



Anthroposophical Society

in the Western Cape & the Basil Basil Gibaud Library
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Special Issue – August 2014

EDITORIAL

Now, when Mankind has the greatest possibility of ‘freedom’, there is also the greatest experience of fragmentation, within our personal lives and or in our social circumstances (as we separate from social, religious, ethnic, economic and family ties).

As we stand at this moment, 100 years later since the beginning of the First World War we have become more and more capable out of this freedom to fight ‘all against all’, in an unimaginably destructive ways (due to the advance in weapons, economic ‘tools’ and sciences). Yet in amongst all this reality, in this womb of the Ego, the greatest Miracle has *happened* and is *happening* until the ends of time. Cecilia Solis-Peralta

“Sounding the Logos”

*Can I expand my soul
to unite with
the Cosmic Word
now conceived
as seed?*

*I sense that
I must find the force
to fashion my own soul
as a worthy garment
for the spirit.*

Rudolf Steiner



Detail of Theo van Doesburg
– Cosmic Sun 1910

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News and Membership

Funeral Of Sergei Prokofieff at the Goetheanum

I was privileged to attend the conference of the Nineteen Class Lessons for the members of the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum at the end of July. On arrival we were told that Sergei Prokofieff had passed over the threshold the day before, 26 July 2014, after a long illness of over three years. Many people commented on the auspicious timing of his passing, which coincided with the conference, as Sergei had devoted a lot of his energy to the furtherance of the School of Spiritual Science.



Sergei Prokofieff

Crossed the threshold into the spiritual world during the early morning hours of July 26, 2014, following a serious illness that lasted three years.

On Tuesday morning, 29th July, friends of Sergei Prokofieff were able to show their last respects by filing passed his coffin beautifully placed in the Schreinerei, with a green foliage cross and a circle of red roses. There were large urns of red and white roses and candles around the simple coffin.

Many people had obviously come from the surrounds to attend the funeral and the Goetheanum buildings were abuzz. The funeral took place in the afternoon. The Schreinerei was filled to capacity, with rows of people standing at the back and along the sides, and others outside who could not fit in. It was extremely stuffy, with two people fainting.

The Christian Community funeral service included beautiful piano pieces, a poem in Russian and an obituary by Sergei's friend, Peter Selg. When the coffin was removed there was a palpable sense of the huge space left by the life of Sergei Prokofieff.

On Saturday, 2 August, there was a memorial service for Sergei Prokofieff in the Foundation Stone Hall. Once again the service was simple and moving, with beautiful piano pieces, reading of poems by Rudolf Steiner and Sergei Prokofieff, and the Hallelujah eurythmy piece performed by the Goetheanum stage group and Kairos eurythmy group, all in white. This was very beautiful.

Nine short tributes were paid, including those by Virginia Sease, Bodo von Plato, Paul Mackay, Diana Pauli, Hans Hasler and Astrid Prokofieff, his wife. They portrayed a man driven with purpose but at the same time a romantic and fun-loving being.

The final piano piece, "Con una dolce lentezza" was composed by his grandfather, Sergej S. Prokofieff.

Barbara Kelly

The Kairos Eurythmy Ensemble performing at the Baxter Dance Festival



The Kairos Eurythmy Ensemble having returned from successful performances in Dornach has just received the good news that they have been invited to perform at the Baxter Dance Festival on the 18th of October at 2pm. The Ensemble and graduating students will form a part of a larger performance from various other dance groups. (Tickets at Computicket).

Silke Sponheuer and Michelle Kaplan

Important Dates

- High School Spiritual Science Retreat, Saturday 20 September at Sophia House
- HSSS Conference, 9- 12 January 2015 at Sophia House
- The Kairos Eurythmy Ensemble at the Baxter Dance Festival
18th of October at 2pm
- Special General Meeting, this Saturday, 2 pm 30 August at Sophia House

Thank You

- Charles for the many hours his gardening staff have worked in our Sophia Garden, as a free gift.

