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MYSTICISM - SCIENCE - THE ARTS

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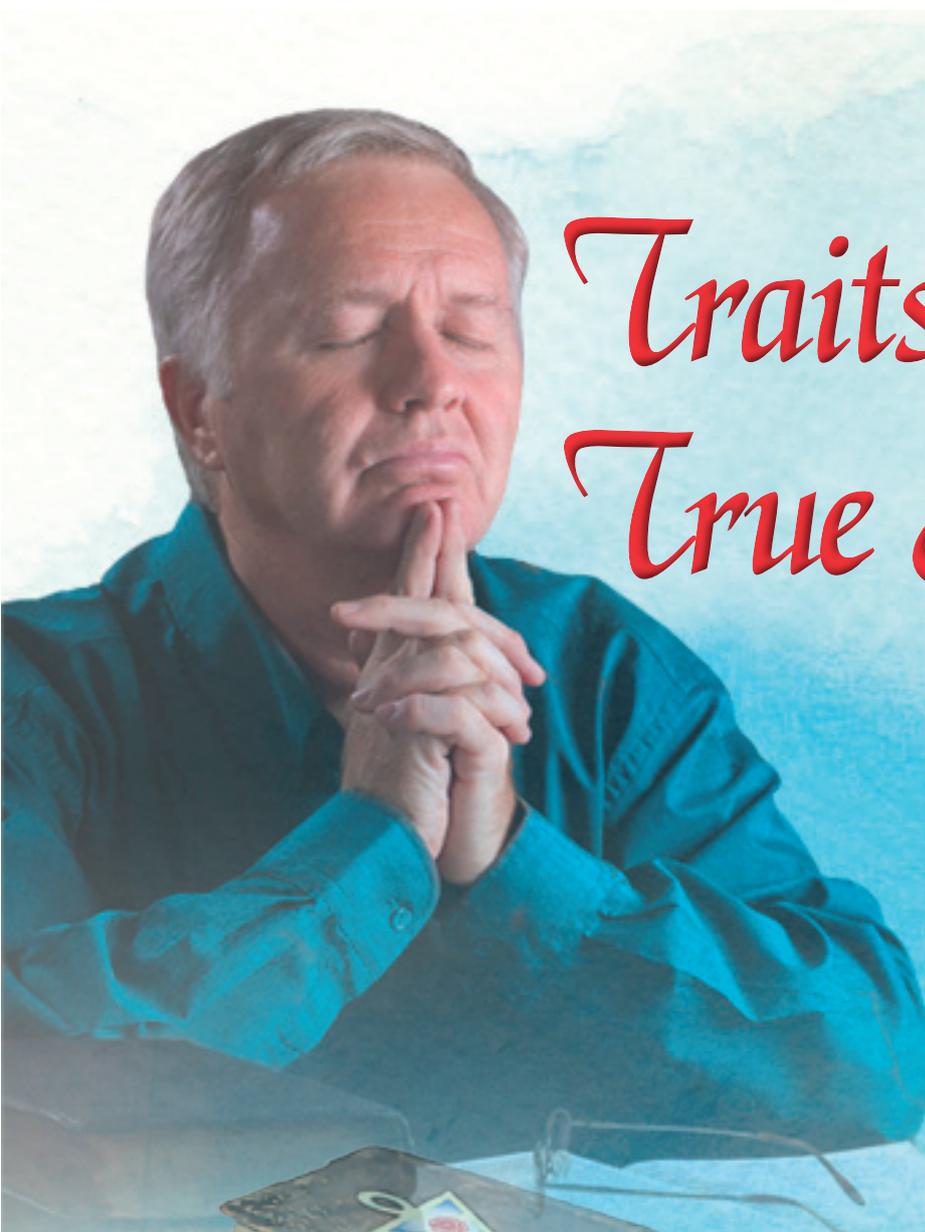
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Traits of a True Mystic



Grand Master's Message

by **Sven Johansson**

Grand Master of the English Grand Lodge for Europe, the Middle East and Africa

TO THE MASSES HE WAS known as 'Jesus the carpenter's son' and for many he was believed to be nothing less than the one and only 'son of God'. To his closest disciples however, this great master may not have been known so much as the only begotten son of God, an extraordinary human being with deep spiritual insight, great intellect, great power and compassion, but a person overshadowed with a holiness that surpasses all understanding.

Jesus had undoubtedly attained a high degree of spiritual maturity and wished to spread his insights and wisdom to as wide an audience as possible..., he exhorted others to follow his example of living a life of spiritual devotion to an almost impossibly high level, challenging them to do better and greater things than he. In the two millennia since he lived, he has been regarded by millions as the ultimate mystic of mystics from whom thousands of millions the world over have derived comfort, inspiration and even a reason for living.

Although the Christian gospels continue to inspire millions to live better lives, the details we can glean from them give us only a very broad outline of what the traits of a true mystic really are. Wide reading and research elsewhere is therefore essential in order to fill in the gaps; for there have been several other highly advanced mystics living within the sometimes suffocation

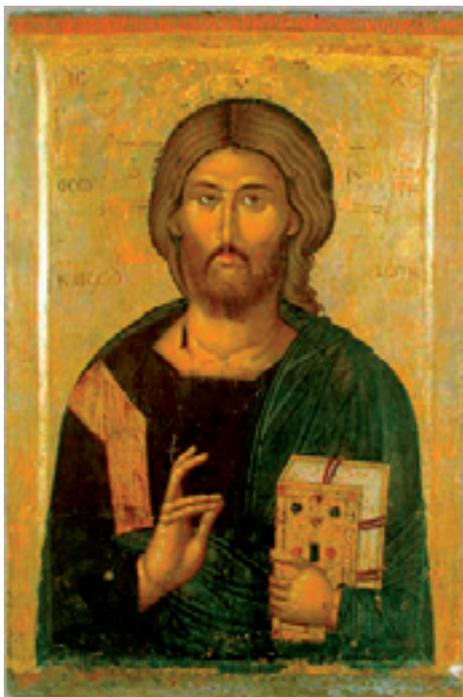
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boundaries of almost every religious faith there is. Some of these individuals, both men and women, have left us clues as to how, without leaving their religious faiths, they escaped the shackles of their confinement and incorporated into their lives the universal traits of a true mystic.

Great mystics lived before Jesus, many have lived after him, and even in our own era it is certain that some will be alive today. A mystic therefore does not necessarily have to be a Christian, Muslim, Jew, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Jain or Shinto, indeed need not belong to any religious faith..., for a mystic transcends all attempts at labelling as he or she privately communes in the stillness of the heart, in a direct and unimpeded manner with the God of his or her highest understanding. There is no mediation, no third party involved, no high priest, no pope, no imam, no rabbi..., only the mystic and God. And let us be clear, mystics are not restricted to the male gender as is commonly portrayed in old scriptures; there have been and are today as many accomplished women mystics as there have ever been male mystics from any era.

Mysticism Misunderstood

Like 'meditation' the word 'mysticism' is greatly misunderstood. To some it evokes ideas of occult practices, incantations and 'strange goings on', and to a great many it is equated with the weird, the strange, the spooky, the unexplained. How sad it is that such misunderstanding exists, for mysticism is nothing less than our deepest quest for self knowledge. It is a self knowledge through which men and women of good will can have glimpses of their most sublime concepts of Good. Note that I did not say 'concepts of God', for there are some who do not accept that there exists a power, force or intelligence greater than anything



In the two millennia since Jesus lived, he has been regarded by millions as the ultimate mystic of mystics from whom thousands of millions the world over have derived comfort, inspiration and even a reason for living.

(Jesus Christ Saviour and Life Giver, Metropolitan John the icon-painter, 1384, Museum of Macedonia, Skopje.)

a sentient being can conceive. Therefore, the intellectual notion of a higher form of 'Good', as in good human morals, good human virtues, decent human behaviour, fairness in our interaction with all living things, justice towards all creatures, good political governance, etc...,

this more than suffices for such people as ideals to strive for.

But even if such ideals lack some of the 'heart' and depth that a belief in a personal God can have, we are never in a position to justifiably criticise anyone for the manner in which they find and pursue 'Good' in life. We should be very slow to judge others, for the labels we use to describe some of the really important things that move us and affect our lives differ from culture to culture, even though the experiences we have of those things, and which are symbolised by so many different words, are in their essence all ultimately the same!

Mysticism answers age-old questions such as: What am I? Why am I here? What is my purpose in life? But these and many other questions are probably not uppermost in the minds of most people; for the mundane business of just 'getting on with life' is such a powerful and all-absorbing task, that one can be excused at times for asking 'who's got time for this?' Yet, if you or I could be a fly on the wall in the private life of each and every person in the world, even for just a month, we would soon realise that by far the majority of them have moments of reflection where deeper existential questions most definitely arise. We cannot help but be nagged occasionally by the whole issue of our existence. Why are we here?

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What are we supposed to be doing? What is our ultimate purpose? The list goes on and on, and we know full well that we do not have all the answers..., yet!

A Mystic Defined

According to Rosicrucian philosophy, a mystic can be defined as “one who communes with the God of his or her realisation..., directly, deliberately, frequently and with confidence, in an all-absorbing, whole-being experience.” For many others though, a mystic is not so much a person in tune with a personal concept of God, as a person with extraordinary powers, of a virtuous character perhaps..., deep and mysterious, and with powerful psychic abilities. The Rosicrucian mystic certainly embraces these and many other qualities, but they are not ends in themselves, merely consequences of the manner in which the mystic’s life is governed while keeping in sharp focus the main task, namely, an ever closer

“A mystic can be defined as one who communes with the God of his or her realisation...”

union with his or her highest concept of God, and a constant striving for purity of purpose and sanctity.

Many Rosicrucians are already accomplished mystics; but equally as many have not yet reached that stage and are merely aspiring to become mystics. Becoming a true mystic is a lifelong Rosicrucian task, but one that sometimes takes more than a single life can accomplish. Certainly the wish and life goal of every Rosicrucian is to one day become a true and accomplished mystic in every sense of the word.

As far as Rosicrucians are concerned, there is nothing more worthwhile in life than to persist in their struggles to remain true to the high

principles they have adopted as a deliberate strategy of discovering their true selves. Personally I think there is no better objective for which to sacrifice everything; for without this quest and the chance of reaching that ultimate goal of complete mastery of the Inner Self over the passions and childish actions of the Outer Self, there is little else of value to strive for.

In their individual quests, they are of course tempted, tested and buffeted about like all ordinary people. But precisely because they are aspiring mystics, they are tested just that much more than others. And specifically they are tempted to use their growing powers and special understanding for selfish rather than universal and selfless purposes. This is an ever present danger and as true mystics everywhere know, the easy path, the path that takes no account of personal failings, the path that does not test one in conditions where true weaknesses can be revealed..., that path may in some circumstances lead to quick and spectacular results, but at the same time may also lead to unbearable instability, unhappiness and eventually complete ruin. Every accomplished mystic can take such a path and use



◀ We cannot help but be nagged occasionally by the whole issue of our existence. Why are we here? What are we supposed to be doing? What is our ultimate purpose?

mental and psychic powers for personal, selfish gain. But for the many that have done so, the personal costs were never worth it.

Greater Challenges for Mystics

Aspiring or accomplished mystics are almost certainly tested with more challenging situations than people who care little about their inner growth; for mystics actively attempt to live by a higher law, and the demands of that higher law naturally imply the need for greater precision in personal thoughts, words and deeds. There is no escaping it, as our ability to choose is increased we are presented with ever more choices. And with more choices comes the need for greater powers of discretion. With a broad perspective of the world, the mature mystic can foresee the pitfalls of life long before becoming trapped in them. And whatever evasive action is needed can be taken before disaster strikes.

Mystics are generally more creative than ordinary people. More calculated risks are taken, deeper investigations are made. Experiments, exercises and the seeking out of the mysteries of existence are carried out with greater vigour and creativity than others. Mystics are deliberate in their actions and plan carefully in a way that attracts to them optimal learning experiences. And, like mature students who need no tutors to encourage them to study, true mystics will study their place in life and their reactions to it with purpose and deliberation without having to be asked to, indeed without any special encouragement from anyone. Mystics have their own inner motivation to go on against all the odds; for an inner certainty reassures them that they are on the right path and need only persevere long enough in order to achieve success.

They are active, curious and interested in many things, but also run into more obstacles, more frustrations and more opposition to their plans. As it has often been described, this is the

‘straight and narrow’ path, but a path strewn in parts with boulders that have to be removed by the sweat of one’s own brow. Yet if we consider ourselves to be true mystics, or at least if we aspire to become true mystics, this is our only true path to perfection, and one from which we may not deviate, not even for a moment’s relief.

The technique of development that true mystics practise does however carry with it certain safeguards against defeat. They are protected in a way that ordinary people are not, for they are part of an *égrégoire* or collective group consciousness of psychic protection precisely because of their devotion to transcendent ideals that are common to the ideals of many others of high spiritual and moral values. And under the umbrella protection of those safeguards, they ease themselves slowly and with full understanding into lives on a higher plane. Although such mystics live in the here and now in material reality, and are governed by the same physical constraints as all other people, their true focus is on something immaterial and inward. Their single, most important goal is not of this world, but of a transcendent state of being far beyond the hustle and bustle of everyday life; and this they pursue above all else.

