

# BROSICRUCIAN BEACON



June 2011

# THE SACRED

## AND THE PRIMORDIAL TRADITION

CONVENÇÃO MUNDIAL ROSACRUZ  
"O Sagrado e a Tradição Primordial"

CONVEGNO MONDIALE ROSA-CROCE  
"Il Sacro e La Tradizione Primordiale"

ROSENKREUZER WELT-KONVENT  
"Die Erhabene und Ursprüngliche Tradition"

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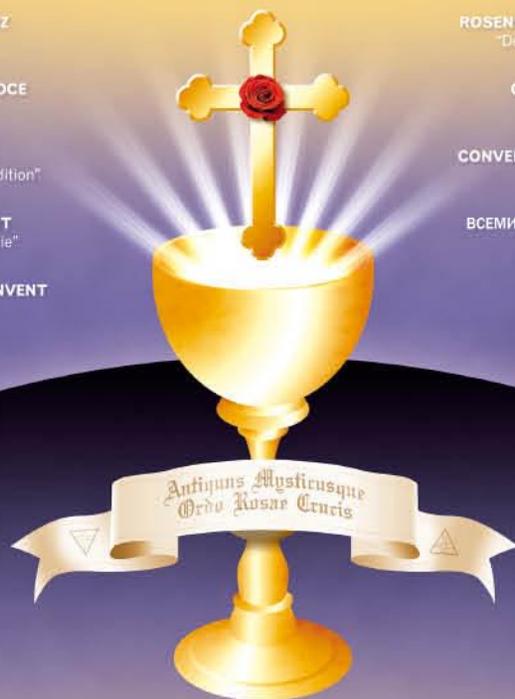
ROSENKORS-ORDENS VARLDKONGRESS  
"Den Heliga Och Ursprungliga Traditionen"

CONVENCIÓN MUNDIAL ROSACRUZ  
"Lo Sagrado y La Tradición Primordial"

CONVENTION ROSICRUCIENNE MONDIALE  
"Le Sacré et La Tradition Primordiale"

ВСЕМИРНАЯ КОНВЕНЦИЯ РОЗЕНКРЕЙЦЕРОВ  
"Священная Первичная Традиция"

バラ十字会世界大会  
"聖なる、原初の伝統"



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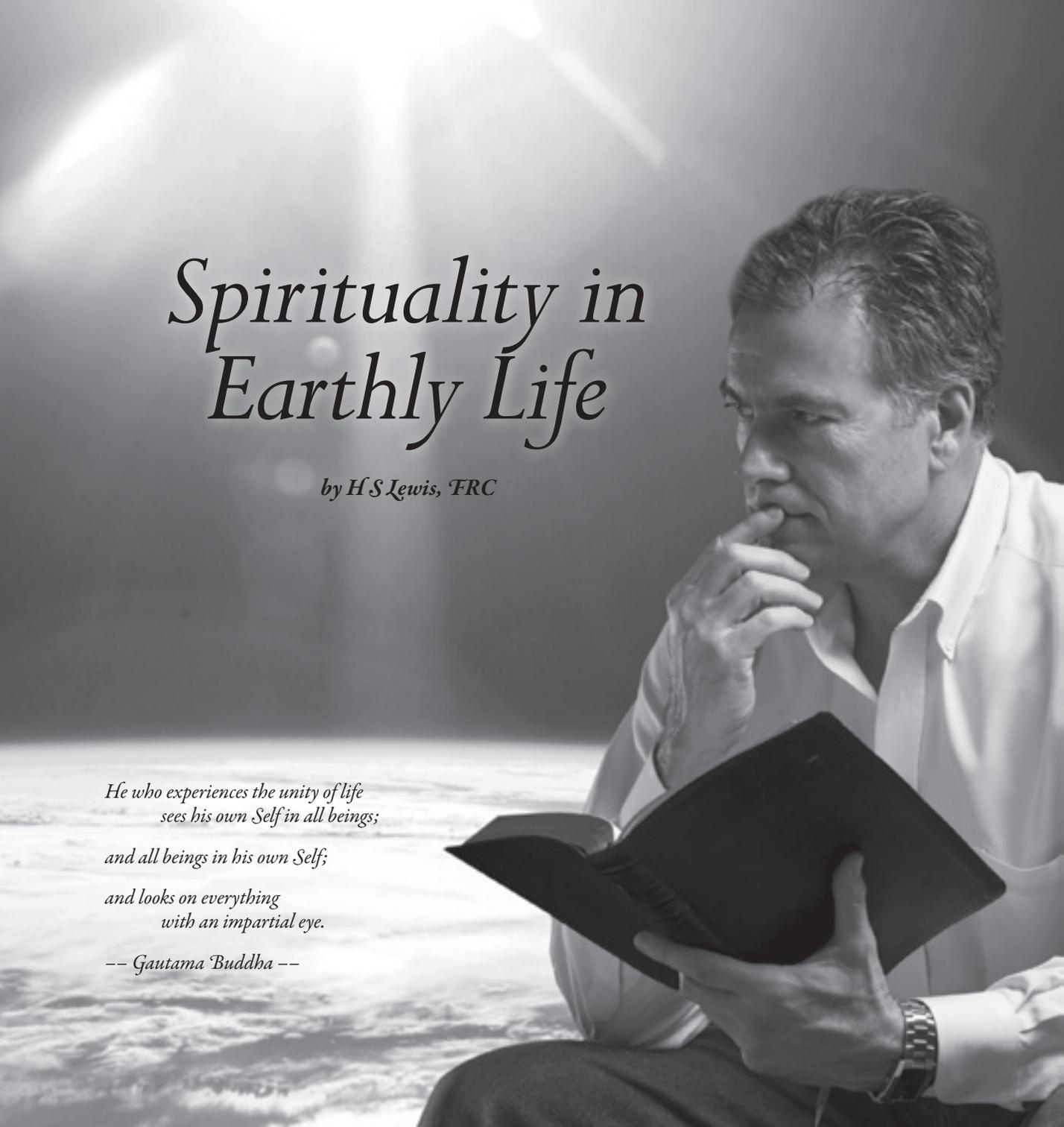
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### COVER SPREAD

“The Garden of Life”

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# *Spirituality in Earthly Life*

*by H S Lewis, FRC*

*He who experiences the unity of life  
sees his own Self in all beings;*

*and all beings in his own Self;*

*and looks on everything  
with an impartial eye.*

*-- Gautama Buddha --*

**W**ITHOUT ANY DOUBT, HUMANITY is collectively becoming more and more conscious of the spiritual side of its life. Those who say that the modern criticism of religious doctrines, accompanied by the unquestionable decrease of interest in church activities, is an indication of our gradual departure from religious study. But they have overlooked the very evident point that we are becoming more truly religious in our thinking and less

prone to accept the creeds and dogmas that in the past we accepted purely on faith.

We do not argue about and analyse profoundly those things in which we have little or no interest. We would not have purchased and read, at a considerable loss of money and time that might have been given to pleasure, many books dealing with religion and dogmatism without having a deep interest in the subject.

From the dawn of civilisation, humanity has lifted

its gaze beyond its present horizon and tried to find in the vastness of etheric space the faintest symbol of something superior to itself which might be worshipped and to which homage may be given. By this very upward gaze, humanity has lifted the trend of its progress to greater heights.

The frailties of human life, the weaknesses of human existence made the earliest thinkers believe that there was more in the purpose of our existence than these things indicated. Whatever was back of that purpose and whatever might lie in it must be above and beyond it in essence. Nothing else could be beyond the material but the spiritual; nothing else could be superior to the mortal than the divine; and nothing else could rule, guide and compensate for the experiences of life but a supernatural omnipotence..., inconceivable, yet inwardly comprehensible.

Certainly we have blundered much in our attempts to reduce to finite definition the infinite imaging of our spiritual comprehension. Yet in the face of experiences that would have weakened faith in anything of lesser importance, humanity has held fast to its belief in this spiritual world and the spiritual creatures evolving through the material forms it knows.

### Being Without Spirituality

Is the spiritual part of us an essential element in our earthly existence? Is knowledge of the spiritual things of life in our material lives? Although these questions seem difficult to answer, and there are yet those personalities that are only partially evolved spiritually and ready to answer in the negative, we need only contemplate momentarily the negative side of the question to realise what things of the spiritual world mean to us here and now.

**The consciousness of God comes to our rescue in times of sorrow, grief and despondency.**

What would we do and how would we think and act if we were to become convinced here and now that there was no God or spiritual consciousness ruling the universe and pervading every living thing in it? If there were no soul, no divine element in our constitution, no divine principle in our personality, no divine power in our vital life force and no omnipotent consciousness in every cell of our body, what a helpless, hopeless, forlorn, useless life this would be!

The first result of such a faith would be the deplorable transmutation of the magnificent element of love into the base attraction of the sensual. The divine and transcendental power of a universal love that rules the world would be wiped out of our consciousness and all of its influences would have to be attributed to the most sordid and commonplace of



*From the dawn of civilisation, humanity has lifted its gaze beyond its present horizon and tried to find in the vastness of etheric space the faintest symbol of something superior to itself.*

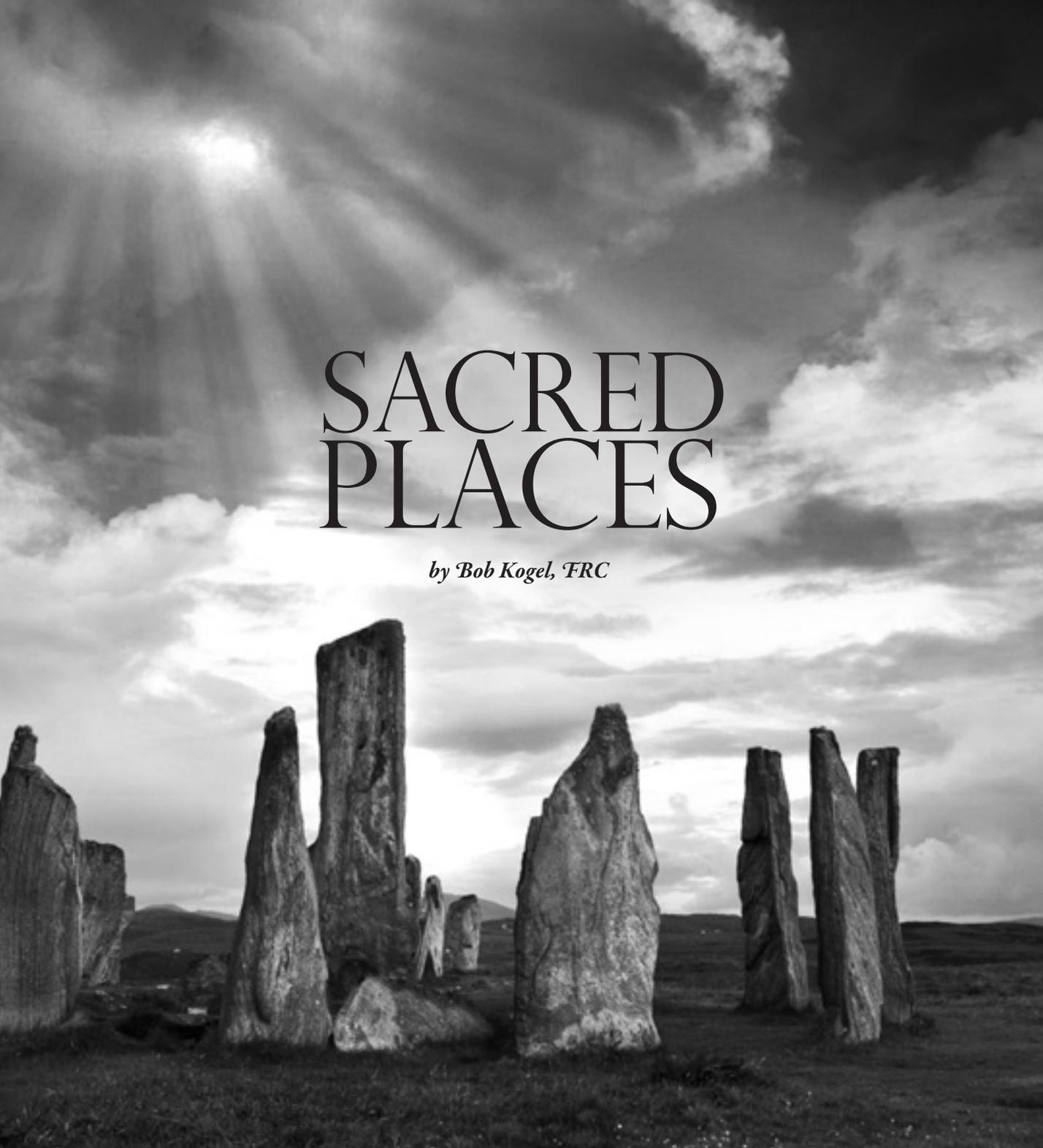
impulses and principles. Beauty, elegance, refinement in art, in music and in colour would become mere accidents of material combinations, and the simple results of unplanned and momentary accident. Ambition and aspiration would rise no higher than the horizon of our bestial natures.

### The Vision of Spirituality

It is the spiritual side of our natures that lifts us to transcendental heights and gives us the perspective of life as though we were upon a mountaintop looking over the beautiful hills and valleys of life and seeing the very distant sunrise before it is visible on the plains beneath. Through our spiritual eyes we see the things of the past that are beyond our objective vision, and we see the coming of a new day whose dawn is beyond the comprehension of one's material conception.

The consciousness of God comes to our rescue in times of sorrow, grief and despondency; then like the whisperings of a mother's voice in consolation, the still small voice within us speaks in magnificent words and cheers us into paths of peace and power. The music of the spheres breathed into all space by the vibrations of God's omnipotent wisdom carries us on as though we were riding upon some ocean of music where every wave is a harmonic chord and where every moment of tranquillity is a dominant note of some sweet melody.

It is the spirituality within us that expresses itself in the grandeur of architecture, in the phantasmagoria of colours that humankind mixes upon its palette and applies to the canvas in imitation of the beauty of nature's resplendent response to the vibrations of the divine law. Spirituality in us is God in us, and without it we would be nothing, we could contemplate nothing, we would master nothing, for its absence would mean that we would each be only a mechanism untouched and unmoved by the magic spell of the creative powers that give us life and being.



# SACRED PLACES

*by Bob Kogel, FRC*

**T**HE STUDY OF SACREDNESS AND sacred places and objects is a vast one as examples can be found in all countries around the world and in all cultures present and past. There is a tremendous attraction for many people to visit sacred places either within their own country or throughout the world. The Rosicrucian Order

has conducted spiritual tours of Egypt over many years. They are run as pilgrimages and by practising some of the Rosicrucian exercises and attunement at various temples and sites; each member has learned something about the sacredness of their surroundings as well as something about themselves.

There is good reason to believe that the popularity

of sacred sites, visited by pilgrims of one kind or another, offers a special reassurance about life today and in the future. Not surprisingly, many ancient sacred places were associated with a fundamental knowledge of wisdom, which some people today feel is possible to recapture. So what brings about a belief in the sacredness of a particular place? Why are some mountains, springs, forests, trees or stones considered sacred? Is it peoples' belief systems that makes them so? As mystics, can we use these places to discover more about ourselves?

The *sacred* means that which is the object of veneration and awe; the term comes from the Latin word *sacer* meaning "restricted" or "set off." A person may also be designated as sacred, as can an object or a place which is regarded as extraordinary or unique. The term *sacer* is closely related to the word *numen* which means "mysterious power" or "god." *Numinous* is a way of describing the sacred to indicate its power. The sacred always manifests itself as a reality different from normal realities. We become aware of the sacred when it asserts itself as something outside of the ordinary.

The presumption is that the divine, or some supernatural or spiritual force, manifests itself to the beholder, creating a feeling of *privilege*. It is often the case that the beholder who, standing before the object, perceiving something mysterious, a strange vision or event outside the norm, comprehends it in terms of the supernatural and invests it with a sacred attribute. This perception of the divine is usually completely convincing to the beholder, who can instantly become a believer in whatever supernatural force of divinity is being made manifest.

Future manifestations of the sacred are interpreted or identified within the context of the beliefs of the beholder. For example, the vision that appeared to the French Catholic peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous at

**The sacred means that which is the object of veneration and awe.**

the grotto of Lourdes was of the Virgin Mary and not a deity of another religion or even of an earlier Celtic pagan goddess. We might conclude therefore that it is the beholder who creates the sacred and invests it in the objects around him or herself.

Sometimes the sacredness of a particular individual is often confirmed, or at least enhanced, through association with an established sacred place or object, an example being the Bodhi Tree at Bodh Gaya beneath which Siddhartha Gautama Buddha meditated and achieved enlightenment in India.



*The sacred caves at Ellora were sacred to Hindus, Buddhists and Jains.*

## Sacred Caves

Caves are natural cavities within the Earth's crust which can also be artificial in origin. Both natural and artificial caves have served humanity in various capacities since time immemorial. Given their subterranean location and the Earth's alignment with the female element they are often identified as the womb of Mother Earth, and associated with birth and regeneration.

Famous sacred caves are found all over the world. One notable example is to be found in India, at Ellora, where there are a series of different underground tunnels that have been carved out of the cliff face and dedicated to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.

## Stones and the Sacred

Stones of various kinds and sizes have also been invested with sacredness from the earliest times. The worship of stones can be found in most ancient cultures and sacred stones can be found in most of the world's religions.

Beginning as early as 5000 BCE, large stones or



*The ancient and sacred site of Stonehenge.*

megaliths (from the Greek: *mega*, great, and *lithos*, stone), roughly worked were erected across prehistoric Europe to stand in lines or circles. The best known examples are Stonehenge in England, and Carnac in France. Sometimes the stones are arranged in conjunction with earthworks usually identified as burial mounds such as at Newgrange in Ireland. Little is known of the purpose or meaning of these megalithic constructions, but it is universally agreed that they mark a sacred place in the landscape.

**Stones of various kinds and sizes have also been invested with sacredness from the earliest times.**

The moving and arranging of massive stones into a building or temple in a sacred context also characterises many early cultures around the globe, from the Incas in South America to the Egyptians, and of course continues on today.

### **Mountains and the Sacred**

Mountains loom large in any landscape and human habitation is usually at their base or in the valleys surrounding them. They have long been invested with sacredness by many people around the world and carry a rich symbolism. For example the peak of the mountain is up in the clouds and touching the heavens; climbing upward infers a leaving behind of the mundane world in an attempt to reach the summit and the ascent itself requires great effort.

In Japan, Mount Fuji is revered by Shintoists as sacred to the goddess Sengen-Sama, whose shrine is found at the summit. Named after the Ainu fire goddess Fuchi,

the mountain is believed to be the gateway to another world. The mountain was originally sacred to the Ainu, the original inhabitants of Japan.

