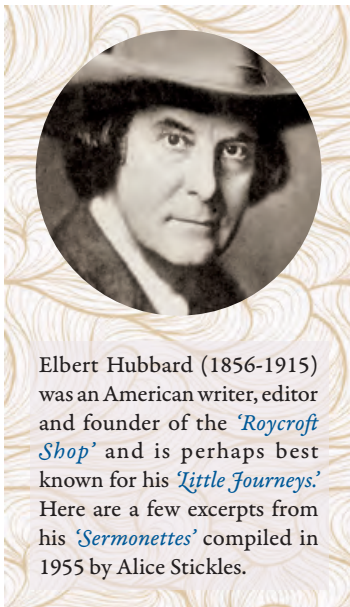
At sunset, I felt anguish at having to leave the serene *Ta Prohm (Ancestor Brahma)* temple which, at the time it was completed in 1186 CE, was called the *Rajavihara (King's monastery)*, dedicated to the Buddhist Bodhisattva *Prajñāparamita (Perfection of Wisdom)*. This was also built by Jayavarman VII, a prolific builder all over the empire.

Beauty and worship have been continuing needs of all people, regardless of eras or cultures. A single lifetime is not near enough to search for and explore the most unusual and satisfying manifestations of reverence and beauty that exist in our world in such abundance, if we will but take time to seek it out. The heights encountered on the way are not only the beauties without, but especially those within. With either though, the steps are often steep, though climbing them once, we gain the courage to climb them again, drawn ever onwards and upwards toward the shrouded mystery of what lies beyond that topmost step.



"Anchorage is what most people pray for when, what we really need, is God's great open sea."

Reminiscing with Elbert Hubbard



Elbert Hubbard (1856-1915) was an American writer, editor and founder of the *'Roycroft Shop'* and is perhaps best known for his *'Little Journeys.'* Here are a few excerpts from his *'Sermonettes'* compiled in 1955 by Alice Stickles.

There is not much true variation in the basic intelligence of people after all; intellect and learning certainly, but not their innate intelligence. The great person is not quite so great as folk think, and the dull person is not quite as stupid as they seem. The difference in our estimates of others lies in the observation that whereas one person is able to get their goods into a shop window, others do not know they have a shop window at all, let alone goods on display to sell.

'The soul knows all things, and knowledge is only remembering', said Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882). A broad statement perhaps, yet, in the silent depths of the subconscious lie myriad truths waiting for the time when their owner calls them forth. And to utilise these stored-up thoughts, we must express them to others. And to express them well, our soul has to soar into the subconscious realm where the net results of new experiences have been stored.



In other words, move away from that ever-present sense of self-consciousness, and enter into a region of partial oblivion, away from the boundaries of time and the limitations of space. Great painters forget everything when standing before their canvas. Accomplished writers are oblivious to their surroundings once the inner muse has taken over. A powerful opera singer floats away on the wings of song and carries the audience with them. The orator pours out their soul for an hour, and it seems as if barely five minutes had passed, so wrapped and lost are they in their exalted theme.

When you reach the heights of sublimity and are expressing your highest and best, you are in a partial trance condition. And all people who enter this condition surprise themselves by the quantity of knowledge and the extent of insight they possess. Some go a little deeper into this trance condition than others and know nothing of the miraculous storing-up of the truth in the cells of the subconscious, jumping to the conclusion that their intelligence is being guided by a spirit not their own. When someone reaches this conclusion, they begin to wither at the top, for they rely on the dead and cease to feed the wellsprings of their subconscious self.

But what do you think is necessary before someone comes into possession of their subconscious treasures? Well, I'll tell you: It is not ease, nor prosperity, nor requited love, nor worldly security. As long as you are satisfied and comfortable, you use only the objective mind and live in the world of sense. But let love be torn from your grasp and flee as a shadow, living only as a

memory in a haunting sense of loss; let death come and the sky shut down over less worth in the world; or stupid misunderstanding and crushing defeat grind you into the dust..., then you may arise, forgetting time and space and self, and take refuge in mansions not made with hands, and find a certain sad, sweet comfort in the contemplations of treasures stored up where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.

And thus, looking out into the Eternal, you forget the present and enter into the land of the subconscious, the Land of Spirit, where yet dwell the Gods of ancient and innocent days. Is it worth the cost?

The Infinite

Self is supreme. To realise that Self is supreme is to rule Self, and allow Self to rule, to be an autocrat, a master over every appetite, ambition and desire. To tame and utilise the appetites is to make them servants to the Self. Those who do not recognise the sacredness of Self are living in a fast-disintegrating world and are ruled by others. To understand Self is to rise above all sorrow, all fear, all pain. It is to attract to Self all and everything you need.

Cosmic Consciousness

Anchorage is what most people pray for when, what we really need, is God's great open sea. It is almost too much to expect that the period of insight and perfect poise should be more than transient; yet it does exist and there is no reason why it should not, in time, become a habit of life.



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Most free Souls who have readied this state of Cosmic Consciousness will testify that insight came first as a thrill, and the periods then gradually extended as mastery became complete. It was a matter of growth, an evolution. Yet growth never proceeds at an even, steady pace, either in the realm of spirit or matter. There are bursts and bounds, throes and throbs, and then times of seeming inaction. But this inaction is only a gathering together of forces for the coming leap; the fallow years are just as natural, just as necessary as the years of plenty.

‘Who shall relieve me of the body of this death?’ cried the Prophet. He had in mind the ancient custom of punishing the murderer by chaining him to the dead body of his victim. Wherever the man went, he had to drag the putrefying corpse. He could not disentangle himself from the result of his evil act. No more horrible punishment could possibly be devised, but Nature has a plan of retribution that is very much akin to it. What more terrible than this: *‘The evil thing you do, shall at once become an integral part of what you are.’*

Owning Things

Do you own the things you possess or do the things you possess own you? Are you the master of the things you own or are the things you own the master of you? The desire to possess merely for the sake of having is a degenerate impulse closely akin to the disease we call *miserliness*. It is a monomania, the substitute of the shadow for the substance of life.

The desire to possess merely for the sake of having is a degenerate impulse closely akin to the disease we call *miserliness*.

A thing is only valuable in so far as it can be used as a means to get something more valuable; all that we possess should be but the means of achieving the supreme end and aim of life; self-development. What will my possessions do for me? Unless we put that question every hour to ourselves, we will become nothing but a gathering machine.

Is our life to be a mania or a real flesh-and-blood exploitation of our faculties? We are only free when we are masters of our instincts; the uncontrolled mania for possessions leads to spiritual, moral and mental suicide.

My Heart goes out to You

Often, we can help each other most by leaving each other alone; at other times, we need a warm hand-grasp and a word of cheer. All the forgiveness I know is humanity’s forgiveness. All the sympathy I know is humanity’s sympathy.

What your condition is in life will not prejudice me, either for or against you. What you have done or not done will not weigh in the scale. If you have stumbled and fallen and been mired in the mud, and have failed to be a friend to yourself, then you, of all people, need friendship and *I am your friend*.

You all belong to my church. I could not exclude you, for if I did, I would then close the door upon myself and be a prisoner, indeed. The spirit of love that flows through me and of which I am a part is your portion, too. The race is one and we trace to a common Divine ancestry.

I offer you no reward for being loyal to me, and surely, I do not threaten you with pain, penalty and dire ill fortune if you are indifferent to me. You cannot win me by praise or adulation. You cannot shut my heart toward you, even though you deny and revile me. I do not ask you to incur obligations or make promises. There are no dues. I do not demand that you shall do this and not do that. I issue no commands.

I cannot lighten your burden and perhaps I should not, even if I could, for people grow strong through bearing burdens. If I can, I will show you how to acquire strength to meet all your difficulties and face the duties of the day. It is not for me to take charge of your life, for surely, I do well if I look after only one person. If you err, it is not for me to punish you. We are punished by our sins, not for them.

Sooner or later, I know you will see that to do right brings good, and to do wrong brings misery. If you will abide by the law, all good things will be yours. I cannot change these laws; I cannot make you exempt from your own blunders and mistakes. And you cannot change the eternal laws for me, even though you were to die for me.





MODERN DEMONS

by **Dennis Kwiatkowski**

In centuries past, demons and devils were feared by large segments of a superstitious population. These personified symbols of evil were regarded as entities whose powers of temptation were considerable and who, by influencing people to do evil, destructive acts, could bring a person to ruin. Today, we live in a more enlightened age and the concept of demons fails to hold the sway it once did over people's minds and emotions. Fortunately, more and more people know today that such symbols of evil are just that: symbols which refer to the baser elements of our existence.

And yet, if the devils of old have lost their power and authority in an era of thinking people, it is also true that they have been replaced with more modern counterparts. These modern demons are just as subtle, just as powerful, and



just as insidious as their Mephistophelean ancestors. The influence they exert upon human lives is just as devastating. Such modern demons are not actual entities, as their predecessors of the past were believed to be. Rather, they are figurative devils, and like their ancient counterparts, they too have names. But the havoc they can wreak is quite real and I will consider two of them: *Procrastination* and *Distraction*.

Procrastination

Procrastination is quite subtle in its effect upon human nature. When our Inner Self urges us to act in a certain way, this demon is quick to speak up. Its motto is: *'Don't hurry. Don't rush to take action. There's plenty of time to get to that. Don't dissipate your energy.'*

In fact, the tendency for procrastination seems to be built into human nature. It is related to the electromagnetic nature of the flow of our life force and corresponds to taking the line of least resistance. It is not an influence we need to be enslaved by. Yet so widespread is its tendency to manifest that we call attention to the necessity of overcoming it in our teachings. The admonition to do quickly what we have decided is best, and to follow it through to the end, has not been lightly quoted from the mid-18th century book *'Unto Thee I Grant the Economy of Life'* or placed in Rosicrucian lessons without due cause: *'Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.'* This is something which needs attention.

Distraction

The second demon is that of distraction. Like procrastination, distraction is alluring in its appeal. The voice of distraction is tempting. It says: *'Please consider me. Give me your attention. This is something you are missing out on in life. Right now, I am most important.'* As a disruptive influence, distraction is all the more prone to manifest in today's society, particularly in Western civilisation, due to the wide variety of entertainment choices, labour-saving technology and high-tech pleasures which are literally placed at our fingertips.

The appeal of distraction may be all the more pronounced in a world filled with tension, stress and confusion, and from which one seeks relief. And yet, in a world where the necessity for productivity on a personal

level is great, where demands are constantly made upon one's time, and where exposure to potentially stressful situations is unavoidable, the need for self-discipline and a set of values or priorities on the part of the individual is mandatory if any constructive end is to be achieved.