“Patience, tolerance and above all fortitude in the face of setbacks, are key elements of the mystic way.”

Developing on a Broad Front

The key to the successful evolution of a mystic lies in the great stability that comes from concurrently developing the entire being (inner and outer) on a broad front; never exclusively in one or two areas alone. Patience, tolerance and above all fortitude in the face of setbacks, are key elements of the mystic way. Slowly, steadily and securely, for as long as they follow the dictates of the higher laws of nature that they have invited into their lives, their unique paths to perfection are revealed to them, and obstacles to their progress are removed.

True mystics have the experience of many

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incarnations to give them the strength and courage needed to go on against all odds. They know they are on the right path, for they see the results of their abiding devotion to their transcendent ideal. Their concepts of a Supreme Reality or God is ever before them and weekly and sometimes daily, changes for the better are taking place within them. Humble though their circumstances may be, they find peace, happiness and fulfilment that few others can honestly say they have attained. Their focus is on the goal, their hearts are with their God, and their paths lead straight to that ultimate of all states of existence, Illumination, or as Rosicrucians have called it in the past, the 'state of the Rose-Croix'.

The Essential Virtues of a True Mystic

With the spiritual maturity they have gained, they have learned the value of applying to their daily living certain commonsense 'virtues' to shield them from some of the more obviously wasteful and unnecessary struggles and temptations that most people are faced with.

And it is by putting these virtues into practice that they fortify and prepare themselves for the challenges that their karma dictates they must eventually face up to and overcome. The virtues they practise are not religious or moral allegories, but down-to-earth practical actions that have both long-term and immediate beneficial consequences. So what then are the essential virtues of a true mystic?

First: Love and Compassion

First and foremost of the virtues is a deep and abiding love and compassion for all things in Creation. People of low character will enter and exit the life of every mystic, just as mystics are sometimes graced by the presence of good people too. But through it all, they love them equally, just as a good father loves his children, whether they are well-behaved or not, whether they are bright or dim-witted, and whether they love him in return or not.

Mystics can sense the faults and weaknesses of others, and they realise which lessons such people have yet to learn. Armed with that knowledge, their compassion for the struggles of such people comes to the fore, and they surround them deliberately and purposefully with the spiritual Light of their beings and do all they can to assist them to understand the full extent of their plight. Such people may not know the mystics who are helping them. Indeed they may not care one whit about their welfare, or even be grateful for the assistance they are receiving. But true mystics still silently hope and pray for the day that those they are helping, and especially those who are particularly malicious among them, will find the door that leads to their personal paths to perfection.

True mystics neither gossip nor engage in thoughts, words or actions that are intended to bring harm to others. Whatever harm they cause through clumsiness or inexperience, they immediately go about setting things right, even if doing so takes the rest of their lives. Their every act is in the interests of harmony, and they conduct themselves accordingly. Their love is freely given; it is outgoing and unasked for. They serve for the love of service, without thought of recompense. But their greatest and most overpowering love is for their Creator. However they perceive it, God is the closest, most helpful and intimate companion they have, the only one who is at their side at all times, though especially during their most difficult moments. With clarity and understanding they concur with the exhortation of the Old Testament authors and the master Jesus when



they said: "Love God with all your heart, with all your might and with all your understanding."

Second: Gratitude and Humility

The second group of virtues are gratitude for all that life brings (both good and bad) and humility in accepting whatever 'fate' decrees. True mystics cannot help but feel humbled before the magnificence of Creation; for the more they learn of its intricate perfection and symmetry, the more they become aware of their utter insignificance in the broader scheme of things.

Because of their humility, they are therefore always ready to listen, always ready to learn, both from the meek and humble as well as from the arrogant and powerful; for lessons come from all quarters and at all times, and those with humility accept it from wherever it arises. Class distinction and privilege has no place with the law of Karma, and true mystics know full well that their most important lessons could equally come from the sewers of poverty and deprived lives as they could come from the stench of wealth and waste.

Without humility, many an opportunity of learning is lost. No person is so lowly or so unworthy that something could not be learned from them. Similarly, no person is so arrogant, high and mighty that a mystic could not learn lessons from them too. A true mystic never takes offence, even under the gravest, most intimidating and unjust of circumstances. For taking offence or harbouring feelings of hurt constitute the most serious and damaging error of all; and against this the mystic remains constantly alert. Yet, should they, despite their best attempts at retaining their composure, still succumb, and if the harsh treatment they receive causes them to stumble briefly and lash out in revenge, they are quick to regain their composure, rise up, stand erect and correct their error immediately. And then with a spring in their stride and gratitude for the experience, they continue on their path, unperturbed and unencumbered by the past.

Their humility manifests as gratitude for all that passes their way. Everything that happens



to them, whether pleasant or unpleasant, they accept gratefully as a part of their essential learning experience. They know how short life is, and how soon their learning experiences on earth will be over. And so, with gratitude and humility, they accept all that life brings them, both good and bad, and daily thank the God of their realisation for the experiences and lessons that come their way.

Third: Justice and Karma

The third virtue is a firm conviction that justice always prevails in the end and karma is an inescapable law of life. True mystics know that they reap only what they themselves have sown. With confidence, they view no action ever in personal terms but as manifestations of the great lessons they are meant to learn through the operation of the inviolable law of compensation, the law of karma.

Even if their limited time on earth may not be long enough to see the full operation of this law, they have unshakeable confidence that the law is universally just and serves the best interests of all living creatures. True mystics cooperate with the law of karma eagerly and with enthusiasm. And if they know there is a need to answer for something they have done or for something they should have done, they do all they can to compensate for their error and bring on the learning process of karmic compensation as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

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At all times and under all circumstances, true mystics are just in their thoughts, words and deeds. And they therefore mete out their responses to life carefully and with thought; for they know that no matter what a person may do in trying to escape the operation of this inviolable law, the full impartiality and severity of its operation will eventually manifest.

They therefore abide by the principles of justice to the best of their ability and make their judgements only in fair and equitable ways. The Cosmic contains all things, knows all things, experiences all things..., and true mystics judiciously weigh the arguments of both sides in any controversy before taking action in the best interests of all. They know they are not always deciding between right and wrong, but rather between two partial views of a single truth, like two observers looking at the same landscape, the one sunlit under a blue sky, the other lit only by moonlight. Both describe the same landscape but through different conditions of light and understanding. Both speak sincerely from their limited understanding and conditions, and both are therefore 'right' as far as their inner development permits.

Without the compensatory laws and impartial justice of the law of karma, there can be neither order nor peace, and Cosmic Law with its inherent universal justice for all, is openly invited to operate in the life of every true mystic, severe as that law may at times be.

Fourth: Discretion

The fourth virtue is that of discretion. True mystics are always discreet and never flaunt their powers or wisdom, even though these may be considerable. Those who flaunt what they know or use their powers ostentatiously to impress others, certainly have neither true wisdom nor real power, and are on a fast-track to perdition.

There are always those who claim to have

unusual powers, who claim to walk with Cosmic Masters, or to be specially chosen by them for elite tasks. Many claim to be messengers of God, but do not practise even the most basic of virtues they preach. The internet is filled with such fraudsters, some extremely wealthy and plausible sounding, but they must not be heeded. Their ends are for personal glory and financial benefit exclusively and are not even worthy of being called *aspiring* mystics, even though they may have accomplished a great deal in the past and may have accumulated great psychic powers.

True mystics are known by their writings, their words and, above all, their deeds. With silence, sensitivity and discretion, they pass through life much as a gentle breeze can be felt but not seen. For most of us, they are the gentle souls we know, respect and can trust with anything. But

for accomplished mystics like themselves, they are like rods of Light of intense and scintillating brilliance, acting purposefully with speed and efficiency, and

always entirely in secret in the interests not only of their own inner evolvment but especially in the interests of the inner lives of as many other beings as they can.



These are four virtues of a true mystic. While certainly not the only ones, they are the most obvious and important ones we can use to recognise a mystic's true credentials. If any person you know does not possess all four qualities in abundance, then you can be sure he or she is not yet a true mystic. The most we can say about such a person, is that he or she may be an aspiring mystic, a neophyte perhaps who may be seeking all that true mystics seek, but who has not yet reached that point of ignition where something within fires up like the rocket engines of a spaceship and launches the inner life onto its definitive journey to self mastery and human perfection on earth.

"True mystics are known by their writings, their words and, above all, their deeds."

Meeting Life's Challenge

by A W Sasha

LIFE IS CHALLENGING and has its problems. It presents within us and around us, desires, obstacles and requirements urging us to do something constructive. But what might that be? Our answer determines our success or failure, joy, grief, suffering, happiness. To think otherwise would result in our being ruled by mere passions, haphazard suggestions, even in our becoming consciously or unconsciously mere tools of impulse. No problem is ever really solved unless we do something constructive about it. As like produces like; so nothing creates nothing.

Easily fatigued people often suggest that it is alright to rest on one's oars once in a while. Maybe, but the 'while' should be short. Life refuses to give vitality to inactivity, letting it harbour decay that ultimately brings about death.

In choosing something constructive, we must take into full account the responsiveness of our energies. No matter what goals we set before us if they bring forth no response within us, leave us cold and uninterested, do not engage our creative faculties; then no effective action will be forthcoming.

Human adaptability has limits, and even the most effective 'self-discipline' can never hope to approximate what the directed free play of innate powers can attain. To make the most of life, one should engage in such activities as will bring forth increasing energies, inspiration, a satisfying sense of harmonious living and ever-expanding perspectives.

This might be interpreted as a form of waiting for inspiration and doing nothing



unless it comes; but the truth is that genuine inspiration is always at our disposal in proportion as we harmonise and acknowledge our innate inclinations. Such directing of our energies in our present state of evolutionary development may as yet not be attainable in full, but life brings its rewards in proportion to our aspirations. The inspiration for a task creates its own rules.

The idea that it is better to do nothing than to do evil is a seemingly plausible sophistry which fashions truth into a falsehood. Refraining from doing evil creates no necessity for doing nothing; it is a loaded implication, immobilising energies which otherwise might be turned from evil to good.

Content and Method

In every activity, the content and method are interlinked. Each requires fitness to the other. Method and goal have a common direction; if they contradict, they exclude. The method of attaining an ideal must be of the same nature as the ideal itself. This is why liberty can never be attained by the practice of tyranny; love never won by hate; peace by war; freedom by oppression. This is not a matter of whether 'the end justifies the means' but of whether the right end is ever attainable by the wrong means.

So much must the nature of what we seek to attain determine the nature of how we seek it,

that the moment a writer, for instance, begins to pay more attention to how to write than to what to write, he begins to drift away from realities. His phrases may be sweetly polished but lacking in substance and mental nutriment.

It is so also with the artist who places technique above content; the salesperson who gives more attention to how to sell than to what to sell; the educator who emphasises the 'how' more than the 'what' to teach; the builder who thinks more of how to build than what to build. Without the priority of content, all how-to-do-it-wisdom becomes a distressing fatuity. Technical knowledge and developmental skill are necessary tools, of course, but even the best plough will accomplish nothing ploughing the ocean; nor can anything grow from dead seeds.