In Tibet, Mount Kailash, one of the tallest peaks in the Himalayas, near the source of the Ganges, is venerated by and is a pilgrimage site for Hindus, Jains and Buddhists. Buddhists regard the mountain as a mandala.

### **Trees and the Sacred**

From the earliest claims, trees have been the focus of religious life for many people around the world. As the largest plant on earth, the tree has been a major source of stimulation to the mythic imagination. Trees have been invested in all cultures with a dignity unique to their own nature, and tree cults, in which a single tree or a grove of trees is worshipped, have flourished at different times almost everywhere. An



*In Japan, Mount Fuji is revered by Shintoists as sacred to the goddess Sengen-Sama.*

elaborate mythology of trees exists across a broad range of ancient cultures. For example, it is believed by some Hindus that the ghosts of *brahmans* live in banyan or fig trees, awaiting liberation or reincarnation.

## Water and the Sacred

Water is a primordial element which underlies creation myths and stories around the world. Water divinities of various kinds appear in the mythologies of many cultures. And, not surprisingly, the world abounds in sacred springs, rivers and lakes.

While sacred in their own right, sacred springs also draw attention to the sacredness of water itself, reminding us that water is a symbol of grace and as such is used for baptism. Water is also one of the four elements possessing fundamental characteristics. In many cultures, water appears as a reflection or an image of the soul.

In India, the sacred river Ganges embodies for Hindus the water of life. Bathing in the Ganges is said to free the bather from sin, the outward purification serving as symbolic support of inward purification. The source of the Ganges lies in the Himalayas, the mountains of the gods, and descends to the plains of India as if from Heaven.

The identification of the sources of rivers, streams, springs and wells as sacred is very ancient. Springs and wells were perceived as the dwelling place of supernatural beings, and stories and legends grew up around them. Often it was claimed that the waters healed the injured or

**Stones of various kinds and sizes have also been invested with sacredness from the earliest times.**

cured the sick with the result that a well or stream came to be regarded as a sacred shrine.

The Romans developed mineral springs. In Germany the waters at *Aquae Aureliae* became the famous spa of Baden-Baden. In 218 BCE, on his way to invade Italy and the Romans, Hannibal and his armies stopped to imbibe the waters at Perrier in the south of France. The water at Évians-les-Bains, on the southern side of Lake Geneva, was discovered in ancient times. The natural spring waters at Évians-les-Bains are marketed today as “Evian.” The waters at San Pellegrino in Lombardy in northern Italy have been known since Roman times. Rediscovered in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, one of the famous pilgrims (*pellegrino* means pilgrim) who came to take the waters there was Leonardo da Vinci in 1509. The spa was established there in 1848, and bottling of water began in 1899.

In one of our Rosicrucian ceremonies we are told



*A sacred Bodhi tree outside a Buddhist temple.*

that our Rosicrucian temples are made sacred by thoughts and conduct. In other words, we can *create* sacredness anywhere by making it so. With the exercises and experiments and the work we do creating a bridge between our inner and outer selves, we create our own unique *égrégoire* or sacred inner environment. We carry our *égrégoire* everywhere we go and can attune rapidly with our inner self at any time.

When we visit sacred sites, we not only enjoy their mundane beauty we can, through attunement with our *égrégoire*, experience deeply the sacred energies and gain greater insight into ourselves.



*Bathing in the sacred waters of the river Ganges.*



# Friendship

by Cheryl Rose, SRC



ONE OF THE GREATEST ASSETS WE can have is true friendship..., friendship we have earned with a few precious individuals whom we trust implicitly with everything, including life itself. The dictionary definition of friendship is “*Showing kindly interest and goodwill; the state of being friends.*” For those fortunate enough to have true friendships, this description seems quite inadequate. Be they husband and wife, or people brought together through school, employment or clubs, real friends are those loving souls to whom you can tell all, and share everything without shame. They come to your aid without question or hesitation, always ready to lend an ear, and in whose presence all masks are discarded.

The lifestyle of a friend need not be in full harmony with our own, for in a true friendship, there is always an intangible “something,” an attraction, a sense of caring that transcends physical, outer circumstances of the individuals concerned. Take magnetism as an example. Slowly move a magnet and a piece of iron together; at a certain point, the magnet is close enough to the piece of iron that the force of attraction between the two overcomes the friction of the iron on the table, and it comes flying straight to the magnet. The magnet seems to be doing all the work. Now take two magnets and align them so the north pole of the one faces the south pole of the other. There is an attraction from both magnets. Both are doing “work” as they pull each other together. Polarity attraction manifests in what Rosicrucians call the “law of the triangle,” for as two opposing conditions come together, a third condition is created. The two opposing conditions have united into a third condition which may be completely different from either of the two initial conditions. And this in a way is the way it is with every true friendship.

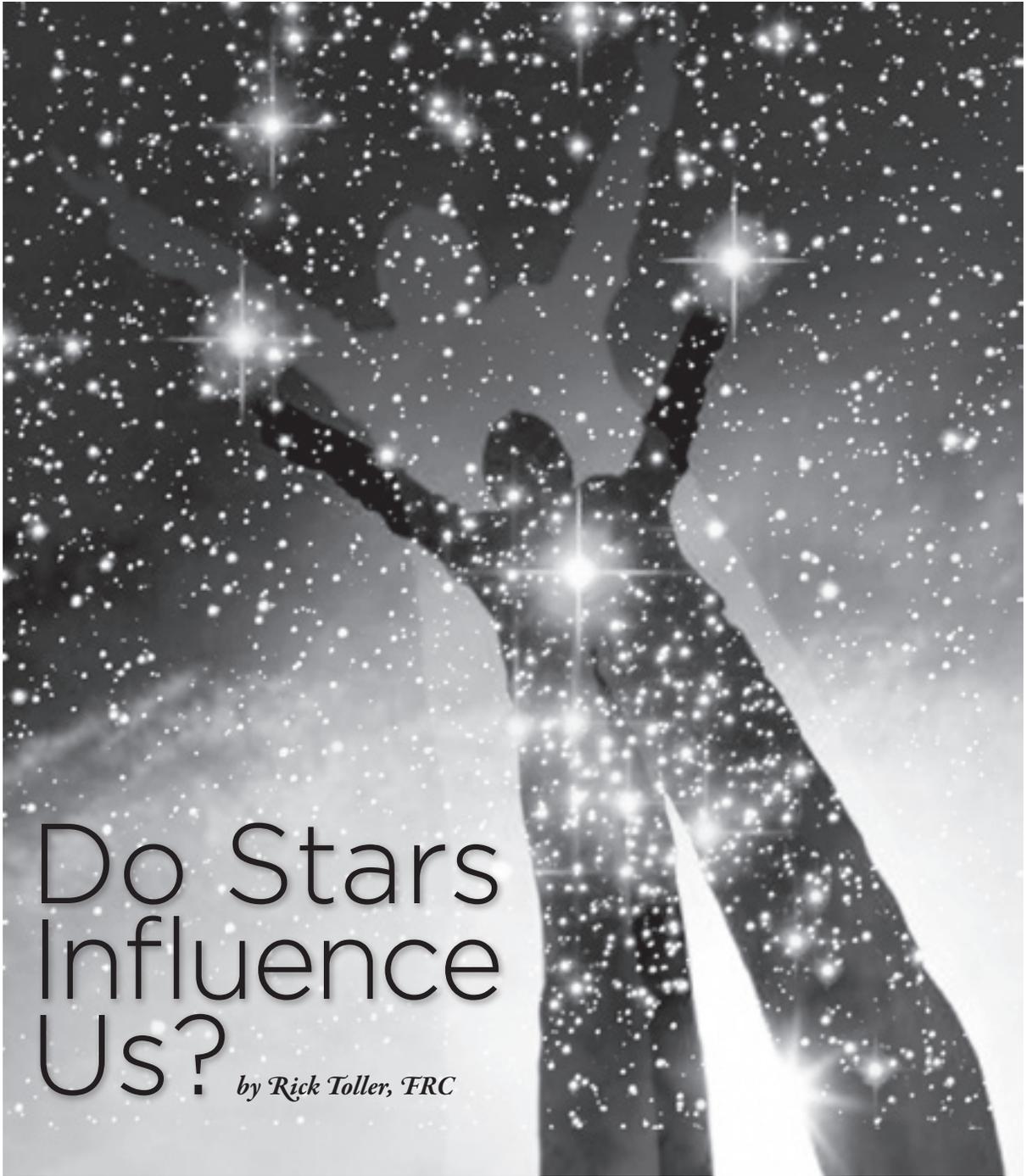
When two people with opposing though

complementary auras meet, a state of harmony is created between them, their auras link up with each other, and a new unit of life emerges. Although still two separate individuals, their combined thoughts and intentions create an egregore which is tantamount to a new living creature. The union manifests in a great and lifelong friendship. Before they met and their vibrations blended together, their vibrations did no great service. One is reminded of the Zen Buddhist Koan: “*What is the sound of one hand clapping?*”

Once established, the friendship grows as the years go by, much as a child grows up to adulthood. With each side of the “friendship egregore” contributing his or her love, ideas, caring and harmony, the bond strengthens further and forms a bond that is the envy of all who see it. It is an example for others to follow, and many years for such completion. Think of what a better place the world would be, if more such friendships could be created.

Taken at a deeper level, is it possible that our very best friend is already bonded with us, just not that visible at the moment? Yes it is, and focusing our thoughts, words and deeds on things that we perceive as being constructive, harmonious, good and wholesome..., and giving back with a sense of justice delivered to everyone and every thing what life has given to us..., and then even a bit more..., we are sure to find our truest friend one day.

Of course that friend will not be a being of flesh and blood, but will be the deepest aspect of your own being, the most accomplished and refined aspect of your own soul..., what Rosicrucians for ages have known simply as “the Master Within.” So, try to be your own best friend and see what happens next..., for the deepest friend you can ever have is already with you. Just think of the power for good that would exist in you if you could unite the two friends of your own self. They may merely be acquaintances today, but aim to make them friends..., soon!



# Do Stars Influence Us?

by Rick Toller, FRC

**T**HE ANCIENT BABYLONIANS and Chaldeans believed there was a universal correspondence between celestial phenomena such as the visible planets, the fixed stars, the moon and sun, and the earth itself, and human worldly events. The visible planets in particular were wrapped in mythology, usually seen as heroic beings and gods, each having a particular realm

of influence. And quite understandably, ancient people believed there was a direct relationship between these celestial bodies and the human realm. What people did on a daily basis was influenced by what happened in the skies.

Whatever occurred in the heavens was bound to have consequences on earth. The *principle of correspondences* ensured that whatever occurred as deeds



Since human lives were related to the planets, depending upon the prevailing influence of the stars under which they were born, people were consequently affected in their earthly affairs by this celestial interrelationship. The 15<sup>th</sup> century image from the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry ('Book of Hours', c.1410) showing correspondences between areas of the body and the zodiacal signs.

or even as thoughts upon the part of the celestial powers resulted in corresponding responses in human affairs. This constituted a theory of *transference* of the imagined powers, habits and acts from the celestial beings and planets, to mortals themselves.

Among these ancient people, much of what is known as natural phenomena was considered to be of teleological origin, that is, as having a mind-cause. The phenomena were not thought of as functions of impersonal natural law, but rather as the *conscious* acts of personalities associated with the planets, the sun, the moon and the occasional comet. In ancient astrology therefore, these celestial bodies *intentionally influenced* human beings to do their bidding.

This concept of teleological influences gradually changed so that the celestial influence was thought to be wholly naturalistic, with each planet having certain inherent qualities which could be either modified or intensified when the planet was brought into a conjunction or certain relationship with others. These influences were less capricious than in the past, and in

the human realm, system and order reigned for as long as the now predicable celestial powers were obeyed.

The principle of correspondence remained, and as human lives were related to the apparent movements of the planets, depending upon the prevailing influence of the planets under which they were born, people were consequently affected in their earthly affairs by this celestial interrelationship.

## Astrology

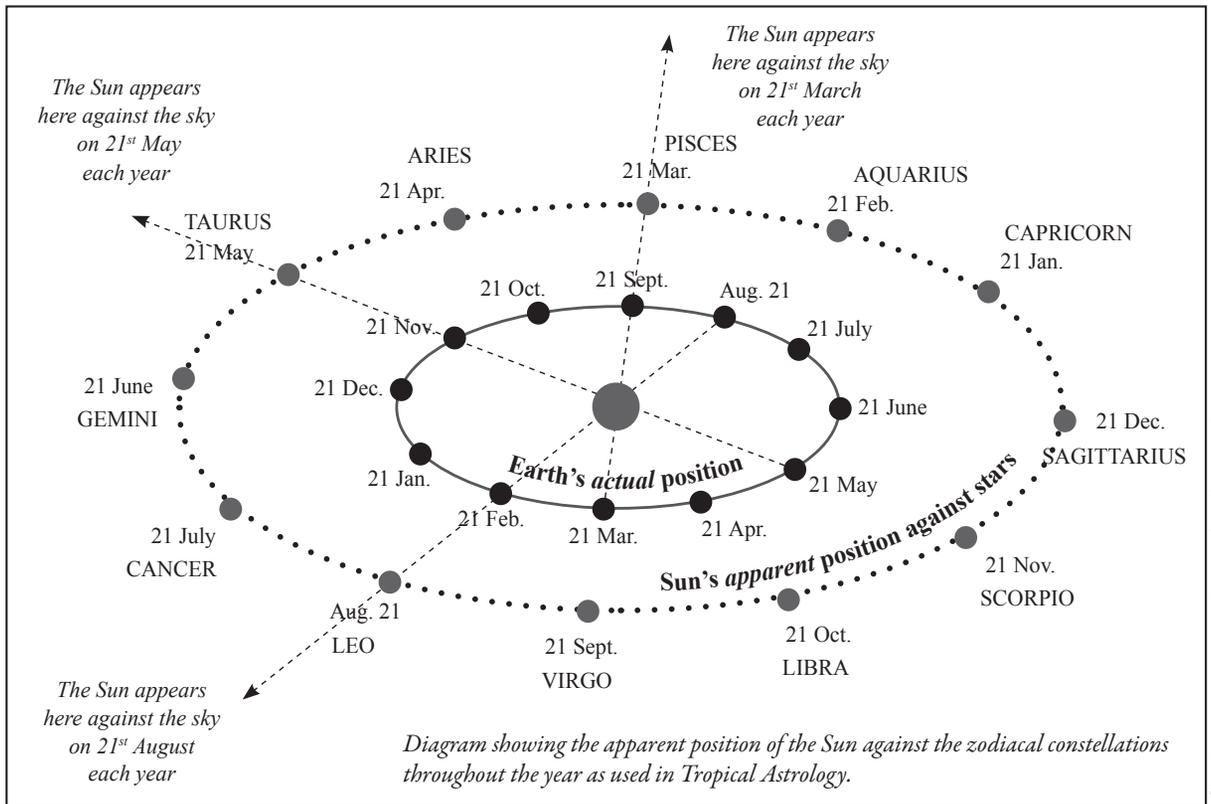
For millennia, the most learned among philosophers, naturalists, temple scribes and priests devoted their lives to the study of astrology, placing their entire faith in the art of "reading the stars." Clearly they discovered something deeply satisfying in their investigations, and in some cases developed highly accurate methods of character analysis based upon the birth date and time of the individuals they dealt with. We have no objective means of gauging the accuracy of their methods, but what is certain is that their activities and preoccupations with linking events in the skies with events on earth, were viewed with respect by most people.

An almost insuperable *fatalism* developed over the millennia, to the extent that people came to deny their own judgments and conclusions in yielding to the expounded influences of the movements of the planets. Even today, especially in extreme cases, if the aspects of the stars are not favourable, some people will avoid undertaking a venture no matter what the circumstances or what their own reason dictates. This is not a criticism, for their faith in the predictions given by astrology could easily be self-fulfilling prophecies which definitely should in that case not be ignored.

**In connection with astrology, there developed an almost insuperable fatalism.**

But in extreme cases, such people are submitting their intellects and wills to a conceived naturalistic power which exercises complete control over every department of their lives, down to the tiniest of daily trivia. Most modern astrologers insist however that the planets *incline* things to happen in certain ways but do not necessarily *compel* them to. In other words, they acknowledge that in most circumstances, we have the power to overcome the planetary forces that form the basis of the art of astrology.

Astrology is one of the oldest consistent beliefs in the history of humanity. How factual are its doctrines?



Is it merely an age-old superstition, the shadow of an era of greater credulity? The ancient Sumerians are generally recognised as the first astronomers. They studied the apparent movements of the visible planets, the moon and sun, and assigned various natural phenomena to them. They saw how the sun rose and set each day with precision, changing over 365¼ days in never ending cycles. They worked out the exact period of the lunar month and noticed how various aspects of human, animal and plant life was affected by the moon's cyclical motion. Some planets seemed to speed up and slow down in their orbits, and explanations were undoubtedly given for this in mythological terms.

They noted the different positions of the stars at various times of the year and observed the heliacal or strange rising of various fixed stars at dawn and

**No intelligent person will doubt that there are certain physical influences exerted upon earth by celestial bodies.**

at periodic intervals. They studied the phases of the moon and began to speculate on the relationship of these phases to the tides and to functions common to reproduction. Since these physical forces and

conditions affected the seasons, it was presumed they must influence all life.

With the celestial bodies undoubtedly being connected with the seasons, and the seasons in turn being the most dominant physical influence on life on earth, it is no wonder then that charting and applying meaning to the motions of the celestial bodies, including the occasional comet or supernova, was such an important and respected art. Thanks to the records they inscribed on clay tablets, we have today a reasonable understanding of the astrological beliefs of the ancients of the so-called "fertile crescent" which encompasses modern day Iraq and Syria.

### Hidden Influences?

Since the sun and moon can cause such huge phenomena as the ocean's tides, it stands to reason that they could also in subtle ways affect the human nervous systems too. Because of their gravitational pull, do they in any way retard or stimulate the flow of nervous energy?