The necessity for *discipline* is also a requirement of anyone seeking to overcome the appeals of procrastination and distraction. History abounds with examples of people who accomplished great things through the application of personal discipline. In the area of classical music, for example, the Berlin Philharmonic conductor, Herbert von Karajan, was regarded as one of the greatest conductors of the last century. His international influence upon the art of music making was profound. In the course of his career, it was not unusual to find him as a musical director and conductor of several symphony orchestras while simultaneously holding the directorship of a major opera house and several international festivals thrown in for good measure.

A joke was once circulated in Europe that when von Karajan stepped into a taxi and the driver asked where he wanted to go, the maestro replied: *'It doesn't matter; I've got something going everywhere.'* His hobbies included water-skiing and car racing, among other things. And yet, this very busy man always had time for the two hours of yoga exercises each morning that he felt was essential for his well-being. Only a personal discipline allowed for such accomplishment.

This example, quite arbitrarily drawn from the field of music, is only one of many hundreds that could be cited of individuals who did not allow Procrastination or Distraction to exert undue influence or control in their lives. Accomplishment accompanies action. The successful person is a *doer*. Procrastination and distraction prevent us from doing and they are the enemies of achievement. In fact, in no age have indolence and the scattering of our energies been responsible for the accomplishment of any great achievement.

The Energy of Action

If the successful person in a societal or material sense is a doer, then, even more so, is the mystic a doer. The Rosicrucian teachings stress again and again the importance of putting thought into action, of conducting the exercises in the Order's teachings and applying the



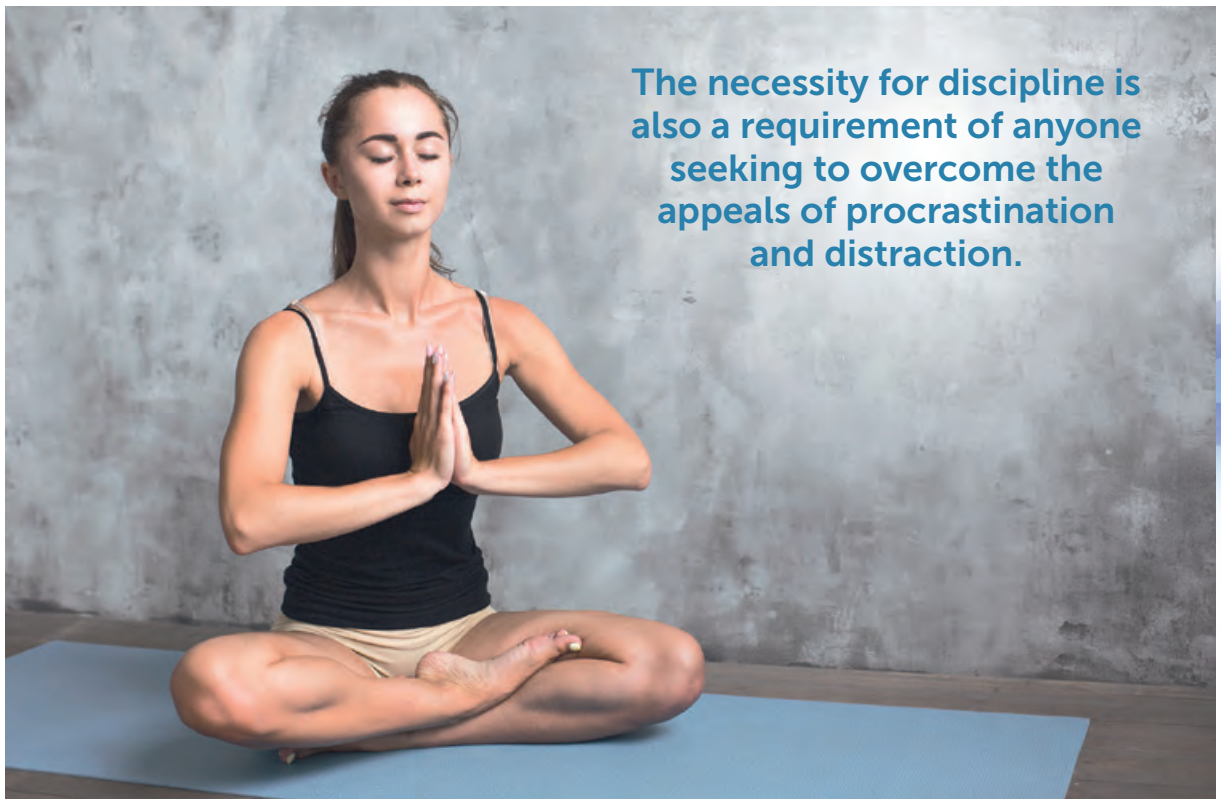
various principles embodied in it. I can recall the keen observation of our beloved past Emperor, Ralph M. Lewis, that people who spend enormous amounts of time, for example, in front of a television set are only experiencing life vicariously.

If the people on the screen were as passive as the people watching the television set, then the TV screen would perpetually be filled with images of people watching a television set. He consistently stressed both the importance of living and experiencing life fully and maintaining a healthy discipline in one's life. His own life was an example of such living, as he was most certainly a doer.

Past British Grand Master, Raymund Andrea, emphasised the need for personal discipline too when he stated: *'The initiate is to live a disciplined life.'* This does not mean that a mystical student becomes some kind of fanatical ascetic who leads a rigorous life of self-abnegation or a life of denial. Neither does it mean that we bite off, so to speak, more than we can

chew or more than we can reasonably accomplish. It does however mean that we put into practice those whisperings of self and inner urges that move our lives into a more positive, productive, healthy and masterly direction. It means that we sincerely apply those things which deep down inside we know are right for us and that need to be developed. Simply put, when we apply and put into use the spirit of our principles, we achieve results: health, happiness and development. When we do not apply the principles, we do not find pleasure in the resultant effects.

We need not search for demons outside ourselves to explain our pain and dissatisfaction. The inertia provided by Procrastination and Distraction will more than engage our resourcefulness and challenge our ability. The mystic must develop a disciplined life, for it is through discipline that we master the various demons of which Procrastination and Distraction are but two. Such discipline moves us closer to our ultimate goal, that of lasting and true happiness, cosmic service and Peace Profound!



The necessity for discipline is also a requirement of anyone seeking to overcome the appeals of procrastination and distraction.

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THE POWER OF WORDS

by **Ralph M Lewis**
Imperator of AMORC
(1939-1987)



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Down through the centuries there has been a magical quality associated with words and utterances. They have been thought to have an inherent creativity. In fact, miracles have been attributed to the mere pronouncement of words. These notions are firmly fixed in cosmogony, philosophy, religion and history. In our times they are an accepted belief and part of the practice of millions of people.

This conception of an efficacy of words and of human utterances is extremely ancient and most closely related to cosmogony, namely theories of the origins of the universe and all within it. The ancient Egyptian city of *Memphis*¹ was the site of a powerful priesthood serving the god *Ptah*.² From remote (pre-dynastic) times Ptah had been the patron god of artisans and craftsmen, who communicated the designs that craftsmen and designers of architectural structures created.

It may be that at some time in the past, ancient Egyptian priests contemplated this relationship of Ptah to craftsmen in depth, and because Ptah communicated ideas for design to craftsmen, was it not likely that Ptah was as well the original creator of all things, the original designer of the universe. Ptah became the supreme master craftsman and the universe was both his creation and his workshop.

Ptah was therefore the source of all things, the Supreme Being of the universe. All things began first in the mind of Ptah and this then became



the first teleological theory in the history of humankind. In other words, it was the very first belief in a *'universal mind'* as a *cause in itself*. It is related in an ancient poem how Ptah objectified his thoughts by means of his *'spoken word'* which materialised his thoughts and brought material existence into being:

Ptah, the Great, is the mind and tongue of the Gods; it [*the mind*] is one that brings forth every successful issue. Ptah, from whom proceeded the power of the mind and of the tongue.

The Power of Words

Cultures and civilisations quite remote from each other, expounded similar ideas regarding the creative power of the spoken word. The Sumerians considered a formally spoken word, such as a command, to be a definite, real thing. To them such words were thought to have special magical power if they were uttered correctly by a priest or deity. Words attributed to the gods *Enlil* and *Marduk* were said to be *'True'*, namely, factual, material, living entities in themselves.

The Sumerian word *'Mummu'*³ meant *'creative reason'*, in other words, that which creates all things. Here again we see reason, or the mind, joined with the spoken word to denote power and creativity. The Babylonian priests said that the god *Marduk* was the creator of the world. Furthermore, he was identified as well with the word *Mummu*. In a Sumerian temple record of around 2850 BCE, this phrase appears: *'The word which he spoke shakes the heavens.'* Then, in another passage referring to the god, we have the following sentence fragment: *'...the word which on high shakes the heavens, the word which beneath causes the earth to tremble.'* The Sumerians influenced other ancient peoples, particularly Semitic cultures. We find in Semitic-related writings the statement: *'The word of Enlil rushes forth and the eye beholds it not.'* Then again,



Image believed to depict Marduk fighting Tiamat.

referring to the god Enlil, we have the following Semitic inscription: *'The utterance of your mouth is a beneficent Wind, the breath of life of the lands.'*

As we compare sections of Hebrew theology with earlier writings, we find much similarity between them.

There is an obvious syncretism, a borrowing. For example, a passage from an old psalm written after the banishment of the Hebrew tribes to Babylon, is similar to early Babylonian theology. It reads: *'By the word of Yahweh, were [the] heavens created, and by the breath of his mouth all their hosts.'* And in the New Testament, John 1:1, there is this statement: *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'* We notice in this the monadical relationship between the Hebrew God and his Word. They are, in this context, one and the same reality.



Ptah

The *Kabala* is another conception of the creation of the universe by the efficacy of the voice. The *Sepher Yezirah*, one of the books referred to often in the Kabala, literally means the *'Book of Creation.'* The first written record of the *Sepher Yezirah* is from about the 6th century CE, though others would put it as early as the 3rd century CE at the start of the Talmudic period. However, traditionally, it dates back to even

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greater antiquity. The word 'Sepher' means 'numerical emanation', or 'power emanating through numerals.' Briefly, the book expounds that the attributes and qualities of deity are symbolised by the numerals 1 to 10. Some of these numerals are said to be male, others female. The first numeral, 1, is said to be indivisible and incapable of multiplication. For example: $1 \times 1 = 1$, and $1 \div 1 = 1$. But in numerology, strictly, not a branch of mathematics, the digit 1 is said to have a reflection of itself which brings about the dyad, namely, the digit 2.

