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COVER SPREAD

"Christmas Dawn"



Thoughts from the Editor

by Bill Anderson, FRC



WE INHABIT SUCH A BEAUTIFUL universe! It is so vast and so full of potentiality. Personally, I have always been fascinated by the night sky. In my mind I would see myself, on top of some Mexican pyramid, scanning the heavens and looking to foretell future events. Not astrology, but an indigenous belief in time as cyclical rather than linear. A daydream perhaps, but it raises intriguing questions nonetheless.

Orion

Here in the northern hemisphere, the winter skies are dominated by the star Sirius and the

constellation of Orion. Orion was an important constellation to ancient cultures and is worth a closer look with its analogy to the Rosicrucian Order.

In ancient Egypt, the constellation we know as Orion was regarded as a manifestation of the god Osiris. During the Old Kingdom, this area of the sky was perceived to be the portal to the Duat, the Otherworld that was the realm of Osiris. The oldest of the Pyramid Texts, found on the internal walls of the Pyramid of Unas, the last pharaoh of the 5th Dynasty (circa 2375-2345 BCE) at Saqqara, tell of his *Akh* or soul flying to unite with the Imperishable Stars and Osiris



in Orion. By uniting with Osiris in the Duat, the counterpart of the earthly realm, he would rejuvenate and regenerate himself.

In Mesoamerica, Mayan culture also emphasised the importance of the constellation Orion, though from a different perspective. Here, Orion was known as *Ox-Tun-Nal*, meaning the "Three Stone Place" in Classical Mayan inscriptions. The stars Alnitak, Saiph and Rigel in Orion form a triangle, which symbolised the hearth-stones of the home fire in the *Popol Vuh*, the sacred book of the Maya. The *Chilam Balam of Chumayel* speaks of these stars as the "three-cornered precious stone of creation." So, this triangular formation of stars was seen as the place of creation, from where First Father, the maize god *Hun Nal Ye*, emerged from the Otherworld and created the present world. He set up the first three stones of creation to establish the hearth or centre of the Cosmos.

Interestingly, the fire at the centre of the three hearthstones was what we now call M42, the Orion Nebula. This dense cloud of gas and dust, some 1,500 light years from Earth is a stellar nursery, where thousands of stars are coming to life.

As Orion has been considered a portal to the cosmic realms, a place of rebirth or renewal, so too is the Rosicrucian Order. The Order offers the combined teachings of the greatest minds of the past and present, transforming them and its students. Through its portals you can attain practical knowledge fit for purpose in this 21st Century. This exotic environment offers its students a means of recreating and renewing their lives. Life itself is an endless stream of choices, and becoming a Rosicrucian student is a life-enhancing experience; you become, in effect, a new creation.

Time to Rethink our Paradigms

Recently, in the *New Scientist* magazine, there was an article that suggested that there is a growing body of evidence from psychologists and the cognitive sciences suggesting that brilliance in academic subjects, sport, music and many

other areas is due only in a very small part to innate ability. Mostly, it is suggested, it comes through inspirational instruction, a supportive environment and sheer hard work.

Every one of us has the ability to become better than we are. Even the most ordinary among us needs to be careful about saying that we are not capable of doing great things. However, ordinary people have proven time and again that they can do something extraordinary: if they are willing to put in the work. In a recent study, it was found that almost all high achievers were fortunate to have at least one crucial mentor. Becoming a "genius" is not so much an innate gift as sheer hard work!

Potentiality

Modern cosmology postulates the existence of "Dark Energy," one of whose explanations is "an unidentified energy field of varying strength that fills space." This identifies with the long-standing Rosicrucian view of the universe as an ocean of potentiality.

In ages long past, men and women, who felt awe at what they saw of the universe and of their place in it, created what we now call science. Of course, it was not the formal structure that we have in place today with its myriad branches, but when someone first looked up and asked the question "Why?" that started a chain of events that has led us on the roller-coaster ride to life in the 21st Century with all of its amazing advances.

This is not to say that people in this century are any more intelligent than those of say a few thousand years ago, simply that more of us are better educated and now have a creative potential long denied to the mass of humanity in previous times. For centuries, the Hermetic Tradition has encouraged the pursuit of knowledge, in our times finding its culmination in organisations such as the Rosicrucian Order. We have a uniquely practical system of instruction, which can enable any person to help reach their potential. It takes a lot of work, there is no easy fix, and it will help you in your evolution.



Creativity and Education

"You can train people to carry out tasks in a better way, to acquire new techniques and skills and to accumulate new knowledge. But the whole essence of creativity lies in its freshness, its freedom and its newness," maintains the physicist F. David Peat.¹ "Creativity is often unexpected and always exciting. It involves seeing things in new ways. Creativity is the essence of life, of evolution, of consciousness, of nature and of matter." The universe itself is in a constant act of creation. Creation and change are the norm in the universe as well as in our daily lives.

He adds that creativity needs "a mind that is fresh, alert and sensitive, not dull, mechanical, afraid or restricted. Creativity is an energy that moves through the whole body." We should simply see creativity each day as something new, fresh and full of potential.

The *New Scientist* also reported that science is aiming for a picture of nature as it really is. "The idea of the eternally true laws of nature is a beautiful vision, and it is possible to test the predictions of a law of nature and see if they are verified or contradicted, but we can never prove a law of nature is eternally true. So, if we believe a law of nature is eternally true, we [actually] believe in something that logic and evidence cannot establish. These are disturbing thoughts. The biggest reason to consider that the laws of nature might evolve is the discovery that the universe itself is evolving."

Positio Fraternalitatis

The Rosicrucian Order AMORC exists to help humanity's evolution. As we continue through the studies we find our creative potential increasing exponentially. The following points are taken from the Rosicrucian Order's recent Manifesto the *Positio Fraternalitatis Rosae Crucis*, published in March 2001:

Rosicrucians are striving for a world:

- Where politicians are trying to serve the common good.
- Where countries manage their finances in the interest of all their citizens, and misery and poverty has disappeared because everyone has what they need to live happily.

- Where doctors treat both the soul and the body.
- Where work is regarded as a source of growth and well-being, not as a chore.
- Where nature is considered to be the most beautiful temple of all and all living things are considered to be our brethren on the path of evolution.
- Where spirituality is an ideal and a way of life and human relations are founded upon love and friendship and where the whole world lives together in peace and harmony.

Do you feel these sentiments are too utopian? If so, they will stay a utopian dream unless you and I take a stand for change. Evolution is a natural occurrence that happens when someone does something different or something different occurs. I am proud that Rosicrucians are in the forefront of evolution on this planet, that they are trying to make this world a better place for everyone to live. Consider the following:

If you believe that all human beings should have the same rights, be given the same respect and enjoy the same freedoms regardless of their country of origin or the nation in which they live – *then why are you not a Rosicrucian?*

If you believe that humanity is evolving and you want to create an ideal society on earth – *then why are you not a Rosicrucian?*

If you believe that the regeneration of humanity depends on tolerance and eclecticism – *then why are you not a Rosicrucian?*

If you believe that no political institution, religion, philosophy or science can claim to hold a monopoly of truth – *then why are you not a Rosicrucian?*

If this strikes a chord within your soul, and you are not a Rosicrucian, isn't it time that you are? It is time for you to take charge of your own evolution. It is time for you to create the right conditions to realise your potential.

If you are not a Rosicrucian, it is time that you are!

Footnote

1. F David Peat: www.f davidpeat.com



The Essence of Mysticism

by Ralph M Lewis, FRC



A MYSTIC IS ONE WHO HAS ACQUIRED a particular concept and a method to transform it into a personal experience. The mystical concept, the objective sought, is of a universal nature. That is, each individual can have an immediate personal experience of the *One*. This personal experience

sought after is a realisation of a *unity* of the self with the One, that is, the Absolute.

Definitions

In the doctrine of mysticism, the One is a term designating Absolute Reality, that is, the *totality* of All. This Absolute, the One, may have other

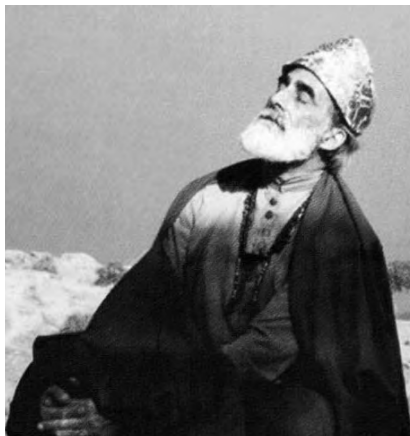


identities ascribed to it. Yet, in the final analysis, these other names may have, to the mystic, the same innate value. Thus for example, God, Universal Mind, Cosmic and Supreme Intelligence all have a correspondence to Absolute Reality or the One.

Only in the mental images we assign to them do these terms appear to differ. For example, the theistic concept of a personal god is distinctly different from the notion of an impersonal Cosmic. Regardless of which notions mystics have, they all accept certain transcendent qualities. This Supreme One is thought to be ubiquitous. Its quality, its essence, pervades all things; it is immutable, eternal and perfect. It is omnipotent; in other words, it is the cause of all that is or can ever be. It is also thought to be omniscient; that is, all things, as a result of its wisdom, are necessarily *perfect*.

The mystic, whether Oriental, Judaic, Christian or Islamic, concludes that divine perfection equates with *the good*. Sublime happiness is experienced only by the truly good. It is necessary, according to mystical doctrine, that we should seek a unity with this divine, transcendent state which we each conceive.

This brief explanation of the universal ideal held by mystics may seem to differ little from the spiritual beliefs expounded in most



The mystic, whether Oriental, Judaic, Christian or Islamic, concludes that divine perfection equates with the good. Sublime happiness is experienced only by the truly good. It is necessary, according to mystical doctrine, that we should seek a unity with this divine, transcendent state which we each conceive.

The concepts and beliefs of the mystic are one thing; and the methods of experiencing them are quite another.

theologies. In long-established religions, even those considered as pagan, the elements of mysticism exist, sometimes as the core.

However, many religionists will not accept the fact that certain doctrines to which they subscribe are basically mystical in content. This is due to two factors. First, most such individuals have never made even a cursory examination of the principles of mysticism. Second, because of

all the erroneous ideas attributed to mysticism, to the uninformed mind it has become a subject immersed in superstition and magic.

Rituals

The rites, rituals and ceremonies of all religions may appear to have an element of eccentricity to those who are not familiar with their symbolical significance. Ignorance really mocks itself. Man has often become awkwardly encumbered when he has tried to transform his spiritual ideals into acts and things, in order to represent them finitely.

The concepts and beliefs of the mystic are one thing, but the methods of experiencing them are quite another. Simply, how are we as mystics to attain that unity with the One, to which we aspire? We rationally accept that we must acquire *liberation* from the bondage of the secular world. We are then confronted with the realism of our dual existence. In other words, there is the common awareness of the physical, mortal existence and on the other hand, the realisation of the "Inner World" with the emotional rapture it can provide.

The mystic does not attribute this inner aspect of his dual nature exclusively to his organic being. Though its sensations may function through the medium of the brain, glands and nervous systems, it is realised that the origin of this inner aspect is not there. Rather, this Inner Being or Self (or Soul) is considered to be a link in the chain of divine or cosmic forces in which we have our being. The body is not thought by the mystic to be separate from this chain of divine phenomena. To believe such would be counter to the mystic's concept that a unity exists in all reality. Therefore, to the mystic there is thought to be a hierarchical order of the manifestations of the reality of the one transcendent power. In essence, these manifestations are however, all of the same quality. But they vary and may even seem diverse in the manner in which they manifest and express themselves to the human consciousness. We may for example use the analogy of the spectrum of



light with its different and yet related colours, or the musical scale with its varied yet also related octaves.

The Psychic Element

The mystic may then refer to this inner part of the self and the complexity of its expression as either the *spiritual* or the *psychic* part of the whole of self. In past centuries, this inner aspect was principally alluded to as the spiritual nature of man. However, in more recent times it has been referred to by the mystic or the student of mysticism as the psychic element of his being, though the word itself is ancient Greek in origin.

This psychic infusion is considered by mystics as being the highest of the divine or cosmic forces functioning in humans. It is similarly believed to be the threshold of our personal unity with the whole of Reality. This unity that the mystic strives to attain has however a dichotomy of meaning. On the one hand, the unity is thought to be a *plenum* of all, that is, nothing is apart from it, and in this sense we are always intrinsic elements of this cosmic or spiritual unity. On the other hand, we are *conscious* beings too.

And the phenomenon of consciousness is *awareness*. Succinctly, a thing can only have reality if we are aware of it. The mystic contends that this all-absorbing unity with the pristine One can only occur when he is conscious of his inner self merging with it. The unity with God, the Universal Mind, the Cosmic, or whatever the mystic conceives its image to be, can only exist to the mystic when it is realised. It is therefore insufficient to know just the physical self. Such would be like perceiving a finger and not the whole hand.

Personal Realisation

Another distinctive and most important characteristic of mysticism is that the experience of exalted Unity is always personal and has an immediacy. In other words, the mystical experience does not require, nor is it experienced through, an intermediary. The rationale of the mystical doctrine in this regard is that the quality of this sublime experience is not transferable

from one mind to another. The self must *directly* realise its integral relationship with the Divine or the Cosmic One. Concisely put, we have no mystical unity until we *know* it. The individual can only know by means of his or her personal attunement and response to that *Whole* of which he or she conceives.



The rites, rituals, and ceremonies of all religions may appear to have an element of eccentricity to those who are not familiar with their symbolical significance.