Of the two, the moon is by far the most dominant when causing tides. Does the moon alter, even minutely, the transmission of information along neural pathways? If the moon's phases, not necessarily its gravitic influences,

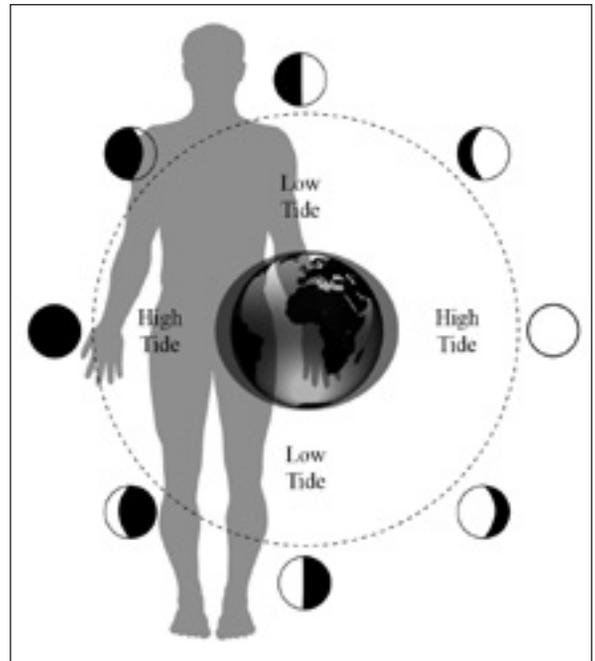
but its reflection of sunlight, have some effect on plant life, then it almost certainly influences cycles of biological activity in humans too.

Minute periodic changes in our neural constitution, caused by the phases of the moon, have already been proven to affect our glandular functions at different times of the lunar month. The lunar cycles are of course competing with other biological cycles, most of them more dominant than the lunar cycle; but the human body seems to have an extremely fine-tuned sensitivity specifically to the lunar cycle, and through all the clutter and noise of other biological cycles in the body, the moon still has its noticeable effect. And if the moon can have such powerful effects on us, it is conceivable that humans, as well as other life forms on earth have evolved similar critical sensitivities to the movements and alignments of the planets as well.

It is no longer an old wives' tale that the phases of the moon have an effect on the growth of plants, and indeed on the biological activity in all living things. But the extent of that effect, and specifically the effect of the planets, is the central issue behind astrology as an interpretive and therefore *subjective art*, and astronomy and biology as *objective sciences*. This is not to say that astrology is entirely wrong simply because it relies to a large extent on subjective interpretation, for there have been many historical astrologers who were not only accurate in their long-range predictions, but were also successful in their diagnoses of current events, and were even successful healers.

No intelligent person doubts that there are at the very least gravitational influences exerted upon the earth by the planets, the moon and the sun. Science concerns itself with provable facts and repeatable experiments, and there can be no arguments against the objective findings of scientific enquiry. However, an intuitive art like astrology, although relying to an extent on the science of astronomy, relies also on intuition and on the undoubted human ability to partially see what broad trends are in current motion and therefore what events are likely to happen in the future. That astrology can drill down from the generality of long-range predictions to daily predictions of minute detail and exactness is however, perhaps a step too far.

And even if we believe in astrology's long-term influences, can we seriously believe that people, based purely on the time of year they are born, are fated to fall into various rough classes of individual such as aggressive, competitive, harmful, etc., or philosophical, accommodating or even mystical? That is one thing science cannot answer, though I must say that from personal experience, I have not the slightest doubt that



*If the moon influences gravity and the tides, does it also affect the human nervous systems?*

people born in the 12 houses of the year, do indeed exhibit 12 broadly different personality types. This may sound stupid, coming as it does from a person who adores the rigour of scientific enquiry; but what can I do but state honestly and from the heart, I have seen this work time after time with great exactitude, and I am as puzzled today as to why this should be, as I was sixty years ago when I first began my enquiry into astrology.

To conclude: I believe in science, I believe in the supremacy of objective observation, I believe in the conclusions derived from serious scientific enquiry, and have full confidence in their conclusions. But I also have an irrational belief..., one I cannot explain, but hold to firmly on the basis of a lifetime of observation. The predictions of astrology are for me not the type that tell you what you are likely to encounter each day, but the type that paints in rough strokes what sort of person you are, what sort of things you are likely to achieve in life, and what dangers you likely to encounter.

There is I believe a happy medium between the rigorous honesty of science and the intuitive, interpretive art of astrology. Science cannot be argued against, for it speaks the unvarnished truth. But equally I can say that science cannot argue against the intuitive conclusions of experienced astrologers either, for no rational enquiry has yet discovered the precise nature and mechanism of the operation of the intuitive faculty in the human being, a faculty that has existed always, and served us well in our struggle to survive.

# A TERRACE FOR CONTEMPLATION

## The Cameron Gallery

by *Mary Brown, SRC*



**I**N 1779, THE EMPRESS CATHERINE II “the Great” invited to Russia a Scots architect, Charles Cameron. She was impressed with his creations and considered him the only person able to fulfil her wishes: *“I have got together with Mr Cameron and we are creating a terrace with hanging gardens, a bath house and a terrace.”* If you stand

in the gardens looking up at the terrace outlined against the blue sky, you can imagine the abode of the gods on Mt Olympus.

Царское Село or Tsárskoe Seló an imperial estate in the small town of Pushkin, some 15 miles (25 kilometres) south of St Petersburg, was the summer residence of the Russian imperial family. Interestingly, for Rosicrucians,



*Empress Catherine II (1762-1796),  
better known to history as Catherine the Great.*

the official Russian term for Emperor is Император or Imperátor, rather than the Rosicrucian pronunciation Impérator. Tsar was the more popular term though.

The main building of the complex is called the Catherine Palace (after Empress Catherine I, the wife of Peter the Great). But it is a building on the South-western side of this palace that is the subject of this article.

## Catherine the Great

Empress Catherine II (reigned 1762-1796) known as Catherine the Great was a German princess brought to St Petersburg to marry Peter III, the heir of the Empress Elizabeth. She was well-educated, speaking German, French and Russian and read extensively, keeping up-to-date on current events in Russia and in the rest of Europe. She corresponded with many of the prominent minds of her era, including Voltaire and Diderot. She believed that education could change the hearts and minds of the Russian people and turn them away from their backwardness. This meant developing people both intellectually and morally, providing them with both knowledge and skills. It is not surprising therefore that it was during her reign that Rosicrucianism spread to Russia.

Charles Cameron (1740-1812) was a Scottish architect, interior designer and Freemason who went to Russia in 1779 at the request of Catherine, and established himself as one of the Empress's favourite designers. He was responsible for several projects at Tsárskoe Seló, but his

most prominent creation was the Камеронова галерея or Cameron Gallery.

## The Terrace

Catherine instructed Cameron to create a colonnade for strolling and philosophical discussion, and the result was this elegant two-storied building that stands perpendicular to the east wing of the Catherine Palace. Nowadays it is considered to be one of the most beautiful galleries in Europe. The colonnade was designed to be used by Catherine as a place for tranquil and philosophical contemplation with the best possible views over the surrounding park, and especially the Great Pond.

The ground floor is built of rusticated stone while the upper floor is an enclosed pavilion, with a Neo-Classical colonnade of 44 slender, white Ionic columns forming a covered walking arcade on either side. Between the columns Cameron placed bronze busts of ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, orators, politicians and generals including Plato, Cicero and Seneca. These are copies of antique originals cast at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The southern side overlooks the Private Garden, and from the east the terrace nearly joins the Hanging Garden. Both walls of the terrace are painted in light blue and the floor is paved with marble. A monumental flight of curved steps, leads down to the garden. On the walls which flank the foot of the stairs stand bronze statues of the ancient hero Hercules and goddess of flowers Flora, copies of antique originals.

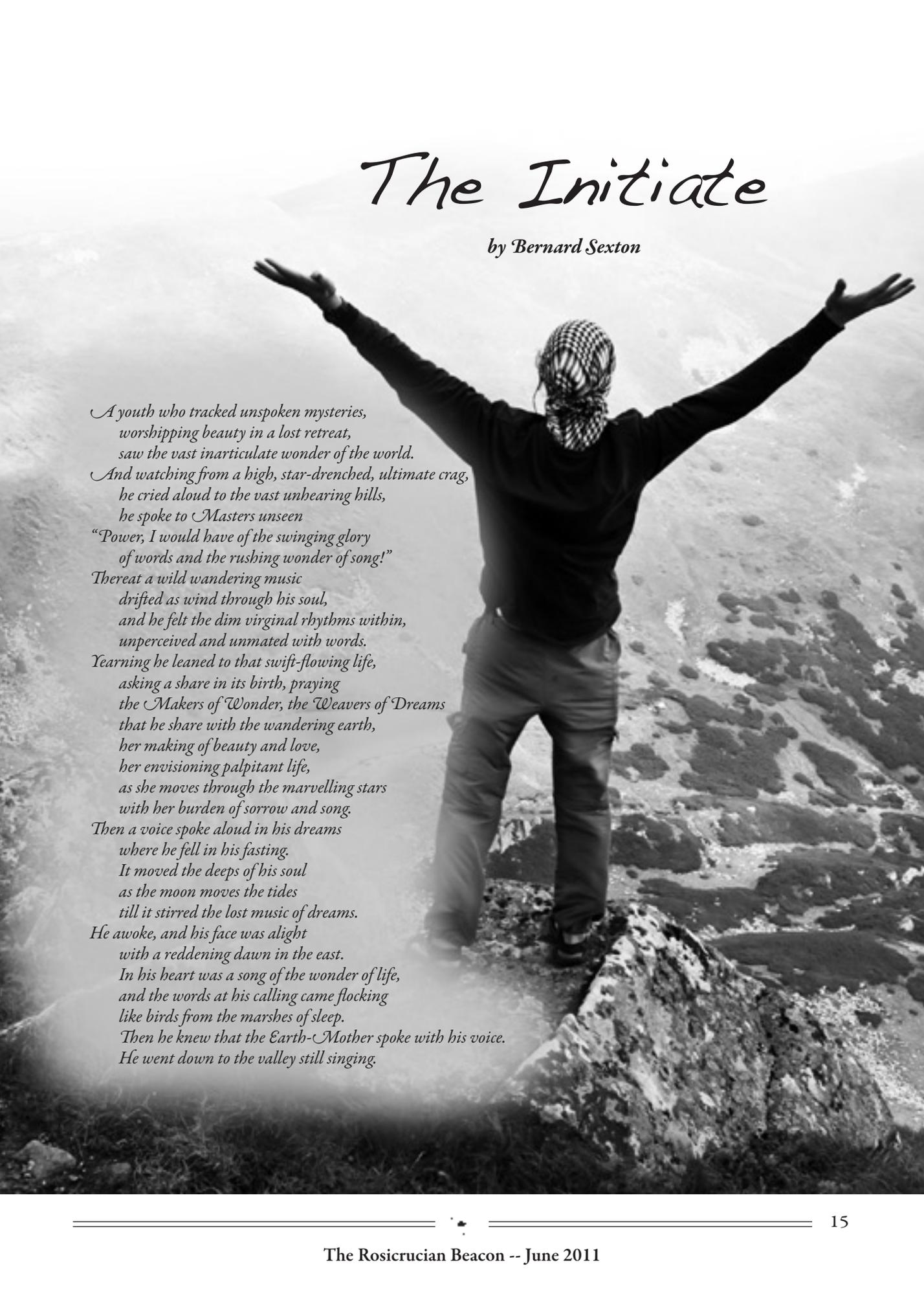
Catherine and Cameron sought to create an idealised, elevating and stimulating place to stroll, sit, read in peace and contemplate. In this beautiful gallery where Catherine went every day when in residence, they succeeded well, as you will discover when you visit, and get a chance to enjoy the serenity of this place for contemplation.



*The inset depicts an 18<sup>th</sup> century view while the larger is a 19<sup>th</sup> century photo-chrome print (1890-1900); the Neo-classical colonnade forms a covered walking arcade on either side.*

# The Initiate

by Bernard Sexton



*A youth who tracked unspoken mysteries,  
worshipping beauty in a lost retreat,  
saw the vast inarticulate wonder of the world.  
And watching from a high, star-drenched, ultimate crag,  
he cried aloud to the vast unhearing hills,  
he spoke to Masters unseen  
“Power, I would have of the swinging glory  
of words and the rushing wonder of song!”  
Thereat a wild wandering music  
drifted as wind through his soul,  
and he felt the dim virginal rhythms within,  
unperceived and unmated with words.  
Yearning he leaned to that swift-flowing life,  
asking a share in its birth, praying  
the Makers of Wonder, the Weavers of Dreams  
that he share with the wandering earth,  
her making of beauty and love,  
her envisioning palpitant life,  
as she moves through the marvellous stars  
with her burden of sorrow and song.  
Then a voice spoke aloud in his dreams  
where he fell in his fasting.  
It moved the deeps of his soul  
as the moon moves the tides  
till it stirred the lost music of dreams.  
He awoke, and his face was alight  
with a reddening dawn in the east.  
In his heart was a song of the wonder of life,  
and the words at his calling came flocking  
like birds from the marshes of sleep.  
Then he knew that the Earth-Mother spoke with his voice.  
He went down to the valley still singing.*

# THE RISE AND FALL OF THE MITHRAIC MYSTERIES

by U.L. Stephens, SRC

*“Hadrianus murmuque per octoginta milia passuum  
primus duxit, qui barbaros Romanosque divideret.”*

*“Hadrian was the first to build a wall, eighty miles long,  
to separate the Romans from the barbarians.”*

(Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Hadriani, 11,2)

**T**HE LATIN SENTENCE ABOVE IS the only surviving comment on the matter from the Roman world, describes how it was the Emperor Hadrian who commanded the 80-mile long wall across northern England to be built. Today it stands as a legacy to the tenacity of Roman imperial will; a bastion protecting civilisation from the wild northern peoples; a wall marking the limits of law and reasoning; a definition of Roman power and its limits.

However, this statement is in itself only a half truth. Indeed, the Roman Empire viewed itself as inherently superior to all other peoples, cultures and civilisations. She had some justification to do so; Rome had destroyed and consumed the lands of the Greek democracies, the trading hubs of progressive Carthage and the most ancient lands of Egypt and Syria. Her legions reigned dominant from the hills of southern Scotland and the forests of Germany to the arid deserts of the Sahara and fertile lands of Iraq.



*Mithras killing the bull. Dedicated by a public slave named Apronianus, treasurer of the municipality of Nersae. In marble, 172 CE from the Mithraeum of Nersae (modern Nesce, Italy). Collection of the National Museum of Rome.*

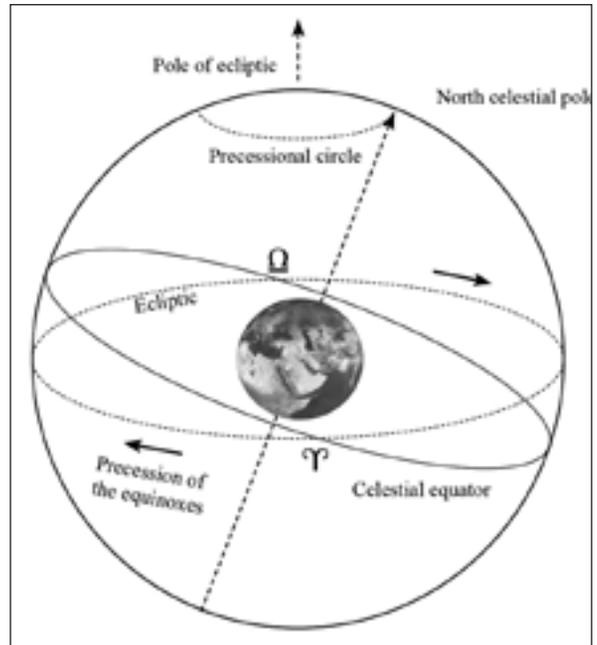
She had not been seriously challenged since the final defeat of Carthage in 146 BCE. Eventual world conquest (the world was not so large in Roman eyes) seemed not only inevitable but indeed eminently desirable by the Roman ruling classes.

Yet upon his investment as Emperor in 117 CE, Hadrian commenced an entire tour of his Empire. Advances made by his predecessor, Trajan, were pulled back in. Major frontier rivers were fortified and mountain passes occupied. Where there was no natural barrier, Hadrian ordered palisade walls and towers to be erected to block free movement, as was done in Roman Germany where they had moved beyond or around the Rhine river line. Across northern England, a massive stone and turf wall was built from the Solway Firth in the west to the banks of the Tyne in the east.

Above all else, religion was central to Roman life. The army had gods of its own, with Mars their principle sponsor when looking for or celebrating victory. Although the empire converted to Christianity in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, Christian sites are heavily underrepresented along the wall. The most famous religious site is the Mithraeum, a pagan temple built for members of the

### Little was ever written about the Mithraic Mysteries.

enigmatic Cult of Mithras, so popular with the rank and file of the army. We know little of their practices. The army eventually marched under the banner of Christ, but as yet a dedicated military chapel has yet to be found along the wall. But it is the Mithraeum at Carrawburgh that interests me. (Extract from Colin McCulloch, researcher, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010).



*The Earth's axis is tilted to its orbital plane. The North Celestial Pole traces out a precessional circle around the pole of the ecliptic, and this means that the equinoxes precess backwards around the ecliptic, at the rate of 50.35 arc-seconds per year which is about 26,000 years for a complete cycle. Around 2,000 years ago, the Sun was in the constellation of Aries at the spring equinox, in Cancer at the summer solstice, in Libra at the autumn equinox, and in Capricorn at the winter solstice. Precession means that all of these have changed, but we still use the old names (e.g. the First Point of Aries for the vernal equinox), and the symbols for the vernal and autumnal equinoxes are the astrological symbols for Aries and Libra. (Adapted from <http://star-www.st-and.ac.uk/~fv/webnotes/chapt16.htm>)*

## The Mithraic Mysteries

The Romans were known for adopting “foreign” ideas as their own, and Mithras was almost certainly not a purely Roman creation. The word Mithras most likely derives from the Indo-Iranian noun, *mitra*, that which binds, as in being bound by a covenant.<sup>1</sup> The term “mysteries” does not necessarily imply that the Mithraic religion was mysterious in any way. It simply means that adherents of the Mithraic mysteries were all formally initiated into a special gnosis or knowledge relating to the god Mithras.

The term “mystery” derives from the Greek *mysterion*, or secret rites. Little was ever written about the Mithraic Mysteries, and it is only through inferences drawn from the underground cave-like Mithraea (Mithraic temples), and the generally present *Tauroctony* (a relief depicting Mithras slaying a bull) and other images of initiatory rites and their primary participants, that we can come to any conclusions. In addition, while “the modern term ‘religion’ seems to be incorrect in a Roman setting,”<sup>2</sup> to participate in a mystery religion implies a binding obligation, a duty and honour.