From this emanation of numerals come air and the 22 letters of speech. In the various combinations of the 22 letters into pairs, all creation eventually came into existence. In the Sepher Yezirah it says: '*...from nothingness did he make something in all forms of speech and every created thing.*'

Logos

The Greeks of the 6th century BCE 'Milesian school'⁴ proclaimed: '*The cosmic substance is Reason, Wisdom and Harmony.*' This corresponds to the qualities attributed to the word *Mummu* by the Babylonians. The Stoics said that '*God is law working through the universe*' and they called the operation of this law, the '*Logos.*'

The *Logos*, they said, is '*thought and mind expressed in action.*' It is the soul of the world manifesting in matter

and in '*Pneuma*' or breath. We notice in this a similarity to the Egyptian teachings and recall the claims made for the god Ptah over two thousand years earlier. He was said to have created the universe by transforming his thoughts into speech. The very name of God in Judaic philosophy was made a sacred and ineffable word, never to be spoken. In all ancient cultures certain words were considered to have divine, creative power. The Greeks uttered certain words of purity before holding a ceremony in honour of a god. In the New Testament, John 6:63, Jesus says: '*My words are Spirit and they are Life.*'

From a psychological and physiological point of view, speech is a transmission of power. It was the first means by which humans could noticeably influence other humans at a distance. They could impose the vibrations of their voices upon the air, which acted as a medium for transmission of the words. The human voice, therefore, was not only action in itself, but it also what caused others to act. Speech is effective in language only in so far as it conveys useful information from one mind to another. At first though, speech invoked in people, emotional and psychic responses, not intellectual ones.

Language is derived from the imitation of common sounds which are heard. In remotest antiquity, at the very dawn of speech in proto-humans, those early humans imitated their own emotional interjections and utterances when communicating. They turned those sounds into



...humans attained an erect position and the full use of arms and legs for an upright posture before having mastered true speech.



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words and languages incorporating sounds such as shouting, howling, stamping and tearing. Most important though, is that speech must initially have evolved out of very basic emotional cries; sounds that affected and were caused by basic human feelings, perhaps natural interjections such as Oh, Ugh, Hmm and Sh.

Sounds of Emotion

In his book *'Primitive Culture'*, the noted ethnologist, E.P. Tyler, cited some interesting examples. A sudden pain that is not too severe causes a sucking in of the breath. This often causes the sound *'Ooh.'* We also instinctively and emotionally react at times to blowing away something. In doing this, we expel the air, causing the sound of *'Poosh.'* To hiss is a primitive emotional interjection. Anger will cause a violent expelling of air, causing a roaring sound. Surprise and astonishment cause the mouth to open and produce a short, quick inhalation of air [in preparation for possible imminent conflict]. This produces the common sound of *'Abh.'* Emotional outbursts of enthusiasm by primitive people produced the loud sound of *'Rah.'* It denotes the responsive vitality of the person. Many languages incorporate these combinations such as our English word *'Hurrah.'*

We see therefore, that an emotional tone and vowel sounds are connected. It has been said that an emotional tone may be defined as a vowel whose particular musical

quality is that produced by the human vocal chords when adjusting to a particular state of feeling. Our feelings, our psychic and emotional responses therefore, cause us to emit sounds and words which express them. Obviously then, such emotional vowel sounds produce similar emotional feelings in other people. In fact, even dogs can react to a human cry of pain, even though no language is used. Consonants on the other hand, are not musical vibrations in the same way that vowel sounds are. They are merely sounds which accompany vowels. In language though, we use consonants in connection with words.

How did human speech develop? Articulate speech is a later function in human evolution. Anthropologists assume that humans attained an erect position and the full use of arms and legs for an upright posture before having mastered true speech. In the cortex, the outer layer of the brain, the portion devoted to speech, is a much later development than other functions. In fact, the speech portion in the brain does not appear until shortly after birth.

Sound Vibrations

We know the physical effect that sound vibrations can have on our environment. The sonic boom of military jets is a common example. Objects which are in resonance, namely objects which have some integer multiple of each others' rate of vibration, will always vibrate in sympathy



with each other. If we strike one of two tuning forks that are in resonance with each other, the other will immediately begin to vibrate as well. Dissonant vibration can often shatter or cause a change in the physical form of things. Fine glassware, for example, has on occasion been shattered simply by the intensity and pitch of a good soprano's voice.

The human body itself is a vibrating entity with receptor organs and psychic centres associated with a few of those receptors and responding to certain specific vibrations. Such psychic centres are, for example, the *pituitary*, *pineal* and *thyroid* glands. When stimulated by certain auditory, olfactory and other vibrations, their functions may be either accelerated or decelerated.

Particularly noticeable to early humans must have been the effect that certain combinations of sounds had upon them emotionally and psychically. Certain words were not mere collections of syllables with a tone accent; they were '*chanted speech*.' The rhythmic note and tone constituted the essential elements, and such words were considered '*voice magic*' because of their effect upon people's feelings and thoughts. The vibrations of the voice suggested power, life and vitality.

This then, was the beginning of chanting. Indications of chanting can be traced to remote Babylonian tablets. Some of them show words accompanied by ideographs suggesting that the words were sung. The vowels, *a*, *e*, *i* and *u* were placed at the beginning, middle and end of lines. It appears this was done to indicate the tones in the chant. In Indian Vedic philosophy are found '*ragas*', namely, melodic phrases or melodies following strict rules. Legend states that five of the ragas were first uttered by the god *Siva*, and the sixth raga by another deity. Each of the ragas consisted of several notes. In the Upanishads, part of the Vedic literature of India, the syllable *Aum* is a vocative symbol of the '*Supreme Spirit*.' It stands for the three primeval qualities. The letter '*A*' is for '*Brahma*', the Creator; '*U*' is for '*Vishnu*', the Preserver, and '*M*' for the god '*Siva*', the Destroyer.

Through experience, people learned that certain words, especially combinations of vowels, had either beneficial or harmful effects upon those listening. Consequently, these words found their way into the sacred writings and literature of philosophical and religious orders. Some of these were just intonations of

vowels without any specific thought related to them. From the different cosmogonies (theories of creation) has descended a great legend: It is said that, at one time in the primordial past, all the vocal power that had created the universe was contained within just a *single word*. That word was one of the greatest secrets of humankind. Legend relates that because humans betrayed their cosmic trust, they fell from their high estate. In this way, the word that started all that exists, got lost and it has been sought ever since.

Many Tibetan and Buddhist chants are said to incorporate parts of this lost word. It is but another way in which people seek to experience harmonious realisation of the Divine. Words, aside from any psychic effects, are also powerful as symbols of thought. Francis Bacon said: '*Men suppose their reason has command over their words. Still it happens that words in return exercise authority on reason.*' The vocative and written word can be dynamic. It is a force, once released, not easily controlled. Therefore, nothing should be more carefully selected than our words.

Footnotes

1. *Memphis* (Μέμφις) is the Greek deformation of the Egyptian name of the pyramid of Pepi I (6th dynasty), namely *Men-nefer*, the name of a nearby pyramid. But the original name was *Ineb Hedj*, (*White Walls*) which referred to the white limewashed brick outer walls of the pharaoh's palace.
2. *Ptah* was the Egyptian god of creation, the chief god of the Memphite triad of gods which included Ptah's wife, the lioness goddess *Sekhmet*, and their son, *Nefertum*. This is possibly the most ancient of triads of the ancient world where the triad consisted of a father, mother and child.
3. As the personification of practical knowledge and technical skill, the deity *Mummu* (equated with *Marduk*) was a craftsman on a universal scale. As the third of the primordial gods, according to the Neo-Platonist Damascius, Mummu symbolised the world of thought, and the origin of the '*Logos*', namely a word, thought or principle revealed through speech, from which all creation emerged.
4. The Milesian School, founded in the 6th century BCE in the Asia Minor town of Miletus, was a pre-Socratic branch of philosophy. The three philosophers, *Thales*, *Anaximenes* and *Anaximander* pioneered what came to be known as the philosophy of ancient Greece. Their strict use of reason in place of tradition and superstition, is what laid the basic foundation for what later evolved into the much later Western scientific method.





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Reflexology

by Phyllis Anderson

Reflexology is a healing art centred on the soles of the feet and dedicated to a single purpose: to bring health to our fellow human beings in a natural way. Natural healing has always appealed to me as it has such an intimate, gentle and almost spiritual dimension to it. As Galen, the famous 2nd century Roman physician once said: *‘For there to be health..., there must be perfect harmony among the various parts of the body.’*

It has been said that our feet are our guardians, the guardians of our physical bodies. But unlike the rest of the body, we take little notice of them until they start hurting. We may pamper the other parts of our body, like our face, hair and hands, but what about our feet? We slip on a pair of shoes and forget about them for the rest of the day. And we may complain about our aching feet but fail to do much about them. Pain in the feet is always a warning and is often nature’s way of telling us that something is not right elsewhere in the body.

Why is it that we neglect such an important part of our body? Our feet carry us through life, most of the time without complaint other than the odd blister through hard and rough wear. But from time to time our feet cry out for a little attention; a warm foot bath, a gentle rubbing or..., absolute heaven..., a Reflexology

treatment. What utter bliss it is when we finally give in and listen to our feet.

So sit back a while with your feet up and consider the fact that there are 7,200 nerve endings in each foot. This fact alone explains why we feel so much better when our feet are treated, for nerve endings in the feet have extensive inter-connections through the spinal cord and brain with all other parts of the body. In fact our feet can be seen as a mirror image of our body, with every organ being linked through the nervous system to a nerve ending somewhere on the feet. Disturbances in the body can be picked up easily through the feet by using the reflexology technique, and usually long before the problem begins outwardly manifesting in the body! In this I see a perfect illustration of the axiom: *‘As Above, So Below.’*

When patients are in a relaxed state of mind, with eyes closed, some will see colours as different parts of the foot are manipulated or massaged. And these colours seem to relate in a meaningful way to the various organs of the body, changing colour from one organ to the next. There definitely is a relationship between the feet and the body, both physically and spiritually. If you have never had reflexology done on your feet, make a point of at least trying. It is bliss, you could get even get totally hooked!





Cosmic Consciousness

by **Sven Johansson**

*Even a tiny glimpse of
Cosmic Perfection is so
great and momentous
that it becomes the
trigger for a profound
inner transformation.*

The expression ‘Cosmic Consciousness’ is well known and all sorts of interpretations have been applied to it over the past century or more. A person who did probably more than anyone else to bring the expression and its meaning into common knowledge was the late 19th century Canadian author and psychiatrist *Richard Maurice Bucke* in his book of the same name. It is a classic, easily available and well worth reading.