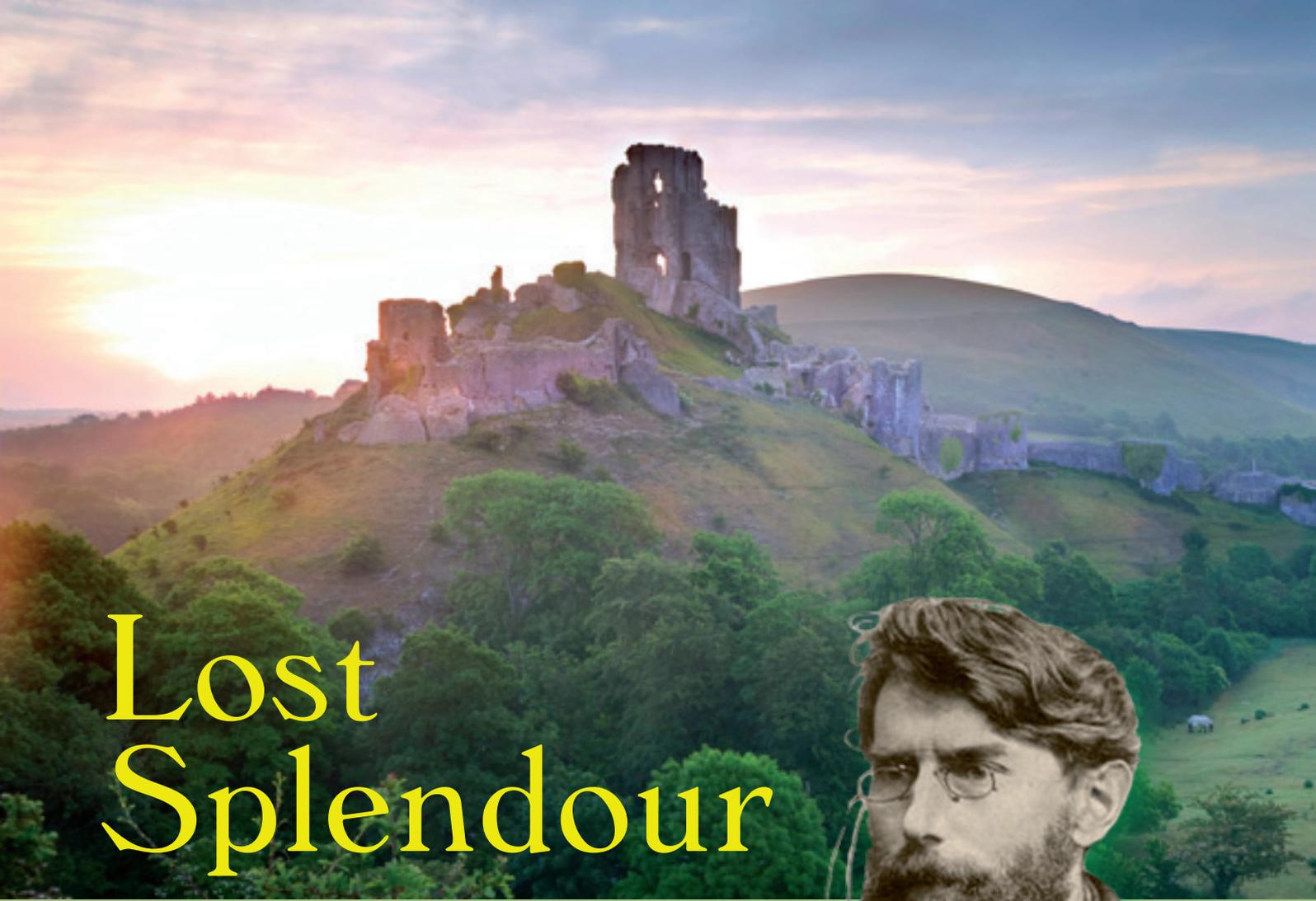
The sciences and arts can serve as sparks to ignite one's inner fire, as openers of new perspectives or as spurs to fitting directions, but they cannot impart the unique and individual understanding which that burning inner experience can open up; only then can creativity enter.

All rules, of course, have their exceptions. The power of life can vitalise inner experiences and open new doors to the worlds of endless light. However, there is only one rule which appears never to have any exceptions: In proportion as we seek discriminating insights into the correct laws of life as it unfolds (even in its paradoxical challenges) so will we discern fitting answers.

“If you wish success in life, make ‘perseverance’ your bosom friend, ‘experience’ your wise counsellor, ‘caution’ your elder brother, and ‘hope’ your guardian genius.”

Joseph Addison (1672-1719)
English essayist, poet, playwright and politician



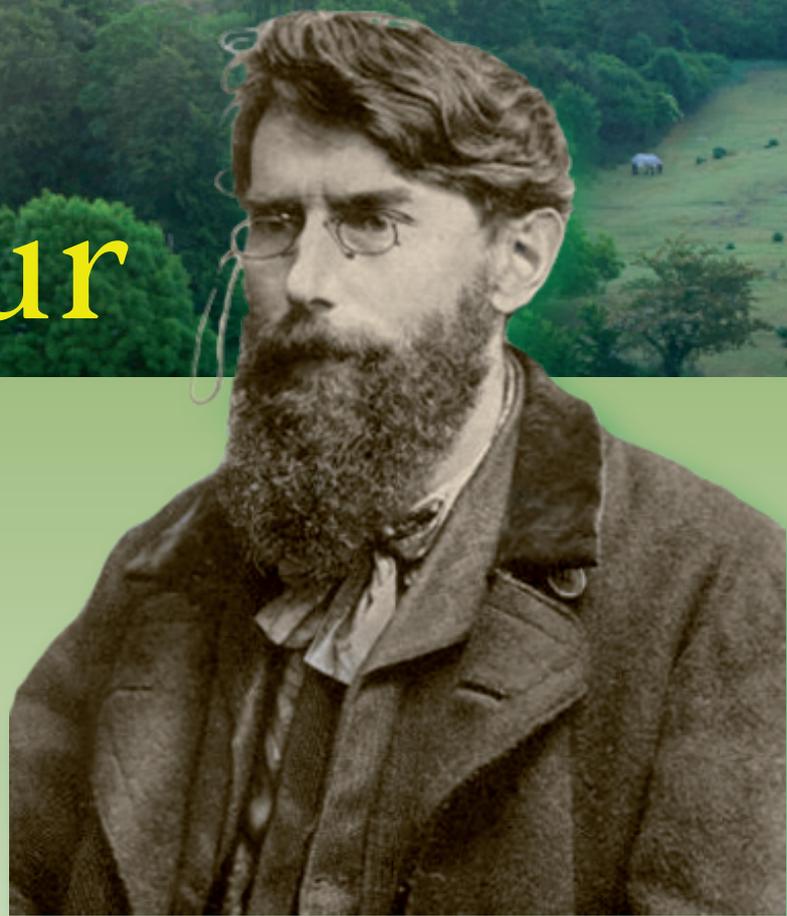


Lost Splendour

Visions of the Irish Mystic George William Russell

INVARIABLY AT THE END of each historical epoch, there comes a great upheaval. It would seem that the Cosmic¹ endows certain races with certain powers and watches to see how they use those great gifts. If for good, the power remains; if perverted, the power is taken away and bestowed elsewhere.

Although great political upheavals occasionally occur to set matters right, it is obvious that the Cosmic is principally concerned only with our spiritual welfare, in the progress of our Real Self. This is very evident in the way all truly creative artists work. Their creations, whether in music, philosophy, poetry or paintings, appeal to our Inner Being, stir its smouldering spark once more into flame, giving us a renewed desire for higher knowledge, for hidden wisdom and an incentive to attain it.



by William McKegg

The entire 19th century was one of Romance. It was an era of music, art and literature. It aroused the dormant senses and prepared us for what the present time has brought us. After almost a hundred years of inspired creations, by which the Inner Being was aroused, it was heard at the close of the period, the approach of the new age. Many writers, poets and artists sprang into notice,

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revealing in their respective works great truths that aroused the minds of the masses.

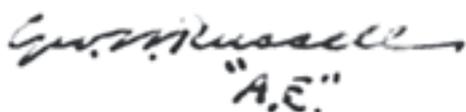
In Ireland, this heraldic note was discerned in the writings of a group of intellectuals headed by Lady Gregory and William Butler Yeats, who formed a literary society and established the Irish National Theatre in Dublin, from which later sprang the famous Abbey Theatre. The writers and poets of the 'Celtic Renaissance' restored to the minds of the people of Ireland the legends and mystic lore of old which were being crushed and forgotten by materialism.

However, one person stood out from the rest. He was George William Russell, known over the world as the poet and artist 'A.E.'. An illuminated mystic, he possessed cosmic knowledge for which his poetic and artistic talents were but material mediums. His paintings awakened and stirred the senses of all who beheld them and his mystic poems spoke to the soul.

Early Days

Russell was born in Lurgan, County Armagh, in 1867. A poor boy and mostly self-educated, he started out in life as a clerk in an accountant's office in Dublin and joined the Irish Agricultural Society in 1897. During his spare time he wrote poetry. Though he painted for his own amusement, he did not take his painting seriously until he was about forty, and even then regarded himself as an amateur artist. Nevertheless, he reveals in each talent vast truths, that is, our strivings to return to the Ancestral-Self, visions of another world, the Light of which turns the light of this world to gloom. He portrays the spirits of the ancestral gods of Finn and Cuchulainn and Ossian, the Great Heroic Ones of Irish legends, now dwelling in Tirnan-Og, the Land of Immortal Youth.

His adoption of 'A.E.' as a nom de plume came about in a startling manner. While still a young man, around 1888 and spending some



time in the country, he had painted a picture of the 'First Man'; a picture full of mystical meaning, but he could not think of a title for it.

"Something ancient and eternal seemed to breathe through my fancies. I asked myself what legend I would write under the picture. Something beyond reason held me, I felt like one who is in a dark room and hears the breathing of another creature, and himself waits breathless for its utterance, and I struggled to understand what wished to be said, and at last, while I was pre-naturally dilated and intent, something whispered to me: 'Call it the Birth of Aeon.' The word 'Aeon' thrilled me, for it seemed to evoke by association of ideas, moods and memories most ancient, out of some ancestral life where they lay hidden."

One day back in Dublin, Russell went to the library at Leinster House to ask for an art journal. While waiting for the librarian to get it for him, his gaze fell on a book lying open on a table nearby. The first word in it to catch his eye was 'Aeon', a name used by the Gnostics to designate the first created being...

"I trembled through my body. I trembled because I was certain I had never heard the word before, and there rushed into my mind the thought of pre-existence and that this was memory of the past. I believed then, and still believe, that the immortal in us has memory of all its wisdom, or as Keats puts it in one of his letters, there is an ancestral wisdom in men, and we can if we wish, drink that

old wine of heaven. This memory of the spirit is the real basis of imagination, and when it speaks to us, we feel truly inspired and a mightier creature than ourselves speaks through us."

Plato said that the soul, when coming down to earth from the Ancestral-Self to inhabit a body, flashes across the universe in a chariot of golden fire, and during that heavenly ride sees, knows and hears all things. The keynote to memory for every soul born in life is in the imagination; and from imagination spring all creations.

Meditations

From an early age A.E. had been stirred inwardly by the loving mystery of the Earth Mother. He discovered that just as there is a divine image within each body, so too is there an essence of divinity within nature. Several experiences had made him aware that this was so, and he realised that there was an Inner Being within him. By developing the latent powers of what he called his 'Real Self' he could become a possessor of Nature's secrets, see into the 'Many-Coloured World' and maybe even see beyond into the highest World of all. He began to stir his psychic senses, meditating and allowing his Real Self to function. In this he persisted and finally achieved results. He states, describing an early experience around 1887:

"I felt a fiery heart throb and knew it was personal and intimate. It started with every sense dilated and intent, and turned inwards, and I heard first a music like bells going away, away into that wonderful trader-land whither, as legend relates, the Danaan gods withdrew [see endnote 2]. Once, suddenly, I found myself on some remote plain or steppe, and heard unearthly chimes, pealing passionately from I know not what far steeples.

"One day, drawn by some inner impulse to meditate at an unusual hour, I found quick oblivion of the

'The Bather' signed with initials 'AE'
Oil on canvas, 40.5 by 54cm.



body. I rose through myself and suddenly I felt as if I had awakened from a dream. Where was I, and in what city? Here were hills with glittering temples and the ways, so far as I could see, were thronged with most beautiful people, swaying as if shaken by some ecstasy running through all, as if the Dark Hidden Father was breathing rapturous life within His children."

A.E. delved into the mystical philosophy of the East and later formed and became head of the Hermetic Society in Dublin, gathering with some friends in a shabby room at night after a day's hard work.

Painting and Poetry

He painted many pictures but he never allowed any of his pictures to be sold for a high price. He often let wonderful creations go for mere trifles, even giving some away. He affirmed that a poor man who sees the Truth in any work of his should be given as much chance as a rich man to purchase it. Many of these hung in his home in Dublin. Cornelius Weygandt, in *Irish Plays and Playwrights* (1913), speaks of them:

"The pictures are of Irish landscape; of the 'Other People', of heroes and heroines of Ireland's prehistoric days; of souls that have yet to be born; of souls that have passed through incarnation after incarnation, never to rise above an animal



'Mystical Figures' signed with initials 'AE'.
Oil on canvas, 40.6 by 53.3cm.

[Retrieved from: http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=5197133]



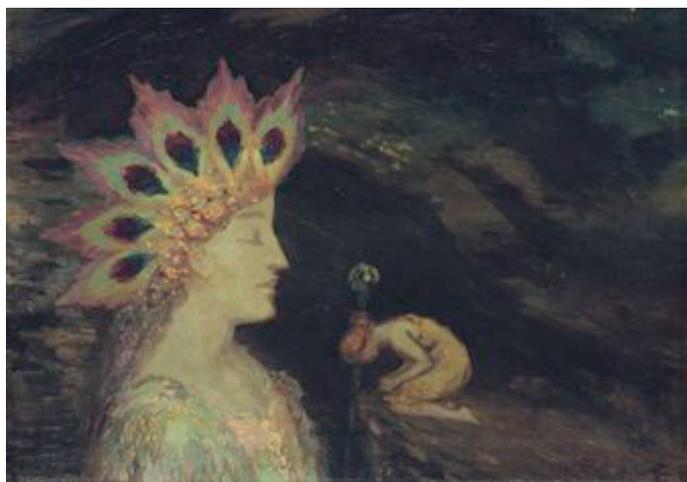
existence; of souls whose every rebirth has taken them to higher spirituality and that now wait to pass along the path of liberation into that of immortality from which they shall never be born again. These visions came to him as the visions whose presence he recorded in his poetry, in all places, as he left the office and looked down the sun-gilded street at close of day, as he wandered in the mountains under the stars with peasants who had 'second sight'; as he talked with fellow Hermeticists in meeting-rooms in back streets whose shabby interiors grew rosy gloom as the talk turned on mysteries."