TABLE 1: The Ages of Humanity from 10,500 BCE

<i>Constellation of Equinox</i>	<i>Approximate Year Began</i>	<i>Approximate Year End(s)</i>	<i>Name of Age</i>	<i>Events</i>
Leo, the Lion (Sun) Aquarius, the Water-Bearer (Saturn)	10,500 BCE (Beginning of Holocene period)	8350 BCE	The Golden Age, Ruled by Cronus or the Orphic Phanes	Stabilisation of planetary climate. Global warming, sea levels rise.
Cancer, the Crab (Moon)	8350 BCE	6200 BCE	The Age of the Great Mother, the Silver Age, Zeus	The Mother Goddess, Neolithic revolution, domestication of animals and agriculture.
Gemini, the Twins (Mercury)	6200 BCE	4050 BCE	The Age of Communication and Trade, Heroic Age	Writing developed, trade began, wheeled transportation, the pantheon of deities.
Taurus, the Bull (Venus)	4050 BCE	1900 BCE	The Age of Structure and Eternity, The Bronze Age	The Pyramids, copper and tin smelted (bronze), papyrus scrolls, the Ankh, bull deity in Egypt and Crete.
Aries, the Ram (Mars)	1900 BCE	250 CE	The Age of War, Iron Age	Akhnaton's monotheism, Persian Mithraism, Courage, initiative, war, and adventure. Romans as "Sons of Mars," iron swords.
Pisces, the Fish (Jupiter)	250 CE	2400 CE	The Middle Ages, The Modern World	New religions, the rise of Christianity, and Islam.
Aquarius, the Water-Bearer (Saturn)	2400 CE	4550 CE	The New Age	Unknown

*There are approximately 2,150 years between the ages. Although the Aquarian Age is believed to have already begun, or will be beginning soon, by using the 10,500 BCE generally agreed upon as the starting date of the Holocene Period the Aquarian Age does not begin until 2400 CE. However, the beginning and ending of the "Ages of Humanity" is highly controversial.*

Duty and honour were paramount throughout Roman civilisation although adherence to any particular religion was not necessary. Mithraism itself, "...was neither static nor homogeneous; just as Christianity varied from one region of the Roman Empire to the other, so too did Mithraism."<sup>3</sup>

### The Mithraeum and Tauroctony

The celebrations of the Mithraic Mysteries were held in Mithraea found throughout the Roman Empire at

military outposts in what is today Germany, France, Spain, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. All Mithraea share certain common characteristics. They are all in, or built and decorated to represent caves. They are all longer than they are wide, with stone benches on either side, and they all depict the *Tauroctony*, or scene of Mithras slaying the bull at a prominent altar.

Included are the figure of Mithras wearing a Phrygian hat and a cloak, the bull (often with its tail in, or depicting,

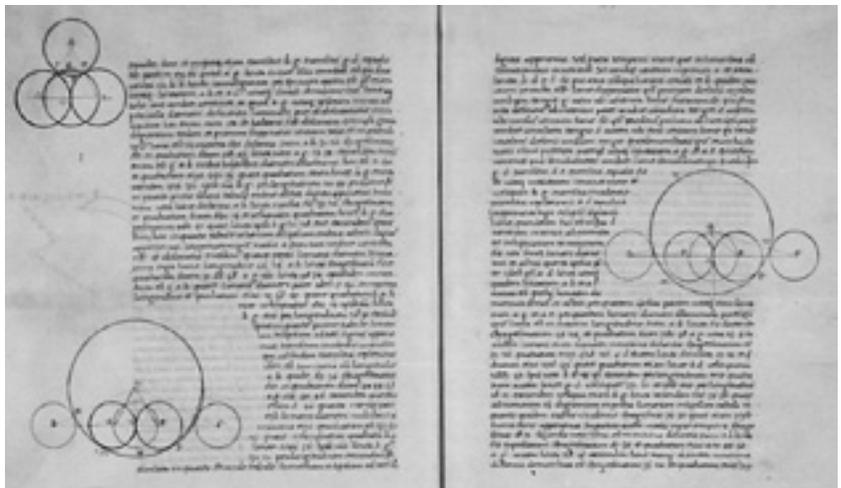
ears of wheat), the dog and snake appearing to ingest the blood of the slain bull, the scorpion biting at the bull's genitals, and the Sun, Moon and stars above or under Mithras' cloak. Often there is a raven perched on the bull's back, two torchbearers on either side representing light and dark, one with the torch up (*Cautes*) and one with the torch down (*Cautopates*), and a goblet.

The actual origins, rites and rituals of the Mithraic Mysteries are relatively unknown. Plutarch, in his *Life of Pompey*, tells a story that implies Mithras was an import from the Cilician pirates who were plundering cities on the coast, around 67 BCE.<sup>4</sup> The wealthy joined the pirates as professional thieves to obtain places of honour for the satisfaction of their ambitions.<sup>5</sup> Porphyry, in his *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, talks of the cave (grotto) as a symbol of the cosmos with souls coming into being and then ascending into the immortal realm.<sup>6</sup> The cave also served as a symbol of all unseen powers since they are "dark" (transparent) to our eyes, and the essence of the powers is, including those of the Primary Mover, invisible.

David Ulansey, in *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries*,<sup>7</sup> hypothesises that these objects represent a set of constellations, e.g., Taurus (bull), Scorpio (scorpion), Corvus (raven), Crater (goblet), Hydra (snake), Canis Major or Minor (dog), and that Mithras himself is represented by the constellation Perseus. The interpretations of what these symbols represent and why these constellations are used, and not the zodiacal constellations (already known at that time), have been a subject of much debate. The answer may lie in the different view between the ecliptic (the zodiac) and the celestial equator. Plato described these two celestial circles as forming a cross. He also believed that the Creator endowed these two circles with uniform, permanent, and unchangeable motion,<sup>8</sup> a philosophical and scientific concept believed throughout the ancient world until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, when Hipparchus of Nicaea witnessed a supernova in the constellation Scorpio.

### Discovery of the Axial Precession

Hipparchus (2<sup>nd</sup> Century BCE) had already begun to notice the longitudinal shift in the star Spica in the



Extract of Ptolemy's Almagest translated to Latin by George of Trebizond, c.1481. These pages show Book VII Chapter 7, on the computation of the duration of solar and lunar eclipse (<http://www.ibiblio.org>).

constellation of Virgo by comparing his observations with those of Timocharis of Alexandria (3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE) and ancient Babylonian astronomical observations.<sup>9</sup> He concluded that the heavens were moving westward along the ecliptic at the rate of approximately one degree (or less) each century. He decided therefore to prepare a new star chart measuring the position of each star according to latitude, i.e. the distance north or south of the celestial equator, and longitude, the angular distance east or west of a particular point. This action created the first star chart with gridlines still in use today.

As Hipparchus prepared his star chart, he began to notice, comparing the older observations with his own, a pivoting east/west change in the position of the north celestial pole star, an observation that takes decades to ascertain. This precession of the vernal equinox

**When the Mithraic Mysteries were born, astronomy and astrological beliefs permeated Mediterranean religious thought.**

is now known as the axial precession. He calculated that a complete cycle occurred approximately every 26,700 years. Today this complete cycle is referred to as the Great Year of approximately 25,800 years, taking approximately 2,150 years for the precession through each of the twelve 30-degree signs of the tropical (seasonal) zodiac.<sup>10</sup> Plato's idea of the uniform, permanent and unchangeable universal cross of the Creator had therefore changed!

Today we refer to this axial precession in reference to the Ages of Humanity, from the Golden Age of Leo and the birth of the Orphic Phanes, through the silver

age of Cancer, the Great Mother goddess, to the present Age of Pisces (see Table 1: *The Ages of Humanity from 10,500 BCE*.<sup>11</sup>). The speed of axial precession changes over time however depending on Earth's rotation, and it is currently speeding up (the precessional speed is increasing which consequently decreases the cycle period).<sup>12</sup> The Vernal Equinox during the four-century advent of Mithraism was in the constellation of Aries, the Ram, moving towards the Age of Pisces, the Fish. During the period of the Mithraic Mysteries, the constellation Perseus stood just above Pisces, Aries and Taurus. In astrological thought, Perseus represents the third decanate of Aries (ruled by Mars) indicating a sub-ruler Jupiter, the primary ritual god of the Romans. Perseus, or for our purposes, Mithras, is seen to be at the centre of the precession and hence became the Primary Celestial Mover.

When the Mithraic Mysteries were born, astronomy and astrological beliefs permeated Mediterranean religious thought, and astrology was becoming an art of synthesis, just as the mystery religions of Rome were becoming syncretistic. Probably because of the discovery by Hipparchus, Julius Caesar reformed the Roman calendar in 46 BCE, with consultation from Sosigenes of Alexandria, to approximate to the tropical year. Before this adjustment, an official date that was recorded as happening in January was actually falling in mid-autumn.<sup>13</sup>

Some time near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Claudius Ptolemy was born. Ptolemy was born a Roman citizen in Egypt and was a member of Alexandria's Greek society. He became a leading naturalist, publishing a variety of treatises. The best-known down to the present day are the extensive amalgamation of astronomical knowledge, the *Almagest*, the *Geography*, and the astrological synthesis of the *Quadripartitum*, or *Tetrabiblos*.

Astrology and astronomy had wide influence in the Greco-Roman period. The stars and planets were the immortal deities, as they had been for millennia. With the discovery of the axial precession, a new god had appeared possessing a world-shaking power to move the

**Almost from the beginning, initiation into the mysteries seems to have been limited to males.**

heavens themselves. This all-powerful god, Mithras, the Sol Invictus, had control over the cosmos and therefore would automatically have power over the astrological forces determining life on Earth. Mithras's control of the Universe meant that with the appropriate homage, he possessed the ability to guarantee the soul a safe journey



*Mithras born from the rock: Roman stoics sought to live in harmony with that which was out of their control, i.e. a non-resistance to the will of the universal mover. For the Roman soldier this was personified by Mithras/Perseus. (Wikipedia Commons).*

through the celestial spheres after death, something that would have been high up on the list of things to ponder about by Roman soldiers. Discovering the precession of the equinoxes meant knowing how to ascend through the newly identified layout of the cosmos.

## The Roman Military

The Marian Reform (named for Gaius Marius) in 107 BCE eventually transformed the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire.<sup>14</sup> Marius proposed a restructuring of the organisation of the soldiers in the Roman armies.

The armies had consisted of landowners only, who had to bring their own horses and armaments, the theory being that landowners would be more apt to defend their own homes and regions. Marius wanted to change the army to include state-paid, state-armed and state-trained legions of professional soldiers from the landless, namely, the *capite censi*. The Marian Reform was a strategy to strengthen Rome in response to the threat from the Germanic Cimbri and Teutonic tribes.

Eventually, as the Empire settled into the *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace), a period coinciding with the Mithraic Mysteries, the consolidation of the military took place and moderation in the expansion of the Empire became the goal. Mercenaries from other lands were hired to guard the far-flung borders. However, martial concerns had to be addressed because war with one power or another was a way of life for the Romans. This “Roman Peace” was not intended to end war; it was intended to create an atmosphere of non-resistance.

Stoicism was a predominant philosophy during this period. In stoicism, self-control and the strength to endure misfortune were important human attributes, especially for the military. It has been suggested that the Mithraic initiations involved three ordeals to be endured: heat, cold and hunger. Roman stoics sought to live in harmony with that which was out of their control, namely a non-resistance to the will of the universal mover. For the Roman soldier this was personified by Mithras/Perseus. Soldiers sought a respite from the worries of constant warfare. Because most Mithraea could only hold 30 to 40 people, the seven-step Mithraic initiation process may have been very selective. The Mithraic mysteries sought to provide the means for the highly trained, duty-bound officers to envision the opportunities for salvation. The cave-like Mithraea were built to represent the cosmos where their salvation could be found through theurgy of the Mithraic Mysteries.

### Initiation into the Mithraic Mysteries

During the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, St. Jerome, the Roman Catholic patron saint of translators, librarians and encyclopaedists, listed the seven grades of initiation into the Roman Mithraic Mysteries (see Table 2, *Mithraic Initiation*). Initiation is a form of sympathetic magic and has long been an aspect of religion with ritual objects designed to affect the environment of people through correspondences. At the end of their initiation, the initiates of Mithras would shake hands with the *Pater*, the highest-ranking member, and meals were

held as a sacramental feast in honour of Mithras, the Sol Invictus, the unconquered sun.

Almost from the beginning, initiation into the mysteries seems to have been limited to males<sup>15</sup> and was popular among the military (as suggested by the Mithraea at military sites). Mithraism promised knowledge that was hidden from outsiders. Although Roman society typically was not particularly spiritual (in the modern sense of the word), Romans were ritualists and formalists to the core. As in all *hierarchies* (from the Greek for the leaders of sacred rites), the members were above, below or on the same level as other members. A hierarchy is a system of order, something very important in the Roman world.

**The final initiation into the lesser mysteries of Mithras was that of Adept.**

The Romans celebrated the seven-day Saturnalia during the time many believe to be the birth of Mithras, near 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Saturnalia was introduced around 217 BCE in the hope of building morale after the Roman military defeat by the Carthaginians at Lake Trasimene.<sup>16</sup> It was a time to “eat, drink and be merry,” a breaking of their system of order, a reversal of roles between masters and slaves, and a holiday for the Roman soldiers. The ropes that bound the statue of Saturn in Rome for the rest of the year were removed; and everyone wore the *pileus*, a conical, brimless, felt hat, also known as the liberty cap or Phrygian cap,<sup>17</sup> the symbol of the highest level of Mithraic initiation.

It is possible that the feasts and initiations into the Mithraic mysteries occurred at different times during the year however. Perhaps they began in the mid-spring after the heliacal setting of Taurus (the slaying of the bull) when the sun was moving to its hottest. The Tauroctony symbolised the “...*final death of winter, symbolised by the bull, and the approach of summer.*”<sup>18</sup> All members progressed through the first four ranks representing spiritual progress. But not everyone proceeded to the three higher ranks.

Some possible meanings of the symbols in the initiations can be gleaned from a reading of the currently available literature on the Mysteries. Those who had completed the 1<sup>st</sup> initiation, the Raven, were the servers at the ritual meals. The Raven symbolises the rational rising of the spirit in service. The Nymphus of the 2<sup>nd</sup> initiation symbolises subservience in the ritual marriage of the initiate to Mithras. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> initiation, the Soldier was presented with a crown balanced on a sword, which he must refuse, stating that

Mithras is his crown. This symbolises that although he wishes to attain glory for himself he will sacrifice his physical power to Mithras. The final initiation into the lesser mysteries of Mithras was that of Adept. The symbol of the Lion represented the stoic concept of the Demiurge, where the Soldier will become the “Good Leader,” or Ariomanus, through trial by fire. This will allow him to help those below him in reaching salvation.

Those who advanced into the greater mysteries became Perses with the *harpe* dagger as its symbol. Perseus removed Medusa’s head with the mythological *harpe* dagger, an adamantine sword borrowed from Hermes. Every year in August, we can view the Perseid meteor showers that appear to be coming from Perseus’s sword as he stands on the white road of the Milky Way. This symbolises the rescuer reborn from the ashes. The 6<sup>th</sup> initiation brought the soldier to Heliodromus, or Sun-courier, where he stood with Mithras, the Sol Invictus, as the Sun and Mithras moved in their course. The final initiation was symbolised by the curved knife and Phrygian cap, and was that of the Pater, the matured, disciplined father who could show the way to freedom and liberty from fear of the cycle of life and death.

## The Apparent Demise of the Mithraic Mysteries

Roman religion in general was not based on any central belief, but on a mixture of varied rituals and traditions that had been assembled over the years from a number of sources: “*To the Romans, religion was less a spiritual experience than a contractual relationship between mankind and the forces which were believed to control people’s existence and well-being.*”<sup>19</sup> One of the most important aspects of Roman religion was the synthesis of whatever mystery religion, god or goddess or idea that arrived in Rome. It remains difficult to know what the Mithraic Mysteries included, but the evidence suggests that they had incorporated many of the mystery religions of antiquity, and personages from throughout their Empire. The Romans created a religion around the secret knowledge of a god that granted salvation from their fate as embodied in the stars and planets.

During the first four centuries CE, many changes were taking place in the Roman Empire that would mark the apparent demise of the Mithraic Mysteries. The 1<sup>st</sup> century experienced the rise of the Christian religion. The 2<sup>nd</sup> century saw the end of the *Pax Romana*, the building of Hadrian’s Wall in Britain and Ptolemy’s astronomical and astrological *Almagest* and *Tetrabiblos*. With the advent of the “Crisis in the 3<sup>rd</sup>

century,”<sup>20</sup> the Roman Empire was beset by civil war, foreign invasion, the plague and economic depression. Clement of Alexandria was developing a Christian Platonism and the Romanised Egyptian stoic, Plotinus, established Neo-Platonism proclaiming that Aristotle and Plato were of the same mind, the same *nous*. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Constantine the Great became the first Christian Roman Emperor. The first Council of Nicaea was held in 325 CE, establishing a consensus of concepts for state establishment of the Christian Church. Theodosius I banned all pagan religions from the Empire by 395 CE, including the Mithraic Mysteries, and Christianity became the official state religion of the Roman Empire.

In *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries*, David Ulansey states, “*The Mithraic mysteries ended as a religion of soldiers, based on an ideology of power and hierarchy.*”<sup>21</sup> What then was the spiritual truth that created Mithras, the last god of the mystery religions? What made him worthy of homage? During Medieval times, Anselm of Canterbury believed that truth was rightness perceptible only to the mind, the ontological argument for the Supreme Being. According to Ralph M. Lewis, “*The first principle of truth [is] personal assurance and confidence...*”<sup>22</sup> The primordial tradition that brought the concept of space and time, the mysteries of the cycle of life and death, including the traditions brought forward in the now-darkened Mithraic Mysteries, remains alive in our religions, philosophies, mysticism, and in our sciences.