I am sure most people who have read up on Cosmic Consciousness will have at least a rough idea of what it is, intellectually at least! Yet, these intellectual concepts are necessarily, indeed, almost certainly, in most cases, not accurate representations of the experience itself. That is clear from Bucke’s book. In the absence of direct experience, therefore, how can one define a concept as grand and vast as Cosmic Consciousness is supposed to be?

Without doubt, very few people are likely to have experienced true Cosmic Consciousness, and fewer still are even able to describe what they went through. Yet,



we are such an extraordinarily inquisitive species that our inner makeup *absolutely mandates* that we must label and categorise, not only our own experiences, but those of others as well; especially to describe what we understand a particular word or expression to mean. We do this simply to facilitate ever greater ease of communication with each another. Of course, with Cosmic Consciousness, this may turn out to be a mistake, for although labels are needed for all our experiences, once they have been created, these very labels restrict and confine our concepts of those things, and even prevent us from the full depth of the experiences that the labels relate to and may even prevent us from having such experiences. We are caught in the straight-jacket of an *intellectual model* which does not relate well with the *actual experience* when it finally arrives.

From the various written accounts we have of the sudden influx of Cosmic Consciousness, we cannot help but notice that the authors unanimously point towards an experience of what, for want of a better term, we can simply call an influx of *'divine essence.'* What is meant by this expression is, of course, a matter of interpretation, but essentially it relates to a *mental construct* (a model or visualisation) that all human beings have, buried deep within their beings, which is associated with the very highest form of awareness we can conceive of as existing in the universe.

The reality of the *divine essence* of one person will never be exactly the same as that of another, even though they will undoubtedly have great similarities. However, we can see that similarities do exist, simply by observing how the world is divided into several religions, many of them professing to have the *correct*, indeed, the *one and only*, concept of what *divinity* is. Yet, despite such inflexibility, within each religion there is general consensus as to what that *divine essence* is. And because of that subconscious, unagreed consensus, the expression *'divine essence'* can safely be used with confidence and be understood in almost any society.

Although *divine essence* or *Cosmic Mind* is a purely human intellectual construct, it is not all pie-in-the-sky stuff; the concept does have purely material counterparts. Material manifestations of the Cosmic Mind then are like any other manifestations of consciousness. They need a physical vehicle in which to manifest and consequently, it is only through a physical *mould* or *form*, i.e. *through a physical body*, that we can become aware of such

manifestations. In our physical world, a vehicle for manifesting the divine essence can be the tiniest living cell or the most complex living body imaginable. In all cases though, the divine essence, also called the *'Cosmic Mind'*, is the driving force leading evolving physical bodies to ever higher states of both physical and mental perfection in accordance with the rules of growth and evolution applicable to the die from which they are cast.

Because this Cosmic Mind has an overall perception of absolutely everything within its environment and infuses every living cell with its life force, even the tiniest body knows how to react and evolve. That is not only because of its DNA, but because of the principle *corpus of rules* that govern the formation of any strand of DNA. Even the tiniest body must be *'created'* according to a *'master plan'*, an exceedingly complex *'mould'* which defines the characteristics and boundaries of that life form's perception and potential for evolution. No matter how primitive the creature is, it will know how to attract harmonious conditions to derive physical well-being, and how to repel disturbances or threats to its integrity. With this in mind, we can say that even the most elementary life-form is endowed with awareness and has a compulsive drive to evolve towards an ideal state.

Progressively, each living body, from its simplest expression, develops ever more complex and refined manifestations of awareness and, in this way, gradually, the Cosmic Mind itself, or at least our perception of it, grows and expands through constantly evolving vehicles. Finally, way up the incomprehensibly vast ladder of evolution, it impregnates living souls with a Divine awareness of itself and begins manifesting, in a fully objective manner, its own unchangeable perfection. This does not imply that Cosmic Consciousness can ever be imperfect or limited, since what seems to be imperfect and limited is only an interpreted manifestation of the Cosmic Mind; namely, interpreted and filtered through the limited faculties of a living soul, referred to by Rosicrucians as a *'soul personality.'*

So, the Cosmic Mind is always perfect and always has been. It infuses into all living cells the same perfect spark of consciousness. However, each living thing can only manifest a very limited part of the Cosmic awareness available to it, and a long process of evolution is necessary before that life form has the power to fully express this inner divine energy. As far as we know, our human species is that *'living soul'* which is best able, in our world, to



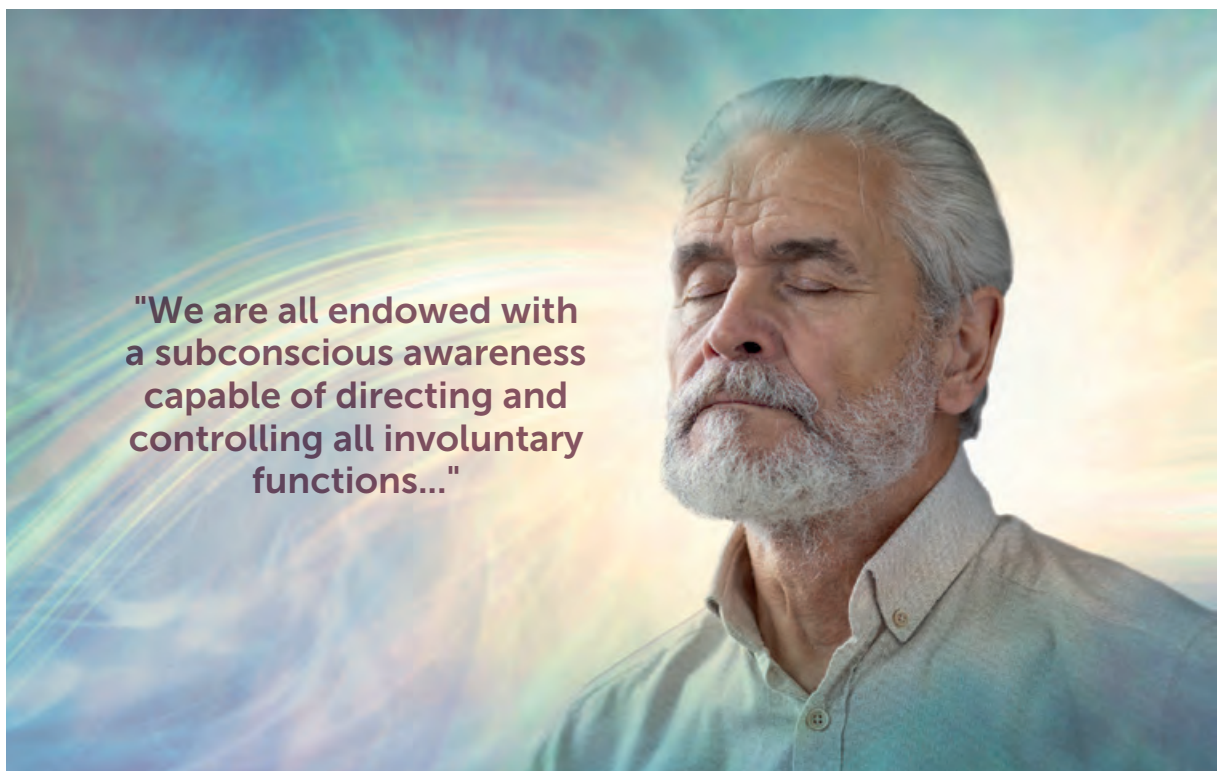
manifest the greatness of Cosmic Consciousness which operates through three basic levels of awareness:-

1. Our surroundings are perceived through our objective and subjective awareness. Objective consciousness derives its existence from stimuli of our five physical senses, namely, sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. The inner responses we give to these outer stimuli come from our subjective consciousness which utilises faculties such as reason, memory and imagination.
2. We are all endowed with a subconscious awareness capable of directing and controlling all involuntary functions, of causing voluntary acts to manifest and of synthesising all aspects of our psychic nature.
3. The final level of human consciousness corresponds to Cosmic Consciousness in its purest state. Clearly, the first two levels must derive their existence from this third one, and all three operate in constant synchrony. Just as it is that through the objective and subjective faculties of our mind we are able to reach into the subconscious mind, it is through the subconscious mind that we are able to gain access to and one day experience Cosmic Consciousness.

This is why we must learn to *know ourselves well* and to *commune with our inner self*. Progressively, we must aim at raising our conscious mind above the objective plane so we can use the subconscious as a link between our Inner Self and the Cosmic. Thus raised, the soul personality is in harmony with the highest plane of our consciousness, the Divine within.

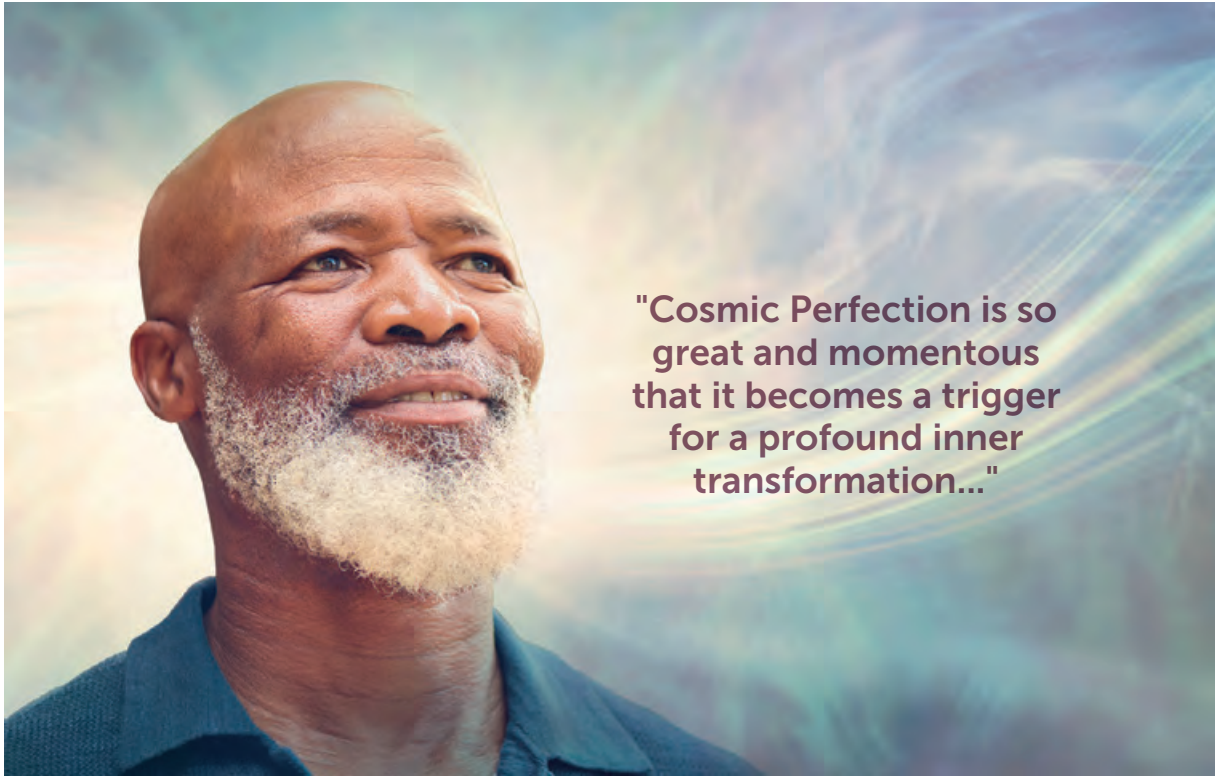
At this level of awareness and communion between human consciousness and Cosmic Consciousness, and underpinned by the universal *Law of Compensation*, or *Karma* (as it is more popularly known), it is conceivable that information transfer can occur, from a distant past reality to our present-day reality, bringing into our consciousness details of great lessons learned during the lives of formerly highly evolved mystics who no longer express life in any form we can understand. The knowledge acquired through such sublime communion, is not restricted to the main historical events of our planet but encompasses all facts and life experiences since the beginning of the universe. One who lives in such a state of consciousness is blessed with an experience comparable to Cosmic Illumination.