Renowned mystics of the past were devout followers of established traditional religious sects. Upon cursory examination, this may seem to contradict the previously cited essential qualifications of a mystic. All traditional religious faiths have their clergy, their priests and priestesses. Such individuals are considered well versed in their dogma and are also thought to be especially spiritually evolved

as intermediaries for adherents of these religions. However, a reading of the lives of prominent mystics down the centuries reveals that the clergy

Primitive magical rites, hypnotism and other practices have often perverted the true teachings necessary to mystical unity.

of the mystics' religious affiliation were not the direct medium of their mystical experiences. Mystics who were actively associated with religions were ardent students of the sacred writings of their particular faiths and were inspired by the traditional rhetoric and preachings of their religious realm. However, such things were incentives to *personally acquire* the necessary enlightenment to attain specific spiritual objectives. The technique, the instruction that such religious teachers expounded, became for aspiring mystics only the method, the instrument by which they then realised their own mystical experiences. The intimate mystical experience, the ultimate unity, cannot be divulged to the mystic. All that is shown or taught to a true aspirant of the mysteries is "The Way."

Method of Mysticism

Though the mystical experience itself is personal, its realisation is universal in its fundamentals. In other words, a *basic preparation* involving certain acts must be adhered to if the neophyte



is to realise his or her objective. Unfortunately, this time-tested procedure is not usually conscientiously followed. This "way" to mystical enlightenment has often been corrupted by the accretion of suggestions proclaimed to be worthy but which are actually worthless and often harmful. Primitive magical rites, hypnotism and other practices have often perverted the true teachings necessary to mystical unity.

What are the elements of the true method which may be applied by those seeking the personal benefit of mystical unity and its illumination? It is not the purpose of this article to delineate these in detail. Rather, such is the purpose for example, of the Rosicrucian teachings. However, a few efficacious statements can be made in this regard.

In the ancient Buddhist *dharma* (doctrines), there is a concise statement regarding the purpose of meditation, which is a fundamental of all mystical technique. The purpose of meditation is stated to be threefold. First, one dominates the lower aggressive nature of self. Second, one develops the higher faculties and attributes toward a vision of life's essential unity. Third, one unites the dual nature of the person into one continuous spiritual process.

It is admitted in Buddhist literature that this is a difficult task: *"Though one should conquer in a battle a thousand times a thousand men, he who conquers himself is the greatest warrior."* There is no automatic transition from a vulgar, coarse mind to a lofty state of meditation. In other words, the mind must be constant in the higher ideals and objectives which it seeks.

Concern for the body is likewise advocated for the true mystic. Asceticism, with its frequent self-mortification, is not recommended by true mysticism. We are reminded that, "the body is a vehicle of consciousness." Deliberate, rhythmic deep breathing is the means by which one purges the body of its impurities and infuses the energies conveyed by air. Exotic postures, so often associated with deep breathing in mystical practice, are not absolutely essential to it.



The Tibetan presentation of the subject of meditation is a conglomerate of Hindu and Buddhist doctrines as well as the indigenous traditional beliefs of the Tibetan peoples.

Meditation and Eastern Mysticism

The Buddhist technique particularly recommends that the best results in meditation are had in the morning. Of course, this advice is not limited to Buddhist instruction alone. The mind is rested and fresh, and unencumbered by the impressions of the day. It is further suggested that one always conduct one's meditation, if possible, in the same place. This creates a familiar surrounding that becomes symbolic of the purpose, and aids in attaining the desired state of consciousness.

It may be asked what results are to be expected from Buddhist meditation for example. It is said that the results of meditation in its early stage are both negative and positive. The *negative* aspect is the reduction of external objective impressions which normally dominate the consciousness. As a result, the aspirant acquires greater tranquillity. The *positive* result in meditation, as related in the doctrines of antiquity, is that the individual acquires a greater universal understanding of humanity and of oneself. In short, the self is bombarded to a lesser extent by external impressions, permitting that introversion which results in a greater self-realisation.

A distinction is made in the Buddhist *dharma* between concentration and meditation. We quote these ancient doctrines to show the line of true meditation that carries down to those organisations perpetuating authentic mystical methods: *"The goal of concentration is immediate and finite; the goal of meditation is ultimate and infinite."*

The Tibetan presentation of the subject of meditation is a conglomerate of Hindu and Buddhist doctrines as well as the indigenous traditional beliefs of the Tibetan peoples. Though the Hindu teachings in Tibet preceded Buddhism by centuries, they were later greatly influenced by its doctrines. The famed Buddhist doctrine of the "Eightfold Path" became an integral part of Tibetan religion and philosophy. The



doctrine of the *Eightfold Path*, as it descends to us today with slight variations, admonishes one to pursue *Right Belief, Right Seeing, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Endeavouring, Right Remembering* and finally *Right Meditation*.

It is assumed that from such character and discipline one would pass to higher degrees of understanding, as the aspirant would come to "realise the non-existence of the personal ego." This simply means that the individual ego would be absorbed into the Absolute, that Unity which is the essence of meditation. It is said that "... as the mere mention of food does not satisfy the appetite of a hungry man, he must still eat. In like manner, a person who wishes to learn about the voidness (of thought) must meditate in order to realise it. A mere definition of it is not enough." To attain this *summum bonum*, it is related that four different degrees of initiation are necessary. Such are not necessary to present here however.

Purpose of Mysticism

Are we to assume from all the foregoing that the goal of the mystic is but an abstract idealism, an escape from the rigours of the phenomenal world of everyday reality? Is mysticism but a retreat into a world constructed of figments of the subconscious? Does the mystic therefore live entirely isolated from the needs of the rest of mankind? If this were so, it would make mysticism solely a practice of soteriology, a mere personal and selfish system of spiritual salvation.

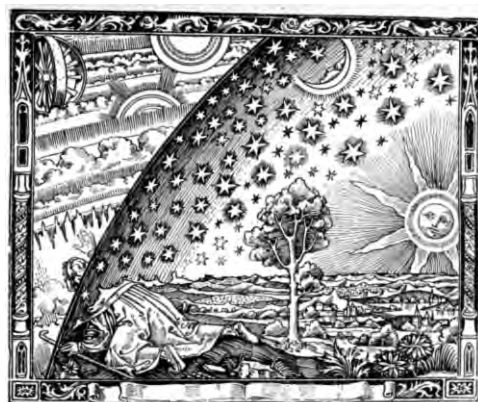
The real purpose of mystical unity is to seek closeness with the source of greater enlightenment. The modern mystic is one who realises that self is an integration of levels of consciousness, of awareness. Our common perception, our objective consciousness is limited. We are all aware of the illumination that comes to us at times as inspiration and intuition, and also of their differentiation from our common perception. Every artist, writer, inventor and scientist is enhanced at times by the brilliance of an unexpected thought that suddenly enters the conscious mind. The mystic seeks to climb, figuratively speaking, a ladder of consciousness, not only to be able to grasp from his or her own exalted level of consciousness a new knowledge or illumination, but to regenerate the lower levels of the mind by means of the momentary influx of what might

be termed Divine Light, Cosmic Illumination and so on. Such a mystical experience is to be translated into terms or ideas which are comprehensible to the individual, and which are adaptable to his or her worldly life in the form of practical knowledge.

Rosicrucian Mysticism

It is a fallacious idea that the object of meditation is to merely experience a state of euphoria or tranquillity. Such in itself contributes little to the welfare of humanity. True *meditation*, as taught by Rosicrucians, is much in accord with modern psychology, though the Rosicrucian teachings have long preceded academic psychology. Psychology refers to meditation as a form of "altered consciousness" and so it is. The Rosicrucian concept recognises that *concentration* is a function commonly of the objective consciousness. It is the focusing of the attention upon external stimuli, the impressions of the peripheral senses.

To Rosicrucians, *contemplation*, reasoning and imagination are the result of an introversion of the consciousness to thoughts and ideas. In other words, it is concentration turned inward,



The mystic seeks to climb, figuratively speaking, a ladder of consciousness, not only to be able to grasp from his or her own exalted level of consciousness a new knowledge, or illumination, but to regenerate the lower levels of the mind by means of the momentary influx of what might be termed Divine Light, Cosmic Illumination, and other expressions like these.

involving the subjective levels of consciousness. Yet it is not true meditation, for meditation transcends these other forms of our mental attributes, and it is not related to a fixed symbol or idea. Having a fixed symbol or idea in connection with the technique of meditation is but an elementary aid, and not the final key that unlocks the inner powers of mind.





Message from a “Rolling Stone”

by Connie James, SRC

THE WAS A MAN CALLED *PIET*. This was not his real name, but it serves to protect his anonymity. He was a rolling stone who happened to tumble across my path in life, and before I continued, he had given me the key to a meaningful existence.

I came across this exceptional man whilst

vacationing in the Karoo area of the Eastern Cape of South Africa. I had left my home in Port Elizabeth and gone up to the Karoo after breaking up with my partner; to clear my head as they say in modern parlance. He was, at the time, helping out at a cosy restaurant in a small town, being a friend of the owner. I was having dinner and on that particular night, business was slow. I was



seated next to the window, while this stranger relaxed at a small table nearby. We were the only ones in the restaurant at the time.

When I looked round to glance at the lone man, he leaned back in his chair, arms outstretched with hands flattened on the table, and uttered in a deep, satisfied voice, *"I feel like reciting The Raven."* I thought he was somewhat eccentric to say the least and quickly calculated how long it would take to reach the nearest exit.

Later I learned that his name was "Piet" and I was to discover that he could indeed recite a good part of Edgar Allan Poe's unusual poem, but he didn't do so on that occasion. Rather, he started a conversation, which I was sure had been his intention all along. And so began an acquaintanceship that was to prove brief but maturing for me.

For two weeks it was my good fortune to be in Piet's company a lot. We spent many golden hours in conversation during which I listened in rapt silence to his wonderful formula for productive living and peace of mind. I learned some basic truths that had escaped me during my thirty years in this world, for his philosophy was as true as steel and as firm as bedrock.

Someone, I can't remember who, once said,

The man's philosophy was as true as steel and as firm as bedrock.

"Yesterday is but a dream, and tomorrow is only a vision. But today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well therefore to this day." These words were the basis of Piet's philosophy and he abided by them more completely than anyone I have known. He taught me to take time each day for the things that count; little things, yet great, such as giving more thought to helping others, visiting a sick friend, writing letters of cheer and encouragement when needed, taking time to see the individuals behind the faces of those we meet along life's way.

He reminded me to notice the glories that make up our world; a glowing sunset, the twitter of birdsong, a starry sky, and above all, to take time for prayer and meditation on the great eternal truths.

Piet also taught me to laugh more and to



worry less about past mistakes and failures. He emphasised the value of disappointment, sorrow and frustration, and once asked me this: *"Do you know the fundamental difference between iron and steel is?"* Then he answered the question himself. *"The difference may be expressed in one word: fire. It's the fire of adversity that tries our faith and deepens our spirit. It enhances our knowledge of God and broadens our character."*

I have never forgotten the following words, which have come to hold a richer meaning as the years have passed: *"Our hearts are widened by weeping and in our sorrows we find a fellowship with sorrowing humanity. Don't be afraid of tears. We can never see the rainbow except through falling raindrops and there are visions of God that we can never see except through falling tears."*

In conclusion, I'll say that Piet taught me also to concentrate on things outside my own self-centred world and he left me with this thought: *"Let's remember that windows open outward as well as inward."* Our acquaintanceship was necessarily of short duration, for circumstances forced our paths to part. Piet went his way and I went mine, taking along the priceless treasure I had stumbled on in a Karoo village. It had been a difficult time for me, but I left laden with the fruits of a spiritual harvest from which I have drawn nourishment and satisfaction ever since.

So, take time to notice the stranger on the road, pay heed to the rolling stones that chance to cross your path. However insignificant they may seem, they may prove to be more precious than jewels.



Scientific Mysticism



Part 6

by William Hand, FRC

In Part 5 of this series we started to look at the topic of consciousness. In Part 6 we will continue this study. However, it is at this stage that we start to enter very controversial areas for science. Much of the science we will consider from now on is deeply theoretical, even though the theories originate from some of the greatest scientific minds alive today. Also the subject matter is approaching the frontiers of current intellectual mystical thought. However, hopefully it will resonate with the personal deep mystical experiences that we all have the privilege of encountering in life. Therefore, from now on, we are truly starting on a journey of exploration, which I sincerely hope will reveal exciting new vistas for everyone who reads these articles.

IN THE PREVIOUS ARTICLE, WE STATED that the level of consciousness is a function of complexity. We argued that everything has a consciousness from the smallest particle to very complex systems like human beings. As systems increase in complexity, they can develop an awareness of their own existence, which we commonly call "self consciousness."

This begs the question: how does this awareness arise? What separates human beings at present from say vast computer networks? Is it just that computers still do not possess the type of complexity found in the human brain? That is certainly a possibility that would be foolish not to acknowledge. It is also the sincere belief of many scientists working in



the field of artificial intelligence that one day, machines will take on *characteristics* that will make them indistinguishable from humans in terms of reasoning power. But will they possess self consciousness?

Science is divided on this issue and some now argue that complex computers will only, at best, mimic the human brain and that self consciousness stems from the more holistic concept of mind of which the brain is just a part. Given the current exponential rise in computer power I expect this issue to be resolved once and for all in our children's lifetime.

Consciousness and Vital Life Force

However, to return to the question of the difference between human beings and powerful computers, it is commonly accepted that human beings are "alive" and that computers are not. So what is aliveness? Is an atom alive? Are we alive? We know the latter is true, and from the arguments presented in Part 5 we can say that the former is also true since we have equated aliveness with complexity by comparing the concepts of passive and active consciousness.