Imaginative Art

As with his friend the Irish poet W.B. Yeats (1865-1939), A.E. was an ardent admirer of William Blake (1757-1827), the great poet and artist. In fact, his own mystic paintings compare with those of Blake, just as those of Blake in their time had a resemblance in style to Raphael and Michelangelo, whose works he in turn venerated. Like Blake, A.E. never used models, claiming that his own imagination afforded him all he required to produce on canvas. He could 'place'

Russell was an ardent admirer of William Blake who during his life developed an attitude of revolt against authority, combining political belief and visionary ecstasy.

Largely unrecognized in life Blake was later held in high renown for his for his expressiveness and creativity, and for the philosophical and mystical undercurrents within his work.



an imaginative group of people and move their positions until the desired effect was achieved. Of this, he says:

"There may be a figure sitting down and I think it would compose better if it was turned in another direction, and that figure will obey my suggestion, not always, but at times it will; and again and again when I, who paint almost entirely from what is called imagination and who never use models, watch a figure in my vision [and] it will change its motions as I will it."

Imaginative art is the gift of every true artist and can be obtained only when the artist is himself a mystic and can reveal to its viewer the 'Real' in nature, instead of imitating the 'Unreal' like a photographer. As a young boy A.E. beheld the 'Real' and throughout his life attempted to disclose its revelations to others.

"I have sought to paint landscape as if it had no other existence than as an imagination of the Divine Mind; to paint man as if his life overflowed into that imagination and to paint the Sidhe² as mingling with his life, the unity of God and man and nature in one single being; an almost impossible idea to convey in paint."

On another occasion he remarks:

"If I rightly understand our mission and our destiny, it is this: to restore to other men the sense of that invisible; that world of our immortality. As

Star Teachers

EVEN as a bird sprays many-coloured fires,
The plumes of paradise, the dying light
Rays through the fevered air in misty spires
That vanish in the heights.

These myriad eyes that look on me are mine;
Wandering beneath them I have found again
The ancient ample moment, the divine,
The God-root within men.

For this, for this the lights innumerable
As symbols shine that we the true light win:
For every star and every deep they fill
Are stars and deeps within.

From 'Collected Poems' (1913)

*of old our race went forth carrying the Galilean
Evangel. We shall first learn and then teach that
not with wealth can the soul of man be satisfied;
that our enduring interest is not here but there, in
the unseen, the hidden, the immortal, for whose
purposes exist all the visible beauties of the world."*

He knows that by revelations of that invisible world through symbolic paintings and mystic poetry, one may sense a glimmer of his spiritual consciousness and hear the call of his Ancestral-Self. A.E.'s belief that all his creations are but memories of his 'Lost Splendour' may be glimpsed in his first volume of poems, *Homeward: Songs by the Way* (1894). In the preface he says:

*"I moved among men and places and in living I
learned the truth at last. I know I am a spirit and
that I went forth in old time from the Self-Ancestral
to labours yet unaccomplished; but, filled ever and
again with homesickness, I made these homeward
songs by the way."*

**'The Flower Spirit' signed with initials 'AE'.
Oil on canvas, 33.5 by 48.5cm.**

[Retrieved from: http://www.arcadja.com/auctions/en/russell_george_william_a_e_/artist/25286/]

The poetry of A.E., like his paintings, has in it nothing of the world. It is pure, with the pureness of silver flame, of celestial fire. It has been said that it is too transcendental and ought to be a little more mundane.

"The act which is inspired by the Holy Breath must needs speak of things which have no sensuous existence, of hopes all unearthly, and fires of which the colours of day are only shadows."

Many-Coloured Earth

It is when we attain that complete fusion and Oneness with the Infinite that we come to realise what A.E. reveals in his poetry and paintings. With the 'unity of God and Man and Nature' we gain comprehension of the All. By stirring our psychic faculties, we open the windows of the soul to Cosmic Light which pours in, flooding our being with splendours of its own majesty, endowing us with the power of vision and of imagination, enabling us to create our own light. As A.E. writes in *The Candle of Vision* (1918):

"I know that all I met was part of myself and that what I could not comprehend was related by affinity to some yet unrealised forces in my being. We have within us the Lamp of the World; and Nature, the genie, is Slave of the Lamp, and must fashion life about us as we fashion it within ourselves."



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Katherine Tynan, Irish poet and novelist, whose works reflect a deep and abiding interest in Celtic mythology. ▶



"Our faculties readjust themselves, and do the work we will them to do. The dark caverns of the brain begin to grow luminous. How quick the mind is now! How vivid is the imagination! We are lifted above the tumult of the body! We rise within ourselves as a diver, too long under water, rises to breathe the air and see the light. This vision brings its own proof to the spirit, but words cannot declare or explain it.

"Visions led me to believe with Plato that the earth is not all what the geographers suppose it to be, and that we live like frogs at the bottom of a marsh knowing nothing of that Many-Coloured Earth which is superior to this we know, yet related to it as soul to body. On that Many-Coloured Earth, he tells us, live a divine folk, and there are temples wherein the gods do truly dwell."

The poet gives us a vivid picture of the 'Many-Coloured World' which he discovered when he was still a poor struggling clerk in an accountant's office.

"My dream-world was self-shining. Light was born in everything there at dawn, and faded into coloured gloom at eve, and if I walked across my lawns in darkness, the grasses stirred by my feet would waken to vivid colour and glimmer behind me in a trail of green fire; or if a bird was disturbed at night in my shadowy woods, it became a myriad jewel of blue, rose, cold and white, and the leaves tipped by its wings would blaze in flakes of emerald flame."

Mystical Writings

Katharine Tynan, Irish poet and novelist, and a close literary friend of A.E., alludes to him in her memoirs entitled *Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences* (1913), she wrote:

"He is of the world, unworldly, the world's stain has never touched him; without religion, yet

profoundly religious; the peace of God which passeth understanding lies about him. He finds gods in the earth and the air, rather, I would say, he finds God; and his life unconsciously has cast incense on the altar of the Unknown God.

"He told me a story the other day of a friend of his who somewhere in the wilds of America became friends with an old Indian. He told him of all the marvels of the world, wireless telegraphy, radium, men flying in the air, speech kept long after the speaker was dead. 'Wonderful! Wonderful!' said the Indian. 'Tell me more.' At last the narrator paused, wearied. 'The white man is very wonderful,' said the Indian. 'Can he do this?' He stopped, lifted a handful of dust and threw it in the air; stretched himself upwards, and then delicate flames ascended from his hands and his feet and his hair; his body shone in the air; he was a living jewel from head to foot. Then the glory faded. There was only an old Indian. 'Can the white man do that?' he asked."

Just as this story of the old Indian's mystic powers causes one to pause and think over it, so do the poems and paintings of A.E. They hold the mind with their mystic force and beauty. In his book, *The Candle of Vision* (1918), there are a few brief paragraphs which reveal at least one great principle known to all Rosicrucian students as one of the great truths about the divine attributes in man.

"There is nothing incredible in the assumption that every cell in the body is wrapped about with myriad memories. He who attributes least mystery to matter is furthest from truth, and the mightiest who conjectures the Absolute to be present in fullness of being in the atom. The works of the Magician of the Beautiful are not like ours and in the least fragment, His artistry is no less present than in the stars. We may enter the infinite through the minute no less than through contemplation of the vast."

Visions

It has been suggested by some that Ireland is a remnant of the lost continent of Atlantis and that her people are descendants of its survivors. In visions, A.E. beheld pictures of those ancient times.

"There above me was an airship glittering with light. It halted above the valley while a man, grey-bearded, very majestic, his robes all starred and jewelled, bent over and looked down upon the battle. The pause was but for an instant, and then the lights flashed more brilliantly, some luminous mist was jetted upon the air from many tubes below the boat, and it soared and passed beyond the mountains."

Five or six years later A.E. beheld a similar vision.

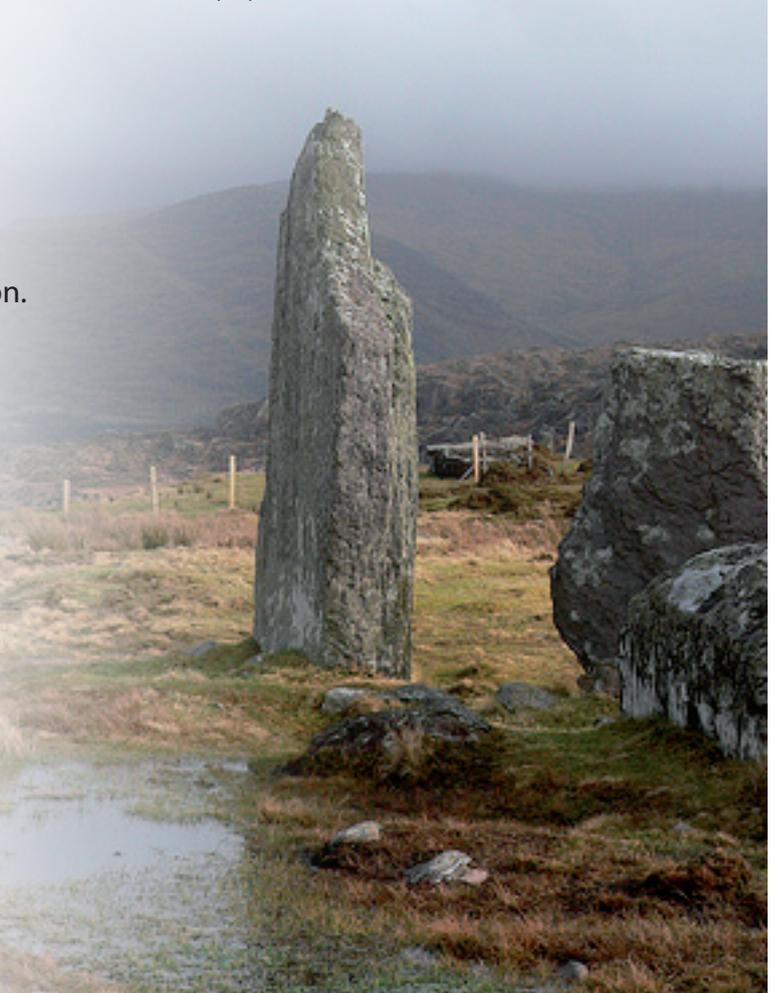
"I was again on high places, and this time the apparition in the mystical air was so close that if I would have stretched out a hand from this world to that I could have clutched the aerial voyager as it swept by me. A young man was steering the boat, his black hair blown back from his brows, his face pale and resolute, his head bent, his eyes intent on his wheel: and beside him sat a woman, a rose-coloured shawl speckled with golden threads drawn over her head, around her shoulders, across her bosom and folded arms. Her face was proud as a queen's, and I long remembered that face for its pride, stillness and beauty. I thought at the moment it was some image in the eternal memory of a civilisation more remote than Atlantis and

I cried out in my heart in a passion of regret for romance passed away from the world, not knowing that the world's great age was again returning and that soon we were to swim once more beneath the epic skies."

The world's great age is returning, as the creative artists who appeared at the end of the 19th century proclaimed, among them, A.E. We who foster and develop our Inner Light can see in vision and imagination the great marvels about to be revealed to all humanity.

Endnotes

1. The 'Cosmic' is a Rosicrucian term meaning the Universe as a harmonious relation of all natural and spiritual laws. As used in a Rosicrucian sense, the Divine, infinite Intelligence of the Supreme Being permeating everything; the creative forces of God. It is an intangible, unlimited source from which radiate the immutable, constructive powers of Divinity. The Cosmic is not a place, but a state or condition of order and regulation (*The Rosicrucian Manual*). (Ed.)
2. Hills or earthen mounds that, in Celtic legend, were the abode of the *Tuatha de Danaan*. Their descendants came to be known as the *Sidhe* (pr. 'Shee') or 'People of the Mounds', supernatural beings who could protect, heal and teach mortals. (Ed.)



The Cashel Keelty Stone Circle [From <http://thinplacestour.com/2010/05/31/beara-cashelkeelty/>]

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Maat

Egypt

To Rosicrucians, the universe is in a state of balance and harmony called by mystics 'Cosmic Order', or simply 'The Cosmic'.

civilisations until much later in their history, it is fascinating to speculate on how they both arrived at the same concept.

7HOUGH MANY THINGS changed throughout the 3,000-year plus history of ancient Egyptian civilisation, there was a constancy of certain key concepts that lasted throughout the whole of their history. One of these concepts was that of Maat. Rosicrucians will be familiar with *Maat* which means roughly *truth, balance and cosmic order*.