Although it is probably impossible to clearly define



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what is meant by Cosmic Illumination, from poetry and many other writings, there are strong indications that even a tiny glimpse of Cosmic Perfection is so great and momentous that it becomes the trigger for a profound inner transformation which will be with people for the rest of their lives. Such a glimpse is likely to represent the highest awareness that any human can experience in a single lifetime. Due to the limitations of our present physical and mental state, we can only ever grasp a very tiny, tiny fraction of this Supreme Consciousness.

It is important to realise that if ordinary people, like you and I, are tools through which Cosmic Consciousness manifests, then we can also productively use this same Cosmic Consciousness for the refinement of our life expression for the rest of our days on Earth. We need only, as often as possible, shift our conscious activities towards ever higher and purer centres of interest. Even if we cannot reach Cosmic Consciousness through our objective senses, we must nevertheless choose physical activities which will prove constructive and lead us, and all within our *'karmic proximity'*, ever closer to that divine awareness.

Only with a very firm and positive approach, can we open the gates of our subconscious mind to finally reach the level of Cosmic Consciousness for brief moments. And the longer we procrastinate in this regard, the longer it will take for us to reach that ultimate goal of life on earth, namely Illumination and full mastery of life in all its varied aspects. Our ultimate aim on earth is to return to the source of the Cosmic flux present in each of us; to leave behind the illusive and deceptive objective world and, finally, to immerse our consciousness in the pure, pristine spring of the Cosmic stream of awareness where we can fully experience the state of being known within the Rosicrucian Order as *'Cosmic Consciousness.'*

All true mystics aspire to reach this state where physical consciousness unites with a truly Cosmic awareness. And while such an experience is undoubtedly the crowning achievement of every effort we have made through innumerable incarnations, incorporating all such experiences into a single and permanent reality in our lives, is in fact the *final destination* and *ultimate purpose* of our lives on earth.



Light in All Things

by Leona Hoogenstyn



istock.com / Zenina

Underlying all nature is a world of light. It is not like sunlight; it is so intensively radiant that it cannot be perceived by mortal eyes. Sunlight is just the visual aspect of the *'Greater Light'* and is a mere shadow beside this *'True Light.'* Infinite light encompasses the entire universe, the physical and the spiritual. It is the unseen world giving life to plants, animals and humans. As Goethe once wrote: *'Nature is the living, visible garment of God.'*

This all-embracing essence contains the potentiality of every plant before it sprouts and grows into its destined form. Although plants contain immaterial qualities, they also require substances of the earth, such as the minerals in the soil and, of course, water. These terrestrial substances are the physical building blocks of plants, but immaterial qualities are also there, and these qualities are responsible for its life and continuity.

Living matter develops through the highly detailed instructions encoded within the DNA in a seed. The growth pattern and characteristics of the plant it will become, is governed by the seed's DNA. Yet, is there really not a non-material *template* of sorts that in turn instructs the DNA what it is to pass on to the growing plant? A geranium seed grows into a plant with beautiful flowers, filling our hearts with admiration for the plant's beauty and robustness. The geranium differs from every other flower by its special characteristics of colour, form, fragrance and growth cycles. In a sense this can be regarded as the plant's personality, and this can also be said of every plant species. This consciousness or simple awareness, exists in all plants and distinguishes one flower from another, one vegetable from another, one tree from another, indeed, one human from another.

Every plant, even the lowly weed, grows for some purpose. After it has served its purpose, or if its growth cycle is terminated before fruition, the unseen essence, the distinguishable consciousness, is neither lost nor destroyed but remains as a non-material template of life, ready for its next manifestation as a plant. It is a common everyday occurrence, which has been continuous from the dawn of life on earth.

The Divine Essence dwells not only in so-called *'higher creatures'*, but also in the fields of wheat, in forests and in the lilies of the field.





by Julie Bubalo

Art is a Way

istock.com / shirossov

Religion, science, philosophy and art are like four great highways. Each one can lead us both towards and away from Truth. No matter which one we choose to take, it can lead us to an intuitive understanding of the divine, the essence of our self and of all things. Or, it can be a route based on falsities. In our search for Truth, we can often become lost, just as much on the highway of art as on other paths.

Artists often isolate themselves from their fellow humans, and sometimes even consider themselves neglected and misunderstood. Some sit in ivory towers, but not securely, for sooner or later those towers topple. It is true that every artist provides as best as he or she can for their material needs; however, negative attitudes will not solve their problems nor lead them towards the Truth they seek.



Sometimes, artists can become lost in a kind of materialistic individualism which is weighed down by purely personal emotion. Often, this limits their range of awareness; a level of awareness that allows a higher and inspirational devotion; one which opens up entire new vistas and offers new channels of expression. A deeply implanted pessimism, a determination to consider themselves to be in perpetual conflict with the world: these things inhibit their potential, and obscure the true goal.

All, at some time or another, have experienced the overwhelming impulse to express something which now flashes into the consciousness, seems clothed in the magnificence of Universal Truth. And yet, how often, even when fired up with the flame of creation, have their understanding, aspiration, and heightened perception been turned into a limited, uninspired and commonplace result.

Connection with the Whole

Unless we understand and recognise our connectedness to the whole, our personal sense of individuality can easily cause us to travel away from the goal of Divine Wisdom. To be different just to *'be different'* is a trap which can limit the great heights of expression which the artist can reach. Perhaps it is the case that to be truly individual, we must realise that we are not. When we realise that we are individual expressions of a greater Unity, we are allowing ourselves to be connected to the magnificent *'current'* and powerhouse of Truth. When the artist aspires to give a clear, unique expression to the whole, the results can be astounding. Something previously pure and inexpressible is brought down from great heights to human perception and consciousness.

Some artists miss out on an intuitive understanding of the significance of life itself. Life is the source of all knowledge. Walt Whitman knew it: he approached his work with a unified attitude and an all-embracing conviction. He could challenge academic rules and

orthodox authorities in his *'Song of Myself'* only because he understood himself to be all selves everywhere.

If the artist separates her or himself from the rest of humanity in their own mind, they are then considered separate in the minds of others. It is a potential within each of us which is only waiting to be used. Our talents are often most easily expressed when we are children. As children, we do not feel the self-consciousness and inhibitions that come with adulthood. We feel free and unencumbered to hum a tune, draw a line, make a comic face, dance a childish dance, walk like kings and queens, or without any hesitation or self-doubt, carve a boat or an animal from a block of wood. Our innate talents seem to become smothered and gradually fade away as we grow older.

A Higher Consciousness

Every area of our activity could be directed towards order, connection and unity. Everyone, whatever their sphere of daily action, can be an instrument of creativity to the extent of our awareness of the Oneness of all life, and the realisation that truth is within.

This change in consciousness can be energising, vitalising, invigorating and inspiring. It brings a sense of eternal existence, invincibility, certainty and security. Our fears, doubts, and distrust fall away as if we are awakening



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from a troubled sleep where everything seemed distorted and unreal.

By trial and error, an artist learns to avoid the merely decorative and say what she or he has to say with a beautiful simplicity and clarity. In this way, the artistic expression will be true to their subject, their mission and to their material. Above all, the result of their sincere approach will be true to themselves. It can take most of a lifetime to learn who their artistic self is, and this they learn in the discipline of their art. Sincerity of purpose and earnest endeavour will produce work of deep and permanent value, and this will be appreciated by the discerning beholder of the work.

The role of the artist has often been to express her or his beliefs and feelings about life and to elevate humanity in the process. Artistic perception coupled with a quiet introspective nature can offer an excellent foundation for the role of art in society. It pierces the superficial aspect of things and touches their secrets. Neither provable nor unprovable, these secrets can open other windows upon other worlds.

The Artist as Prophet

Creative geniuses make their presence felt amongst us from time to time. Their work often speaks to the spiritual consciousness of an evolving humanity. We might say that artists who can see beyond the limits of their own art are *'prophets'* and can help humanity advance.

The poet, painter and composer can offer a different and higher perspective of life and existence from the theologian, philosopher or scientist. All have felt the truth of their work and, in this, they become much more than gifted artisans.

Here is one final question: what is the relationship of art to religion, science or philosophy? Although the words and methods they use, and their goals, may differ, these four ways to truth do connect with each other. Each is useful in its time and place, but none is final, and none alone is the ultimate or absolute in its interpretation

of Truth. It is the same world looked at differently, expressed differently. They speak to us according to what we inwardly seek. Each has its force which can't be replaced by that of any other. But on a higher plane, these forces meet and merge.

Leonardo da Vinci is said to have been the first to approach science as an artist. Although primarily known for his achievements in these two areas, he also travelled the roads of philosophy and religion. To give another example, the Pythagorean school proposed that *'in the beginning God geometrised.'* Pythagoras applied these principles in his own experiments and studies. He thought in terms of a Supreme Being, the invisible *'Moving Spirit'* which underpins the universe. Instead of emphasising differences, he demonstrated that all ways are essentially the same.