But there are obviously *degrees* of aliveness; an atom does not have the same awareness as you or I. So is there a cut-off point when a complex system becomes self-aware? This seems very unlikely as nature does not work that way. So if we reject that line of reasoning for the time being then there has to be something else that is common to both the atom and ourselves.

Well there are a few possibilities, but if we use a reductionist argument then ultimately we (the atom and ourselves) are both essentially combinations of vibrating strings (see Part 3). Where there is vibration there is an energy, and where there is an energy there is a force and that same force is in both the atom and ourselves. The difference is that in human beings the force is *stronger*. Moreover, the force operates throughout our bodies, not just in the brain, and it is the *strength* of this force that ultimately separates us from computers. Mystics have given a name to this force: Vital Life Force or VLF for short.

The Duality of VLF

We have just defined VLF as the force that causes strings to vibrate. It is also the force that keeps our bodies together through the principles

of polarity and the workings of the forces of matter such as the electro-magnetic force. It can be argued that the electro-magnetic, the strong nuclear and weak nuclear forces discovered by science are material manifestations of the VLF. If we also include gravity then the VLF may hold the key to the grand unification or "the theory

Vital Life Force may hold the key to the grand unification or "the theory of everything" that science earnestly seeks.

of everything" that science earnestly seeks. This is very controversial stuff for science, but fits in well with mystical philosophy, particularly the principle of duality in all that exists in nature.

What I would like to propose is that VLF has a duality of expression. The material expression will be the four fundamental forces discovered by science; the immaterial or opposite polarity of expression will be their counterparts operating in the hidden dimensions of String Theory.

When we discussed String Theory in Part 3 it was stated that for the theory to work there had to be other dimensions of space-time in addition to our commonly experienced three dimensions of space and one of time. It is now becoming accepted that there are at least 11 dimensions of space-time in our universe, seven of them being "hidden." Six of the hidden dimensions are thought to be curled-up extremely small (much smaller than a single photon). However, these dimensions interact with our normal space-time, and interactions or vibrations in the hidden dimensions manifest in the normal ones, for the same strings are vibrating in all 11 dimensions. In fact the vibrations of the strings can be thought of as one system operating in at least 11 dimensions. The true nature of VLF has been a mystery for mystics over the centuries. However, if we can accept the duality proposed above then the veil begins to drop!

So, we can now see that consciousness (and its levels) is essentially a manifestation or attribute of VLF; the stronger the VLF, the greater the potential level of consciousness. Also, Consciousness (with a capital C) is a *force*, the primary force behind all reality. This primary and creative force is called Nous in the Rosicrucian teachings. The Soul force (arising from the strength of VLF and discussed in Part 7) is the immaterial



aspect of Nous and the material aspect is referred to as Spirit.

The Big Picture

Until 1995 String Theory was in a bit of a mess. Basically, there wasn't just one theory but several competing theories. All included the multi-dimensional aspect, but each was subtly different from the others. This was unsatisfactory, for if String Theory is true, then the universe must still have only one way of operating. Then in 1995, the brilliant scientist Ed Witten made a breakthrough by proving mathematically that if one of the hidden dimensions was very large (larger than the universe) then all the apparent differences between the theories disappear, resulting in one, and only one, String Theory.

We discussed the idea of dimensions in Part 3 and introduced the concept that people living say in just two dimensions cannot easily conceive of a higher third dimension. Anything going on in the third dimension would appear differently in two dimensions. For example, a sphere approaching

Consciousness as an attribute of VLF will transcend all of the universes.

a two-dimensional world would appear to the two-dimensional inhabitants as a flat circle that is simply increasing in diameter. So, by analogy we can only glimpse a *part* of what may be happening in the very large 11th dimension in our 10-dimensional universe. However, many scientists are now exploring the idea that our universe is just part of a higher dimension which can encompass an infinite number of universes or *branes* (contraction of the word: membrane). For further reading on this I recommend "*The Universe in a Nutshell*" by Stephen Hawking listed in the bibliography.

If we accept this picture, and I see no reason not to, then Consciousness as an attribute of VLF will transcend all of the universes. Moreover, it will be the same and the *one and only* Consciousness. This is much more than Cosmic or universal consciousness. What we are possibly discussing here is the consciousness of God. Many scientists now concede the possible existence of a higher force responsible for all that exists, and we too have arrived at the point where we can go no further using current scientific

knowledge. It's possible that there may be even higher dimensions, though for now, let us leave that for personal meditation.

Evolving Consciousness and the Desire to Be

To summarise so far: we have seen that:

- Consciousness (or awareness) arises from the vibrations of strings in multi-dimensions.
- The force responsible for the string vibrations is known as the Vital Life Force or VLF which operates in all dimensions.
- The signal strength of the VLF determines the level of consciousness but...
- VLF also transcends all dimensions to form one Consciousness.

Another way of looking at this is to consider Consciousness as a system comprising individual units of consciousness (strength of VLF). For example, a plant could be one unit, a hydrogen atom another and you or I another (more complex) unit. The system as a whole would then have a consciousness dependent not only on the consciousness of each unit but also upon the *links* between each unit.

This would be a quantum system whereby aspects of Consciousness would come into reality through internal exchanges of information and energy between each unit. Consciousness, since it encompasses all possible universes, would have the *potential* for infinite expression. Indeed the quantum wave function Q (see Part 1) of Consciousness would actually *be* every possible universe and everything in every possible universe. "*To Being there has never been a beginning.*"

Thus we can see that Consciousness has the potential for infinite expression and as such is continually evolving to that goal in its "*desire to be.*" Is this the reason for life and why we are here? In Part 7 we will return to consciousness as expressed in humankind and explore the concept of Soul and ask the question: what happens at bodily death or transition?

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A

B

C

D

E

F

Z

Alphabetical Aphorisms

by H Spencer Lewis, FRC

Y

*A*ttend carefully to the smallest details.

*B*e prompt in all things.

*C*onsider well, then decide positively.

*D*are to do right, fear to do no wrong.

*E*ndure trials patiently.

*F*ight life's battles valiantly.

*G*o not into the society of the vicious.

*H*old integrity sacred.

*I*njure not another's reputation.

*J*oin hands only with the virtuous.

*K*eeep your mind from evil thoughts.

*L*ie not for any consideration.

*M*ake few acquaintances.

*N*ever try to appear what you are not.

*O*bserve good manners.

*P*ay your debts promptly.

*Q*uestion not the veracity of a friend.

*R*espect your parents and their counsels.

*S*acrifice money rather than principles.

*T*ouch not intoxicating drinks.

*U*se leisure time for improvement.

*V*enture not upon the threshold of wrong.

*W*atch carefully over your passions.

*X*tend a kindly salutation to all.

*Y*ield not to discouragement.

*Z*ealously labour for the right.

X

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NINETY-NINE GOLD COINS

by Amelia



NUR AD-DIN, SULTAN OF DAMASCUS, great defender of the faith, was wealthier than any man alive. His power stretched to the sunrise in the east, the sunset in the west, to the mountains of the north and the blazing deserts of the south; and no man dared speak his name without invoking a blessing on his kingdom. Sultan Ad-Din had

gardens reputedly as beautiful as the legendary hanging gardens of Babylon and a fortress palace that in thirty years, no rival had ever tried to penetrate, not even his great rival, Mawdud, the Emir of Mosul.

The Sultan should have been happy, for he had great vigour and health, wealth beyond measure, seven adult sons, 18 beautiful daughters



and four loyal wives. But more than this, he had the secret admiration of the most beautiful woman in the world, the lovely Jamilah, second wife of the emir of Baghdad who he was planning to steal away one day to marry.

Yet, he found no contentment in life and constantly schemed and worried about his possessions and those he had still to gain. There was also no rest from the incessant problems of holding on to his empire, and despite his great wealth, he knew of many distant places of beauty, culture and great riches that he had neither conquered, nor would ever possess. This saddened him greatly and gave him feelings of failure, inferiority and deprivation that only a man as blinded by greed as he could know. For although he had more than any person alive, and his subjects called him the most glorious and powerful ruler in the world, in the privacy of his own thoughts he hankered after things beyond his means. Coveting things he knew he would never attain was Hur Ad-Din's great burden, a sorrow he could hardly bear to live with any longer.

Why, he wondered, could he never satiate his thirst for possessions. Why could he never feel truly satisfied? He had the constant attention of everyone and received lavish gifts from far and wide. Yet, despite the ceaseless stream of visitors pronouncing their loyalty to him, and despite the constant growth in his wealth, he felt ill at ease, for he sensed that something of great importance was lacking in his life. What it was however, he did not know, and from year to year he lived with a gnawing inner ache of unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

One day he awoke much earlier than usual, and after private prayers in his quarters and dispensing with the usual washing and dressing ceremonies usually attended by 20 slaves, he slipped unnoticed passed his guards and strolled off into his magnificent gardens. Nature was at its best, birds were singing and the dew was heavy as the sun rose on the eastern boundary of his kingdom. Water gurgled in streams through gardens lush with flowers of every kind and orchards heavy with fruit. But Nur ad-Din had a heavy heart and saw nothing of the splendour around him.

On he walked, deep in thought, unguarded and alone, to areas of his vast garden that he had never seen, when suddenly in the distance he faintly heard the voice of a man singing a song in

praise of the beauty of Creation. This was unusual he thought; men of faith do not sing, and besides, all his subjects should be at prayer at this hour. Who would be in his garden, and furthermore, why such happiness? Slowly he walked in the direction of the singing and through the bushes he saw a man dressed in rags, digging the earth and planting new flowers. Oblivious to the Sultan's presence, he seemed happier than any man in the world. Life seemed so light and easy for this man, and he exuded joy and happiness in great abundance. How could this beggar, this mere servant, this slave, have such happiness while he, the great Sultan of Damascus had nothing but worries in his heart?

When the Sultan turned a corner and, coughing softly, made his presence known, the ragged man fell to his knees in terror and began shuffling backwards, head bowed low, to leave the Sultan's presence. Curious, the Sultan told him to stop and ordered him to rise. With piercing eyes he gazed at this pathetic, underfed creature and sneered: "*Why peasant are you so happy? Why do you sing when others pray?*"

The man looked down at the ground in abject humility before his master and mumbled: "*My Lord, your Magnificence, my name is Hakim and I am but a lowly servant of your realm. It is through your grace that I have the privilege of working in this most beautiful of gardens. And through your grace I have the pleasure of nurturing and caring for your subjects, the great and beautiful plants of your garden. And these subjects of yours give in return their most beautiful fragrance and a bountiful supply of fruit to my lord's household. In my song I thank the Almighty for the happiness he has brought me by giving me the means to work in his Creation. I earn enough to feed my wife and children, and all we need is a roof over our heads and warm food to fill our bellies. My family is my inspiration and they are content with whatever I bring home. That is why I am so happy. That is why I sing in praise of Allah the merciful.*"

The Sultan winced and after waving his hand in an air of dismissal, impatiently turned while the servant shuffled backwards out of sight and ran for his life. Suddenly the Sultan noticed a guard close by standing in full armour, appearing to have seen and heard the entire proceedings. Embarrassed and angry, he demanded why he was there and what he was looking at, to which the guard replied: "*Oh great Sultan of Damascus, I am here to guard your life; for you walked into*



these gardens unaccompanied and spoke to a stranger who could have done you harm." At this the Sultan sighed and let out a low wail: "Oh why can I not find contentment as this peasant has? I have everything and yet this lowly servant greatly surpasses me in happiness. How can this be?"

Embarrassed by his outburst, the Sultan looked at the guard with anger and was about to dismiss him from his presence when the guard, in a calm clear voice replied: "Your Magnificence, although this servant has found happiness and contentment in life, unlike you he has not tasted the bitter fruits of 99."

"What do you mean by that?" the Sultan hissed, to which the guard calmly replied: "Your Magnificence, for him to truly know the bitterness of 99 as you do by day and night, you will have to place 99 gold coins in a bag and leave it unannounced on his doorstep. When you have done this, he will soon learn what it is to be you, and you my Lord, will have learnt a great lesson."

The Sultan went purple with rage at this insolence, and drew his dagger with intent to kill. But an instant

later, and not knowing quite how, the guard had disappeared. There was not a sound, the guard was simply not there. Who was this guard, he thought? Fearing that he may have walked into an area of the garden where Jinns perchance roamed, he hastily withdrew and rushed back to the safety of his palace. Making it back to his chambers without anyone noticing, he fell into bed and within seconds was sound asleep.

When he later awoke that day, and after bathing and being clothed by his usual retinue of slaves, Nur ad-Din knew that something of great importance had happened to him that morning. Whether it was a dream or he had been bewitched by Jinns, he could not tell, but the clarity of the memory of that morning's encounter had instilled in him a sense of urgency to test the recommendation of this mysterious guard. And so he arranged for a bag of 99 gold coins to be left that night on the doorstep of the gardener Hakim whom his servants knew well.

Later that night, when Hakim went outside his humble home to look at the starry sky, he saw the bag on his doorstep, and wondering what it might contain, took it into his house. Before his wife and children, he poured out the

99 gold coins to shrieks of joy from his family. Eagerly he counted them over and over, but his disappointment steadily grew as each time it came to 99; not 100, just 99. Something must be wrong he thought, there must be a coin missing. No one would put just 99 coins in a bag. Surely they would have made it an even 100?