## Endnotes

1. Schmidt, Hans-Peter, “Mithra i: Mithra in Old Indian and Mithra in Old Iranian,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (New York: Columbia University, 2006),
2. Hewett, Clive, “Roman Religion: An Introduction,” (*The Roman Military Research Society*, 2010).
3. Pvdens. “Mithras Sol Invictus: An Initiate’s Guide,” (*The Roman Military Research Society*, 2008).
4. Plutarch, “Pompey,” *Lives* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), Vol 2, p. 88.
5. Ibid, “So that now there embarked with these pirates men of wealth and noble birth and superior abilities, as if it had been a natural occupation to gain distinction in.”
6. Porphyry, “On the Cave of the Nymphs” (*De antro nympharum*) in *The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook of Sacred Texts*, ed. Marvin W. Meyer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 210-11.
7. Ulansey, David, *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries: Cosmology and Salvation in the Ancient World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

TABLE 2: Mithraic Initiation				
Grade of Initiation	Title	Symbol	Associated Planet	Associated Constellation
Lesser Mysteries				
1	Corax	The Crow	Mercury	Covus, the Raven
2	Nymphus	Male Bride	Venus	Taurus, the Bull
3	Miles	Soldier	Mars	Aries, the Ram
4	Adept	Lion	Jupiter	Leo, the Lion
Greater Mysteries				
5	Perses	The Harpe Dagger	Moon	
6	Heliodromus	Sun courier	Sun	
7	Pater	Curved knife, Phrygian cap	Saturn	

8. Plato, *Timaeus and Critias* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 49: "He then took the fabric and cut it down the middle into two strips, which he placed crosswise at their middle points to form a shape like the letter X; he then bent the ends round in a circle and fastened them to each other opposite the point at which the strips crossed, to make two circles, one inner and one outer. And he endowed them with uniform motion in the same place, and named the movement of the outer circle after the nature of the Same, of the inner after the nature of the Different."
9. "Hipparchus." *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago: William Benton, 1957).
10. "Precession" in *Astronomy Encyclopedia*, ed. Sir Patrick Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 218-19.
11. The Holocene Period, from around 10,500 BCE, is the geological epic that includes the present. It is the period of civilisation when the climate changes began to stabilise and became more regional.
12. Berger, A L, "Obliquity and precession for the last 5 million years" in *Astronomy and Astrophysics*, 51 (1976): p. 127.
13. "Julian calendar" in *Astronomy Encyclopedia*, ed. Sir Patrick Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 210.
14. Plutarch, "Caius Marius" in *Lives* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), Vol 1, pp. 549-584.
15. Jonathan, David, "The Exclusion of Women in the Mithraic Mysteries: Ancient or Modern?" in *Numen* 47(2), (2000): pp. 121-141. There is some evidence that women were not altogether or dogmatically excluded from the Mithraic Mysteries.
16. Landis, Shawn, "The Roman Saturnalia," 2007 (<http://www.suite101.com>).
17. Yates, James, "Pileus" in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, ed. William Smith (London: John Murray, 1875).
18. Ulansey, op.cit. p. 20.
19. "Roman Religion" in *Illustrated History of the Roman Empire*, (<http://www.roman-empire.net>)
20. Ross, Kelley L, "Crisis of the Third Century" in *Rome And Romania, 27 BC - 1453 AD*, (<http://www.friesian.com>)
21. Ulansey, *ibid.* p. 125.
22. Lewis, Ralph M, "Truth, What is it?"

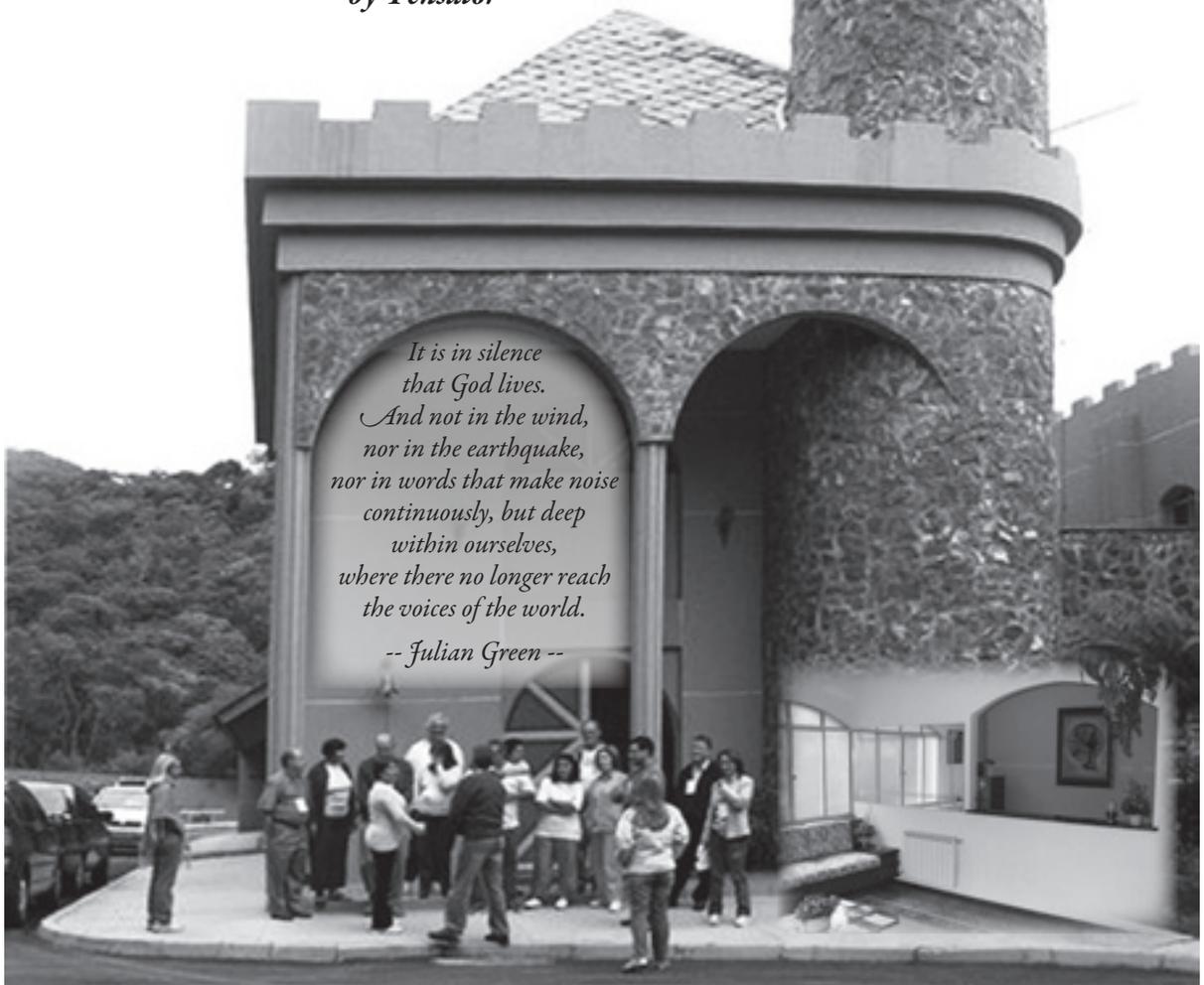


Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicaea burning Arian books. Drawing on vellum, ca. 825 in the Capitolare Library, Vercelli, a compendium of canon law produced in northern Italy.

# *Morada do Silêncio*

## *The Abode of Silence*

by *Pensator*



**I**N AUGUST 2011, A ROSICRUCIAN World Convention will take place in Brazil. Rosicrucians from all over the world will gather in the eco-city of Curitiba, capital of the southern Brazilian state of Paraná for four days of fraternal contact. Curitiba is where the Grand Lodge of the Lusophone or Portuguese-speaking countries has its own equivalent of Rosicrucian Park, called *Bosque Rosacruz*, in the north-eastern suburb of Bacacheri.

Some miles further on lies the small town of *Quatro Barras*, and it is on the outskirts of this town that we find the

subject of this article: the *Morada do Silêncio* or “Abode of Silence” situated on the *Chaminé da Serra* (Chimney Mountain.) It stands in the biome<sup>1</sup> known as the *Mata Atlântica* (Atlantic Forest,) an ecosystem that is part of the *Serra do Mar*, a mountain chain extending some 1,500 kilometres along the south-eastern littoral of Brazil. It was here that the Portuguese Grand Lodge established a spiritual retreat for meditation and contemplation for all Rosicrucians members. The retreat is surrounded by some 110 hectares (272 acres) of green, lush, exuberant nature. Its flora in particular lends a touch of magic.

## The Abode

Building on the site started in 1987 and the inauguration of the Abode took place on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1995. Because this retreat is devoted entirely to spiritual discussion, activities and contemplation, and is used exclusively by Rosicrucians, it is a powerful focal point for the sustaining and strengthening of the collective aura of the Rosicrucian Order, known to Rosicrucians and the Rosicrucian égrégoire. It is truly a wonderful place, with its own stream, various cascades and a temperate forest with a harmonious and reinvigorating atmosphere.

Located only some 40 kilometres from the Grand Lodge in Curitiba, the *Abode of Silence* has over 2,200 m<sup>2</sup> of buildings and 48 rooms. In all but name, it is a true mystic monastery for temporary retreat by Rosicrucians from the stresses and strains of their busy urban lives. Each room has a small area known to Rosicrucians as a Home Sanctum. It is a place or focal point in which Rosicrucians pursue their private devotions, regularly entering states of meditative silence, conduct periods of private prayer, or spend time reading material of an elevating and inspirational nature.

The Abode also has a Rosicrucian Lodge temple where mystical work of a special nature is carried out daily. There is also a pyramid-shaped Sanctum on the upper floor, called a *Câmara da Paz* or “Chamber of Peace,” a special room created for the sole purpose of radiating thoughts of peace to all humanity. There is a well stocked library, a dining hall, a well tended garden, a lake and apiary, and of course offices and residences for the caretaker and administrator. The Abode was built entirely from donations received from Rosicrucians living in Brazil.

From the Grand Lodge in Curitiba, buses leave periodically carrying Rosicrucians from throughout Brazil and other countries, bound for a period of withdrawal from the cares of everyday life, in the Abode of Silence,

**The retreat is devoted entirely to spiritual discussion, activities and contemplation, and is used exclusively by Rosicrucians.**

where vibrations of Light, Life and Love are constantly focused with purpose and intent to all humanity. The retreat aims to give Rosicrucians the opportunity of experiencing a more intimate closeness than usual with the so-called “Master Within,” which according to Rosicrucian ontology is the earthly expression of the individual human soul in each person. The Abode of Silence is therefore a gathering place providing



*Building on the site started in 1987 and the inauguration of the Abode took place on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1995.*

Rosicrucians with an oasis of calm that meets conditions necessary for the awakening of inner peace and quiet in the company of plants and wildlife native to the *Serra do Mar*.

The four two-story buildings of the Abode of Silence are also used for other matters such as annual meetings of officers of the Rosicrucian Order, such as Grand Councillors and Directors of the Portuguese Grand Lodge, as well as hosting a school for volunteers who assist in the upkeep of several hundred member groups, known as Lodges, Chapters and Pronaoi, spread throughout Brazil.

### Silence of the Soul

Late one night as I sat alone in the garden, the bushes illuminated by a full moon, a gust of wind stirred the branches of the surrounding trees and I felt it gently caress my face. What joy entered my being at that moment! It was as if the breath of God had blown into my soul a serenity and peace so deep there was no end to it. In silence, something awesome entered my being and worked miracles in the silence of the night. My personal travails, my personal night ended on that fateful evening, as God passed through the forest on a breeze, moving the waters on a land millions of years old.

I cannot be the only one who has felt such peace, for undoubtedly God has passed through these forests countless times, tending His garden, urging new flowers into existence, arranging new wing designs of insects, new patterns of colours for birds and new scales for fish and reptiles. The sparkling stars above were like pinpricks of light in the night sky, and a feeling of profound peace enveloped me for hours on end. This surely was the silence of the soul!

The Morada do Silêncio retreat is for seekers of light, truth and divine revelation. Through study, regular



*There is also a pyramid-shaped Sanctum on the upper floor, called a Câmara da Paz or "Chamber of Peace," a special room created for the sole purpose of radiating thoughts of peace to all humanity.*

meditation and the practical application of spiritual laws, Rosicrucians seek communion with the depths of their own beings, the tranquillity of their own souls. For just one short period in life it is necessary for all of us to journey within to a place where we can breathe in deeply a state of perfect serenity. In an instant we can be transported to a world of inspiration, breathing in the energy of nature itself, and experience the peace and power of the soul. The Morada do Silêncio was a truly special place and time for me.



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*The highest and most beautiful things in life are not to be heard about, nor read about, nor seen, but if one will, are to be lived.*  
-- Søren Kierkegaard –

#### Endnote

1. Pronounced "by-ome"... a large naturally occurring community of flora and fauna occupying a major habitat, e.g. forest or tundra (Oxford dictionary).



**T**HE EFFORT AND PAIN TO BRING A NEW body into the world while the soul waits eagerly for the moment of possession may be compared to a mystical initiation. The cry of the newborn babe is symbolic of the cry of the flesh in war and rebellion against the dictates of the spirit from the moment of birth until the release of death.

At death, a last supreme effort is made by the heart, lungs and mind to keep the eager soul from its leaving. Once again there is battle as the body labours

for one more breath, one more frantic moment of life. But always triumphant, the soul finally wings its way to freedom.

These two glorious moments, birth and death, symbolise the whole panorama of life. There is no progress without struggle; each day the soul fights to make itself heard, seen and felt. The soul's free expression may make life a glorious picture of love and harmony; but greed, intolerance, fear and self-pity may ruin it. Progress means struggle, but in the end, the soul is victorious.

# The Precognitive Experience

by Russell Clayton, FRC



ONE MORNING A MINE OFFICIAL went underground to visit his workforce. After spending some time observing the men in a certain work area, he got a feeling so strong that he felt he had to act immediately, and ordered all the men out of that area of the mine. By his own account they thought him mad, but were shocked when shortly afterwards the whole place caved in. To them, it is still a mystery.

The above account is a classic example of what is called

*premonition or precognition.* To Rosicrucians, the principles of cause and effect underlie all manifestations perceived through our objective sense faculties. To those experiencing a premonition, the effect is one of puzzlement, awe and a deep sense of respect for what makes such a thing possible. This is so particularly when the manifestation, the physical counterpart of the psychic experience, is observed only a short time later. From a philosophical standpoint, it raises the question: "*How can an effect be realised before there is any apparent cause for its existence?*"

From the standpoint of mystical philosophy, all or everything is potential in the Cosmic, taking the word "Cosmic" to mean loosely the sum total of the universe existing as a harmonious relationship. Rosicrucians, recognising that the concepts of space, and especially of time, may well be nothing more than by-products of consciousness (human or otherwise), realise that the past, present and future may also ultimately be nothing more than different parts of a single, indivisible form of consciousness known as "the now" in some mystical

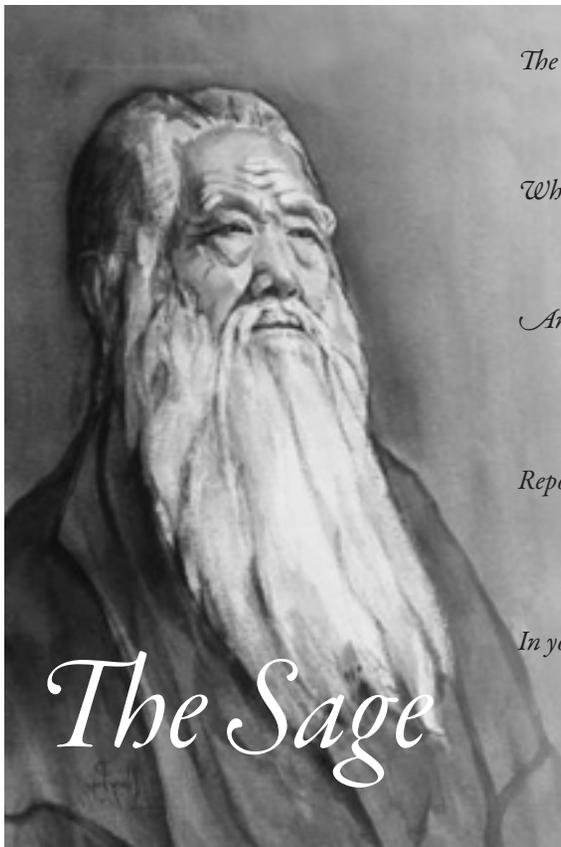
**Rosicrucians, recognise the concepts of time and space to be products of the human consciousness.**

literature. From this standpoint then, the outcome of many patterns of cause and effect can be intuitively discerned. Like the patterns of a kaleidoscope, a particular design is the outcome of one element's action upon another and its relationship to it. If other causes are not brought to bear upon it to bring about a corresponding change or effect, the pattern remains constant.

Mysticism holds that, through our latent psychic faculties, we are capable of becoming aware of such patterns. They may be simply impressions that are suddenly

received in the consciousness, generating associated ideas. The individual receiving such impressions may not be related directly to the outcome or the manifestation of the perceived pattern. However, we may become inadvertently attuned or in touch with the minds of others who are directly associated with the cause-and-effect relationships involved. We may come to sense their fears, or in our realisation of them, we may interpret such impressions as being a particular event that will befall some person or persons.

Scientific research in many fields has established that most natural events have a chain of causes and effects before the major results are apparent. Earthquakes are linked to stresses and strains in the earth's surface that have built up over years, sometimes centuries. In the case of a potential cave-in in a mine shaft, it is postulated that a psychically sensitive individual may well become aware of the disastrous final effect of a complex of causes and effects existing around him. Usually, it is only the impression of the final effect which is realised, the manifestation having a direct bearing upon the individual's concern. The impression may be realised as a visual or auditory one, or simply as an emotional "feeling" of a pending situation, which is sufficiently strong to motivate immediate action.



*The repose of the Sage is not what the world calls repose.  
His repose is the result of his mental attitude.  
All creation could not disturb his equilibrium:  
hence his repose.*

*When water is still, it is like a mirror,  
reflecting the beard and the eyebrows.  
It gives the accuracy of the water-level,  
and the philosopher makes it his model.*

*And if water derives lucidity from stillness,  
how much more the faculties of the mind?  
The mind of the Sage being in repose  
becomes the mirror of the universe,  
the speculum of all creation.*

*Repose, tranquillity, stillness, inaction,  
these were the source of all things.  
Keep to this when coming forward to pacify  
a troubled world, and your merit shall be great,  
your name illustrious, and the empire united into one.*

*In your repose you will be wise, in your movements, powerful.  
By inaction you will gain honour, and by confining yourself  
to the pure and simple, you will hinder the whole world  
from struggling with you for show.*

Zhuāng Zǐ (Chuang Tzu, 369-286 BCE)

# A Right Time for Everything

by Carol H'Behrman



**T**HE TIMELESS TEACHINGS OF THE past tell us that there is a right time for everything. *“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.”* How helpful it would be if we could learn to recognise these “right times,” to set the timelines of our lives to coincide with this universal guide, and to let the tides of being fluctuate with a cosmic ebb and flow. Sometimes it is simple to do so. Society and one’s own physical development can signal the appropriate moments for such important steps as going to school, starting a career, marrying and raising a family.

Many decisions, however, are not quite so obvious.

Life is a succession of changes and new beginnings. Whether we like it or not, whether we want to or not, at various moments in our lives we are compelled to enter into new stages of development, to consider new areas of thinking, and perhaps to abandon some old ways. Knowing when to make these changes can often mean the difference between success and failure, between wasting our hours in no longer productive—even destructive pursuits, or utilising this time for growth and achievement, both inner and outer. But how does one know when this moment occurs? How does one know when it is truly time for a change? *“Act, act in the living present! Heart within, and God o’rhead!”* wrote the poet, Longfellow.

## Failure to Act

So often the failure to act at the appropriate moment can mean loss of opportunity for growth and advancement, can even initiate the onset of a deep freeze of the soul, a sinking into lethargic and stultifying habits, those spiritually deadening routines which can destroy us the most when we are least aware of them.