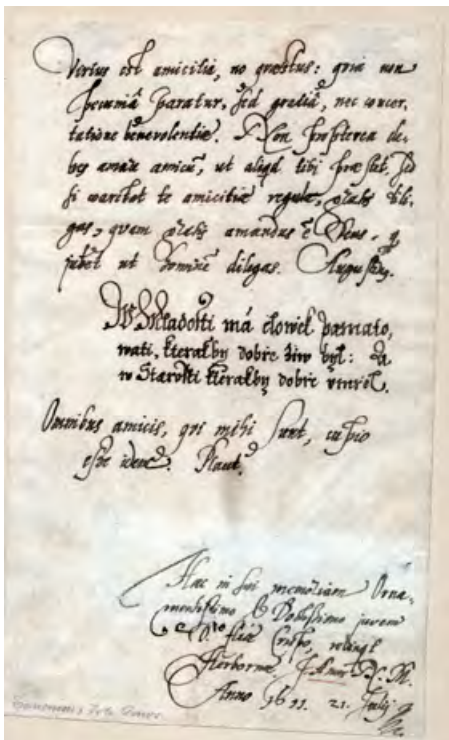
In summary, we could say that it is impossible to divorce the four ways. They are so interwoven in essence that they can't be separated. The scientist who sees Life, Mind and Will in all things, is as *'religious'* as the theologian, as profound as the philosopher, and as creative as the artist. As we approach the centre of Truth, we find it expressed in several disciplines. The torchbearers of Truth on all four highways light our way.

And finally, this brings to mind an inspiring quote from the early 19th century English poet John Keats: *'Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.'*



Comenius & Universal Education

by Marc Cornwall



This 21st July 1611 manuscript by Comenius is believed to be the oldest document by his hand to have survived to our time.

In the book *'Rosicrucian History and Mysteries'*¹ by Rebisse, a great deal is written about *Jan Amos Komenský*, better known as *Comenius*. Heralded in the 20th century by the United Nations for his aspiration to a future universal education, this great mystic wrote *'Via Lucis'*, (*Way of Light*) in 1648 at the end of the infamous *Thirty Years War* that had ravaged central and northern Europe since 1618.

In chapter 10, we read about the important part played in the history of the *'Perennial Philosophy'* by Comenius, a Czech philosopher, pedagogue and writer, who participated in the foundation of the *'Royal Society'*.² At the very front of the book we find the following words by Comenius:

We wish... that all men, singly or jointly, young or old, noble or commoner, men or women may learn fully and become accomplished human beings. We also wish that every man should be well educated, not only on generalities, but on everything that allows him to realise his essence completely; to learn to know truth, never to be deceived by pretence; to love Good and never be seduced by Evil; to do what must be done and to be careful



about what must be avoided; to speak wisely (and not remain silent) about anything to anyone when necessary; finally always to treat things, men and God with caution and not rashly, and never to stray from the goal – happiness.

In ‘*Via Lucis, vestigata et vestiganda*’ (*The Way of Light, traced and traced*), written in 1641 but not published until 1668, two years before his death, Comenius proposed to a group of scholars, on its way toward becoming the *Royal Society of London*, a new effort on the part of learned Christendom to establish a ‘*College of Light*’, a broad community of scholars who share the same foundation of knowledge, the same sacred mission and even the same language. Comenius had been invited by some members of parliament to serve on a commission to reform public education in England, and he took his service on the commission very seriously. They got more than they had bargained for:

Overcoming the darkness will require four campaigns: universal books, universal schools, a universal college, and a universal language.

Life and Times

‘The learned are spiritual and seek their inspiration in the Book of Nature.’
 -- from ‘*Rosicrucian Reflections*’ --
 by Christian Bernard.

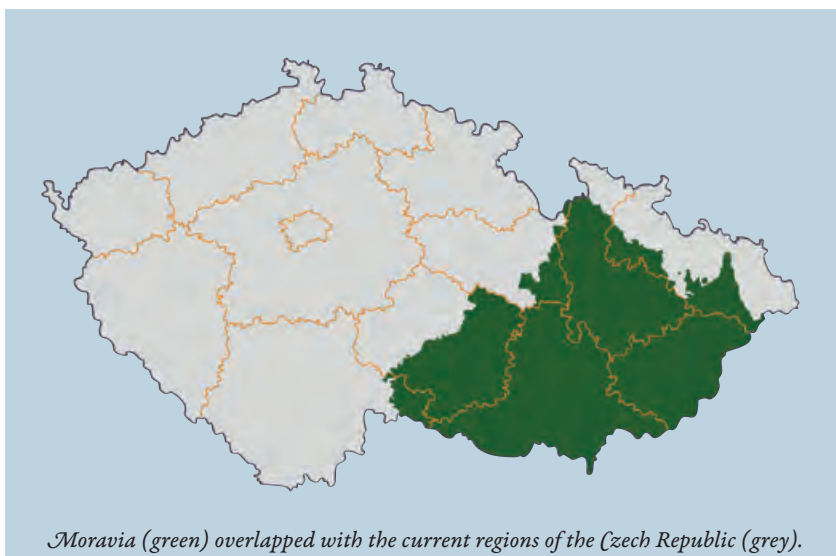


Coat of Arms of Comenius' beloved Moravia.

Jan Amos Komenský (28-Mar-1592–15-Nov-1670) was a Moravian philosopher, pedagogue and theologian who is considered the father of modern education. He was born in 1592 in the Margraviate of Moravia in the Bohemian Crown.³ His exact birthplace is uncertain, but possibilities include *Uherský Brod*, as it is mentioned on his gravestone in *Naarden*, or *Niynice*, or *Komňa*, from which he took his surname, meaning ‘a man from Komňa.’

He served as the last bishop of the ‘*Jednota bratrská*’ (*Unity of the Brethren*) before becoming a religious refugee and one of the earliest champions of universal education, a concept eventually set forth in his book *Didactica Magna*. As an educator and theologian, he led schools and advised governments across Protestant Europe through the middle of the 17th century.

In 1613, at the age of 21, he left his native Moravia to continue his studies at the University in Heidelberg, during which he attended the celebrations around the marriage of the Prince Elector Friedrich V of the Palatinate, one of the most powerful men in the Holy Roman Empire, and Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James VI of Scotland and I of England.⁴ Their court was in Heidelberg and Friedrich was the great hope of Protestant Europe.



Moravia (green) overlapped with the current regions of the Czech Republic (grey).

wikimedia / Kirk





*Holy Roman Emperor
Ferdinand II*



*Johann Valentin
Andreae*

Throughout his life, Comenius supported the royal couple, especially when they were crowned king and queen of Bohemia in 1619 and found themselves at war with the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II (*'king of Bohemia'* was one of his many titles) who was the cousin of Emperor Rudolf II. Comenius later followed them into exile in the Netherlands, where he died in Amsterdam in 1670.

Comenius and Reform

Comenius was a friend of *Johann Valentin Andreae* and was enthusiastic about the project of reform as set out in the three primary Rosicrucian manifestos, the *'Fama Fraternitatis'*, the *'Confessio Fraternitatis'*, and the *'Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreuz'*. In 1623, placards appeared on walls throughout Paris announcing the presence in the city of the Rosicrucian Brethren. It was also the year in which Comenius published, in Czech, his book *Labyrint světa a ráj srdce* (*Labyrinth of the World and Paradise of the Heart*), recalling the hope he had placed in the Rosicrucians. He was an idealist whose expectations had been reduced by the start of the Thirty Years War. But despite the disappointment and the crushing of his once-bright expectations, he did not give up. The idealism that had once blossomed within him, permeated his being and he did his best to bring them to fruition.

Pressing ahead, he introduced a number of educational concepts and innovations, including pictorial textbooks written in native languages instead of Latin; teachings based on gradual developments from simple to steadily more comprehensive concepts, lifelong learning with a focus on logical thinking as opposed to dull memorisation, equal opportunity for impoverished children, education for women, as well as universal and practical instruction.

He also believed sincerely in the connection between nature, religion and knowledge, in which he stated that knowledge is born from nature and nature from God. Besides his native Moravia, he lived and worked in other regions of the Holy Roman Empire, and other countries: Sweden, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, (*at that time one of the most powerful states in Europe*) Transylvania, England, the Netherlands and Hungary.

Important Works

Comenius wrote many books in Latin, the international language of the time, and in Czech. If we take a look at some of them, it will give us a greater understanding of why he is considered so important. In the times that he lived in, education was the prerogative of the upper or middle classes and he firmly believed that this had to change.

The *'Orbis Pictus'*, or *'Orbis Sensualium Pictus'* (*Visible World in Pictures*), is a textbook for children, published in 1658. It was the first widely used children's textbook with pictures, published first in Latin and German and later republished in many European languages. It has been described as *'...the first purpose-made children's picturebook.'* This revolutionary book quickly spread around Europe and became the defining children's textbook for centuries to come. What a wonderful legacy left to children today who universally love to sit in the lap of a parent or doting grand-parent and be read a story with pictures.

The book is divided into chapters illustrated by copperplate prints, which are described in the accompanying text. In most editions, the text is given in



Jan Amos Comenius (Komenský)





Pages from *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* by Comenius.

both Latin and the child's native language. The book has 150 chapters and covers a wide range of subjects such as inanimate nature, botany, zoology, religion and humans and their activities

A large portion of the this book is dedicated to a careful unpacking of the familiar analogy of learning to light. Since the biblical *'Fall'*, darkness has covered the earth, and there has been no shortage of ignorance, pain and catastrophe. As in medicine, the cure is to remove the cause of the illness, and in this case the cure, he believed, required a lot more light.

Overcoming the darkness requires four campaigns, for universal books, universal schools, a universal college, and a universal language. The universal books will establish a common foundation of knowledge. The first book was to be a *'Pansophia'*, a universal understanding of the entire condition of all things. The second book was to be a *'Panhistoria'*, all the particular actions, accidents and issues of things which have been discovered from their origin up to the present time. The final book was to be the *'Pandogmatia'*, recounting all the theories or opinions which have been held about things wherever and however they have been produced and whether they are true or mistaken.

The Didactica Magna

The word education comes from the Latin 'educare', which means something along the lines of 'bringing

forth from within.' Finding the different ways and strategies of 'bringing forth' is exactly the task of pedagogy. -- from 'I Saw Your Light from Afar' by Claudio Mazzucco.

Comenius' greatest work was the *'Didactica Magna'* (*The Great Didactic*). Written originally in Czech but published in Latin in 1657, its ambitious aims and desire to explain and give guidance to almost every part of schooling, has a timeless attraction. This book is a goldmine for anyone interested in the most profound concepts, structures and beliefs that are today intrinsic and undisputed parts of educational thinking; the idea of childhood as the main life phase of learning; the idea of knowledge progression and age differentiation as key principles in the structuring of education; and the spatial, temporal and social organisation of everyday schooling.