Maat as a Principle of Cosmic Order

Maat does indeed mean 'truth' but this is too simple a translation of the Egyptian term. To the ancient Egyptians, Maat represented the principle of Cosmic Order as well as eternal renewal. *Maat is right order in nature and society*, as established by the act of creation, and means, according to the context, that which is right, that which is correct: law, order, justice and truth. It was considered that this state of righteousness had to be preserved and established in all matters great and small.

As the Indo-Iranian tribes swept south into Iran and India, they brought with them a similar concept called *Asha* in the ancient Persian religion, Zoroastrianism. Without any known contact between the Egyptian and Indo-Iranian

Originally, Maat seems to have been something simple, a concrete geometrical

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Maat and Asha

Egyptian and Persian Concepts of World Balance

by Bill Anderson

and physical term denoting 'straightness' and 'evenness'. The earliest hieroglyph for it probably represents the base of the pharaoh's throne which may in turn be regarded as a stylised form of the primeval mound, the first piece of earth to appear after the act of creation. This straightness later came to mean 'right' and 'correct' in an ethical sense. The transference of meaning gave the concept its significance and made it a fundamental concept in Egyptian thought and behaviour.

Maat originated with creation: it was brought into being by the primordial god and then constantly refreshed or restored by each pharaoh. This is plain from the following two texts:

"The sky is at peace, the earth is in joy, for they have heard that Pharaoh [Neferkare] will set Maat [right] in the place of Isafet [disorder]."

and

*"Tutankhamun drove out disorder from the Two Lands and Maat is firmly established in its place; he made lying an abomination and the land is as it was at the first time."*¹

The crucial points are these: Maat is equated with the 'First Time' that is the act of creation. The



Winged Maat representing balance: The Persian Ahura Mazda is also depicted as a winged figure.

pharaoh that drives out disorder is an incarnation of Atum, the primeval god of creation from Heliopolis. The end of disorder goes hand in hand with the establishment of Maat:

*"Maat is great and its effectiveness lasting; it has not been disturbed since the time of Osiris."*²

Emphasis is laid upon its unbroken continuity from the mythical time of Osiris onward and its everlastingness, for Maat outlasts human life. This translates into punishment for those who passes over its laws.

Maat in the Judgement of Humans

There was an aspect of Maat as a measure of judgement upon humanity. So important was the concept of Maat that it applied not only to religious and ethical matters but to earthly justice as well. As justice, Maat was the basis of the Egyptian legal system. The vizier, who was responsible for the administration of justice, was, from the 5th dynasty onward, called the 'priest of Maat'. In later times judges wore an image of Maat on a chain about their neck. Maat also appears personified in human guise, wearing the headdress of a large single ostrich feather.

The Egyptians believed that during some past golden age, when all aspects of human life were allegedly in harmony, the law instinctively took account of all facets of human conduct, so that justice and ethics were integrated and social justice prevailed. They wrote for instance that in the era of the primordial gods...

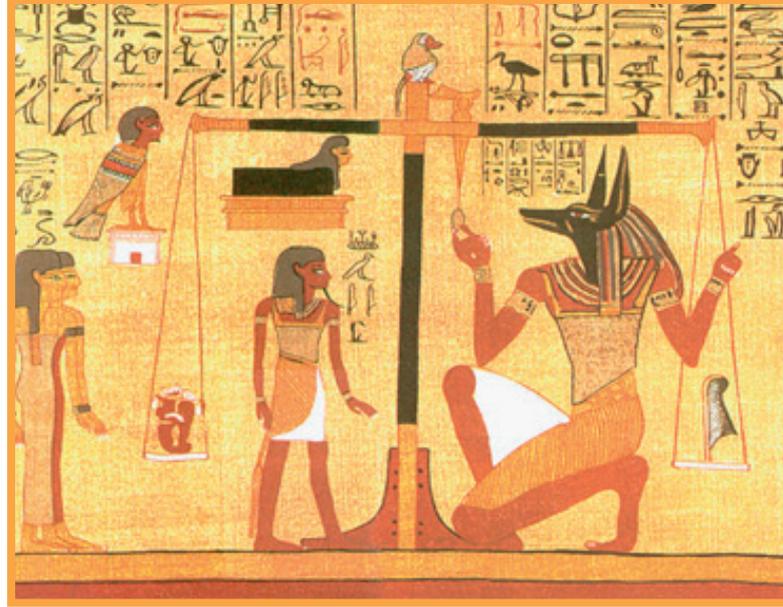
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"Maat came from heaven and joined those who lived on earth."³

At that time, it was believed, there was no injustice, no pain, no hunger, in short, no everyday problems whatsoever.

The judgement of the dead is dealt with in its most developed form in the so called *Book of the Dead*. Here the vignettes accompanying the text in the papyrus of Hunefer or the papyrus of Ani show that the dead man's heart, deemed to be the seat of the intellect and will as well as the life-giving centre of the physical body, is weighed against a symbol of Maat, usually depicted as a feather, and which serves as an ethical standard.

The jackal-headed god Anubis, who has become an attendant of Osiris, Lord of the *Duat* (the underworld), is master of the balance and is in control of the pointer; Thoth, the scribe of the gods, records the verdict and announces it. If the verdict should be unfavourable, the person becomes a victim of the 'devourer', a hybrid



monster waiting hungrily nearby. If the verdict should be favourable, the deceased is invested with the attribute of Maat and, as one who is 'true of voice' (*maat kheru*), is brought before Osiris on his throne.

Many statements of innocence were voiced by the deceased before the actual weighing of the heart took place. These are at times referred to as the 'Negative Confession' or the 'Confession to Maat'. They correspond to an ideal way of life to which all should aspire, and constitute a moral code that prevailed for millennia in Egypt. Ideally you were expected to conform to Maat in your speech and actions. Statements to this effect are to be found among ancient funerary inscriptions. The range of human affairs permeated by these ethical principles was as broad as it could be. It included people's conduct toward their fellow human beings, toward the gods and toward society. Maat imbued justice with an ethical spirit.



Asha

Zoroastrianism, the religion of the ancient Persians, is a vibrant religion to this day. As a religion it has influenced Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and its effects can be seen both in Neoplatonic philosophy and Muslim Sufi thought. The vastness of the Eurasian steppes encouraged the Indo-Iranians to conceive their gods as cosmic,

◀ Maat or Ma'at wears the single ostrich feather symbolising truth and uprightness. Her name in hieroglyphs is indicated.

not local, divinities. They understood a universal principle known in Avestan (the language of the Zoroastrian texts) as *Asha*, the principle that governs everything from the workings of nature to human law and all human conduct.

The ancient *Asha* or *Asha Vahishta*, later known as *Ardvahasht* under the Sassanian dynasty (224-637 CE), was one of the divine 'Heptad' of Zoroastrianism, comprising *Ahura Mazda* the 'Wise Lord' and the six *Amesha Spentas*, the 'Bounteous' or 'Holy Immortals' (archangels), the six aspects of God's own nature, through which all people came to know God. It is through these seven primal emanations that God's will is done and through which one may come into contact with God. This doctrine was an ancient, mystical way of looking at reality, and this distinct group of seven have a significant central role in Zoroastrian myth and ritual. Each *Amesha Spenta* protects and can be represented by one of the seven creations, which Zoroastrians believe collectively constitute the divine creation. In myth, the Holy Immortals care for and protect their creations, and in the rituals a token of each creation is present to represent the spiritual presence of that Holy Immortal.

Asha, considered as the most beautiful of the Holy Immortals, represents not only the opposite of untruth, but also the divine law and moral order in the world. *Asha* preserves order on earth as he smites disease, death, fiends, sorcerers and all vile creatures. He is truth and cosmic order and is considered to be the closest of the Holy Immortals to God.

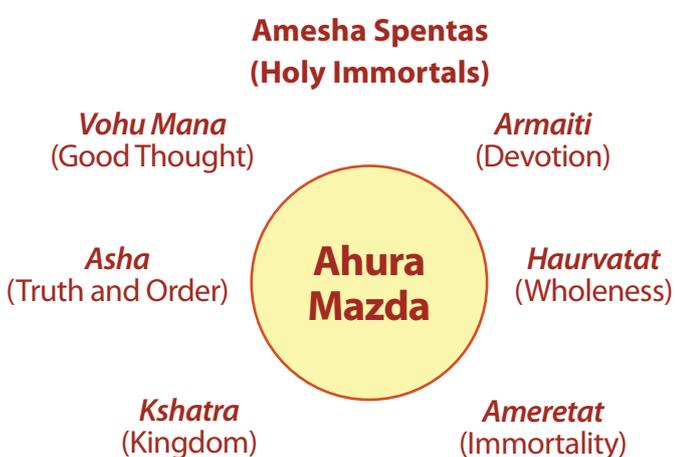
Asha connotes the eternal, immutable law that governs the universe, and regulates both the spiritual and corporeal worlds. In Zoroastrianism natural law and divine law are the same. *Asha* constitutes the yardstick for determining right and wrong. He sets normative ethics and provides the standards that apply to all people at all times. He represents absolute values. The assumption is that right deeds produce benefits alike for the author of the action and for society at large. The accrual of benefits to the author of the act is automatic. As with the law of Karma, the law of *Asha* ensures that happy consequences are the outcome of good acts. An individual reaps what he or she sows.

Asha is Truth

Asha means many related things, and can't be translated by just one English word. You need a whole constellation of words to translate it: righteousness, law, cosmic order, truth and justice. But *Asha* is first and foremost 'Truth', being the opposite of 'Lie' (*druj*).

The concept encompasses all clear and objective vision, all honesty and unclouded thoughts, words and deeds. Then it is 'Righteousness' involving a commitment to good actions that builds society and gravitates toward health, peace and good will. These actions are not prescribed, as they are in Jewish or Islamic sacred law, but they will vary as the conditions of history or society vary. The underlying call to right action however, remains the same.

Asha is also 'Law'; not a prescribed set of commandments, but a description of the laws that rule our lives and the universe around us. *Asha* is impersonal. In Zoroastrianism, *Ahura Mazda* is not the type of God who suspends the laws of reality in order to make a point or to help someone. In Zoroaster's concept of divine governance, there are no suns standing still, miraculous healings, miraculous plagues or deliverances, no resurrections from the dead. In all the 'Gathas' (Zoroastrian hymns) there are no miracles or supernatural occurrences; this is astonishing for





Ahura Mazda

something composed at least 3,500 years ago. In Asha, God set up the laws of reality, both in the natural world and the social world, and he will not break them.

The law of Asha describes what actually happens, not what should happen. It encompasses the law of gravity and all physical laws discoverable by science as well as the laws of consequences governing our own behaviour, which are discoverable by sometimes painful experience. Throw a rock in the air and, if unhindered in its descent, it will come down: that is Asha. Overindulge in alcohol one night and you will wake up with an unpleasant hangover; that is also Asha, the *law of consequences*. If you do wrong, quite often the world itself will punish you, either by its own laws or by someone taking the law into their own hands. But what of those who do wrong and prosper, who die happily after a life of evil? Then we must look to the world to come, which is also under the rule of Asha, where, as Zoroaster states, the 'Best Existence' (heaven) is waiting for those who choose Good in this world, and where the 'Worst Existence' (hell) is reserved for those who have done evil. This 'hell' is not eternal since all things will be purified by the end of time; but it is long enough to purify evildoers.

Therefore, to praise Asha as the 'best' (Avestan: *vahishta*) is to put yourself in harmony with cosmic order, and to commit yourself to the search for Truth in your spiritual, moral and working life. Asha dwells within you, as it does in everyone, and it is divine. Every time you do

Ahura Mazda's creation, evident as Asha, that is truth and order, is the antithesis of chaos, evident as druj, falsehood and disorder. The resulting conflict involves the entire universe, including humanity.

a righteous deed, no matter how small, you are bringing yourself closer to God through Asha.

Cosmic Order

To the ancient Egyptians, cosmic order was portrayed as a beautiful young woman, Maat, while to the Persians, Asha was a beautiful young man. In both lands, the inherent beauty attributed to cosmic order is self-evident. Both concepts arose independently in different parts of the world: Africa and the Eurasian steppes, yet both had so much in common; recognition of inherent order to the universe and the right way for people to behave; in other words, what we now call Karma.