Failure to recognise when the time has come to re-evaluate one's employment and perhaps consider a change; failure to recognise danger signs in a relationship that desperately needs renewal if a marriage is to be saved; failure to loosen parental bonds on a young person who is searching for his or her own identity sufficiently to avoid a complete rupture of those ties; failure to recognise that the decay of old interests has led to a limbo of the consciousness which can be reawakened only by development and expansion of new interests and thought; the list might go on and on of life-destroying traps which await the unwary.

## Recognising the Time

How, then, does one learn to recognise the "right time," that propitious moment when there is the most to gain emotionally, materially or spiritually, from change? The answer, paradoxically, is both exceedingly simple and extremely difficult. It is simple because the techniques are easy and within the reach of everyone, yet arduous because of the difficulties inherent in awakening those who are marking time.

Except for an enlightened few, we are all asleep to a greater or lesser degree when it comes to an awareness of our own potential and the psychological and emotional pressures which block the full achievement of that potential. "Oh wad some power the giftie gie us To see oursel as others see us!" cried the Scottish poet, Burns. It would indeed be valuable if we could see ourselves as others do, but more so of what we are capable of becoming.

Fortunately, it is seldom necessary to solve the complex mystery of identity all at once. We develop slowly, when we develop at all. One new aspect of identity, one added shade of being, is all we can be expected to cope with at one time. And the time to recognise this new facet of ourselves, to bring it up for reflection and examination, indicates itself to us in many ways. We receive numerous signals from within when life has become static and unproductive. With awareness and practice, we can learn to recognise these signals.

Sometimes, the signs are mental, a vague restlessness,



*So often the failure to act at the appropriate moment can mean loss of opportunity for growth and advancement.*

a sense of boredom, an increase in tension and irritability, a diminishing or even vanishing of the joys which were once experienced in daily living, a feeling of listlessness or lethargy. These symptoms may indicate problems other than the need for a change but, whatever their source, only benefits can accrue from an awareness of their existence.

When inner needs go unanswered too long, they often manifest themselves in physical symptoms. These may go so far as to indicate actual illness but are more often expressed in fatigue, persistent or recurrent headaches, and insomnia. Physical symptoms, no matter how mild, should never be neglected. They are the body's intuitive way of trying to tell us something important about ourselves. If we train ourselves to heed these signals, they can help point the way to improved physical and mental health. We may even come to realise that sometimes these signs indicate that it is time for a change, a change upward and outward into increased understanding and self-development.

## Awareness

Those of us who are alert to these mental and physical signals are well on the way to the development of that awareness that leads to spiritual, emotional and intellectual growth. We can take stock of our situation and recognise those areas of our lives that are in need of revitalisation and renewal. Awareness must always precede action. Just as changes in barometric pressure are followed by appropriate changes in weather, so our inner barometers can point out to us the need for change in our own lives.

The act of living involves unceasing action and renewal. Those who work at the art of living maintain a constant awareness of their real selves and the shifts in its needs as it grows and develops toward ever greater harmony and strength. Recognition of the right time for change can avoid wasted, unfulfilled hours and bring one into new areas of experience and creativity; a step closer to that perfection of the self for which we all yearn.



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# Free Your Self

by Sarah Watford, SRC

**H**AVE YOU EVER LOVED SOMEONE so much that you became that person? Have you ever lost yourself in another person? Have you ever been confused about your dreams and urges? I have observed people who were so in love and immersed in one another that for all intents and purposes they had lost their personal identities. It is a good thing two people in love to deeply harmonise with each other, and for the most part it is hard to see anything wrong with it. It feels so perfectly correct doesn't it? But is it really right to go so far as to lose our personal identities?

The fact of the matter is that your deeper self is a unique, never-to-be-repeated individual being; nothing is identical to it, and it does not appreciate losing its identity, and in fact never actually does, regardless of what the outer self does. For a while it will stretch and strain to try and maintain a level of harmony with another person; but in the end, its individuality breaks free again. The urge for self expression is too powerful be restricted indefinitely, and sooner or later the total immersion that some people seem to have in each other, separates out into the two individuals..., often with tears and acrimony. There is a special separation required between any two people, and if it is not allowed then ill health and disharmony eventually results. I mention ill health because I have experienced it and seen it in others as well. People who love one another tend to eat alike, exercise alike, think alike; and the dominant one in the relationship will most likely be the example for both. Yet this is seldom a healthy thing for both

to do. It may be fine for one, but not necessarily for both.

Similarly, a couple's thoughts, dreams and desires may be blended because of the sympathetic love and care involved. And one in the partnership may actually believe a goal is his or her own, when in reality it is that of the other. The result can only be disappointment and confusion if one person aims at the wrong dream, a mistaken illusion.

Love, sharing and unity are wonderful things, but not indefinitely and not at the expense of the individual self. The warm glow of togetherness eventually fades and one ends up having to pick up one's own karmic burdens again and walk the path of life and compensation that one was destined to. If each of us cannot maintain our individuality at all times, and imagine our own future, we may be due for many side trips off our personal paths. Furthermore, we are here to accomplish specific tasks in life, all of them linked to our individual karmic loads. We have our special contributions to be made to the world, and being bonded to another so closely that we cannot manifest our own deeper self, is a prison too far.

You have something to give, no matter how insignificant you may think you are. If you never ask yourself what it is, you may never use your gift, and in turn never benefit either yourself or anyone else. I believe in my heart that many marriages and civil unions could be saved if both persons in the union knew the inner self so well that they could always recognise the other's individuality and give their beloved the freedom to express it as they were meant to.



# The Illusions of Change

by *Mary Holloway, SRC*

**C**ONTEMPORARY AND HISTORICAL world events have often been misconstrued for actual change in human attitudes and character. But amidst the sound and fury of our earthly conflicts lie the very subtleties of life. Hence, truth is often obscured in a maze of confusion, intellectual interpretations and opinions, originating from the questionable faculty of human reasoning.

The teachings of the founder of Taoism, Lao-tsu, proclaimed that what we see or experience as world events are but effects emanating from an invisible world beyond our senses. Actually then, there may be more than the eye beholds, in spite of the welter of material facts that

flow to us from a variety of so-called authorities. These often include the scientist, historian and economist, among others, as highly respected sources of accurate information.

However, this impressive array of intellectual talent proffered to us has seemingly etched an unclear and inadequate picture of where we are heading in the scheme of living today. Is the human mind being overexposed to the materialistic and, like a sensitive film, giving forth a blurred image of the true and real objectives of life? Looking at the objective facts alone..., degradation of our biosphere, plants and animals going extinct, the loss of ancient native languages at the rate of scores every



*Rebels, in the name of social justice and in the infamous process of eliminating their oppressors by whatever means, have sought apparent change in anarchy. The tyranny of one form of rule is often replaced by the tyranny of revolt; and in reality there is no essentially altered living, except in a limited material sense.*

year, the loss of tribal and folk customs and the wisdom inherent in them..., it is sometimes difficult to disagree with the prophets of doom and gloom, past and present, as they report the human scene devoid virtually of all we may call inspiring. Diversity is being lost at a catastrophic rate, Gaia is ill, and few nations have been able to avoid violent confrontations from within or without for long.

During revolutions, human depravity has often plunged to historical depths in the wake of momentous events. Rebels, in the name of social justice and in the infamous process of eliminating their oppressors by whatever means, have sought change through anarchy, with disastrous results. But there followed agony and despair in the seeking of only temporal change. The tyranny of one form of rule is often replaced by the tyranny of revolt; and in reality there is no essentially altered living, except in a limited material sense. We do not live by bread alone. Even well-motivated rebels cannot supply for their famished masses the necessary manna from the empty larder of spiritual poverty. True freedom and profound change at any level is only obtained in the quiet and confidence within us.

Depressing sequences are found in the history of all nations; no group of people is exempt. And the elements of sameness and duplicity, the superficial characteristics of our attempt at external change, are depressingly repeated over and over. Neither Muslim, Jew, Christian nor any other fragmentary culture has been exempt from the appalling brutality humankind has created in the past and continues to create even today, due to its failure to recognise the starting point of all universal good, namely, our conscious awareness of the Inner Self, the Inner Master, the real world from which we may never be separated.

Unfortunately, the pundits have painstakingly presented us with an admixture of pathological despair

and small hope in the society they bare. But the paradox of an ugly world in the midst of universal harmony and beauty may yet be resolved. What could be missing from the objective facts of the so-called pragmatists is a correct interpretation and a proper correlation with the truth. Therefore; some of the answers to our bewildering problems may be found in the unpopular domain of the metaphysical..., or simply, that which lies beyond the science and physical appearance. If we hope to arrive at fundamentally sound change we need to penetrate the earthly veil, its endless illusions and distorted images. For too long mortal minds have been conditioned to accept erroneous thinking as an instrument for real change and better living.

To many thinkers, it appears that all the essential facts have been gathered. But have they? We may be familiar with our many social problems besides the neurosis of a possible nuclear catastrophe. And to this is added the dire prediction: that our increasing leisure world may burgeon into an idle pasture for boredom and insatiable pleasures. Yet, some of the wise men and women of the past held out more faith, more hope, and more inspiration for all of us. Aristotle believed that through leisure pursuits, humankind grows morally, intellectually and spiritually. There is much to support his ideas., so let us focus our view from the vantage of the mountaintop.

## The Intellect

Are we perhaps misinterpreting the so-called evidence presented to our senses? History can record only the objective facts. Within the limited framework of reason, analysis and the intellect, we have obtained only temporary remedies for our chronic ills and ephemeral changes. Henry Thoreau wisely said, "*Men have become tools of their tools.*" It is clear that reason and scientific enquiry still often founder at the limits of the intellect, and

**True freedom and profound change at any level is only obtained in the quiet and confidence within us.**

cannot progress further until our cognitive and reasoning abilities have evolved to higher, more inclusive states.

This seems true in a large measure, otherwise the expertise of our highly trained minds would have eradicated our social and individual strife a long time ago..., or at least brought us closer to the healing water of "Bethesda." If I might continue the analogy, we are saddened by the many of unfortunate people who are seeking their mythical pool of healing waters through outer means. Will the Master's command, "*Rise, take*



*Aristotle believed that through leisure pursuits humankind grows morally, intellectually and spiritually.*

up thy bed, and walk,” once again regenerate the tortured soul of humanity? Or is our ultimate destiny bound to a meaningless jigsaw puzzle mainly created by the intellect with its unanswerable questions?

If we confine our capacity for life to the five senses and our intellect, which together comprise but a part of our Self, then we appear outwardly doomed to a perennial existence of unmitigated suffering. The urgent call is for a change from within, a change from the depths of our creative subconscious self, a change that emphasises the invisible sustaining power of our spiritual nature, a change that acknowledges the existence of something truly transcendent resident in every human being, lying dormant, waiting for the day of liberation when it can take charge of our clumsy, stumbling outer faculties.

### From the Silence of the Soul

If we believe with conviction that true peace and life emanate from the silence of the soul, then we may find through regular periods of focused meditation that the changes; and power we are seeking externally reside within us. They have always been there, they will always remain there. Subsequently, we will obtain our healings and answers in a changed dimension of life-spiritual awareness.

This was the universal truth that Gautama Buddha discovered two and a half millennia ago, but which the world was not prepared to accept. He found the illusory nature of appearances and

the truth beyond the din and tinsel of everyday life. Of course it does not imply that we must ignore the evils of war, hunger and poverty in a humane sense. But it does mean, unequivocally, that we must look inwards, beyond objective appearances, if we are to obtain the quality of change in our lives that is most desirable; for the illusory nature of our experiences can give us a false sense of living as we erroneously view the world around us. So it appears that the level of our consciousness determines the agony or real change we manifest daily.

Whatever else may be illusory around us, we are certain of our consciousness, our state of being. Hence, we have a practical approach and clue to the nature and origin of change. Let us therefore embrace wholeheartedly what we know to be, and know we can control..., namely our lives, with the unlimited good that resides within us through the world of “God within.” The changes in our lives may be depicted as the external manifestations of *growth* morally, physically or spiritually. And whether expressed

**We should look inward, beyond the objective appearance, to obtain the quality of change in our lives most desirable.**

individually or by nations, growth as a function of intrinsic change raises human thought, expanding the horizons of consciousness toward what is true and real and good for us.

Perhaps we react to the changing world and the tumult in our lives as we often do to the clap of thunder. Perhaps we are incognisant of the real potential energy flashing across the heavens. And perhaps we ignore too the Potential Energy and the Divine Source which can alter the sameness and monotony of stagnation in life.

The ripples of our individual thoughts vibrate across the troubled waters of world consciousness, in the deep silence of meditation. Eventually, our meditations, our prayers, our sincere desires, those vibrating currents of creative, loving, caring, compassionate thought, will cause a profound change in the quality of living for every living thing in the world. This is the natural and universal Law of Growth, God in action. Practise meditation daily, do not miss a single session, and do it with humility and a profound love of the Creator who has honoured you to be here, in this time of world strain and almost unbearable challenge.



*If we believe with conviction that true peace and life emanate from the silence of the mind, then we may find through meditation that the changes; and power we are seeking externally reside within us.*



# Failure: the School for Success

by Philip A Clausen, FRC

**A**RE YOU THAT MODERN-TYPE OF person, used to quick changes, rapidly changing fortunes, a competitive atmosphere, and the knowledge that at any time you could be manipulated into doing something you would rather not do? The Spartans would have indeed welcomed you at Thermopylae, holding the pass until death against the vastly superior Persian armies. You smile, this is a nice fantasy, for you secretly know that all of this cannot be true..., or is it?

Deep down inside where it really counts, you know you would prefer broad sunny days that change with Egyptian slowness, where each pleasurable chisel stroke on the tablet of life you are carving is preceded and then followed by meaningful contemplation, and your agreeable co-workers nod and discuss and admire the

ongoing artistry of the day's work. You eat a slow and wholesome lunch with these people. All of them chew their food properly, no one smokes or coughs piteously, no one drinks to excess, no one swears or speaks ill of another, no one chisels the work of another while he is gone out back for a little while to enjoy gazing at the serene passage of some clouds. Oh what a wonderful, pleasure-filled world! You smile..., you are having another daydream.

It is 5:00 pm; you are done with Thermopylae for today. Either the Spartans have won, or the Persians. It's a little hard to tell for sure on a daily basis. You have been returned home on your motorised shield. Anyway, forget about that. Now at home, you can do what you really want to. You promised your wife that you would build her a little pathway so she can stroll down to her flowers. You do it the old-fashioned way, the way your grandfather showed

you. You mix the concrete by hand in a wheelbarrow. It's hard work, but by the time the sun is setting, the pathway is poured and it even looks fairly smooth. Do-it-yourselfer pride makes you glow inside. You feel re-bonded with Mother Nature, and the universe seems to be revolving in a neat circle around your forehead.

But a thought nags at you before you fall into exhausted sleep: Did Grandad say to use one scoop of cement to every five scoops of sand, or was it to every four scoops? You wake up Saturday morning, refreshed, excited. You go out to the back to proudly show your wife the new pathway. The morning light is brazen and unforgiving. Those are definitely looking like waves in the cement. You carefully pull the wooden frame away. Those are definitely little cracks opening up in the sagging cement. You touch a corner of the path. It breaks away like icing on a cake. You have not created a thing of lasting beauty. You have created an expensive ribbon of concrete junk.

Your wife reminds you that her in-laws will be arriving in about an hour and you realise this is not a fantasy. This is real life. You want to smile. You want to laugh, but you find your mouth has turned to concrete. Other past failures in your life loom up to leer at you. But you are not a green soldier. A puff of hot steam rolls up the back of your shirt and out of the collar. You think, "Thermopylae Pass." You have been here, how many times? You know what must be done. Your hands know what a sledgehammer and cold chisel feel like. You are, in fact, an expert with sledgehammer and chisel.

Two hours later the guests have all arrived. They are sitting under the umbrella table, eating your wife's perfect cuisine, drinking coffee, watching you with mixed admiration and wonder. What a dynamo, what a worker you are, what a model husband, they exclaim. You are mixing concrete from three piles. One pile is cement, gray and fine as cake flour; the second is a pile of sandy gravel; the third is a strange gray-green pile that strongly resembles a pulverized pathway.

"*What is the pile?*" Uncle Peter wonders. "*It's a family secret,*" you tell him with a straight face. "*It's the secret ingredient that guarantees success.*" They do not know that you are a "failure." All they know is what they see now: a man confidently mixing, pouring and smoothing concrete into the form of a pathway. They do not know your chequered past. They do not know what a near-miss this has been. And they do not need to know.

You almost decided to come clean and tell them what had happened and then leave it and walk away. But you don't. This is a crucial moment. You decide to stick, to hold the Pass, to win the Victory, to create Concrete, or be carried out on your shield.

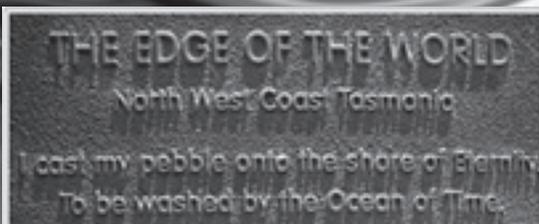
"*Do you use a five-to-one mix, or a six-to-one?*" Uncle Peter asks. You assess him with a cool look. "*I always use a four- to-one ratio.*" You pause dramatically. "*Doesn't everyone?*" You benignly gaze upon them. This is no fantasy. This is your life. Night retreats before your lighted mind. Defeat turns into victory. Failure is and always has been the school for success. You smile, wiping sweat from your brow. There will be many other such days.

# Edge of the World

by Brian Inder

*I cast my pebble onto the shore of Eternity.  
To be washed by the Ocean of time.  
It has shape, form, and substance.  
It is me.*

*One day I will be no more.  
But my pebble will remain here.  
On the shore of eternity.  
Mute witness from the aeons.  
That today I came and stood  
At the edge of the world.*



This was reprinted from the magazine *Cradle Mountain Gazette*, Tasmania, Australia. It can also be found on a plaque situated on the north coast of Tasmania, where the winds known as the "Roaring Forties" assault the shores, Reprinted with permission of the author.



# On Being Creative

by Irene McDermott

**T**HERE IS AN UNRELENTING URGE in every one of us to extend ourselves. We feel impelled to leave our imprint. Every culture has left a record of the creative, religious and historical achievements of the men and women of its time. Surely our reason for being is to energise some spark of infinity within us until its flame can be felt and seen. Until we have discovered the individual channel through which this splendour can be imparted, we feel we are existing to no purpose.

I once took a friend of mine to see Rembrandt's *Titus*. The painting was in a separate room with security rails to hold back the hushed crowd, and was further protected by a museum attendant. Although I had seen prints of this child,

presumed to be Rembrandt's son, I was not prepared for the impact of the original. Through an ingenious use of light, the serene countenance of the boy is illumined. The portrait literally comes alive and the effect is startling.