In the *Didactica Magna*, he organises and articulates many of his thoughts on education and the art of teaching. He presents his perspectives on the importance of moral and religious education, educational administration, and the role of discipline in schools. Comenius was active as a theologian and educator during the turbulent period of the Thirty Years' War, as well as the profound shifts in political and ideological landscapes brought about by the Reformation, Counter-Reformation and significant new scientific discoveries. Personally affected by the ravages of war, Comenius faced the loss of several



family members and eventually fled Moravia in 1621 due to religious persecution. This led to a lifelong exile during which he travelled extensively throughout continental and northern Europe.

The *Didactica Magna* is an important effort to reorganise education during the 16th and early 17th centuries. Comenius explicitly placed himself within the context of other Lutheran theologians and educators such as Martin Luther (1483–1546), Philip Melancthon (1497–1560), and Johann Valentin Andreae (1568–1654). Together, they can be seen as individuals contributing to a gradual reshaping of educational thinking and giving education a more prominent role in state governance.

Childhood has historically been perceived as a crucial and influential stage of life, particularly in terms of physiological development, as it is the period during which children learn and absorb knowledge, develop good social conduct, and form their morals and religious values. This perception was rooted in the belief that children’s brains were especially malleable and impressionable due to their inherent ‘softness’ and ‘moisture.’ Group education in schools was viewed as the most advantageous approach to learning.

It was not only efficient in terms of numbers, but also fostered a social and intellectual synergy, promoting effective social interaction and collaborative learning. Comenius advocated for inclusive education, emphasising that all children, regardless of socio-economic background or gender, should have access to knowledge, virtue and religious education, as he believed it to be beneficial for the progress of society as a whole. How moving, how modern!

In his approach to education, he emphasised the importance of individuals attaining (1) comprehensive

Comenius advocated for inclusive education, emphasising that all children, regardless of socio-economic background or gender, should have access to knowledge, virtue and religious education...

knowledge of the world through science and language, (2) moral virtue and good manners, and (3) religious understanding to truly flourish in life.

While external rewards such as health, beauty, wealth and success were possible, they were not sufficient as life goals. Comenius believed that true fulfilment comes from the pursuit of knowledge, virtue and piety as intrinsic qualities within every individual. He stressed the need to cultivate these qualities using ideal forms and appropriate methods as a means to return to an original and uncorrupted state of human existence.

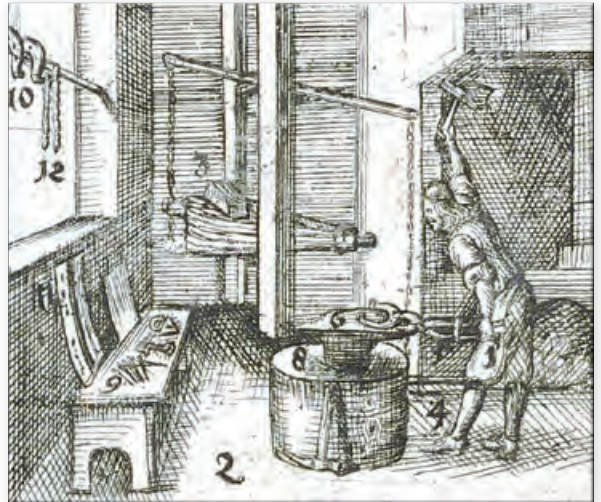
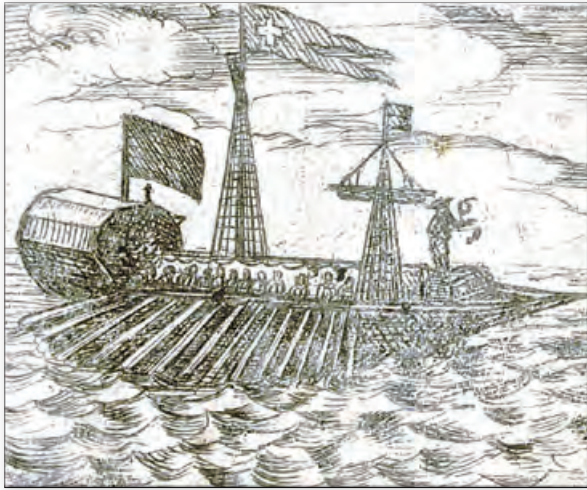
From these established social codes of conduct, Comenius derived additional guidelines for instilling in young people the values of honesty, sincerity and resilience in their interactions and work ethic. It was emphasised that they should not become lazy or deceitful. To achieve this, children were encouraged to socialise with virtuous people and undertake various tasks in their presence. This approach involved training children to communicate and interact with people from different backgrounds, including



wikimedia / Richard Huber

Title page, Didactica Magna.





A selection of the educational images found in 'Orbis Sensualium Pictus' by Comenius.



teachers, peers, parents and others. Children displaying laziness, thoughtlessness, boorishness or rudeness were to be corrected.

The organisation of schools should facilitate a seamless interconnectedness of all elements while maintaining distinct positions and functions. This would give rise to an organic and cohesive social entity. To achieve effective education, all that was required was a skilful arrangement of time, subjects and teaching methods. He emphasised the importance of organising schools in a manner that would minimise disruptions and prevent negative influences, both internally and externally. He advocated for locating school buildings in peaceful areas, away from potential distractions and disturbances. Additionally, he proposed that the school interiors and outdoor spaces should be aesthetically pleasing to create an inspiring environment for the children.

In line with this, the teaching content and books used in schools were to be selected carefully so that they truly supported children's development towards wisdom, moral fortitude and piety. Comenius was

...the teaching content and books used in schools were to be selected carefully so that they truly supported children's development towards wisdom, moral fortitude and piety.

deeply concerned with creating harmony and *'avoiding arrhythmia.'*

His educational model was highly focused on mass education, accommodating up to a hundred children at a time. To effectively implement this model, certain additional techniques were necessary. For instance, some students were chosen as prefects and given specific responsibilities to supervise their peers. The student body was then divided into several subdivisions, each led by a prefect and comprising approximately 10 students. Overseeing these units and their leaders were higher-ranking prefects, culminating in the teacher as the ultimate authority.

To harness the motivational and disciplinary power embedded in competition and peer rivalry, Comenius proposed that teachers organise regular contests among

...Comenius proposed that teachers organise regular contests among students,

students, where they could vie for good grades. The approach aimed to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning through a combination of the fear of criticism and demotion, and the desire for the teacher's recognition and approval.

Make no mistake about it, it takes a very special kind of courage to admit ignorance and submit to self-reformation. In fact, it takes a lot more inner discipline to refine and perfect ourselves than it takes to find a better job. -- 'Practical Mysticism' by Edward Lee.

Comenius was uniquely forward thinking for his time and was clearly influenced by Rosicrucian ideas and the Rosicrucian circles in which he moved. It was a time of change, and he was very much at the forefront of that change.

Footnotes and Bibliography

1. *'Rosicrucian History and Mysteries'* by Christian Rebis, can be obtained from <https://amorc.org.uk/collection>.
2. *'The Royal Society'* (founded 28 November 1660) or more formally *'The Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge'*, is a learned society and the UK's national academy of sciences.
3. The Margraviate of Moravia of the Bohemian Crown, was a region in the east of Czechia and one of three historical Czech lands, with Bohemia and Czech Silesia forming the other two.
4. The present British Royal Family is directly descended from the union of the Prince Elector, Friedrich V of the Palatinate and Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I of Britain.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0046760X.2020.1739759> -- By Björn Norlin



Per Ankh

The Traditional Origins of Western Mystery Schools

by **Constance Dreyzel**

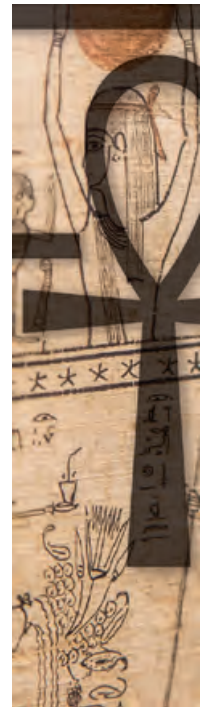
Egyptian hieroglyph meaning the 'Per Ankh' (House of Life).



In ancient Egypt, the concept of *Order* or, more specifically, a *Universal Cosmic Order*, was called '*Maat*.' The goddess Maat and the principles of *truth*, *justice*, *balance* and *cosmic order* that she stood for, underpinned everything that was good and well-administered. What she represented stood in direct opposition to the chaos and lack of justice and good governance that Egyptians believed had existed before the first dynastic pharaohs emerged some 5,100 years ago.

Maat was the most primaeval, fundamental of concepts of thought, philosophy and activity in Egypt throughout its recorded history. It underpinned everything needed by the top-down, deeply religious, governance that was the moral and religious aspiration of all but a few Egyptian dynasties; in particular all those who managed to rule Egypt as far as the beginning of the Ptolemaic period.

Often depicted as a goddess wearing an ostrich feather in her headdress, Maat may have existed among



wikimedia / Eternal Space



the early Neolithic tribes inhabiting the Nile Valley before the emergence of the first Egyptian ruling dynasties at the turn of the 4th to 3rd millennium BCE. But unlike the existence of the falcon god Horus among pre-dynastic Egyptian tribes, firm evidence of a pre-dynastic female deity Maat, has yet to be found. For this reason, it has been suggested that Maat became a ruling principle of all religious and secular life through the unified actions of the pharaohs of the first few dynasties.

Maat was one side of a concept of duality that had emerged by the time of the first dynasties. A universal deity influencing and guiding the actions of all other deities, Maat represented *stability* and a *world order*, indeed a *universal principle* which became the foundation of the Egyptian concept of a *divine ruler* who ruled, with fairness and justice, every aspect of daily life. That divine rule was based upon two concepts: a deity above all other deities, ('*Neter*'), and the existence of a '*World Order*' ('*Maat*').

Neter (or '*Ntr*') is cognate with our English word '*Nature*' and represented in the ancient Egyptian pantheon the infinite, raw power of Nature; infinite energy. Neter was, not only the all-



A (modern) representation of the Egyptian Goddess Maat.

embracing *physical being* of Nature, but also its *inherent power*, from which emerged an *indwelling spirit* infusing all gods of the Egyptian pantheon, and included one fundamental quality known as *mind* and all thought processes associated with human cognition.

The mental, intellectual manifestations of Neter were infused in all the deities of Egypt and manifested through them their distinct qualities which were all part of the great Neter, the source of all existence. Supreme among all humans, the pharaoh was believed to be the incarnation of *Neter Horus*, the one-and-only '*son of the god*' and the premier, strongest reflection of Neter in the material world.

The Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote around 500 BCE...