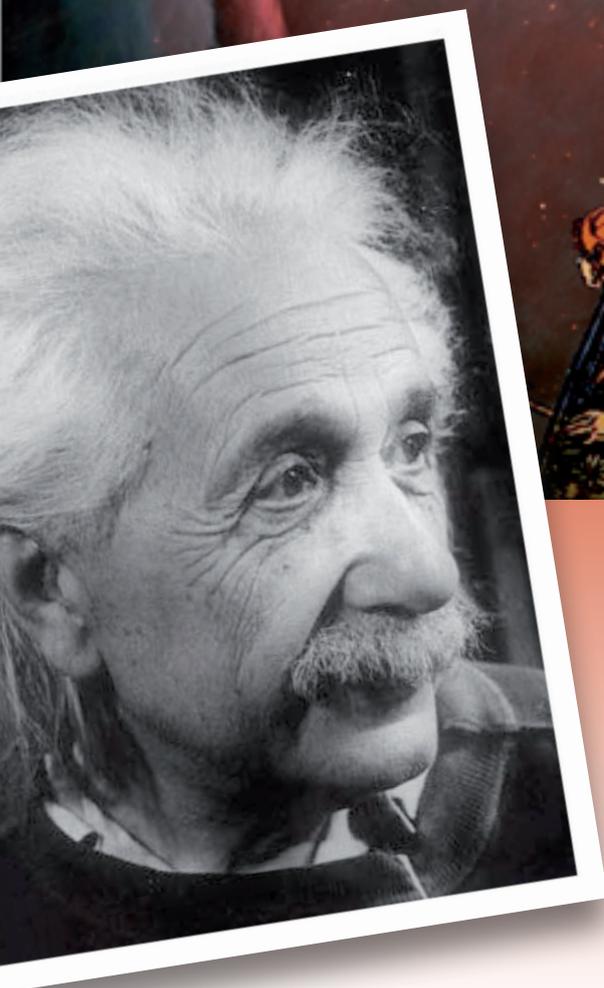
*As long as I shall be able and strong, so long shall I look in quest of truth. Truth, shall I see thee, as I continue to acquire both good thinking and the way to the Lord?*⁴

Endnotes

1. Quoted in Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, Methuen, 1992 (English translation), p. 114
2. *Ibid.*, p. 115
3. *Ibid.*, p. 114
4. From *Yasna* 28.4-5

Einstein's Quest for Oneness

by Marc Cornwall



ALBERT EINSTEIN, the most controversial and the most beloved of modern scientists, left this earthly plane on 16th April 1955. His work altered forever the way we view the natural world. Ever since, historians and scientists have been attempting to assess the heritage he left to humanity.

For fifty years the name 'Einstein' (1879-1955) was synonymous with scientific genius. He loomed over early 20th century physics as its defining, emblematic figure, having given the world Special Relativity in 1905

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and General Relativity in 1915, spending the remaining 40 years of his life searching for what we are still searching for today, a 'unified theory of everything'. Whilst he failed in this last grand mission, he left humanity with two rigorous theories that have yet to be proven wrong but also the memory of a man of humble demeanour, profound insight and compassion for all of God's creation.

His face was familiar not only to scientists but also to millions of laymen who neither understood nor cared about Relativity. "Why is it," he asked a *New York Times* journalist in 1944 "that nobody understands me, but everybody likes me?" How did the obscure creator of an arcane cosmological theory

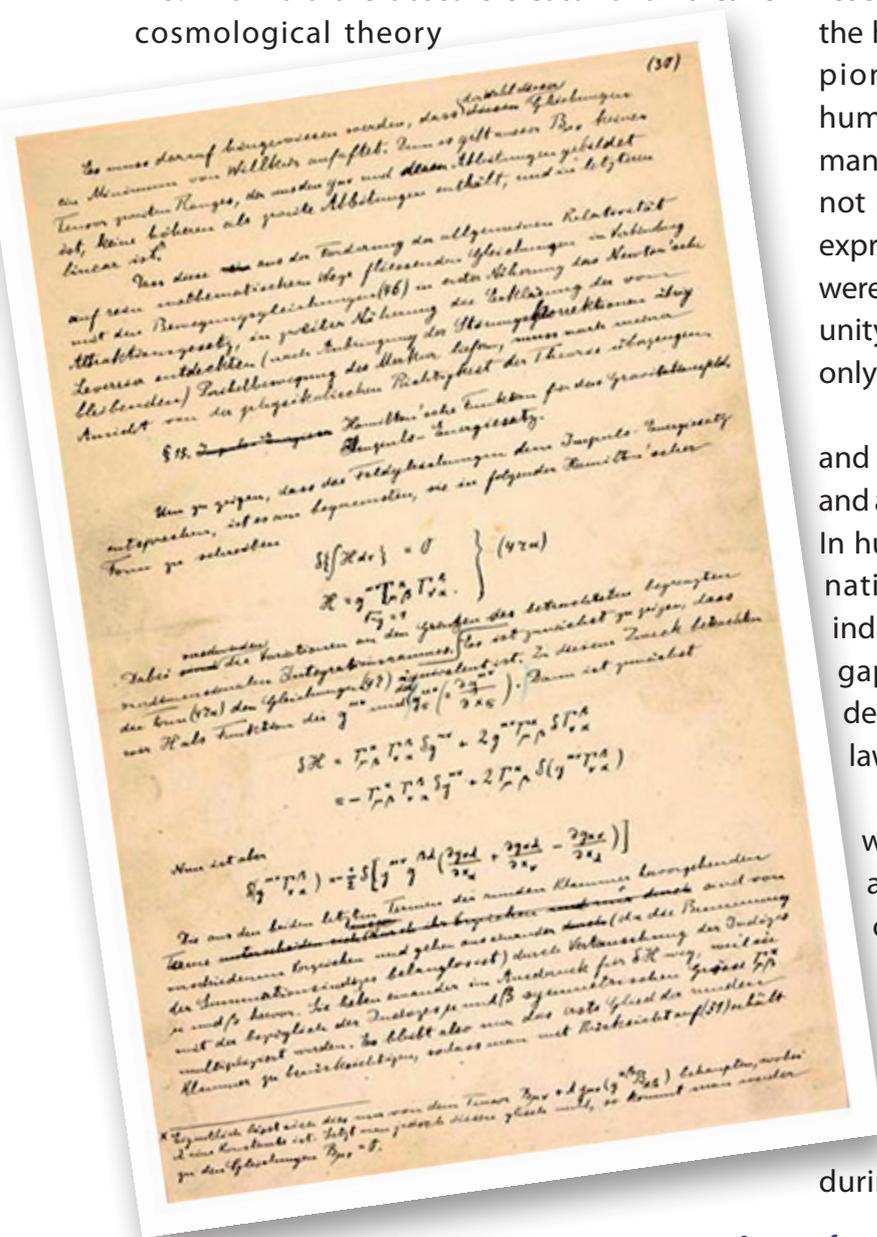
become so well-known and loved? We remember his unruly shock of hair, gradually softened and bleached by age, overshadowing his features, frozen into an eternal question mark and covering a deep inner sadness. Only in the last photograph, taken a few weeks before his fatal illness, did loving-kindness ease the tenseness of dedication, while his tired eyes twinkled benignly over the rims of his glasses.

A Man and his Mission

His features tell the story of his mission. The questioning look stands for a life devoted to research. The lines of sorrow were etched by the heroic failures to which even this successful pioneer was subject in his scientific and humanitarian efforts; for Einstein was a great man as well as a great scientist, and his work was not limited to scientific treatises. Although he expressed himself in many fields, his endeavours were directed toward a single goal: to bring about unity, simplicity and harmony where others saw only diversity, contradictions and hostility.

In the science of Physics, he unified waves and particles, space and time, matter and energy, and attempted to unify electricity and gravitation. In human affairs he tried to reconcile races and nations, and socialism with freedom of the individual. In philosophy he tried to bridge the gap between science and religion, between determinism, human responsibility and moral law.

Let us first take a look at his scientific work. Doubted in the beginning, it is now part and parcel of every textbook, of every college or university course on fundamental Physics. He first hit world headlines in 1919 when an expedition to investigate a solar eclipse confirmed his General Theory of Relativity. He became an overnight media sensation. But 1905 was his *annus mirabilis*, when, during a single miraculous year, he produced



A page from Albert Einstein's manuscript on the general theory of relativity, published in *Annalen der Physik* in 1916.

[Source: <http://www.wired.com/culture/lifestyle/news/2003/05/58869>]

Einstein with colleagues
and Yerkes Observatory
staff in 1921

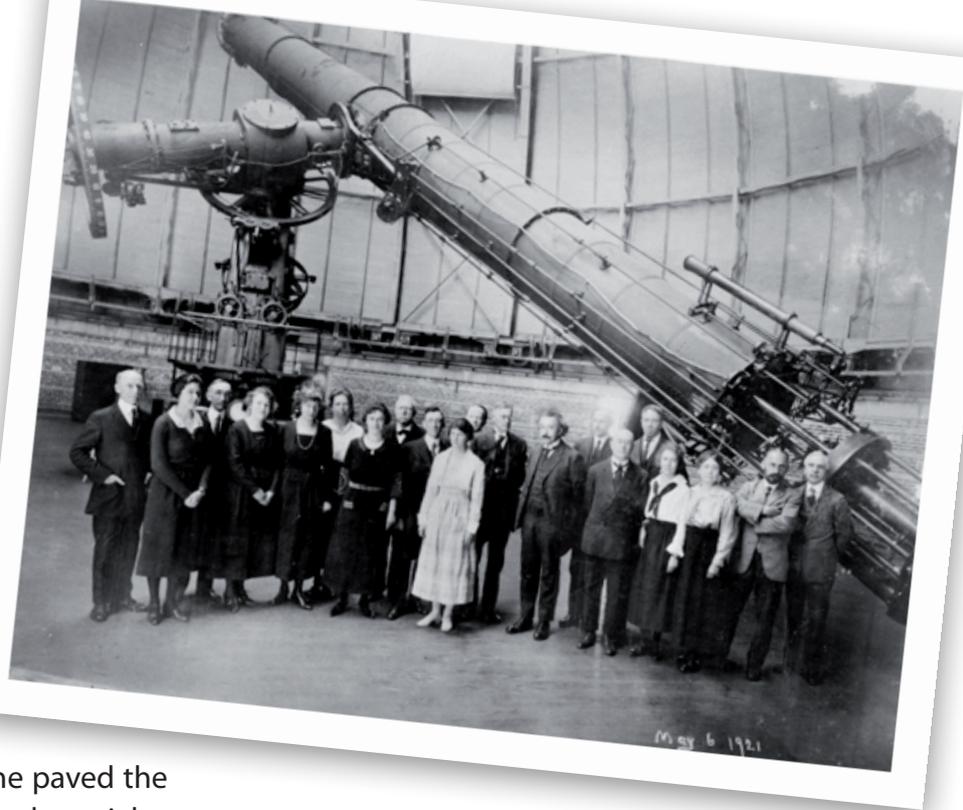


not one but three world-changing papers, something only comparable to Sir Isaac Newton during the years 1665-1666. In recognition of this, the international physics community set aside 2005 as the World Year of Physics in tribute to Einstein's centennial.

His first pioneering venture was a bold interpretation of photoelectric effects. By asserting that light is emitted in the form of bullet-like photons, he paved the way to the unification of waves and particles that was brought about, some fifteen years later, under the name of Quantum Mechanics. It is for this photoelectric research that paved the way for the acceptance of the dual nature of light as both particle and wave, that Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921. A hundred years later, technologists are still finding new ways of harvesting novel inventions from his theories.

His greatest and most famous creative achievement was of course, the General Theory of Relativity. Its impact upon the physical sciences was enormous, in two widely separate fields. In the macroscopic field of astronomy, it corrected imperfections in Newton's laws. Hitherto unexplained changes in the orbit of the planet Mercury were accounted for. The theory also predicted the bending of light rays by the gravity of the Sun and the reddening of light emitted by very heavy stars; both predictions were soon confirmed. Relativity further asserted that space itself was curved so that the universe, although unbounded, might turn back upon itself and form a vast but finite cell. This view strangely resonates with some of the deepest and most ancient mystical cosmologies.

In the microcosmic field of rapidly whirling atomic particles, Relativity proved that a particle accelerated to high speed becomes heavier than when it is stationary; a fact soon verified by atomic



physicists and cyclotron builders. Conversely, by losing mass, a particle sets free large amounts of energy. This last assertion is the principle underlying the nuclear bombs and atomic power plants. But in addition to these material results, Relativity greatly affected the thinking and the philosophy of the 20th century.

Relativity's Axioms

Its first axiom was that space and time do not exist separately, only conjointly as a four-dimensional framework of observation, a framework that changes with the standpoint and motion of the observer. This may seem natural and sensible to Rosicrucians, who for many years have regarded time and space as man-made abstractions. However, it aroused a furore with conservative scientists as well as with totalitarian politicians both Nazi and Communist.

Relativity's second axiom was the equivalence of energy and matter. This was accepted with less of a struggle than the first, because its practical proofs and consequences were undeniable. But from a philosophical viewpoint it was equally revolutionary. 'Solid' matter could no longer be regarded as an entity separate and distinct from light, for example, and other forms of radiation. The entire physical

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universe therefore had to be viewed as a vast ocean of vibratory energy; once again, in full agreement with age-old Rosicrucian tenets.

In the introductions to his papers on Relativity, Einstein hinted that he was spurred on to his deductions by a belief in the consistency and unity of nature. Underlying the harmony and symmetry of physical laws, Einstein sensed a Cosmic Intelligence, which he contemplated with rapture and awe. His lifelong search for Truth was a kind of mystical worship. It permeated his entire being and became embodied in the questioning look common to all his photographs.