In it I saw my own son at that age. I felt the charm of innocence, the frankness and guileless love of all children. It radiated out to me and touched some hidden spring that revealed the universal character of all creativity and made me aware that I too am a factor in its evolvment. As we left the museum, my friend said quietly, "*I shall never forget that as long as I live.*"

The artist calls upon instinct, knowledge and all of his inherent creative ability as he puts brush and oil to canvas to achieve a painting that sets forth some fragment of truth.



*Rembrandt's Titus: through an ingenious use of light, the serene countenance of the boy is illuminated. The portrait literally comes alive and the effect is startling when standing before it.*

This truth may be drawn from the deep recesses of his consciousness or dredged up from his own experiences. In his urgency to unlock the doors of inner creativity, he relates to us. We are caught up with him by some invisible thread of communication. We are inspired, not by the inanimate canvas, but by the vision projected through this medium. It speaks its truth to us and we respond, thereby enlarging ourselves, and, at the same time allowing the artist to go

**The artist calls upon instinct, knowledge and all of his inherent creative ability as he puts brush and oil to canvas.**

full circle by consummating his need to express and his longing to see that expression live..., to communicate his idea to the beholder.

Rembrandt's career began by painting portraits of socially and politically prominent people of his day. His popularity pleased him and he lived graciously and well. Later, a series of tragedies and misfortunes befell him. His wife, Saskia, having lost three children, died a year after Titus was born. Gradually Rembrandt's commissions declined, his popularity waned, and his fortune too faded away. His deep sorrow and sense of defeat awakened in him a new concept of his talent. He no longer "painted to order." He drew instead more and more on his inner self for inspiration, and his work showed greater depth. It was during this period that the beautiful and famous portrait of Titus was painted.

## An Unknown Power

Does this indicate that we can achieve fulfilment only through heartbreak and loss? Not necessarily. It does point up the fact that often such despair leads one to discover the vast store of inner resources at one's command. For many of us the challenge presented by obstacles enables us, through some unknown power, to rise to new heights.

This union with the inner being can often be accomplished by simply accepting it as a child accepts a gift at Christmas. One of the happiest women I know has achieved this contact without any apparent effect. Part Hawaiian, part Portuguese, and reared by a Chinese family, she plays the piano easily and with grace. She does not read music; yet she can play almost any popular tune she has ever heard. She extemporises with runs and variations, letting herself go as she bubbles over with the joy of her "creation." We catch her joy and marvel at the music that flows through her fingers. We wonder about this power in us and may well conclude that we do not use this power, but that the power uses us.

Not long ago I watched an artist friend give a demonstration in painting. She placed three blobs of oil in the primary colours on her canvas with a palette knife and said, "I never know what will come out when I start to paint, but we'll move the colours about and see what happens."

What happened was a seascape with rough boulders in the foreground and a rougher sea between the rocks and a stormy horizon. She asked her viewers, "What do you see? I'm too close to it." Someone volunteered, "I see a boat- being tossed by the waves." "Yes, it's right here," the artist agreed, filing up the outlines of a rowboat. "There's a man in it," someone else offered. "A man? Then he'll need oars." With a few more deft strokes of the palette knife, the boat, man and oars were clearly depicted. "What's he doing out there?" the artist continued to ask.

Opinions were divided. A few thought he was going out to rescue someone in distress; others felt he was coming in or being tossed ashore from a sinking ship. Whichever way the viewers saw the painting, it was evident the artist had expressed the idea of man's battle with the elements for survival. Each one in the class was finding his or her particular truth in it.

## The Law of Creativity

The *law of creativity* is impersonal and is forever seeking all outlets open to it. Whether you bake a perfect cake, build a graceful cabinet or tastefully decorate a modest home, you are invoking the law of creation. The writing of a poem deserves no greater recognition than these apparent menial



*Each one in the class finds his or her particular truth in their own creativity.*

but productive tasks. It is not for us to judge the quality or quantity of our abilities but it is our moral obligation to cultivate them, thereby increasing their fruitfulness. The tools one uses may be inanimate but the truth revealed will be a living thing.

Many geniuses have developed their talents in spite of physical handicaps or material lack. They seemed obsessed with a desire to bring to light the whole measure of talent or truth entrusted to them. Robert Louis Stevenson, while ill for years, continued writing; his work showed no signs of morbidity or any hint of complaint. Beethoven, at first bitterly resentful of his increasing deafness, finally accepted his handicap and went on to compose some of his most moving music. Edgar Allen Poe, penniless and ill, poured out his poetry and prose. These men are gone from us but their truth, alive and convincing, is recorded in their works for us to share. They had the same trials and problems, the same limitations and frustrations as we have. But they were aware of a tremendous power moving through them, pushing them forward in the work they felt destined to do. With some it came hard, with others it was easy.

It is said Schubert's music literally flowed from him, seemingly without effort on his part. He wrote more than two hundred and fifty songs before he was nineteen; some of his dances were written in half an hour; his symphony in C major was written in one month. Those who create, conscious of this force vibrating through them, can scarcely wait to get to their work in the morning, and their days are never long enough. In fact, they will need less and less sleep. Thomas Edison often worked eighteen hours a day or more. A very short nap was all he needed to renew his energy.

## We Are Creative

There is a store of miraculous power deep within each of us. It is not necessary that we fully understand this power in order for it to function, but we must believe it is there. Once we know this and can let go of our mental blocks, a singing force, a dynamic something motivates our every act, and finally we see a purposeful design unfolding in ways beyond our understanding.

This urge that impels us to express ourselves is really the divine centre within us asserting itself. It is necessary to still the conscious mind if we would hear the directions of this inner being. Only by cooperating and communicating with this larger self are we able to project ideas of such stature that they develop entities of their own and outlive us.

When we have definitely made this contact, we can trust our intuition as to the direction we should take. This communion with the inner self releases us from much of the worry associated with our outer existence, thus freeing us to pursue our given work. Cooperation and collaboration with the law of creativity engenders a feeling of security. We become necessary, even indispensable, to the operation of this law. Non-cooperation can easily make us expendable.

**This urge that impels us to express ourselves is really the divine centre within us asserting itself.**

We cannot afford to ignore this mandate of creativity. The whole conception of the universe, the world and all life including plants, animals and humankind is based on it. Participation is not only a promise of immortality; it is the only way in which we can feel alive, really alive, because creativity is the motivating factor of the Life Force itself.



*Many geniuses have developed their talents in spite of physical handicaps or material lack. From left to right: Edgar Allen Poe, Robert Louis Stevenson and Ludwig Beethoven.*

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE

*by Ralph M Lewis, FRC*



**T**HROUGHOUT THE WORLD, THE demands for widespread cooperation continue among nations. But before people can live and work in harmony, they must have a common understanding. Physically and organically people have much in common. Mostly, they react alike to the external forces of the environment. We know that the primary qualities of sense impressions are almost identical. Under certain circumstances we all experience coldness and moisture. Under other conditions

we have the sensations of heat and dryness. We also react similarly to what we call extension or space, that is, ideas of dimension such as length, breadth and width.

In the emotional and intellectual realms, however, we are quite diversified. One person will perhaps find amusement in an incident that will anger another. Another may perceive beauty and in what to someone else is merely a distorted blob of colour. Intellectually, one person finds an idea that inspires and may even seem profound. Another finds the very same idea dull or unintelligible.



*Do we know what the word Peace really means? We have our own understandings of it, but there really doesn't exist a universal understanding of it.*

Words often prevent others from having unity of thought. Words in themselves are supposed to be symbols of ideas but often they are just a mere framework for a name. It is left to the individual to place their own construction upon these words.

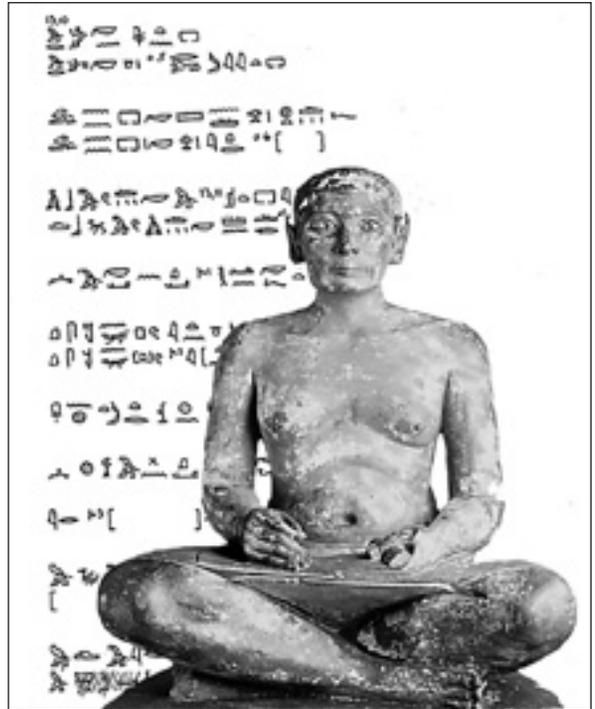
## Peace

*Peace* is one of those words for which there doesn't appear to be a universal understanding although its use is very common. We know that it is cast about freely by the press and is often used in private conversations. To most of us the word peace is a *symbol*. It signifies freedom from strife, that is, the avoidance of any physical or mental distress. Peace in this way then, is a *negative* kind of symbol. We say it is negative because to most people it is not a thing

**Peace is one of those words for which there doesn't seem to be a universal understanding.**

which is sought in itself. Rather, it is looked upon as a *state or condition where there is freedom on a mundane level from the aggravation of something else*.

Consequently, to millions of people today peace is just a negation; in other words a doing away with



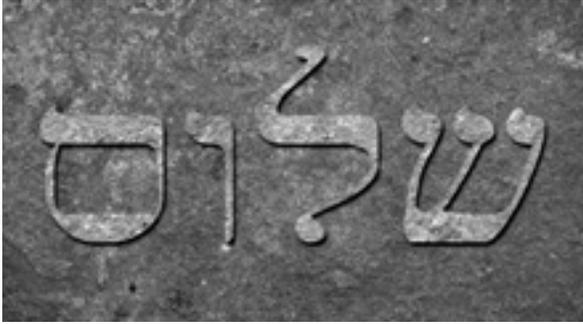
*The Maxims of Ptah-hotep extol such civil virtues as truthfulness, self-control and kindness towards one's fellow beings. Learning by listening to everybody and knowing that human knowledge is never perfect are a running theme. Pictured is Ptah-hotep with a part reproduction of his maxims from Zába, Z.; Les Maximes de Ptahhotep, Éditions de l'Académie Tchecoslovaque des Sciences - Prague, 1956.*

undesirable things while remaining empty in itself. For analogy, to them peace is like darkness. Darkness is only determined by the absence of light or its diminishment. It is not a thing in itself. Any pleasures derived from such a negative peace are like scratching an itch. When the itch is gone, so is the satisfaction that comes from the scratching.

## Lost Meaning

Has peace, in the long course of history, lost some hidden or secret meaning which it once had? Did the word perhaps at one time convey to the ancients a point or principle which has been forgotten with the passing of centuries? The dream of peace, either collectively or as an individual experience, is as old as history. Even to the ancients there appears to have been no general agreement as to the meaning of peace. It was used by them to explain feelings and conditions for which no other words now exist.

Perhaps the earliest reference to peace comes from the Memphite mystery school of Egypt some 4000 years ago. Not far from the Great Pyramid of Khufu was the ancient city of Memphis with the royal cemetery of Saqqara. Memphis at that time was a site of great learning. It is also



The Hebrew word "shalom" meaning "peace" had two other meanings, prosperity and health.

the world's oldest centre of abstract metaphysics. Upon a tablet, which has come down to us from this remote period and from this old city, we find the injunction: "As for him who does what is loved and him who does what is hated, life is given to the peaceful and death to the criminal."

What is emphasised in this age-old teaching is that when we are of a peaceful nature our conduct draws to us the love of other people. To do what is in harmony with other people in society constitutes goodness. The good person then, according to these ancients, is the peaceful one. They neither offend nor do they disturb others by their conduct and, in return for such behaviour, they receive the pleasurable response of the friendship of those they come in contact with. Conversely, the guilty one, according to this ancient injunction, is the one who does what is hated and evokes a commensurate response from others.

**No one could know personal peace, according to the ancients, without first having the love and respect of others.**

Now let us realise that these teachings of some 4,000 years ago were uttered before the use of such words as "good" and "evil." At that time the concept of "peaceful" was construed as the proper moral or ethical conduct for a member of society. The virtuous person of that period was actually called the "peaceful man." Such people made their lives and actions contribute to the happiness of others in society and they responded in turn. Peace seemingly meant mutual satisfaction among people or compatible behaviour. No one could know personal peace, according to the ancients, without first having the love and respect of others. This required them to be useful and accepted members of society. *Ptah-hotep* was a vizier of an ancient Egyptian pharaoh of the 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, Djedkare Isesi, approximately 4,300 years ago. In a book of advice to his son, "The Instruction of Ptah-hotep," an

early piece of Egyptian "wisdom literature," he said: "Be a peacemaker rather than a judge." Here, definitely was an admonishment to the youth of the land that it is far more important to prevent the arising of a conflict than to decide later who is right in the conflict.

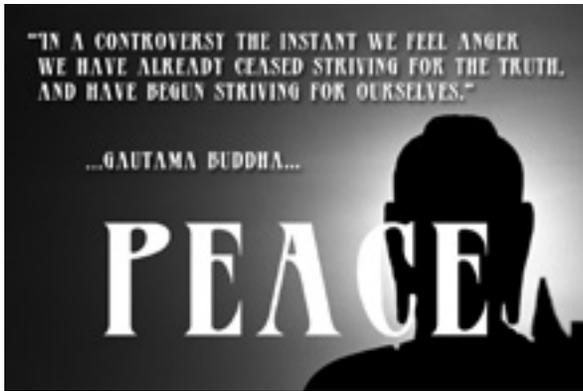
Among the ancient Hebrews, the word "peace" ("shalom") had two original meanings. Principally it meant *prosperity and health*. In fact, a regular ancient form of salutation was: "Peace be unto you." The second use of the word by the Hebrews, and the ancient Egyptians, was psychological. It meant peace of mind and of heart. This signified a state of personal welfare and repose as opposed to unrest and dissatisfaction. By the Hebrews, and the ancient Egyptians, love of peace was considered one of humanity's outstanding virtues. Peace, however, was an attribute which was to be attained by the individual. It wasn't thought to descend upon them from on high like some divine mantel. It was considered an exalted form of conduct which the person acquired. In the Hebrew *Torah*, the name for the divine laws or construction of these laws, there appears this phrase: "By these things is the world preserved, truth, judgement and peace."

## Conflict

We can say that, in the main, the ancients indulged in a sentimental dream of eventual universal peace for all humanity. This principle of peace was conceived as the *avoidance of conflicts* which would disturb society and, of course, disturb the individual's repose. During the height of the Roman Empire, there was the ideal which was expressed as *Pax Romana* or "Roman Peace." But this, in effect, meant an enforced peace by the Romans, a peace as the result of the establishment of a strong empire banding all peoples together. Actually it constituted peace at the point of the sword by conquering people and by subjugating them. According to the Romans, where there was no display



During the height of the Roman Empire, there was the ideal which was expressed as Pax Romana or "Roman Peace." But this, in effect, meant an enforced peace by the Romans.



*The negative concept of peace is well expressed in the Buddhist doctrines. By desiring nothing, by wanting nothing, we retreat from the reality of existence and any distractions that may come from it. We construct our life in such a way that potential conflicts and distractions are lessened.*



*The Stoic philosopher, Seneca (c.1 BCE-65 CE): The Stoics advocated avoidance of distractions.*

among people of any conflict, it was presumed that social and political peace ensued. Nevertheless, as history has disclosed, unrest raged in the hearts of these many conquered peoples.

This engenders the question: Does mere conformity to any prescribed method or regulation constitute peace in itself? Do we experience personal satisfaction and contentment when we're compelled to conform to certain regulations and provisions that have been set up but for which we have no intimate response? As we have seen, emotionally and intellectually we are all different to some extent. That which our reason rejects and which may be

### **Does mere conformity to any prescribed method or regulation constitute peace in itself?**

emotionally displeasing to us never results in a personal peace, regardless of how it may have been legislated by society. Even the ancient Egyptians of forty centuries ago knew that peace had a dual character; it must provide for personal satisfaction as well as for social and political unity.

Too much emphasis has been placed upon peace in the collective sense and from the political point of view. *Peace is really individual* for it is a personal matter primarily. Often it has been considered as merely a system of order and restraint which can be set up legally but, unless individuals experience this peace, it's non-existent to them. In fact, peace is principally a personal construction on the part of every person. It's first necessary that we rid ourselves of any preconceived false notions about peace. Instead let us give it psychological consideration. Let us look at peace empirically, objectively and see how intimately it touches each of us.

## **The Difficulty of Desire**

Human beings are creatures of *desire*. These desires are various inclinations and motivations. These urges compel us to both mental and physical action. Indeed, the state of our being is an active one. For example, the body is nourished by replenishing itself. We are driven to this desire for replenishment by the aggravation, the urges, of our restless appetites. The mind is active through having its consciousness aroused in the form of sensations from which our ideas come. Pleasure, then, is the gratification of both our physical and mental desires.

An excessive indulgence in most of our desires induces just the opposite result. Such excess brings about abnormality and, in its wake, distraction. However, the commonest aggravations which we experience are inadequate satisfactions, those that fall short of fulfilment. They're usually caused by obstructions to some gratification of our desires. This posits the question, and it is an important one:

*Which is the most desired state of living; the positive pleasures which titillate and thrill our senses or the negative pleasures which follow just from avoiding conflicts which aggravate us?*

For analogy, we seek the fragrance of a rose. Yet, in trying to pluck that rose and enjoy its fragrance, we risk pricking our hands on a thorn. Now the question is: Would it be preferable for us to forego the pain caused by the thorn or should we risk it for the pleasure of the scent of the rose?

In general then, *peace is a negative state*. Someone once said: "*It is restfulness of surrendered will.*" In other words, by desiring nothing, by wanting nothing, we retreat from the reality of existence and any distractions that may come from it. We are required to construct our life in such a way



St Thomas Aquinas, the 13<sup>th</sup> century theologian and philosopher, said: "Peace implies two things: first, that we should not be disturbed by external things and second, but that our desires should find rest in one."

that potential conflicts and distractions are lessened; we have run away from life to avoid disturbance.

## Buddhist Viewpoint

The negative concept of peace is well expressed in the Buddhist doctrines. The first sermon of Buddha, the *Dharmachakra Sutra*, followed his great enlightenment under the traditional Bo tree (also known as "Bodhi") in Bodhi Gaya, India. In this sermon Buddha sets forth his famous *Four Noble Truths*.