Now I will tell you more about Egypt, because it has many admirable things, and what is seen there is better than any other country. The excellent monuments of ancient Egypt are the result of their deep faith and the application of the principle: '*As above, so below.*'

This eternal correlation between *that which is above* with *that which is below*, was repeated in Asclepius III in the Hermetic texts:

In Egypt, all the actions of the forces that govern and act in heaven were transferred to the earth below. It should rather be said that the whole of the cosmos dwells in [*Egypt*] as in his sanctuary.

Scenes of daily activities found in Egyptian monuments show the strong, ongoing correlation between earth and sky, that which is below with that which is above.

As far as we know, the 18th dynasty was the most mystically inclined of all dynasties. Not just Thutmose III but under his grandson Thutmose IV and great-grandson Amenhotep III, we can see a movement culminating in the reign of Amenhotep III's son Amenhotep IV, the '*heretic pharaoh*', *Akhnaton*.

Traditional histories of the Rosicrucian Order speak of the creation of a unified mystical body by the



Pharaoh Thutmose III during the 18th dynasty in the New Kingdom. As the founding Emperor of the resurgence of the Rosicrucian Order in the 20th century, Harvey Spencer Lewis put it in 1929, it...

...was Thutmose III who organised the present physical form followed by the present secret Brotherhood and outlined many of its rules and regulations.

The text goes on to caution that it...

...must not be construed that the word Rosicrucian, or any variation of it, was used by, or applied to this ancient brotherhood; rather that the modern manifestation of this ancient tradition is found in the Rosicrucian Order (AMORC) which derives its principles and objectives from it.

Recent research has rediscovered another aspect of this foundational event which has gone, if not completely unnoticed, then decidedly unremarked upon for a very long time. Shedding new light on a significant feature of the Rosicrucian tradition, there is mention of a collection of documents dealing with the appointment of an individual to be the head of the united priesthoods of all Egypt during the time of Hatshepsut and her co-regent Thutmose III.

Houses of Life

The Houses of Life perpetuated the mystical work of temples throughout ancient Egypt.

Ancient Egyptian priesthoods were not only concerned with external Temple duties such as the taxation of privately owned lands and the management of large temple-owned plantations with grains, herds of cattle, sheep and goats. Attached to most Temples was a building known as the '*Per Ankh*' (*House of Life*) where the most precious archives were housed.

In those precincts neophytes were trained as scribes, healers and priests with the primary purpose of guarding and perpetuating the ancient mystery traditions of Egypt, which included medicine, dreams, healing, prognostication, among many other topics and practices. The Hermetic historian Garth Fowden wrote:

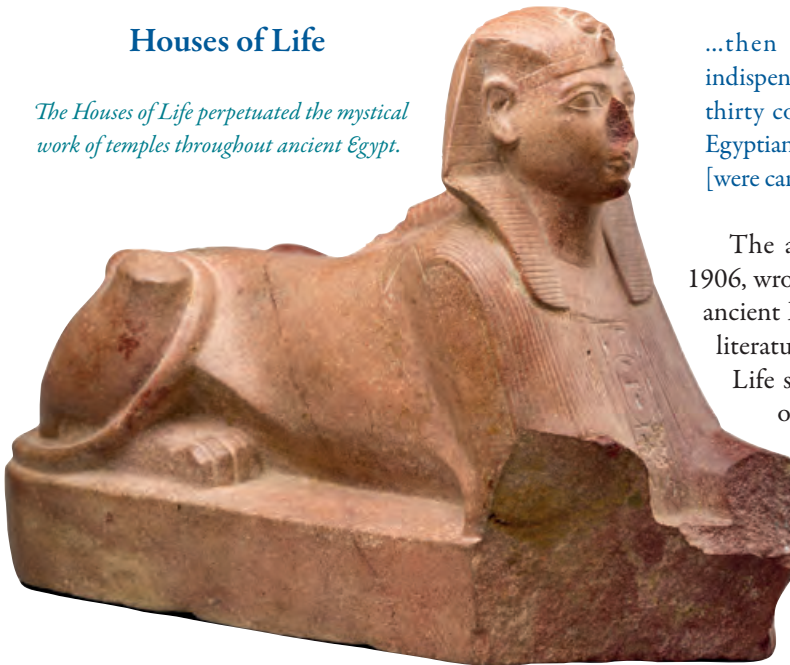
The sacred books of the ancient Egyptian priests were copied out in the Houses of Life, which served, subordinate to their primary cultic purposes, as temple scriptoria or libraries.

Among these volumes were 42 that were attributed to the god *Thoth*, who, in later centuries became known as '*Hermes Trismegistus*' (*Hermes the Thrice Great*). The Christian Gnostic and teacher *Clement of Alexandria* testifies to having seen a procession carrying books from such a collection (around 200 CE) containing works on the gods, astrology, hieroglyphs, hymns, prayers, spiritual training and medicine:

...then two-and-forty books of Hermes, indispensably necessary... of which the six-and-thirty containing the whole philosophy of the Egyptians and the other six, which are medical... [were carried forth]

The archaeologist James Henry Breasted, in 1906, wrote about these deeply venerated records of ancient Egypt. It seems probable that much of the literature and teachings from the many Houses of Life situated in temples throughout the length of the Egyptian Nile, are likely those we have received today in Hellenised form as the '*Hermetica*', including the '*Corpus Hermeticum*.' The Houses of Life were much more than a priestly apprenticeship; they were the true mystical heart of the priesthood.

The appointment of an individual to



Sphinx of Thutmose III.





Hermes Trismegistus illustration.

be the head of all of the Egyptian priesthoods unified not only the priestly orders in their external manifestation, but also brought into harmony and union the mystical component as well, the esoteric work which centred around the *Per Ankh*. In this way, the traditional Rosicrucian statement of the unification of these into a single mystical Order, is consistent with external historical facts as well as inner spiritual truths.

Unification of the Priesthood

What is fascinating and apparently unremarked upon, at least in recent times in connection with Rosicrucian history, is that this historic appointment and unification was not the sole work of Thutmose III. The unification appears to have begun during the co-regency of pharaohs Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, roughly during the 21-year period from 1479 to 1458 BCE.

It was during Hatshepsut's reign of political and financial stability, that gradual change in culture was made possible under Thutmose III's guidance with the reinvigoration and emergence of an extraordinary ancient mystery school at Luxor. Hatshepsut's influence though is seen in the fact that it was her own trusted vizier, *Hapuseneb*, the most important man in her entourage,

who was appointed as the first *Chief of the Prophets of North and South*, a title found on his statue in the Louvre in Paris.

By 1984, the German Egyptologist *Jan Assmann* wrote of the joint religious work of the two Pharaohs:

Hatshepsut and Thutmose III founded and propagated not a new religion, but a new form of Amun religion that was enhanced by the fourth dimension of Divine spontaneity and action in the world and in devotees.

He then goes on to connect this evolution with the Atenism of Akhnaton and Nefertiti. As Henry Breasted explains...

The formation of the priesthood of the whole land into a coherent organisation, with a single individual at its head, appears for the first time during the joint reigns.

Breasted provides further translations of Hapuseneb's appointment from the inscription found on the Louvre statue, an appointment which was made during the joint



Below: metmuseum / Rogers Fund, 1931

Sphinx of Hatshepsut.





The temple of Hatshepsut near Luxor in Egypt.

reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. We can safely assume that it was, at least at the beginning, with the full consent of both rulers. The alternation of masculine and feminine may result from later alterations in the text, or it may indicate independent actions by both rulers, portending a growing rift between them which was, in later decades to manifest in the erasure of Hatshepsut's name from many monuments.

Breasted himself, perhaps due to the presuppositions of his times, seems to have resisted or vacillated about the idea that Hatshepsut was involved with the appointment, later arguing against the evidence of the inscriptions:

Hapuseneb, the first High Priest of Amun who occupied the position at the head of the new sacerdotal organisation, was the vizier under Hatshepsut. But it is more likely that her co-regnant, Thutmose III, effected this organisation than that she should have done it.

This opinion may well have influenced others in the early 20th century. The viewpoint excluding Hatshepsut from significant religious activity connected with Amun, fortunately did not survive the 20th century. When building her mortuary temple on the West Bank at Luxor, Hatshepsut employed the renowned architect *Senenmut* who built it *'according to an ancient plan.'* He wrote:

I was a nobleman who was listened to. Moreover, I

had access to all the nobility's writings. There was nothing I did not know about what happened from the beginning.

Archives existed in all official institutions, such as courts, public works as well as in temples. High officials, as well as pharaohs, had access to these archives, some vast and detailed, others mere summaries. Senior officials were required to study and implement the specifications. Amenhotep, son of Hapu, the distinguished scholar and architect of Amenhotep III (1405-1367 BCE), describes his early education as follows:

I was appointed as an aspiring royal scribe; I was introduced to the divine book; I saw the wonderful things of Thoth; I was equipped with their knowledge; I opened all their [passages]; in all their affairs I was consulted.

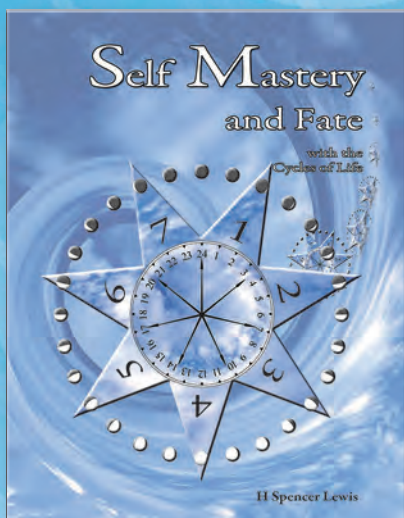
And from this initial *Per Ankh*, this Theban *'House of Life'*, stories about the so-called *'Primordial Tradition'* began, and has continued, in many forms, down into our own times through many and varied spiritual traditions and on into our own beloved Rosicrucian Order. Before ancient Egypt, I stand therefore in awe at all it accomplished and, above all, for the Light it bequeathed to our world.

Long may that Light shine bright
for all who are yet to come.



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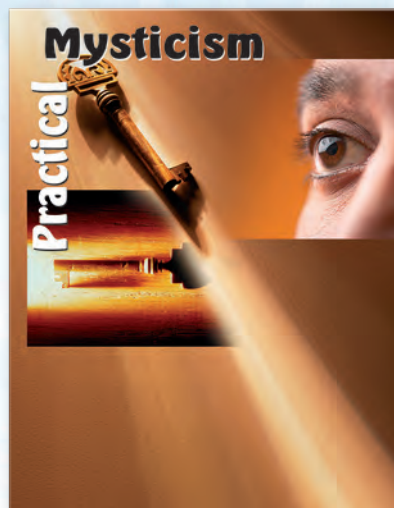
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