Quanta and Beyond

In spite of his great work and renown, his scientific opinions in the second half of his life were out of step with the trend of later physics. At his death, his lifework was unfinished and in doubt, and his scientific failures were as heroic as his achievements. His inability to accept the validity of Quantum Mechanics, and his transcendental belief that system and order reigning supreme in some higher, Divine Law, is expressed in anguished terms in his now famous phrase: *"God does not play dice with the World."*

It was, alas, his personal belief only, unproved by research and opposed by his scientific peers. Indeed, as Quantum Mechanics developed further and further and eventually became an easily proven fact of natural law, had he lived longer, his anguish may only have grown stronger. His General Theory of Relativity and the Theory of Quantum Mechanics are irreconcilable at the level of our human experience, but we know that both theories will one day be superseded by an even greater and more all-encompassing theory, perhaps Superstring Theory which promises to eventually lead us to a unification of these two great opposing theories of the 20th century.

In the introductions to his papers on Relativity, Einstein hinted that he was spurred on to his deductions by a belief in the consistency and unity of nature.



Frustration and dilemmas beset not only Einstein's scientific work but also the social, philosophical, educational and political views that he expressed vigorously in many articles and lectures that he gave around the world. Although sensitive and modest, he did not hide in an ivory tower. In later life he involved himself with many social causes, being concerned with people individually and with humanity as a whole. He devoted himself to simplicity, elegance and mathematical beauty, wishing fervently that all of humanity could enjoy peace, economic security, political and religious freedom, and leisure to pursue the higher things of life such as science, art and philosophy. In his younger years, Einstein had been shocked by the oppressions, tortures and murders perpetrated by the Nazi regime in his native Germany. He had called upon the Western democracies to save humanity from this onslaught of a new Dark Age, by force of arms if necessary. And when the Second World War did break out, Einstein, by now living in the USA and researching at Princeton University in New Jersey, advised President Roosevelt to develop the atom bomb, lest Hitler should possess it first and use it to enslave the world. This led to the start of the famous 'Manhattan Project', the American research programme that produced the first atomic bomb.



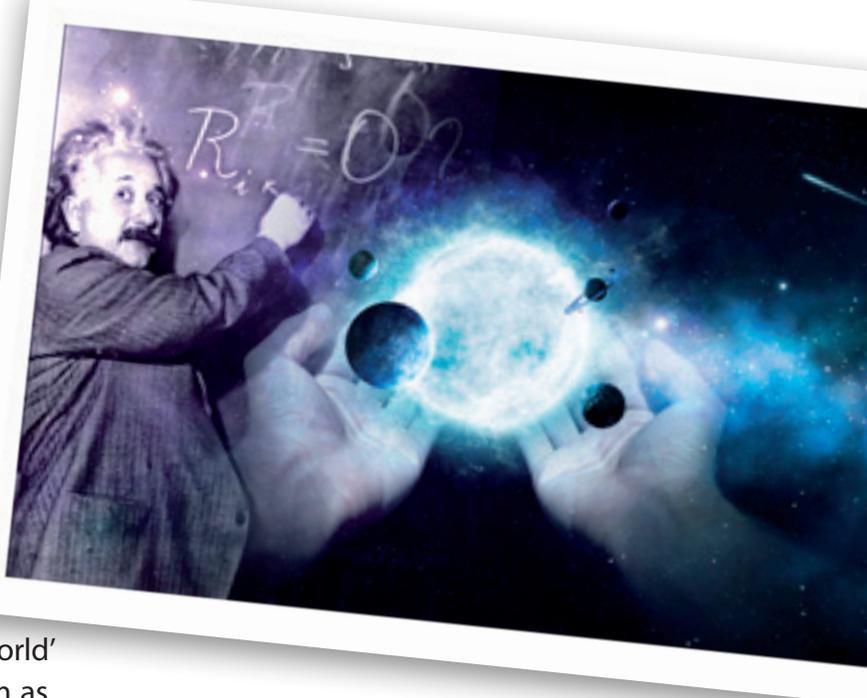
During the last two decades of his life, Albert Einstein embarked on a solitary, unsuccessful quest to find one single unifying theory for modelling the universe.



The war was hardly over, when a new danger threatened from the hostility between the USA and the USSR. However, by this time, Einstein had become convinced that victory by force of arms was futile. He spoke out bravely for reconciliation, for a strengthening of the United Nations and for the unity of all mankind. For these efforts he was honoured in 1948 by the 'One World' award which perhaps meant as much to him as the Nobel Prize. He spent his declining years in the fear that the fruits of his own scientific research might help to bring untold suffering to mankind, perhaps even to wipe out all of civilisation. He once commented that although he did not know with which weapons World War III would be fought, World War IV would be fought with sticks and stones.

A third inner conflict that troubled Einstein was the schism between his humane instincts and mystical intuition on the one hand, and his scientific convictions on the other. As a human being he believed in the overwhelming power of love, in moral law and in the progress of mankind.

But as a scientist, he believed in strict determinism. But if determinism is a fact, he speculated, if it is true that every particle and every energy-ripple in the universe follows a fixed 'World Line' then it matters not whether their course is preordained by a capricious God or by an inflexible physical law. Does mankind struggle against a life that is already predetermined for it? Would it not be better then for them simply to submit to the inevitable? What is the use of devoting your life to the search for scientific truth unless you feel deep down that your efforts are a service freely chosen? Perhaps the expression of hopeless bewilderment so evident in many pictures of Einstein is due to this philosophical impasse.



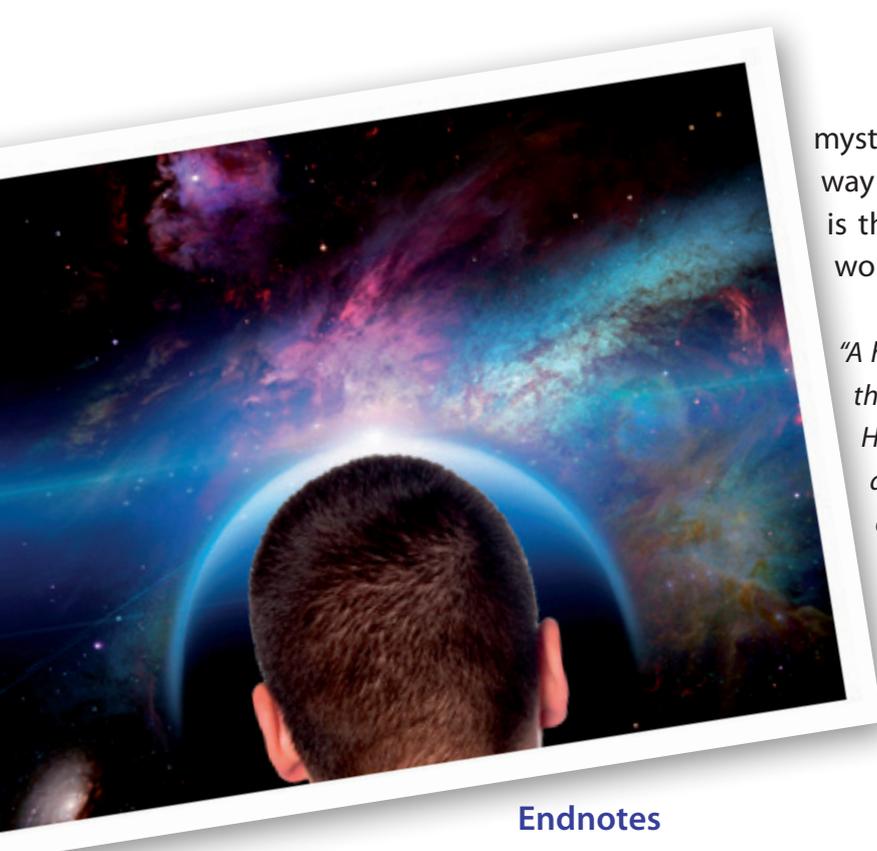
Einstein and Mysticism

Rosicrucian philosophy teaches a way out of this dilemma that baffles puritan scientists and believers alike. The particles and waves, for which relativity postulates rigid determinism, constitute only the negative polarity of an all-pervading vibratory energy. Over and above them is the positive domain of *Life Force, Consciousness and Will*. This positive domain is neither limited by space-time nor by physical determinism. Since Consciousness and Life can affect and direct matter (at least in our own bodies), we are entitled to believe in inner freedom despite outward necessity, and to believe in a moral law underlying physical laws. Perhaps the crowning scientific unification, the one that eluded Einstein, will consist of the discovery of the law that governs the interplay between material energy and conscious life force. That truly would be a watershed for humanity.

During the last two decades of his life, Albert Einstein embarked on a solitary, unsuccessful quest to find one single unifying theory for modelling the universe. He did not achieve the scientific triumph of gathering all physical laws into one, the so-called Theory of Everything. He did not live to see the dawn of an age in which nations could unite in peace and brotherhood and did not attain the Peace Profound of reconciling the finite laws of matter with the voice of Infinity within his soul. But he earned and savoured the

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mystic joy of leading science and humanity a long way forward toward the eternal goal of Unity. This is the heritage that Albert Einstein left to the world. Let us ever remember and cherish this.

*"A human being is a part of a whole, called by us the 'Universe'; a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest – a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. The striving to free oneself from this delusion is in the one issue of true religion. Not to nourish the delusion but to try to overcome it is the way to reach the attainable measure of peace of mind."*²

Endnotes

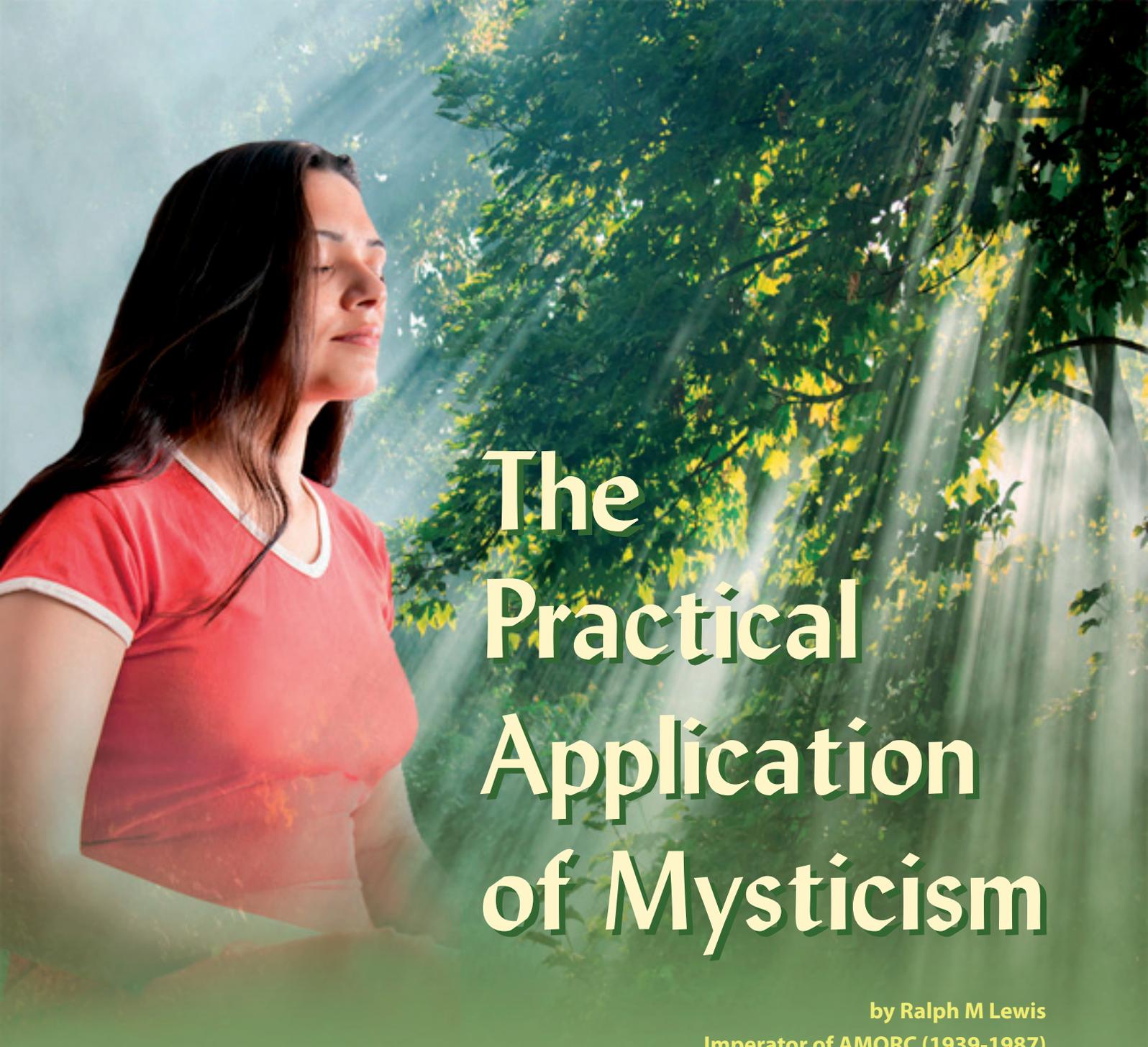
1. An accelerator that imparts energies of several million electron-volts to rapidly moving particles.
2. The content of a letter dated 12th February 1950 to Robert S. Marcus, of the World Jewish Congress, who had lost his son due to polio and had asked Einstein for some comforting words.