- The *first* truth, he relates, is that existence is suffering. Birth, disease, decay and death are suffering. Furthermore, to be separated from what we want is suffering and not to get what we want is also suffering
- The *second* of these four truths expounds that craving or desire, called *Karma* by the Buddhists, is the cause of all suffering.
- The *third* truth relates that the cessation or end of suffering is the release from desire.
- The *fourth* or final truth expounds the Eightfold Path by which this freedom from desire is to be attained.

Buddha has been called the world's first psychologist because he makes certain ends in life exist within the mind of humanity instead of in remote places or future periods.

Buddha taught that the notion of "I" or the ego and the word "mine" give rise to the existence of desire. When

we think of *atman* (Sanskrit: self, soul, breath) of the Self as being independent, then we come to identify the body with this Self. Then, humanity has an everlasting love for this Self which it has identified with the body and is forever trying to gratify it. To eliminate desire, according to Buddha, it is necessary to deny the *atman* or deny the individuality of Self. When we think of Self as being separate, we also then conceive something beyond self. According to Buddha, we are ever after disturbed in trying to reconcile this individual self with something that we conceive as beyond it.

The Buddhist doctrine, furthermore, relates that the things of the world which we daily experience have no independence; that is, *there are no particular things as they appear to us through our senses*. Since, then, the Self has no separate reality and the things of the world which the Self desires do not exist independently either, the craving of the Self for them is but a useless illusion, says Buddha. "Put down desire," he exhorts, and thereby attain the state of Nirvana which is a kind of inexplicable peace.

Now, in these doctrines of Buddha, the principal application of will by humanity is to *suppress the desires* for the pleasures of the senses. In doing so it is claimed, humanity will *avoid the conflicts* that come from pursuing these pleasures. Now, needless to say, this cannot be carried out, especially in our Western world, without disrupting human society. However, in a more conservative application it does result in self-control or self-discipline.

## The Stoic View

The ancient Stoics also advocated a negative peace, that is, *withdrawal* from the worldly state of mind. The Stoics, the ancient Greek philosophers and the later Roman school, criticised sensual pleasures as being futile: they considered them as actually resulting in distraction. Seneca, the Roman philosopher, statesman and prominent Stoic, said: "I am seeking to find what is good for man, not for his belly." The Stoics even declared that the emotions are a disease. Compassion, sympathy and pity were thought to be weaknesses. Help another in distress, yes, but do not show

**Suppression of desires will result in the avoidance of conflict.**

those emotions. They took the position that emotions and sensual pleasures centre about desires.

To sum up the Stoic philosophy in connection with peace: *happiness and peace were to be found only in imperturbability*. This is interpreted as avoiding anything that will perturb us, arouse our appetites or our emotions. But this kind of peace is so negative that it robs us of our

dynamic action and initiative. It wouldn't permit us to create anything if such action were to disturb our repose.

Many people also entertain the fallacy that *peace is nothing more than ignorance of the future moment*. We all know people who do not care to plan, who do not wish to look ahead. They don't want to study or acquire any new knowledge. Any such activity to them is disturbing, depriving them of peace of mind. These people are momentarily at peace because they insist on being ignorant of what lies around the corner. Actually, however, these people are not escaping the reality of their existence. Reality eventually overtakes and descends upon them. At that time its effects are far worse because people are not prepared for them. Such a philosophy of peace is like an ostrich burying its head in the sand so it cannot see what is coming its way.



*St Paul referred to peace as "intellectual repose." He described this as "peace in believing." From a mystical point of view, this is the submerging of oneself in some ideal that is in harmony with life's activities and the demands which life makes upon us.*

must be a desire that surpasses all others and is Cosmically inspired. The desire for peace must arise in the depths of the spiritual self. The end of such a desire for peace is not negative. It means more than just avoiding some distraction or conflict. *This desire for peace is positive*. It is the seeking to bring satisfaction to the whole of humanity.

St Paul referred to peace as "*intellectual repose*." He described this as "peace in believing." From a mystical point of view, this is the submerging of oneself in some ideal that is in harmony with life's activities and the demands which life makes upon us. In other words, conceive a mission for your existence, a reason why you are here, and then direct the whole self, not just your mental and physical being, toward that conceived end. You will, of course, as a mortal being, continue to experience certain external distractions and certain rebuffs from the vicissitudes of life. But when you've attained the supreme desire of peace in the spiritual, mystical sense, these rebuffs of life, these distractions, will then be considerably lessened in their effects upon you by the inner certainty and assurance you have attained.

The greatest causes of our anxieties and restlessness are not external forces. The cares and responsibilities that come to us are not necessarily the greatest disturbers of peace. The principal cause of these disturbances which we experience is the feeling of insecurity and the lack of independence which we have at times. When we have an ideal which can be related to our inner self, that is, to the evolved self, we are never too deeply disturbed by things of the world. There is always an inner peace, no matter what the turmoil of the day. Self-confidence is born from an assuring knowledge of our inner harmony and free conscience. These are the first requisites of peace.

Inner peace, then, is the full activity of our whole being. The various disturbances and distractions which we experience are a consequence of insufficiencies of some personal satisfaction. Ignorance is mental starvation; jealousy and envy are emotional starvation; moral degeneration and selfishness amount to starvation of the soul. There is no peace where the self is out of harmony with any source of its supply. *The symbol of personal peace which we should keep in mind is a balanced scale*. It is never a scale at rest but one that is always active. It is the scale of compensation, of adjustment between the objective and subjective worlds, the finite and the infinite and between unity and diversity.

## The View of Aquinas

Mysticism is often declared today to be so abstract, so idealistic, as to be completely opposed to rationalism. In fact, mysticism offers the most cogent and the most plausible approach to individual peace. St Thomas Aquinas, the 13<sup>th</sup> century theologian and philosopher, said: "*Peace implies two things: first, that we should not be disturbed by external things and, second, but that our desires should find rest in one.*"

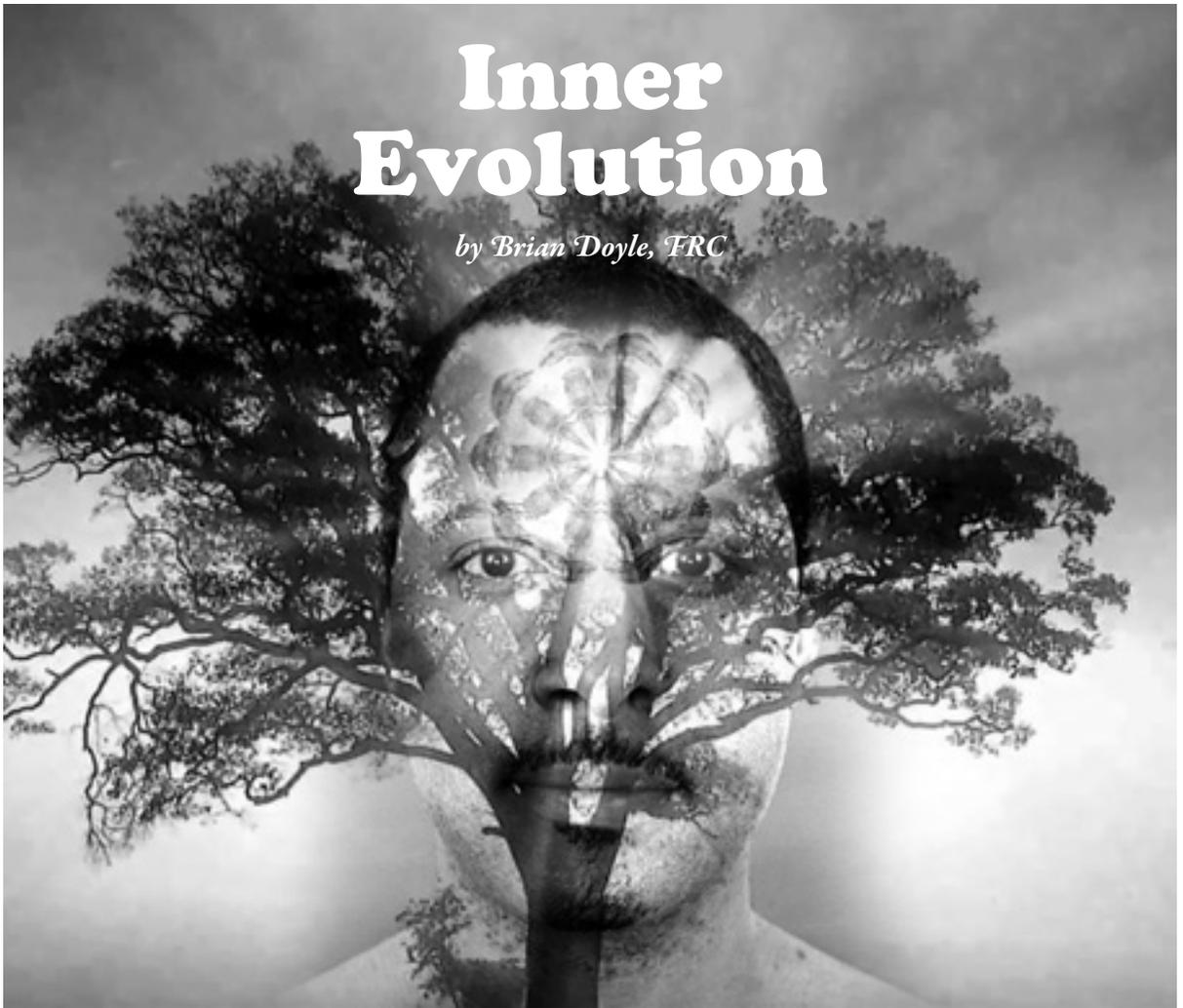
It is the second part of his remarks which is the most important to us. You will note that Aquinas does not deny the existence of desires nor is he critical of the fact that humanity has desires. Rather, he requests that humanity rest its desires in one. Now this we interpret as meaning the *focalising of all our desires*, the merging of them, in some impersonal ideal, some superior, transcendental love that constitutes the one. It is like the drawing of the threads of all our lesser desires, the various aspects of ourselves, together to serve some superior or exalted end. For analogy, the candleholder and the candle and flame are all combined to bring forth light. The candle and its holder and even the flame are finite, they are limited, but the light that comes forth from their combination is infinite in its nature. The light reflects all objects which are exposed to it.

## A Practical Approach

Now *humanity must desire peace* as it desires other things, but this desire for peace must be an all-inclusive one. It

# Inner Evolution

by Brian Doyle, FRC



**W**E ARE THE PRODUCT OF A UNIQUE history. Since the beginning of human evolution, our efforts to protect and evolve ourselves and improve our knowledge of the world around us, to organise community life, to establish laws and a well-ordered society, have all been the subject of a singular tale.

From our Palaeolithic state to modern times, humanity has struggled for survival. In order to maintain its existence, it has faced many tasks and physical trials. We are now born into an organised society, with established laws and modes of living; a superior level has been attained. The struggle for survival now becomes the struggle with ancestral instincts. In the past we have been preoccupied by the domination of our universe. In the future we will have to learn to dominate ourselves, to understand the complexities of our own nature and learn to fulfil our mission as part of humankind. The progress we have made with regard to the world about us has

proven easier to attain than it has been to conquer certain aspects of our behaviour. The conquest of space has taken precedence over the conquest of self.

## A Scientific Age

In modern society there is an emphasis on science and mathematics; the role of applied science and technology has brought changes in the world around us more quickly and more far reaching than ever before. But the territories of the mind await greater exploration for their riches to be discovered.

These scientific discoveries and their application enable us to predict the movements of the planets; it alleviates human suffering and has considerably lessened human effort, lightened our burdens and improved communications. But while we are able to measure the universe, we are still a stranger in much of the world of our own nature.



*The role of applied science and technology has brought changes in the world around us more quickly and far reaching than ever before. But the territories of the mind await greater exploration for their riches to be discovered.*

Why is it then that our knowledge of our environment has grown more quickly than knowledge of ourselves? Our ancestors employed their intelligence to secure food and shelter, to manufacture weapons for fighting and tools for farming, to develop trade and build communities. It would seem that knowledge of the world was immediately more useful to us; our environment demanded conquest of the outer world. Although we believed in the existence of our soul, we neglected to give the same attention and study to our own inner world.

## Our Responsibility

Our common task is to raise our consciousness, namely to approach within our ability the most perfect of human ideals for the purpose of acquiring a more evolved soul through *harmonious* fusion of all human qualities. The promise of this evolution is a superior struggle. If the individual aim identifies itself with others of the human race who similarly aspire to rise above human weaknesses, modern humans will prove they are the archetype of the future race, the ancestor of the spiritually perfect person.

**Knowledge of our environment has grown more quickly than knowledge of ourselves.**

It is the opinion of some leading biologists that evolution on the morphological plane has ceased. The struggle for morality and spirituality has replaced the struggle for life. The knowledge we have gained of the physical world makes it essential that we seriously consider the moral and spiritual implications of our actions.

In the development of the human race, humanity has presented a spectacle which, with a few beautiful and glorious exceptions, has been exceedingly difficult to understand. When we try, we are faced with a dilemma. The source of much of the evil in the world is not from an exterior source, but arises from within ourselves. To eradicate this evil we must learn to neutralise the degrading instincts, as well as the superstitions we harbour, and the misguided ambitions which colour our attitudes. It is not an easy task; it will be acquired only at the cost of personal sacrifice and sustained effort.

The responsibility lies within us. The mystical impulse slumbers, awaiting those capable of transforming it into practical mysticism. It is in tandem with this mystical aspiration and through personal effort that we grow in spiritual stature. The processes of evolution will continue to take us through many trials. To pass through these stages successfully we must fortify ourselves educationally, morally and spiritually. But, for sure, our development is one of high obligation and great opportunity.



*The source of much of the evil in the world is not from an exterior source but arises from within oneself. To eradicate this evil, we must learn to neutralise the degrading instincts...*

# Window of Understanding

by *Loanne Miller*



ONE DAY, WHILE LOOKING through my dining room window, a small object lying in the grass caught my attention. It appeared to be a small animal; in fact, I was sure it was an animal.

However, after moving a little closer to the window to get a better look, I discovered the object was only a piece of crumpled paper that had blown in from somewhere else. As I withdrew my focus I noticed an imperfection in the windowpane which I had never noticed before and realised that looking at the object through the flawed glass had distorted my view enough to lead me to believe in the existence of something which actually had no existence in the form I perceived it.

Reflecting on this I compared the window of the dining room to my “window of understanding,” the understanding of life and the experiences of which it consists. We can move along with seeming little difficulty in perception and understanding until suddenly, just like looking through the flawed window,

something which should be quite clear is distorted.

With no warning, our vision of perception is lacking and our understanding of the situation is blurred to the point that the solution we seek seems impossible. Try as we may, the obstacle looms between us and clarity. More effort put into concentrating upon the situation has no effect toward clarification so long as we continue to view the situation through this flaw; or worse perhaps, when the solution is based on a viewpoint which is distorted. But eventually, if we move a little and see the facts from another angle, the perception clears and the problem can be solved.

We should always be aware of the possibility of flaws creeping into our understanding. They are not always easy to recognise as such and appear so suddenly one is taken by surprise. At the same time we should also realise that others may occasionally be viewing a situation through their own imperfect window, and we should be patient with their understanding. Let them discover their error and correct their view.



HEREAS LIFE IS NOT ALWAYS A PERFUMED rose garden, one can't help but notice how for some, it almost could be. For them, everything seems to flow so harmoniously; and whilst not necessarily materially wealthy, they radiate an inner wealth of happiness and peace which is the envy of all. So how do they do it?

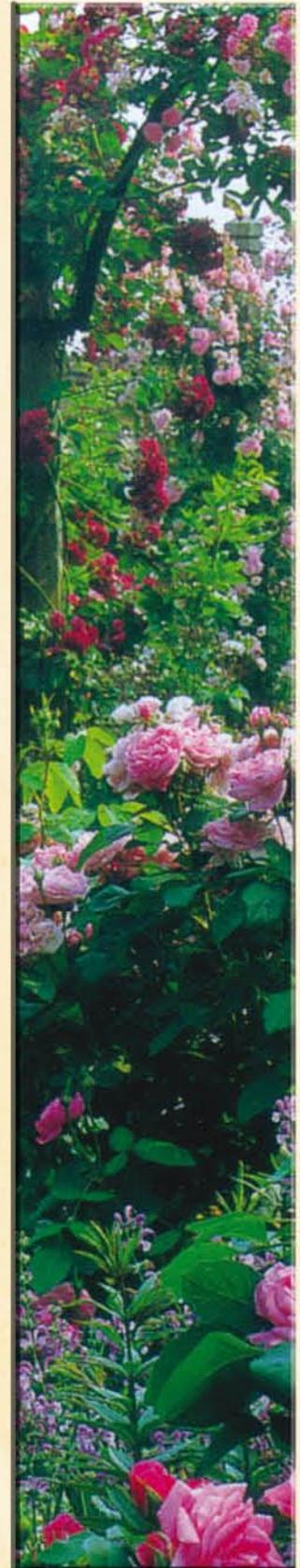
Well, one thing they all seem to have in common is that they long ago dared to take charge of their destiny! Examining *needs* rather than *wants*, and true *values* rather than *passing fads*, such people realised that more than anything else, what they needed to learn was to rely upon their *own insights* rather than those of others, come to their *own conclusions* rather than accept the conclusions of others, and above all, to take their *own decisions* in life and for better or worse, *live with the consequences of their own actions*.

The *Rosicrucian Order* assists people to find within themselves their own, personal "*higher wisdom*," something which exists as a potential in all human beings. Developing this inner understanding can lead to what sages and avatars of all ages have referred to simply as "*Illumination*," a pure state of joy, perfection and achievement beyond our fondest hopes.

Gaining this knowledge and experience is not merely an academic exercise, it is a *series of practical steps* needed in order to gain first proficiency and eventually mastery over our daily thoughts and actions. Instruction in the steps necessary to reach these goals is what the *Rosicrucian Order* has to offer. Its approach to inner development has brought happiness, peace and success into the affairs of thousands of people in the past and you too can benefit from it if you wish.

To find out more about the *Rosicrucian Order* and its unique system of inner development, write to the address below, requesting a *free* copy of the introductory booklet entitled "*The Mastery of Life*." Find out..., it could be the valuable turning point in your life.

Mail to: Rosicrucian Order  
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*Kind hearts are the gardens,  
Kind thoughts are the roots;  
Kind words are the flowers,  
Kind deeds are the fruits.*

*Take care of your garden  
And keep out the weeds;  
Fill it with sunshine,  
Kind words and kind deeds,*

*-- H W Longfellow (1807-1882) --*