Retracing his steps, he searched and searched for what he presumed would have been a coin he had dropped, but no, it was not there. Someone has taken the hundredth coin he thought; what a world of thieves! Finally, exhausted, he decided he could not rest until he had the "full set" of 100 coins and there was nothing more to do about it than to work harder than ever before in order to earn enough to buy that last coin.

When he arose the next morning, he was burdened by the immense task that lay ahead of him, and he was also for the first time in years,

in a very bad mood and even missed his prayers.

Angrily he barked orders at his terrified wife and children before storming out of

the house to begin work in the Sultan's gardens just before dawn.

The Sultan had hardly slept at all that night and had prayed fervently for a release from his unhappiness. Again before dawn he slipped unnoticed into his gardens. In the morning dew, surrounded by a chorus of birdsong, he went to the place where he had seen his gardener the day before. And there he found him again, not singing praises to the Creator this time but cursing the burden of his daily toil. With great venom Hakim cursed the world and the thief who had "stolen" his coin. Now he was chained to the task of labouring day and night for seven full years in order to earn enough to buy that single missing coin.

With a heavy heart, Nur ad-Din, the great Sultan of Damascus, turned and silently began walking back to his palace. How could this happy servant have become so bitter and unhappy after receiving a king's ransom, enough to live in comfort without toil for the rest of his life? The Sultan could not believe that Hakim, who until only yesterday had been so happy and content, could have undergone such a sudden change of heart after receiving such good fortune.

No one would put just 99 coins in a bag. Surely they would have made it an even 100?



Suddenly he sensed the presence of someone at his side and with a jolt he saw the guard in full armour at his side again. Without so much as a greeting, the guard looked him straight in the eye and said: "Nur ad-Din, you have seen what happens to one who has enough but feels that despite his wealth, life has cheated him of that last gold coin. But for that last coin, Hakim believed he would be happy beyond measure, fully forgetting that he was happy even before he received the 99 gold coins. Hakim has tasted the bitter fruits of 99, and now you are not alone.

"Sultan of Damascus, if you truly humble yourself and understand how much you have to be thankful for, you can live in bliss with very little. You have been unhappy because you have always sought more and never given thanks for what you have. From this day forth, you will think of how much you have and how little others in your kingdom possess, and give freely of your abundance to those who need it most."

Upon hearing this, the Sultan sank to his knees, and reaching out for the hem of the guard's

tunic, held it tight as he sobbed quietly, both with regret for his past greed and with joy at the thought that he had at last found the answer to his inner aridity. Now he knew how happiness could be his and with gratitude he praised Allah that he still had the chance to make amends for his past greed. After a while the guard placed his hands firmly on the Sultan's shoulders and said in a loud voice: "Rise Nur ad-Din, Sultan of Damascus, go your way in Peace and walk in the ways of Righteousness always." The Sultan rose, and looking into the unfathomable calmness of the eyes that beheld him, briefly thanked the guard and turned to leave. Nur ad-Din never turned back after this encounter and found a happiness and peace he had never thought possible.

As for the guard, no one ever saw him again, though legend has it that this guardian of the faith was none other than that great guardian of the human heart, the wisest of all men, the legendary Mustafa the Wise of Córdoba!

Morning Prayer

by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, SRC

Let me today do something that shall take
a little sadness from the world's vast store.
And may I be so favoured as to make
of joy's too scanty sum a little more.
Let me not hurt, by any selfish deed
or thoughtless word, the heart of foe or friend.
Nor would I pass, unseeing, worthy need,
or sin by silence when I should defend.
However meagre be my worldly wealth,
let me give something that shall aid my kind.
A word of courage, or a thought of health,
dropped as I pass for troubled hearts to find.
Let me tonight look back across the span
'twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience say
because of some good act to beast or man
"The world is better that I lived today."





The Dalai Lama: Ethics & the Mystic

by Betty Main, SRC



TENZIN GYATSO, THE 14TH DALAI Lama is one of the world's most respected religious leaders. For many years he has been preaching the need for a spiritual revolution in a world that is full of suffering and pain. Born in North-eastern Tibet on 6th July 1935, he was recognised at the age of two as the reincarnation of his

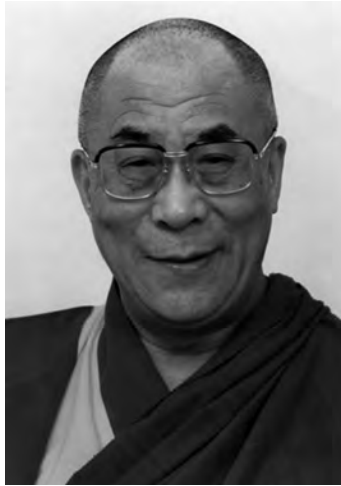
predecessor, the 13th Dalai Lama, and therefore an incarnation of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the *Bodhisattva of Compassion*. Bodhisattvas are enlightened beings who have postponed their own *nirvana* and chosen to take rebirth in order to serve humanity.

In 1950, when 15 years old, the Chinese army invaded Tibet and he was obliged to accept



their political power. For nine years he tried to talk peace with Máo Zédōng and other leaders until an uprising in Tibet resulted in the Chinese threatening to bomb his summer palace. To save the traditional buildings and their inhabitants, he was compelled to flee across the Himalayas to India, where he was granted political asylum.

Establishing his headquarters in Dharamsala in the North Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, he sought there, through teaching and instruction, to preserve the traditions and culture of Tibet. Members of his government-in-exile have continued to work in a non-violent manner for the future of their homeland.



Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama is one of the world's most respected religious leaders. For many years he has been preaching the need for a spiritual revolution in a world that is full of suffering and pain.

Positive and Negative Attitudes

Trained as a Buddhist monk, his teachings, based on love, compassion and consideration for others, are of interest to Rosicrucians as they reflect many of the principles that they incorporate into their daily lives. By inspiring a spiritual revolution, the Dalai Lama is trying to persuade the peoples of the world to abandon their negative thoughts

His teachings are of interest to Rosicrucians as they reflect many of the principles that they incorporate into their lives.

that cause unhappiness and pain, and instead try to train their minds to think positively.

He recognises that many of the present evils of the world are man-made. Daily on our TVs or in our newspapers we see examples of them in the wars and disturbances in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Darfur region of Sudan. The Dalai Lama advocates that problems should be solved by dialogue and discussion rather than by violence and destruction. He deplores the existence of national frontiers and nationalism, for they create divisions between "them" and "us." Instead of using force, he believes problems should be analysed and discussed from all angles so that through dialogue and a commitment to non-violence, some form of settlement can be reached.

Similarly, murder, violence, rape and the breakdown of marriages and family life, are also caused by negative attitudes. Their outcome is fear, suspicion, helplessness and self-loathing. If we dedicated our lives to developing positive thoughts, we could spread ethical virtues such as love, compassion, tolerance and the practice of non-violence. Not only should we defeat the damage done by negative attitudes, we should also try to spread ethical values.

It is not enough just to aim at positive thoughts; we should also accept responsibility for our actions. If we were to re-orientate our thoughts and emotions, we would not only be able to cope with suffering more easily, but perhaps we could prevent it arising in the first place. Generally, it has been found that those whose conduct is ethically positive are happier and more satisfied than those who neglect ethics.

Ethics

What then are these ethics? In essence they are based on consideration for others. Our lives are so intertwined that our very existence depends on others and their co-operation, as well as those countless thousands who provide for our daily living. In effect, where our thoughts and actions do not harm others, they are ethical; where they harm others, they are unethical.

In a sense, our lives are sustained by a great quest for happiness, expecting and hoping that certain acts will bring it about. There are no boundaries to the desire to be happy and avoid suffering. Psychologically and emotionally we are all the same, whatever our differences in skin colour, our outward appearances and physical make-up. We can all share these positive emotions that bring us peace and tranquillity, as well as troublesome negative ones.

To achieve these unifying aims, we must establish a code of universally accepted ethical standards. For this purpose, we should try to develop a feeling of empathy towards others, trying to understand their sorrows and share





Establishing his headquarters in Dharamsala in the North Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, he sought there, through teaching and instruction, to preserve the traditions and culture of Tibet.

their suffering. To cherish the well-being of others brings inner happiness and peace of mind, and provided our minds are strong enough, we can remain calm and serene even when surrounded by difficult circumstances.

In our world there are both rich and poor countries. But strangely, it is often those living in

To achieve these unifying aims, we must establish a code of universally accepted ethical standards.

materially developed nations who, despite their advanced industries and science, suffer more, as they are often not as satisfied and happy as those living in less developed countries where expectations are not as high. An abundance of material possessions means that their owners continue to demand more and more, giving rise to the disruptive emotions of greed, envy and malice. Where satisfaction depends on material concerns instead of happiness, there is always a prevalence of anxiety, stress, confusion, uncertainty and depression, sometimes requiring the use of tranquillisers, medicines and sleeping pills as remedies in daily life.

Influence of Religions

Religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism, are founded on love, compassion and forgiveness; most religions are. With such a variety of countries and

communities across the world, there exists an unavoidable diversity of faiths, some of which will suit some people and not others depending largely on the culture the individual is raised in. In this multiplicity of faiths however, all must learn to live together in harmony and tolerate the beliefs of others.

As the influence of religion declines, there is mounting confusion as to how best to conduct our lives. It used to be that religion and ethics were closely intertwined. Now many believe that science has disproved religion. Where there is no final evidence of any spiritual authority, morality itself becomes a matter of individual preference. In the past, scientists and philosophers felt a pressing need for solid foundations on which to establish immutable laws and absolute truths. Now this kind of research is held to be futile. Where ultimately nothing exists any longer, and reality itself is called into question, the result is chaos.

Spiritual Revolution

Given the absence of the essential basis of faith which has led to much anxiety, stress, confusion, uncertainty and depression, the Dalai Lama, through his teachings, urges the need for a spiritual revolution. He maintains that it must be based on universally accepted ethical principles, where actions and thoughts are directed at the good of others by developing empathy and understanding.

We must transform our habits to become



The Dalai Lama, through his teachings, urges the need for a spiritual revolution. He maintains that it must be based on universally accepted ethical principles.



compassionate and make an ethic out of virtue. We must practise non-violence with forbearance and fortitude. Patient forbearance inhibits negative thought. The development of patience is an antidote to anger which is the greatest threat to inner peace and therefore happiness. With ethical discipline we must learn compassion, which means caring for and sharing in the sufferings of others.

Moreover, we must work to safeguard our environment. So far, the Earth is the only home we have. Astronauts, on their journeys to and from the moon and the international space-station, can look down upon our blue planet and see it as a thing of beauty and fragility. We are guilty of the pollution that is destroying it and maybe, just maybe, the present incidence of floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and other natural phenomena throughout the world are the result of the Earth protesting against the way we are treating it.

The Dalai Lama has travelled widely, meeting world leaders: presidents, popes, archbishops, political and church leaders, as well as poor and humble individuals, with whom he has shared his life. He has addressed parliaments, assemblies and gatherings of all kinds, promoting peace through his doctrine of non-violence and stressing that problems both large and small, must be solved through dialogue and discussion. To him, war is an outdated mode of human activity.

Longing for Peace

During the last 40 years, there has been a change in public opinion and an increased longing for genuine peace. With the steady intertwining of national economies, there has been an emergence of security groups, so that we have become accustomed to seeing United Nations troops deployed as peace-keepers in distant countries.

It is the Dalai Lama's aim that one day the world will witness the establishment of a World Council of the People far transcending the scope of the present United Nations. Such a body would consist of groups of individuals drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds: academics, artists, bankers, environmentalists, lawyers, poets, religious thinkers and writers, as well as ordinary men and women. All will have reputations for integrity and dedication to fundamental ethical, human values. Because it would not be invested

with political power, its pronouncements would have no legal force, though by virtue of its independence, its deliberations would symbolise the conscience of the world. They would therefore represent a supreme moral authority.

Many might say this is impossible. Yet, while people tend to criticise and blame others for what goes wrong, surely it is worthwhile

With ethical discipline we must learn compassion, which means caring for and sharing in the sufferings of others.

putting forth such constructive ideas. Given the respect that human beings generally have for truth, justice, peace and freedom, there is a genuine possibility of creating a better, more compassionate world. The potential is there.

If, by the proper use of education and the media, it were possible to implement some of the suggestions put forward by the Dalai Lama, conditions could be established that would help to promote his dream of creating a lasting peace in the world.

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The Dalai Lama has his own website at www.dalailama.com



The Dalai Lama's aim is that one day, the world will witness the establishment of a "World Council of the People" far transcending the scope of the present United Nations. Such a body would consist of groups of individuals drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds including ordinary men and women.