The Lock and the Key

IT IS NOT THE KEY that men are missing to penetrate into truth, not even the lock, because the lock is everywhere, and we carry the key within ourselves; but what they are missing is discernment and judgement on their individual appropriate use, to carefully compare things which are analogous and not to search for matter into spirit nor for spirit into matter; because in the context of truth the key and the lock are both the same substance, namely both are spirit.

However, men react as if only one of them was; that is, that if they believe that they are spirit they nevertheless only search into the sciences of matter and if they believe in the divine universal principle, they do not let it get close enough to them to demonstrate to themselves the dignity of their own nature.

Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803)



The Practical Application of Mysticism

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

MYSTICISM IS THE AWAKENING of the self to a consciousness of a divine reality. The self, for the first time, becomes aware of cosmic beauty in contrast to its own finite imperfection. It then attempts to emulate the divine beauty that it experiences. Mysticism, by its very nature, is an intensely personal experience.

Plotinus (204/5-270 CE), the Neoplatonic philosopher, said that mysticism is the marriage between soul and God; in other words, *the personal realisation of unity with the Absolute* or the One. The mystical experience consists of four elements.

The first element is the *ineffable*. This means that the experience is difficult to explain, it is more of a feeling, just as difficult to explain as fine music. The second element of mysticism is the noetic quality. This means that we experience a unique new knowledge that consists of an *illumination* of greater depth than our intellect alone can provide. The third element is *transcendence*. This is our ability to sustain the mystical experience. The memory of the experience diminishes through time. The fourth element is *passivity*. The self is completely passive during the experience. There is no emotional or mental turbulence at the time.

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We should be mindful that mysticism is an experience, an inner experience, and not just a theory. To apply mysticism, you must first work upon the self and then objectify your experience. Mysticism provides the substance or material upon which we cogitate and then take action. It denies that knowledge is limited just to the sense impressions. The mystical principle of knowledge asserts that man is essentially divine and therefore capable of immediate communication with reality, the One.

Aspects of Mysticism

It is important that we do not confuse mystical *technique* with *application*. There are various Eastern and Western techniques. The technique, whatever it may be, is merely a mechanism. It is not the final objective of mysticism. For analogy, there is an obvious difference between learning to use tools, and constructing a building. You must relate the principle of mysticism to an understanding and use of life.

Meditation is one of the principal techniques of mysticism but it also has a practical application. The particular importance of meditation is its role in the discovery of the expansion of self. In other words, there is more to our conscious being than we realise. Self is more than just one phase of consciousness. Meditation leads to inspiration, insight and new views of reality which are the rewards of contact with other levels of consciousness. Some people wrongly think of meditation as being an escape from reality. Meditation is not just a closing of a door to one kind of perception. Rather, it is a *portal* to different chambers of the psyche.

One of the first great benefits derived from mysticism is a broad ontological view concerning the nature of being. Being refers to absolute reality, the One or the Cosmos. Ontology is a basic study of metaphysics, though metaphysics

approaches ontology only from the speculative and intellectual point of view. Mysticism, however, makes ontology a personal experience. In ontology, mysticism causes us to sense a union of all reality. We are no longer confused by various theological divisions of the Cosmos. Simply, there no longer exist such subdivisions of reality as heaven, hell, natural, supernatural, the Absolute or time and space. Not does the mystic find so-called matter completely separate and apart from what is termed the immaterial world.

The Mystical Pantheist

The true mystic is also a *pantheist*. To him or her, the divine, the spiritual essence pervades all things. Furthermore, the laws by which the Divine functions or manifests are also divine. There can be no distinction between the essence and its laws of manifestation, just as our thoughts and deeds are related. Therefore, the pantheist sees divine manifestation in all the phenomena of nature. The mystic realises that no one thing, whatever it may be, is completely representative of the Cosmic or Divine. As the Dutch philosopher Spinoza said, neither is the totality of nature the whole of the Divine. This is true because the Divine is potentially, along with *Being*, more than what already exists.

For this reason the mystical pantheist experiences his or her concept of God in every natural phenomenon. They try to understand

The Divine is potentially, along with *Being*, more than what already exists. ▶



nature. They seek a personal intimacy with it, resulting in a harmony of the self. The mystical pantheist does not accept the old theological idea that humanity alone has a spiritual essence. If the soul in man is an emanation of the Divine Consciousness, then all living things have soul, but with a lesser degree of manifestation. The consciousness of life is united, regardless of the form that the organism assumes.

Practical Mysticism

Does an abstract subject such as mystical pantheism have practical value? Yes, because it opposes the many forms of superstition and ignorance of the past. It allows a realisation of the universal sodality, that is, the fraternal aspect of the Cosmic force pervading all things.

Another practical aspect of mysticism is the *concept of equality* that it expounds. Philosophically, the word 'equality' can appear as a logical paradox, seemingly contradicting itself: something equal in every respect to another thing loses its own separateness for such equality would include equality in time and space as well. Therefore, there would be no plurality, because just a single thing or condition would exist. From this point of view, there is no absolute equality. *There is only relative equality*, that is, similarity. Mysticism shows that there is no absolute equality within humanity except in essence, and this essence is the Vital Life force pervading all living

things. Everyone varies in their intellect, emotions and awareness of self. The only equality that we should strive for is the right to know ourselves. However, such a right carries an obligation that everyone must be able to think and express their thoughts. Only in this sense does mysticism accept the idea of equality.

Another practical application of mysticism is its *understanding of value*. The mystic knows that value is a relative term. What value is assigned by one may not be accepted by another. Are there then no absolute values toward which everyone should strive? *The only absolute value is life*, for all else depends upon it. Yet, even this value must be qualified. To merely live is not the highest attainment of man. Life can be both used and abused by humanity. Life force in its pure state is creative not degenerative.

Our personal value in life should then assume the same order for each of us has talents, some of which are still dormant, yet to be awakened. They may be mechanical, artistic or intellectual skills, each varying in its degree of development. It becomes our duty to give value to our lives by creating something worthy or assisting others who strive to do so. To neglect our creative ability, or to influence others to do so, is to place a wrong value upon life; a helpful suggestion, a comforting thought, prevention of an ethical wrong are all worthy values. If inspired through mystical study, these values are then examples of the practical application of mysticism.



The Logos

Jacob Boehme (1575-1624)

THE ETERNAL WORD has been revealed in our human nature, which is blind to the presence of God, and he who absorbs this Word with his hungry soul, and thereby returns to the original spiritual state in which humanity took its origin, his soul will become a temple of divine love...

The Beauty Beneath

by Walter Puphal

SOME COME TO an awareness of the Infinite through the sciences; some are inspired by the arts in great music or poetry. Shape, line and colour are to many an expression of divine reality. Thousands find the world a manifestation of a power and wisdom beyond the grasp of ordinary comprehension.

Whether peering into the mysteries of the heavens, seeking the truths of life as they manifest around us, or dealing with the evolving mind and human consciousness, we become increasingly aware of the presence of an 'Infinite Wisdom' in proportion as our own insight becomes more penetrating.

To come upon a floral specimen anywhere is an experience to cherish. If it be familiar or rare, I look upon it as an example of what God has given us and something which ultimately I hope to know more directly. I feel challenged to learn about it. It is something to be taken into account, something new in the mosaic of life, a new friend, a new voice, a new joy.

I ask you to try to imagine a world without wild flowers! The meadows, the hills, the shadowy glens would be barren places. Look upon your favourite haunts, those that reflect to you something of God's grace and concern for our good, and quietly resolve to add your voice and influence to preserve them.

We speak of the magic of spring, the lengthening days, the rising sap in the birch and oak, resurgent all about us, but nothing so dramatically portrays the insistent life force as do spring flowers in the wild.

As the winds mellow, violets appear, so

gentle and so easy to live with that we are beguiled; still marvelling that so small a flower can do so much. We are not quite ready for the impact of the lady-slipper and its exotic beauty.

Late summer and the bright blue aster and the little multi-flora mingle in a gay profusion with different kinds of buttercup and cornflower. The soft pink of the ragged robin offer harmony and gentle counterpoint. The untouched grass, breeze blown, invites the eye and further exploration. There in the grass is a clump of purple-blue downy gentian such as to cause the heart to leap. Once encountered, it is never forgotten. Its discovery will captivate the heart.

Wild plants in their natural setting are in harmony with their environment in all their ways. They develop abilities to derive nourishment from diverse soil conditions and to find necessary moisture. They will even grow to heights not usual for them that they may face the sunlight. In competition with other growths, they will persist in the same location year after year-struggling, adapting and evolving.

Varieties like the harebell thrive on the face of bare rocky cliffs, with only small crevices for their roots. How, in such places, do they survive summer's heat and winter's cold?

I have already asked the question what would remain if the wild flower were to disappear. Even if we were to assume that nothing else would disappear, surely, with their going, humanity would lose in large degree the capacity to appreciate beauty and would cast aside a help provided for spiritual evolution and advancement.

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Discipleship on Trial

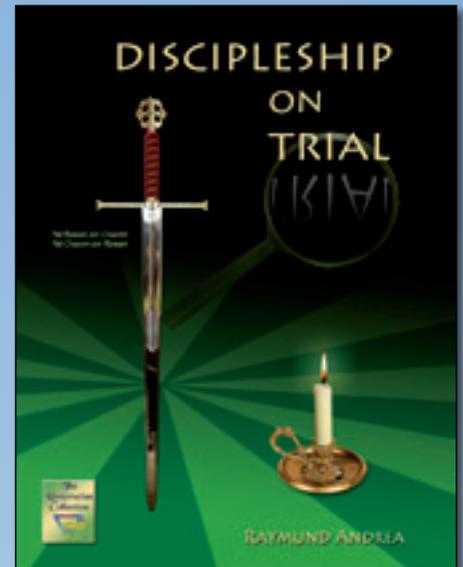
by Raymund Andrea

HIS BOOK WAS written against the backdrop of the darkest days of the Second World War. The momentous events of two world wars in the space of 25 years had markedly affected the psyche of nations and brought humanity to a crossroads in history.

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

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

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



by Raymund Andrea

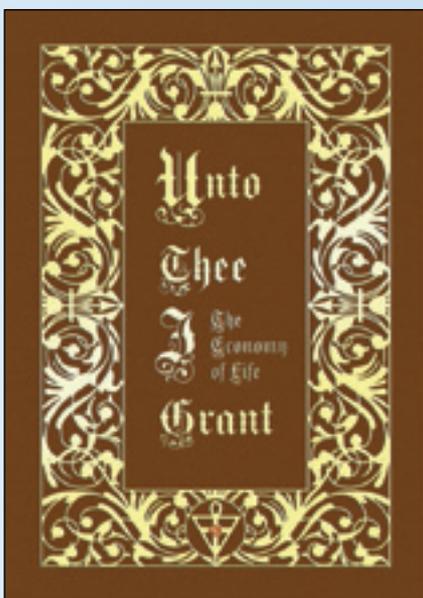
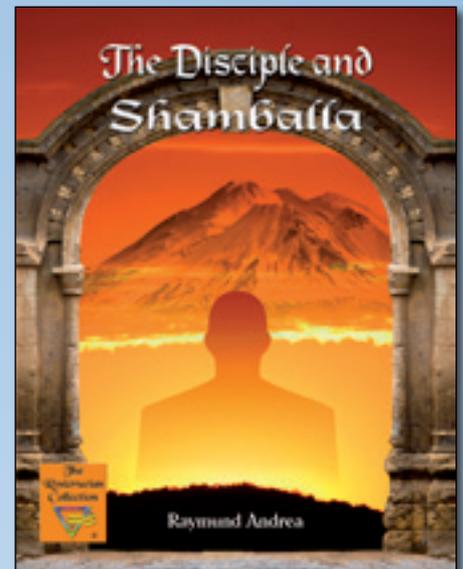


The Disciple and Shamballa

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

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

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



Unto Thee I Grant

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED in English in 1750, this book has for over 250 years held pride of place on the bookshelves of many seekers of spiritual enlightenment. Translated from a set of Tibetan manuscripts, and possibly originally meant as a "guide-to-good-living" for Tibetan monks, even a cursory read convinces one that the chapters were compiled by a person (or persons) of high spiritual intent. The inspiration it has given to generations of seekers continues to this day. The simple, down-to-earth points of advice are timeless and as valid today as when they were first composed, possibly over a thousand years ago.

You can open this book on virtually any page and derive inspiration for the day from the two or three paragraphs you will read there. It is a wonderful and worthwhile companion for life.

FULLY INDEXED. Search for and find page references for all the most commonly used words and expressions.

The book consists of two parts: Part 1 is in the archaic English of the mid 18th Century, and Part 2 is in modern English.