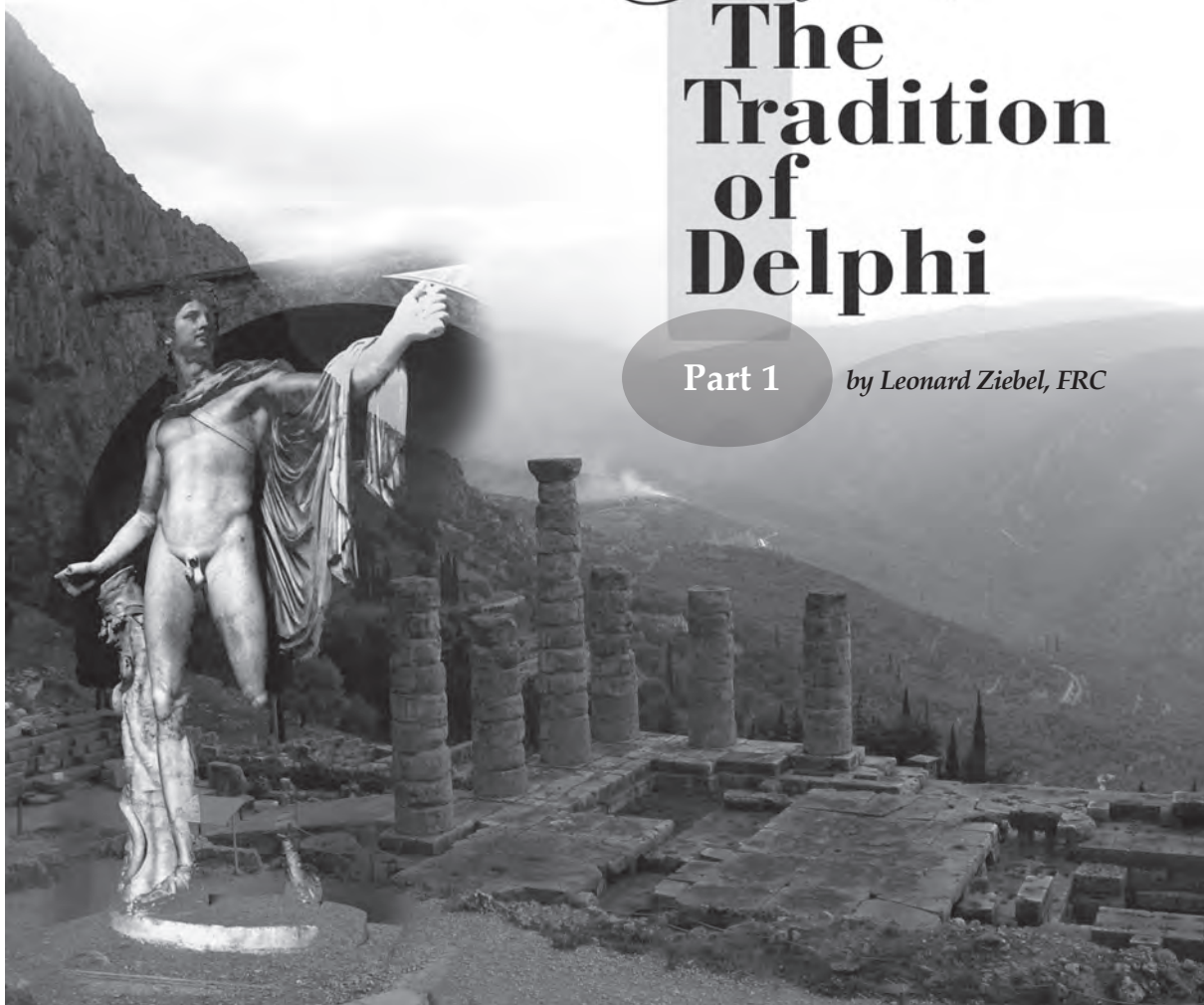


Know Thyself

The Tradition of Delphi

Part 1

by Leonard Ziebel, FRC



THE VIEW FROM THE DELPHIC slopes was breathtaking. Cloud-capped Mt. Parnassos, with patches of snow still clinging to its highest peaks, towered over precipitous cliffs that ringed a natural amphitheatre on one side and dropped down to the seemingly bottomless Pleistos valley on the other side. Small rivulets of melted snow trickled down undulating terraces, creating the

Kastalian Spring in a narrow crevice at the foot of the mountain.

Apollo consecrated Kastalia to the Muses and it was said that the spring could inspire the genius of poetry to those who drank her waters or listened to their quiet sound. An undisturbed view of the valley below offered an awe-inspiring spectacle that stretched to the peacock-blue waters of the Gulf of Corinth, 15 kilometres away, where



the ancient harbour of Kirrha was situated. It was here that the supplicants landed on their journey to consult the Oracle.

The Joyous Journey: 206 BCE

Our group from the city of Elea, whose most famous citizen was the esoteric philosopher Parmenides, joined the throng of pilgrims at dawn on the 7th day of the month Bysios (February-March). Phoibos Apollo, the great god of light, had returned a few days earlier from Hyperborea, his winter quarters in north of Thrace, and now, on his birthday, the first oracular session of the year was about to begin.

Once a month, the Pythia and her retinue of assistants and priests went through an intricate series of rituals to purify herself. First, she purified herself by bathing in the pure, sparkling waters of Kastalia: *the outer purification*. Then the Pythia and her cortege walked ceremoniously up the hillside, through the sanctuary's terraced compound, drawing near to another spring called Kassotis, whose clear and cool waters she drank: *the inner purification*. It was by drinking this water that she was said to receive her inspiration. From Kassotis, so it was said, the Oracle proceeded into the temple, through the Pronaos into the Adyton, past the inner altar where the eternal flame burned. Then the officiating priests led her down a circular stairway to her chamber, a small grotto that was fashioned from a cavity in the earth directly below the shrine.

The melancholic beauty and distinctly spiritual atmosphere created by the stillness of the surroundings, make it easy to understand why Zeus, the father of the gods, placed the conical-shaped stone called the *ομφαλός* (*omphalos*), meaning the "navel" of the earth, at Delphi. According to legend, to find the exact centre of the

Once a month, the Pythia and her retinue of assistants and priests went through an intricate series of rituals to purify her.

earth, Zeus released two eagles simultaneously from either end of the world to determine where the centre lay. They met above Delphi.

Mt. Parnassos had already for hundreds of years been considered sacred and here a new temple was dedicated to Zeus' favourite

son, Apollo, the god of harmony, order, light, prophecy, medicine and healing. He was also the patron of youth, beauty, music and colonisation.

Delphi is not only a major Hellenic sanctuary; it also possesses gymnasia, athletic games, music festivals, merchant stalls, guides, food vendors, hawkers of religious souvenirs and even a theatre. So much to see and do here!

But Chrysanthios and I had a single purpose, and after purifying ourselves in the waters of Kastalia, we followed the retinue up the Sacred Way to the portal of the temple, past the

The name Delphoi may refer to an archaic veneration of Gaia, an Earth goddess at the site.

elegant porticoes and official buildings, past the thousands of statues and votive offerings to the great edifice where we prepared for our entrance to the temple proper. We had come to consult the Oracle and were full of awe and excited anticipation.

Delphi: 2006 CE

Delphi (Δελφοί), in the modern Greek prefecture of Phokis, was revered throughout the Greek world as the centre of the universe. The great Panhellenic sanctuary of Pythian Apollo lay in the ancient Greek territory or *koinon* of Phokis. The Phokians, not a city-state, rarely figured in the major events of Greek history and Delphi, although within their territory, was not considered a Phokian sanctuary and was administered by a coalition of states called the *Amphiktyony*.

The name *Delphoi* is connected with *δελφ* (*delph* or hollow) or *δελφός* (*delphos* or womb) and may refer to an archaic veneration of Gaia, an Earth goddess at the site. Apollo is connected with the site by his epithet *Δελφίνιος* (*Delphinios*, "the Delphinian") i.e. either "the one of Delphi," or "the one of the womb." The epithet is also connected with dolphins in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* (line 400), telling how Apollo first came to Delphi in the shape of a dolphin, carrying Cretan priests on his back.

"Further yet you went, far-shooting Apollo, until you came to the town of the presumptuous Phlegyai who dwell on this earth in a lovely glade near the Kephisian lake, caring not for Zeus. And thence





It was believed that Zeus, the father of the gods, placed the conical-shaped stone called the ομφαλός (omphalos), meaning the “navel” of the earth, at Delphi.

you went speeding swiftly to the mountain ridge, and came to Krisa beneath snowy Parnassos, a foothill turned towards the west: a cliff hangs over if from above, and a hollow, rugged glade runs under. There the lord Phoibos Apollo resolved to make his lovely temple, and thus he said:

His skills and his defence of human values made Apollo the most beloved of the Greek deities.

‘In this place I am minded to build a glorious temple to be an oracle for men, and here they will always bring perfect hecatombs, both they who dwell in rich Peloponnesos and the men of Europe and from all the wave-washed isles, coming to question me. And I will deliver to them all counsel that cannot fail, answering them in my rich temple.’

When he had said this, Phoibos Apollo laid out all the foundations throughout, wide and very long; and upon these the sons of Erginos, Trophonios and Agamedes, dear to the deathless gods, laid a footing of

stone. And the countless tribes of men built the whole temple of wrought stones, to be sung of for ever.”

-- From the Homeric Hymn to Apollo.

The Phaedriades (The Shining Ones) were the pair of cliffs on the lower southern slope of Mt. Parnassos, which enclose the sacred site of Delphi. The celebrated ancient writers Strabo, Plutarch and Pausanias all mentioned the Phaedriades when describing the site: a narrow valley of the Pleistos formed by mounts Parnassos and Kirphis. Between them rises the Kastalian Spring.

Even today, at noontime, the rock faces reflect a dazzling glare, while at sunset the sides of the cliffs glow red with the reflection of the sun’s rays, and the whole ravine of the Pleistos and the steep terraced olive groves in the valley leading to the rocky pass of Arachova are bathed in a warm, deep purple light. These cliffs form the eastern gate of the site.

Apollo

It is thought that the worship of Apollo, always depicted as an eternally handsome, beardless young man, came to the Aegean area from Anatolia (modern day Turkey) sometime between 1100 and 800 BCE. Homer, mentions him as being on the side of the Trojans, not the Greeks, during the Trojan War, which may bear out this supposition.

There are indications that he may even have originally been a Hittite or Hurrian divinity. He seems to have personified the power to dispel and ward off evil, which was related to his association with the darkness-dispelling power of the morning sun and the conceived power of reason and prophecy to dispel doubt and ignorance.

Apollo (Ἀπόλλων) is the light that illumines the arts of civilisation. He and his sister Artemis were born on the seventh day of the seventh month on a barren and inhospitable floating island that was incapable of sustaining life. At the very instant of Apollo’s birth, a rooster crowed, heralding the dawn, and seven sacred swans circled the island seven times in waters that emitted a golden glow. At the same moment, a grove of golden olive trees representing the spiritual nature of the universe began to bloom, and the foundations of the island took root. Zeus was so proud of his son and of the events proclaiming his birth that he declared the island to be a sanctuary. He named it *Delos*



(Δῆλος), "the Brilliant." Birth and death were forbidden and those who were about to give birth or to die were rushed to another location in order to preserve the purity of the island.

During his early years, Apollo dwelt in the mountainous valleys of Pierra, an area north of Mt. Olympos, where the nine Muses taught him the intellectual arts that give man an insight into the eternal truths and frees him from physical bondage. Apollo was such an adept pupil that he soon surpassed his teachers, and Hermes, the chief messenger of the gods, presented him with the seven-stringed lyre which became a symbol of the harmonious union of the cosmic forces that pervade heaven and earth. When Apollo left Pierra to live among the gods on Mt. Olympos, Zeus placed a golden crown on his head, thereby vesting him with divine authority.

His skills and his defence of human values made Apollo the most beloved of the Greek deities, and many legends were woven around him. It was told that after the death of his friend Hyakinthos through the jealous anger of Zephyros, god of the west wind, Apollo sought solace in the company of a beautiful mortal



A Roman depiction of the eternally handsome Apollo.

girl named Marpessa, who was in love with the courageous and handsome Idas. Realising that he could not compete with the god in any contest designed to win the girl, Idas abducted Marpessa and sped away in a winged chariot that the sea-god Poseidon had made for him. Apollo, who was still grieving over losing Hyakinthos, was not willing to give up Marpessa and set off in immediate pursuit. The winged chariot was no match for the swift steeds that pulled the sun through the heavens and Idas was soon overtaken.

Knowing that his doom was certain, Idas nevertheless prepared to fight to the death for the girl whom he loved. As Apollo was about to strike, Marpessa threw herself between the two adversaries and declared her love for Idas. She pleaded with Apollo to spare Idas, reminding him that it was her right as a mortal to choose her own mate.

Remembering the longing he felt for Hyakinthos, Apollo bowed his head in shame and asked to be forgiven for his selfishness. He wished the two lovers well and with a heavy heart, returned to his home in far-off Hyperborea.

Hyperborea was a paradisiacal island surrounded by the river Oceanus. It enjoyed perpetual warmth and sunshine. Fruit grew so fast and so abundantly that they would be sown in the morning, reaped at midday, and consumed at sunset. Herds of graceful unicorns roamed the plains and many varieties of fish filled the waters. In the highlands, an assortment of unusual plant life covered the landscape, pollinated by swarms of various insects. Within Hyperborea's borders, sorrow was unknown, and its inhabitants chose the time of their death, which they celebrated by feasting and rejoicing, after which they



Depiction of the fight between Apollo and Idas for Marpessa. Details from Athenian red-figure clay vase about 500-450 BCE. (Munich. Antikensammlung 2417. Photo. Museum KM 3381 © Munich. Antikensammlung)



were escorted in regal splendour to a high crag overlooking the river Oceanus and hurled into its frothy waters.

The river Oceanus was thought to be a limitless river encircling the world. Early Greek thought conceived this river as symbolising the

A priestess was installed called the Pythia to act as a mediator between the gods and men.

current of energy that induced the dynamic forces and transitional states between solid matter and formless gas, and it was believed that all life germinated in these waters. From a metaphysical point of view, Oceanus can be regarded as the primordial sea containing within itself the seeds of all possible forms on one plane of existence, and Hyperborea personifies the ascent from exoteric darkness to esoteric light. The manner in which its inhabitants chose to leave the island is



The Kastalian Spring in the ravine between the Phaedriades is where pilgrims and the priesthood, the contestants in the Pythian Games and especially suppliants who came to consult the Oracle, stopped to purify themselves in preparation for entering the great temple.

analogous to the descent of the soul from heaven to earth.

Python

After dwelling in Hyperborea for one year, Apollo returned to Greece only to learn that his mother Leto was being intimidated by the chthonic serpent Python which was terrorising the countryside around Mt. Parnassos at the place known as Pytho. Apollo rushed to her aid and a fierce battle took place, in which Python was mortally wounded by Apollo's arrows. Defeated, the serpent slithered to its lair, which lay underneath the mountain by the spring of Kastalia, and died.

In this brief but significant allegory, the serpent represents the evil that man must overcome, and Apollo's arrows are the shafts of light that are symbolical of man's victory over the dark forces of the universe. In Greek, the word *pythein* (πύθειν) means: "to rot." The defeat of Python came to symbolise Apollo's (Light's) victory over the powers of darkness.

Kastalian Spring

On a hot summer's day, the crystalline springs from which people and animals could refresh themselves, shimmer and pulsate luminously. Delphi's abundance of water in pools and springs, as well as quenching the thirst, was an inspiration for poetry and prophecy. The cliffs and surrounding mountains kept it secluded.

The Kastalian Spring in the ravine between the Phaedriades is where pilgrims and the priesthood, the contestants in the Pythian Games and especially suppliants who came to consult the Oracle, stopped to purify themselves in preparation for entering the great temple. Two fountains fed by the sacred spring survive. The archaic (early 6th century BCE) fountain house has a rectangular marble-lined basin surrounded by benches. There is also a Hellenistic or Roman fountain with niches hollowed in the rock to receive votive gifts to the nymph Kastalia. It was impossible to bathe in this spring as the water was covered and seven bronze spouts provided the water needed for the purifying rites.

After Python

Following the defeat of Python, Apollo challenged the god Pan to a musical contest in which the prize would be the gift of prophecy. Pan was defeated



and Apollo tested his newly acquired powers on a shepherd who tended his flock of sheep in the shadow of the god's temple at Delphi. After Python had expired, vapours began to ooze out of the deep crevasses that were to be found on the hillside, and Apollo caused the shepherd to become enveloped in their fumes. The herdsman soon began to jump about and act irrationally, mumbling strange phrases that later proved to be prophetic revelations.

As more and more people flocked to Delphi to experience the ecstasy of the intoxicating subterranean gases, the priesthood erected a shrine over the exact spot whence the vapours issued and installed a priestess called the *Pythia* to act as a mediator between the gods and men. Inside the shrine stood a large bronze statue of Pythian Apollo, crowned with a halo of laurel leaves that he fashioned to console himself after the nymph Daphne was spirited away from him by Gaia, the earth mother. Inscribed over the portico of the temple were the words Γνώθι Σεαυτόν (*Gnothi Seauton*) or "Know Thyself" commemorating the humble lesson Apollo had learned while serving King Admetos of Pherai in Thessaly.

In the temple at Delphi, aids to human life had been inscribed by the Seven Sages of ancient Greece. The Seven Sages visited Delphi and dedicated to Apollo the messages that have become proverbs, according to Pausanias in his *Description of Greece* (*Ελλάδος περιήγησις*). All the messages reflected a warning that worldly lies, passions and hypocrisy would not be tolerated within the shrine, and serious consequences would befall the individual who entered with unclean hands.

A typical example of how serious this warning was regarded is revealed when King Alyattes of Lydia fell ill after his army had destroyed a temple to Athena. He appealed to the Pythia for aid, but was refused a reply until he built and dedicated a temple to Athena in place of the one his army ravaged. So distraught was the king over the oracle's silence that he built two temples and sent an enormous amount of silver to Delphi.

The Oracle was consulted before cities sent out colonies to other parts of the world. Pythia was instrumental in the Greek colonisation of Asia Minor, Syracuse in Sicily and Marseille in France. As the overseas colonies prospered and



A consultation with the oracle in the form of the Pythian priestess.

the Oracle's fame grew at home and abroad, the Greeks increasingly viewed Delphi as central to their rebirth, not only spiritually but also physically. Delphi became the spiritual centre of the Greek world. It undoubtedly received its reputation as a religious haven because of its location. Situated as it is at the end of a formidable gorge and located in a cluster of rocky peaks sheltered by a circle of rugged mountains, it was difficult for enemy invasion forces to reach it.

As a sacred shrine where tribal leaders vied for the favours of the gods, Delphi became the centre of political intrigue and the Pythia, in her role as "adviser," played an important part in shaping the destiny of Greece. The trust and respect that were generated by her prophecies impressed a modicum of unity and authority upon the Hellenic mind that moulded the independent city-states into one great nation. She also acted as mediator between the various Greek states during their wars.

Over a period of 250 years, four Sacred Wars were fought to safeguard the independence of Delphi and to give free access to the Oracle and its sacred precincts. In later years Delphi came under the influence first of Macedonia and then of the Aetolian League (290-190 BCE) before yielding to the Romans in 189 BCE. Although the Roman general Sulla plundered Delphi in 86 BCE, there were at least 500 bronze statues left over to be collected by the Emperor Nero in 66 CE, and the site was still full of fine works of art when Pausanias visited and described it a century later.





by Robert Daniels, FRC

THE DREAM OF AN IDEAL SOCIETY is an enduring goal of many who have devoted their lives and interests to the mystical life and all it stands for. Through the centuries, Rosicrucians have laboured for the upliftment and inspiration of mankind and have given unrelentingly of their skills to advance society in its upward progress.

We too have a dream of an ideal society in which people from all lands, cultures and interests can work together in peace and harmony for the

benefit of all. For only in peace and harmony can the ideals of a great society be fulfilled.

Divine Light

It is through the expression of the divine essence within us that we come to develop those powers and abilities which bring to us the breadth of vision and service to humanity that is so necessary today.

Our inner Light begins to shine and reveal itself as we seek to use the talents and abilities we have developed. It is expressed in good thoughts,



kind deeds and helpful advice. A word of praise and encouragement whenever possible can bring Light into the life of another; it takes so little when one knows how. Good thoughts and good deeds illuminate the lives of others and are far more important and helpful than we realise. The extension of loving thoughts and a compassionate understanding towards others has a subtle but tremendous influence wherever it is directed. Therefore, let us use wisely these tools of the spiritual self for the advancement of ourselves and others.

Our visualised ideals, good thoughts and practical works are the means whereby we advance daily. They are the stepping stones to our successful endeavours. Study and the practice of mystical principles lay the foundation for our good works and prepare us for the service and development we envisage.

Power of Thoughts

Never underestimate the good you can do, for your thoughts are undoubtedly more penetrating and far-reaching than you know. Once you begin extending a loving appreciation to others, a fusion of the mind with the Light of the living soul within you will begin to take place. Concentrated thoughts can have great effect. And when we visualise our desired ideals and the service we want to render, we may be sure that we will be successful.

The Divine Light residing in each of us awaits recognition and use. Its Light will illuminate our mystical endeavours and trigger deeper insights into our daily affairs, if we will but allow it expression. Its practical value in our academic and vocational activities will prove to be a real blessing and encouragement in all we seek to do. This is the mystical life; the living of a practical and useful life in the world, ever seeking greater knowledge and understanding; helping others when the need arises, with a mind and heart uplifted and illuminated by the light of the Divine Consciousness within us.

There is a great need today for the mystical revelations which can come only from those who are prepared to give themselves to the life of the *Soul*, and whose training and education have prepared them for service. That service can be in science, medicine, industry or in many of the social aspects of life. In all parts of society wherever we look will be found those who have committed themselves to helping others. They feel the compulsion to

help others by sharing the knowledge they have gained. Although their methods are at times a bit controversial, they accomplish a great deal of good. Many new ideas are being tried, and many old ideas are being revived for the benefit of those who can profit from them.

As you attune yourself with your Inner Self, where the presence of God resides, just waiting for your approach, you will receive inspiration and enlightenment on how you may best utilise your abilities for the good of others. Your willing hands are needed, and the good you can do will

This then is the task of all people of good will ... to make themselves count in the spiritual life of humankind.

demonstrate the effectiveness of the Divine Light within you, which seeks to shed its light and rays of love upon you and all mankind. This then, is the task of all people of good will, individually and collectively: to make themselves count in the spiritual life of humankind.

Mystics of past ages achieved much for the benefit of humanity in all areas of life. They revealed ways of approaching life which we are free to emulate, indeed that all people of good will are mandated to follow. The Cosmic used them because they had prepared themselves through many years of devoted study and practice in the great school of life. As Rosicrucians we ask everyone to use whatever principles of goodness and sanctity they have received; use them each day in sending constructive visualised thoughts to those in need; use them constantly to bring about necessary changes in world affairs which are constructive and positive for the good of all.

And remember..., as you offer yourself as a channel of service, the Cosmic will provide you with many opportunities to render practical and useful service wherever and whenever the need arises. Opportunities for service are closer than you think. Embrace them, take them with both hands, and eagerly serve the greater good. Only when men, women and children of all nations take their personal responsibilities to serve others seriously, can our ideal society become a reality. This may seem utopian, and so it is. But without an ideal and the stamina and will to carry that ideal to fruition, we will never reach our goal of *peace on earth and good will to all mankind*.





Alone?

by Bob Hudson, FRC

UTHINK ALL MYSTICS MUST KNOW the state of "aleness" quite intimately. Most Rosicrucians I have met are devoted mystics, and nearly every one was very individual and self-sufficient, and did anything but "run with the pack."

But are we *ever* completely alone, even when there is no-one in sight? No, I don't believe we are. We can visualise someone we love, a friend or a relative who is either on the earth plane or perhaps on the spirit plane, and have a long and often quite intimate conversation with them.

Yet, we may still *feel* alone! But could this feeling not simply be a result of a real or perceived rejection? Or is it just a mood swing? There are times when we crave to be alone, or rather by ourselves, though often in this state

there is no feeling of actual loneliness.

What is the difference between loneliness and being alone? It is possible to feel a great sense of loneliness in a crowd, or even when we are just with a couple of people. You've heard the adage "two's company, three's a crowd." Being the odd one out in this kind of situation for example, can be the hardest loneliness of all.

The way I have dealt with being "alone" is to mentally change the word to "all one." For me this means a state of self-containment and being at peace, safe in the knowledge that somewhere, whether past, present or future, I am loved and have real worth. It is just at this particular moment that I am "alone," I am "all one" in being, able to be at peace and project such love and light as is needed when I next encounter my fellow human beings.





GOETHE AND THE STORY OF FAUST

by *Gustav Siekmann, FRC*

THE ENIGMATIC DRAMA, *FAUST*, of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), might be described as a symbolic allegory of humanity's way of evolution from primeval beginnings through all the earthly and unearthly forms of life's experiences, toward Cosmic Unity: the ultimate purpose of Creation. When we view Goethe's

works from the vantage point of a mystic, we find that his presentation of the medieval story of Dr. Faust is similar to the literature of the *Quest*: man's search for a lost treasure which, when found, will endow him with a sacred power to cope with all adversities and attain the mastery of life.

It is a search for guidance along the cosmic path, which, as we know, demands the





Goethe's *Faust* was published in two parts; the first being preliminarily completed in 1806, while the second wasn't finished until 1832, the year of the author's death. The first part concentrated on the soul of Faust, whereas the second was more concerned with social issues, psychology, history and politics.

unceasing effort of expanding our consciousness of the world around us in manifold forms, both tangible and intangible. The same theme appears in ancient mythologies of Egypt and Greece for instance, in the legends of Isis and Osiris, Orpheus and Eurydice and especially in the Eleusinian Mysteries where Demeter, the Earth Mother, is in search of her lost daughter Persephone. In psychology, ideology or matters of the soul, faith, hope and love, we have the "Quest for the Holy Grail" and in Rosicrucian tradition the finding of the "Lost Word."

Goethe's Faust is an analogy of mankind's search for Universal Harmony.

Similarly, Goethe's *Faust* is an analogy of mankind's search for Universal Harmony; our inherent urge to "detect the inmost force which binds the world and guides its course." Through his experiences of life on earth in its complex totality, Dr Faust learns to understand the mysteries of nature manifest within his own Self. His story therefore, is one of sequential initiations from lower to ever higher levels of consciousness.

Goethe's works are on the whole profoundly mystical and worthy of our attention as students of mysticism. For at the present time, when materialism seems to reign supreme, our awareness of the non-material facts of life is also expanding. Within the overall functions of the cosmic law of cause and effect, this awareness must expand in parallel with materialism, thereby

maintaining a harmonious balance between the physical and metaphysical structures of the world.

Prologue in Heaven

The expansion of awareness progresses slowly, at present only subconsciously among the mass of people, but consciously within those who have already found the right and true way. Goethe tells us this at the very beginning of *Faust*, in the *Prolog im Himmel* or "Prologue in Heaven" where the voice of the Lord God appears in conversation with Mephistopheles (also known as Mephisto), the Devil's agent.

Mephistopheles laments that humanity, the world's "little god," as he calls man, has not evolved since the beginning and is not worthy even of *his* diabolical attention, being involved in his own senseless devices. Though gifted by the Grace of God with a glimmer of heavenly light called *Vernunft* or "Reason," man only uses it to be more beastly than the lowest beast.

"But there is Faust, the doctor, My servant," injects the Lord. In this opening scene, though only a few words are exchanged between the Lord and the Devil, and Goethe, the master of German literature, projects a flash view of humanity's position in the Cosmic. Placed between the two extremities of God and the Devil, Heaven and Hell, Light and Darkness, positive and negative, and being dual in his own nature, man appears suspended like a mass of electrically charged particles in a field of anodic and cathodic attraction. And the view is focussed upon one who represents the archetypal qualities of the mystic clearly specified through Mephisto's answer: "Indeed! Faust serves You after strange devices; no earthly drink or meat the fool suffices. His spirit's ferment far aspires; half conscious only of his craziness, from heaven he demands the fairest stars and from the earth the highest raptures and the best. And all the Near and Far that he desires fails to subdue the tumult of his breast."

Now the cosmic forces are set into action upon this mystic man; the immutable principle of cosmic evolution by which man, through all his earthly ups and downs, inevitably raises his soul personality to ever-expanding consciousness. This process of individuation in Jungian terms is



assured in the Lord's words: "Though still confused his service is to Me, I soon will lead him to a clearer morning; sees not the gardener in the budding tree flower and fruit the future years adorning."

The Spirit Who Ever Denies

But Mephisto, "the spirit who ever denies," feels sure that there is still a chance to entrap Faust and requests the Lord's permission "gently upon his road to train him." Granting Mephistopheles this permission the Lord replies: "So long as he on earth shall live, so long I make no prohibition; man's errors urge his striving aspiration. Enough! What you have asked is granted; turn off this spirit from its fountainhead; to trap him, let your snares be planted and he with you be downward led. Man's active nature all too soon can weaken, unqualified repose he learns to crave. Thus willingly the devil I let tempt him, who works, excites and serves him like a slave; and who then stands ashamed and forced to say: A good man, through obscure aspirations still has an instinct for the One True Way."

Goethe's works convey every conceivable thought about humanity's being on earth, the purpose of life, its fundamental laws, and the divine and mundane influences conflicting in man's mind. Born in 1749 in Frankfurt am Main, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe died in 1832 in Weimar. He combined within himself the stern realism of his father Johann Caspar Goethe, a lawyer and *Kaiserlicher Rath* or Imperial Counsellor, with the sense for harmony and beauty of his lively and imaginative young mother Catharina

To present his views of humanity's evolution Goethe needed a background story and a villain.

Elisabeth, who came from an old-established patrician family. Both parents had been highly educated but were of totally opposite natures. The distance between his father's intellectual and his mother's intuitive qualities was the cause of much inner emotional distress in young Goethe, which bothered him far into mature age and was the cause of severe illness in his younger years.

Storm and Stress

The literary climate in which the young Goethe grew up has been described as one of *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress), an expression of the



Rembrandt's "Faust" (c.1652-53). Etching with drypoint and burin. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

emotional gap between factual knowledge and intuitive feeling amongst the intellectuals of the time. They were torn between the old dogmatic teachings of the church and the new knowledge that came in the wake of the Renaissance and of Martin Luther's Reformation.

This contrasting duality is presented in the character of Goethe's Dr. Faust with whom he identifies much of himself: "two souls, alas, reside within my breast, and each withdraws from and repels the other."

To some extent this conflict in Goethe's nature was reconciled by the influence of his maternal grandfather, also a lawyer and distinguished magistrate, who was said to possess the gift of second sight.

To the young Goethe's delight, his grandfather's library contained books of travels, discoveries and the phenomena of nature. Through these books and the experiences of his grandfather's psychic gift, Goethe came early into contact with the occult or hidden mysteries of life and with all the immaterial qualities in which the mystic sees the true value of being. He has been





The sudden appearance of Mephistopheles represented here by the French Romantic artist Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), 1828 lithograph.

described as the last man on earth who comprised within himself the total knowledge, physical and metaphysical that was available to mankind of the 18th Century.

The Search for Unity

Goethe knew all that was worth knowing in his time. He made every effort to convey his knowledge as a whole to his contemporaries and to posterity. To become whole or *ganz werden* in his native German, was the basic purpose of his life, to find the unity of being out of the triplicity in himself; an emotional triplicity in which he saw the basic cause of all human troubles. And the search for this unity is the theme of his mystical drama *Faust*, which he wrote between 1806 and 1832. Ever since publication of the work as a whole, scholars of literature have tried to define this unity.

To present his views of humanity's evolution or of the sequential stages of initiation that lead along the way to Cosmic Unity, Goethe needed a background story and a villain. He found them in the medieval legend of the historical Dr. Johann Faust (c.1480-1540), a dubious magician and

alchemist, as related by Philipp Melanchthon, the reformer and friend of Martin Luther. Melanchthon had personally known the real Faust and depicted him as a sinister character and a charlatan. The public of his time saw in him a man who was in league with the devil. Legend soon took over and proliferated into numerous versions.

In these legends, Faust is inevitably doomed to perdition, having signed his soul to the devil in payment for Satan's services. Goethe used this story as a demonstration of man's earthly desires and struggles, the joys and the inevitable trials of our mundane existence. But as a mystic he could not be contented with the idea of final perdition. He had to convey the message of salvation: the message that man's unceasing efforts against all adversities, urged on by faith, hope and the light of expanding consciousness, will lead him upwards and onwards, through love to everlasting life.

Goethe needed years to complete the two parts of his drama *Faust*. It is subtitled *A Tragedy*, of which Part 1 was first performed in 1808. It was a great success, although it is a sad story of human misery caused by man's own evil inclinations. If viewed from a mundane point of view, the first part on its own could leave you in a state of hopeless frustration, for it is a diabolical mixture of sensations, emotions, temptations and inspirations; and yet it has a symbolical structure balancing wisdom against stupidity, sanctity against magic, knowledge against ignorance, love against hate. All this occurs on terrestrial and sub-terrestrial levels, that is, in the world and underworld.

Like Goethe's Faust we are only too aware of our ignorance and failings.

But from the "Prologue in Heaven," we have been made aware, right at the beginning, that Part 1 is merely the introduction to a greater whole, and that a second part was to follow. This second part was Goethe's life-aim, which he completed in 1831, only a few months before his own Great Initiation.

Futility of Knowledge

Following the "Prologue in Heaven," we find Faust in his medieval study, aptly decorated with signs of astrology, alchemy and magic. In his famous first monologue he meditates upon



the futility of all learning, having studied philosophy, jurisprudence, medicine and even theology. He feels just like a fool, no wiser now than he was before; and he laments, "I see that nothing can be known; that knowledge cuts me to the bone."

In his initial monologue, Faust is not only dissatisfied with the results of his scholarly learning but also reflects upon his passionate longing for direct and intimate communion with nature and for an understanding of nature's strange phenomena in which his contemporaries saw manifestations of frightening supernatural powers. Faust, unafraid of hell or the devil but disillusioned by his recognition that mundane knowledge alone brings no joy or satisfaction, now takes to magical sources of learning. He opens "this one of mystery from Nostradamus' very hands



Mephisto, "the spirit who ever denies," feels sure that there is still a chance to entrap Faust.

Having found harmony within, Faust now strives to bring himself into the service of a great idea.

to guide him through spiritual lands," and soon he is enraptured by the 'Sign of the Macrocosm:' "Was it a god, who traced this sign, with impulse mystic and divine? In these pure features I behold Creative Nature to my soul unfold."

Cosmic Totality

And so we are drawn to visualise a symbol of cosmic origin designed to create in us a view of the Cosmic Totality, a guiding plan for our own spiritual evolution. Such view of a symbolic map of Creation as a whole will aid man to find his position within it, to take his bearing on the Way, and to recognise his own Self as a part of the Whole.

We are all somewhat like Goethe's Faust; we are only too aware of our ignorance and failings, and the more we work and study, the greater becomes this awareness. As students of mystical teachings we know very well that work and study will lead to nothing unless we also spend time in meditation and experience its results. And here a symbolic image of Cosmic Totality can help to put us into a harmonious state of mind, capable

of creative thought.

Part 1 ends tragically, leaving Faust heavily loaded with karmic debts. The unloading of those debts is the allegorical theme of Part 2. Analogous to the theme of the *Quest*, Faust, still served and guided by Mephisto, is now in search of his soul, his true personality, which is so deeply hidden beneath the memories of his misdeeds and so difficult to reach while Mephisto dominates his emotions.

Now we find a different Faust. No longer is he just the scholar in search of deeper knowledge of nature's mysteries; he no longer craves just for "the detection of the inmost force that binds the world and guides it in its course" as he had expressed it in his initial monologue. This is far behind him; now he has become a man of the world in the widest sense.

Faust appears a changed man who has conquered the exuberance of his "storm and stress" period. The inexhaustible cosmic forces, manifesting through sun and earth, awaken his own innermost strength and urge him toward a creative activity that needs none of Mephisto's magic. Now he consciously makes deliberate and rational use of Mephisto's resources. In his untiring striving toward perfection, he develops an ever-increasing resistance to diabolical temptations; but he still allows Mephisto to lead him through the world in space and time.

We find him at the Emperor's Court amongst the highest nobility, disgusted with these selfish, narrow-minded and anything but noble people. He



longs for contact with that truly pure and beautiful part of humanity that once before had been alive on earth: the wonderful culture of ancient Greece.

Chymical Wedding

Goethe allows his Faust to experience Greek culture in those scenes where Mephisto's magic materialised Helen of Troy, the classical prototype of feminine beauty and human dignity. Through Faust's passionate love for Helen and their symbolic union, Goethe presents to us the mystical meaning of the *Chymical Wedding*: the alchemical concept of the "Mysterium Conjunctionis" to which Jung often referred, symbolising the reconciliation of opposites and the harmonisation of disunities in the soul.

The result of this union of Faust and Helen is Euphorion, their winged son. He represents the genius of poetry in its perfection, romantic passion, enthusiasm for worthy activities and classical beauty and humanity's sacred right of freedom. In Euphorion we see the desirable qualities humanity can attain when intellect, knowledge and wisdom are united with a sense for beauty and dignity to a harmonious whole of the highest aesthetic and ethical values.

In another scene we meet Homunculus, an artificial human replica made in a laboratory once belonging to Faust. Homunculus personifies man's inherent striving for physical perfection, mundane knowledge and the sensual part of human life. Totally lacking a soul of his own, Homunculus represents Faust's subconscious mind expressing

his unconscious longing for the highest ideals of beauty in poetry, art, science and the splendours of nature.

In these scenes we see Faust steadily growing up and away from Mephisto. We see how these experiences mature his urge for active contribution to humanity's wealth and happiness. Having found harmony within himself, he now strives to bring himself into the service of a great idea. He still needs Mephisto's assistance to acquire a vast area of wasteland, but through the energy within himself he now really attempts to deserve and own what he has acquired: "*What from your father's heritage is lent, earn it anew, to really possess it!*"

Faust has grown to emulate this maxim. Under his guidance, a great project is on its way. His wasteland will become a fertile district populated with happy people. Unaffected by want or need, and no longer even by guilt, Faust's only concern now is *care*. Blinded at the end of his life, care alone remains with him: care for the welfare of other people.

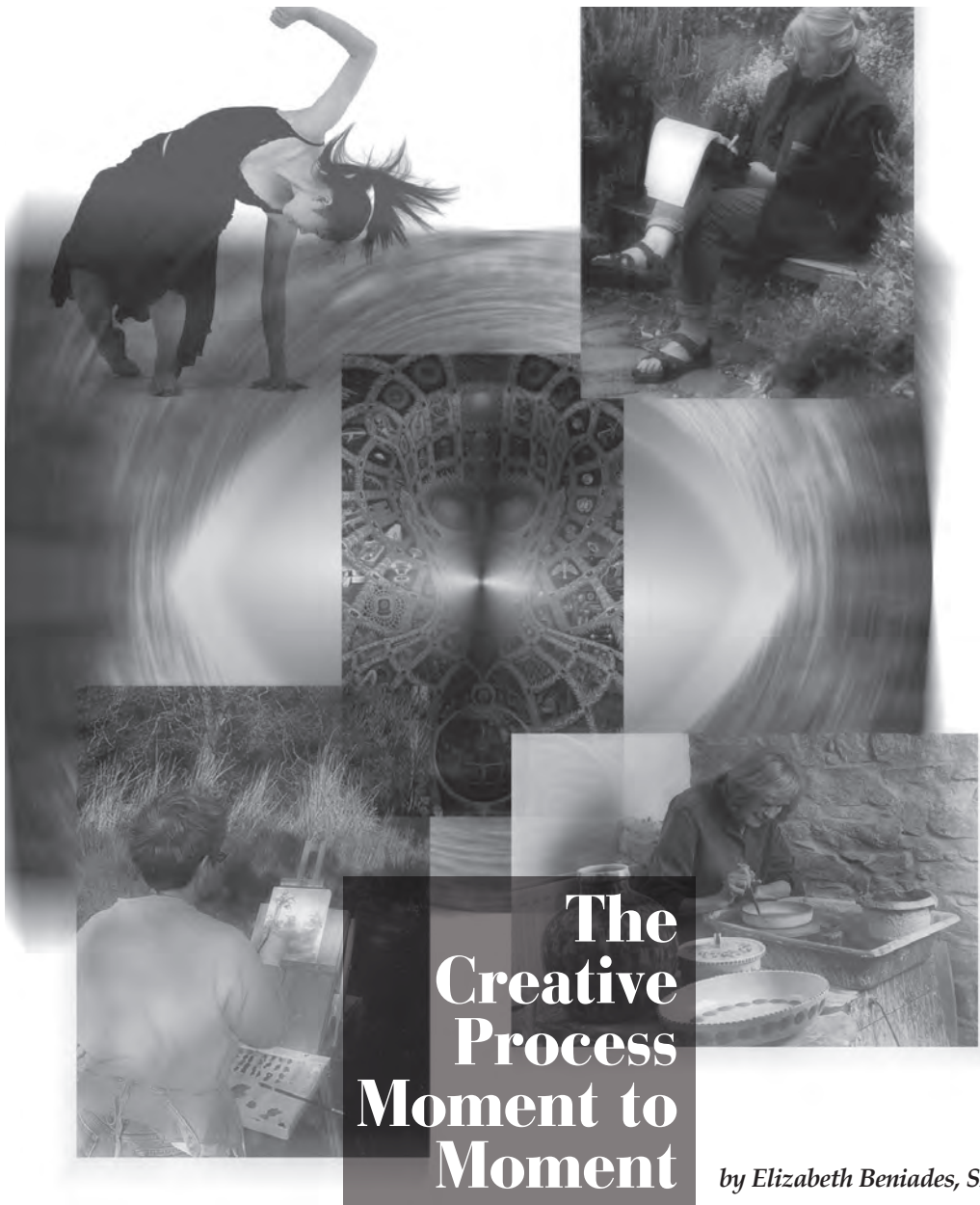
And so, Faust's earthly life comes to an end. Mephisto still hopes to catch Faust's soul; but through his own spiritual evolvment Faust has created the condition the Lord predicted in the Prologue in Heaven: "*A good man, through obscure aspirations, still has the instinct of the One True Way.*" Through his own efforts Faust has conditioned his soul personality to that level where the powers of divine love are stronger than the mundane attractions of corporeal reality.

Hymn to the Joyful

*Leave here today in good health and tomorrow
Rise, and shine like the light-bringing sun
That shines brilliantly in the skies
Over all the lands.
Come forth to a new good day
To auspicious beginnings
And to days of unceasing joy!*

(Extract from a Sogdian Manichaean hymn.)





The Creative Process Moment to Moment

by Elizabeth Beniades, SRC

THE CREATIVE PROCESS WITHIN US goes on from moment to moment. It is a process where we lift the veil to the Garden of Eden, the fruitful garden existing beyond our finite self-concept. This process prepares the way for a blending of our consciousness with the subtler vibrations from above.

To be creative, it is necessary to commit the mind, heart and whole being to this process. And in so doing, it is possible to expand reality from the finite to the infinite. The first step in this creative process can be summarised by the word *light*, meaning the focussing of consciousness. The second step can be encapsulated in the word *life*, meaning that which initiates action. And the



third step can be summarised by the word *love*, the most beautiful and harmonising experience we can have.

Light

This first finite step, the step of consciousness or light, manipulated consciousness to deliberately focus our attention on something. We receptively centre our attention on the information at hand. Our full awareness is gathered together and concentrated as if it were crowded into a thimble. We almost forget or lose sight of the physical being, for by choice (indeed necessity) we release awareness of our physical senses and our material selves, in order to be open and receptive to cosmic vibrations.

By being subjectively open and receptive, we are letting our objective selves go and preparing for a journey in a swiftly moving stream of consciousness, flowing from mountain to valley and eventually to the ocean that surrounds us. The stream of human consciousness is flowing from the Cosmic to the individual, the individual to the Cosmic, perpetually uplifting and renewing.

This step of light infuses us with the broadening vista of ever greater knowledge and freedom. This is the light that brings us out of the shadows of the finite mind, the light that creates a glow in our individual aura and a lightness in our step, the light that vibrates through every fibre of our being to raise and uplift consciousness into the realms of the Cosmic; more specifically, into the realms of *life*, or the second step.

Life

In this, the step of action, or life, the indefinite second step, we put into action what we received in the first step. The phase of life is a gratifying, emotional experience based on our receptivity in the first step.

We are not always aware just how gratifying this action will be and sometimes are easily distracted, discouraged and afraid. At this point, it is very important that we become courageous and steadfast in our original goal, keeping in mind the ultimate aim in order to overcome our particular obstacles.

We have received willingly and therefore need to willingly put into use in our lives what we have accepted. By this very action

of receiving, we expand consciousness beyond ourselves, becoming free and flexible. And by acting willingly, we receive life, we receive the rewards of our efforts, and we become blessed. We become labourers in the vineyard of the Cosmos, willing to aid our fellow men and women, attuned with the finer and more subtle forces of nature.

Though not always apparent, action and change are constant processes in nature. Even in an apparently dormant scene, changes are taking place from moment to moment. Just as a seed needs to shed its outer shell, becoming more exposed to the elements surrounding it and bringing about new life, so we must peel back the skin of our objective reasoning, becoming more receptive to our surrounding elements and bringing us new life. A flow of energy surrounds us and engulfs us and life springs forth. Although manifesting our basic nature and essence, we allow the beauty of life and its energy to bathe

Responding to universal love leads to a newer, fuller reality, a more completely vibrant life.

and refresh us with vitality and love. This flow of energy is constantly waiting to burst forth as part of the evolution and upliftment of all humanity.

The foundation of our being, having been established on these two processes of consciousness and action, is now ready to receive the infusion of love from the Cosmic, that all-embracing divine force that holds the fabric of reality together. We have transcended the finite, and the indefinite, and are ready to become transmuted in God's infinite light. Almost before we realise it, we pass into the third step, allowing the power and vitality of cosmic love to manifest through us.

Love

With the harmonising experience of love, we are prepared to receive impersonal, universal love, a love that cleanses and refreshes us in its wisdom, strength and beauty. This is the cosmic love that supports and adorns our inner temple. We have been receptive and active, and are therefore prepared for the step of experience. Through awareness of the true essence of love, our inner nature is re-established on firm ground.



By using the tools of consciousness, action and experience, we are able to manifest *light, life and love*, relearning that which we have forgotten in the physical world. The distinctive identity we cling to, the individual "I," has expanded to become a glow of warmth that evaporates shadows and radiates light into our being; a glow as if from a star, an impersonal glow of love.

Our purpose now is to be a tool of the Cosmic, a link in the cosmic scheme. Releasing what we are and letting go of stagnant concepts, we grow, giving and receiving love in its purest form. Responding to universal love leads to a newer, fuller reality, a more completely vibrant life. We become one with cosmic reality which manifests more clearly as we allow universal love

to manifest through us. It is truly an expression of our love for Creation and of Creation's love for us.

And we are participants in that Creation too, by allowing the Cosmic to work through us, thereby making us creators in our own rights. We do this firstly by being receptive, secondly by initiating action, and thirdly through experience. We have always had *free will* and will always be able to freely make the choice of serving humanity and the greater Good.

Infinite wisdom, beauty and strength will be in abundance in life if we choose to create, moment by moment in accordance with our highest concept of goodness, peace and universal harmony. The first step is up to us.

The Candle

by Mary Sheriff, SRC

*I rise towards great heights, ever pointing upwards,
awaiting the hand and action that will change my form.*

*My garb is usually white, although oft times
I like to tone in with my surroundings.*

*My purpose is triple, depending on my user.
To some I bring enchantment and romance,
to others memories, memories of love, fun, unforgettable incidents,
often memories of those no longer with us.*

*When the hand I was awaiting, reaches out to ignite me,
the Lucifer it holds and I are for a moment as one flame;
and I flicker with excitement for my form is changing.*

*Long have I been seated upon this candlestick, awaiting my moment of glory.
At last I am alight, an agent by which objects are rendered visible.*

*Steadily I burn, and as the hours grow long, my form becomes short;
I am slipping away. But have I brought into someone's life
both forms of illumination?*

*It is dark and I am gone.
Other candles are waiting to replace me.*



True Humility

by Ruth Olson, SRC



WHEREAS IT IS NECESSARY FOR us to respect and love that spark of Divinity, the “Higher Self” that resides in all of us, we must not forget that as aspiring mystics, it is incumbent upon us to have similar feelings for the deeper selves

of others too. And that must be irrespective of the distorted outer behaviour such people may indulge in from time to time. Some people (I’m sure we all know one or two) radiate love and contentment. They are self-assured and happy and reflect their inner sanctity by completely



accepting others as they are, “warts and all.” Such people, we refer to as the humble.

In our day-to-day life, we find that exploring the self, the thinking, emotional being, leads to all kinds of necessary adjustments. The more we are aware of our self, our life and our feelings, the more we will see our own and others’ attributes.

Insight

We must cultivate our consciousness of being, and prove ourselves worthy of the path of inner discovery we have chosen to tread. The Golden Rule says: “*Love your neighbour as yourself.*” The problem is that too many of us don’t even love ourselves to begin with. As we delve ever more deeply into our inner consciousness, we need to get in touch with those characteristics that are really us and realise the wonderful nature of the personality.

The fact is that many of us hardly even *know* our own deeper self, an aspect of the wider human being known to mystics as the “soul personality.” Such insight comes as a result of deep and often painful introspection. As we begin to unravel our own truly complex nature we must avoid criticising what we find. Rather than dwelling on the shortcomings we unearth, we should focus most of our attention on those qualities we *like*. As we reinforce these points, the good begins to surpass the problem areas. In other words, we can eliminate the undesirable by emphasising those things we want to keep. That is the mystic way of transmutation.

Being Humble

There are different kinds of humility, and we all have our favourite example of an acquaintance that we believe truly represents what that word means. This is probably a person who has, in some way, subordinated important things in life to a lesser place. Perhaps it is someone who is successful, without being aggressive and domineering, while remaining gracious, easy and considerate of other people. Or maybe it is someone who is *self-aware* rather than self-centred.

Many of us are preoccupied with the idea of being humble; it does seem to be a worthy goal. But what is humility? When we discover that illusive kernel of truth, we might learn its

nature, in other words not *trying* to *be* humble, for a self-designated humility such as this can be irritating in its falsity. That people generally lack humility is evident because they have a tendency to belittle themselves. Some examples of this are those apathetic individuals who are adept at self-deprecation; or those who adopt an ingratiating attitude; or those who act more lowly than necessary. These are but a few. Such people deserve patient understanding because their behaviour is unknown to them, its reason

What we call true humility is really an unconscious acceptance of oneself.

buried in the subconscious mind.

The more we try to *have* humility, the more we haven’t got it. Holding the thought that you are humble almost negates the possibility of being humble. The hallmarks of humility are modesty and an unassuming manner. It’s a very subtle thing, because we don’t act out these characteristics. What we call true humility is really an unconscious acceptance of oneself. The humble individual is not submissive or sycophantic and lacks pretentiousness.

If we were to generate some keywords that commonly describe the state of humility they might be: open-mindedness, thoughtfulness, generosity, self-knowledge, and so on; all pluses. But those negative keywords would appear as: arrogance, narrow-mindedness, self-centredness, low self-esteem, self-abasement and such like. Those who score on the plus side have eliminated the egocentric dependence on self-aggrandisement and self-abnegation, and have achieved a happy medium that is something like humility.

Remember every day and reflect upon the fact that we are each a wondrous being, a combination of a body with senses and feelings joined with an exalted Inner Self. That inner being which has listened to our self-downgrading for such a long time, now needs to hear how wonderful we are. If we would follow this course on a daily basis, we would find changes coming over us, leading gradually to fullness of living and an unconscious growth in humility.



Balancing Spirituality



by Benefactrix

IF YOUR HEAD MUST BE IN THE clouds, keep your feet on the ground. The rewards of otherworldliness are dubious and besides, it's lonely up there.

Whatever you may think of this physical world, it still remains the arena in which you must perform. The basic instinctual drives propel and necessity presides as ruthlessly as any Nero. A cloud dweller is inevitably precipitated into the earthly melee and, unless his stance is firm, his defeat is certain. At best, he will be badly bruised.

Cloud fabric is tenuous; as disappointing as candy-floss melting immediately in the mouth, however iridescent and captivating it might look. The Ideal wears a material garb; its essence permeates the Here and Now. And knowingly or unknowingly, all have embarked on the same journey. The "Holy Grail" is an earthen vessel, its contents potent with juices fermented from life's experiences. The tools of spiritual growth are at hand and their use is compulsory.

They are earthy tools and seemingly unequally distributed. But if a spade can turn only a little soil, the divinity that sparks each grain is the same that fills a steam shovel's load. To ignore the tool fitted to one's hand is foolish, for practiced skill is a prerequisite for mastering another more complex one. This is not to say that the human spirit is earth bound; that it can't soar and enrich itself by

temporary respite from physical preoccupations. But mystic ecstasy is as futile as dervish frenzy unless it is converted into practical utility.

Countless words have been written to express the inexpressible. They are nebulous, distracting and even dangerous if they induce detachment and encourage idleness. Development of the spiritual consciousness is accomplished *in* the world, *for* the world, and for the benefit of human evolution. And that means dealing with the world, not avoiding it. Spiritual development is a turning of the inside out, a chemical-spiritual interaction for which externality is indispensable.

Unless the indwelling gaze sees outwardly as well, there is no transmutation. Instead, there is the danger of spiritual pride and intellectual stagnation, an insularism that precludes true spirituality and contributes nothing to the advancement of humanity. Spirituality is not made of cloud stuff; rather it is composed of struggle and effort, the conversion of spiritual insight into practical action. The technological advances of the modern age have finally reached such a point where veritable spiritual perfection is demanded to harness them to good purposes and prevent them from being used in less effective and destructive ways.

This is the challenge, and the time is Now. Earth substance provides the means, and spiritual perfection is possible.