Notice - Very important, please read

Dear Members and Friends

Our neighbors on the corner properties of Morpeth rd. (opposite our library), Have lost patience with our visitors parking before their homes. We would ask you, in order to maintain good neighborly relationships, not to park on our end of Morpeth rd.

The Challenge of the Times and the Mission of Truth

'How the whole world in which we grew up has been shattered in fragments! ... The regeneration must come from within, from the soul; humankind must feel the pulsation of a new spiritual life...!
Jan Smuts – Mt Kilimanjaro 1916 (WWI)



“Paths to Apocalyptic Consciousness,” Dr Peter Guttenhofer’s Three Talks at ‘Foot of the World Conference’, Sophia House, July 2014

Peter is a consummate teacher, and in my opinion an ‘Artist of Peter is a consummate teacher, and in my opinion an ‘Artist of Life’ and a dramatist. So ‘as usual’ he brought his content in a vivid manner...and ‘as usual’ it stirred one deeply. As the title of his talks direct one, he made apparent the extent to which the Dragon today casts its shadow, in and on us. Thus we were called as Christopher Fry puts it: “...will you not wake, for pity’s’ sake.”

Yet Peter also brought profound experiences of Hope – one of these holy gifts was contained within his third lecture, when he described an inner exercise from “Knowledge of Higher Worlds” – the Dust and Seed exercise. Peter not only described it but he ‘DEMONSTRATED’ it, he revealed it for me. How to move between the polarity of feeling, that these two ‘substances’ can evoke, when one inwardly works at it. Peter took us through many levels of enhancing these

feelings/truths, e.g. the dust- fragmentation/ breakdown from past; the seed- process of concentration, regeneration called from the future. Dust- old, nerves; Seed- childhood forces, blood. We need both of these poles, and to move between these two inwardly, to go to the ‘dry, cold and hard’ in oneself and then to the ‘germinating’ in one, this will enhance the process of empathy within one. We can then choose to look at the earth from the aspect of the dust particle or rather from the other, is the earth a germinal seed, an embryonic germ for a new universe!

Peter then directed us, using this exercise, to look at other aspects of life: e.g. the Cities. Are the Cities places of fragmentation, where millions of people are alone in skyscrapers, in tube-trains,- squeezed together but ‘plugged in to their head phones’- in alienation, we can then find no purpose in them, only despair. Or if we look from the aspect of the seed, are they not

a birth place of the Individuality, for the process of becoming does require sacrifice, suffering. The birth of the “I”, this is a task of our time, Peter said, to be exposed so that finally, one I and another I ,can meet ‘sheath-less’- this is the necessity started 2000 years ago at The Turning Point of Time, when the “I” was given.

Peter brought things towards an end, when he shared, that in 1910, Rudolf Steiner spoke of a New Happening on Earth, Christ Appearing in the Etheric.....(this was just before the World War I). Rudolf Steiner also emphasised that from the year 1933, it would be even more important to awaken to this phenomena.

Peter through his three lectures I feel, guided us to be aware that the Human Being is the only one who has accesses to “free-life-forces” from his early childhood, and it is the task of our time, the 21st century, that we exercise these. The exercises of Anthroposophy are given for this (e.g. the dust/seed exercise) and THESE EXERCISES CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. “That good may become, what from our hearts we would found, and from our heads direct with single purpose.”

Thank you Peter.

Caroline Hurner

And as a new committee member I am so looking forward to working together with our newly formed committee, which includes past members Cecilia Solis-Peralta, Wilfried Bohm and Linda Merritt, and the new members Craig Tilsey, Rob Macleod and Charles Hugo.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Hurner

POETRY AT THE FOOT OF THE WORLD

Poetry readings opened each day’s session at our Foot of the World conference. Here are a few markers from the journey we took. We followed the thread of the evening talks, which spoke of the alienation and chill in our time, beginning with the cataclysm of the First World War and accelerating through the twentieth century. One young poet, Isaac Rosenberg, who volunteered from Cape Town, had this dread premonition even before he entered the trenches, written in the month the war broke out:

August 1914

What in our lives is burnt

In the fire of this?

The heart’s dear granary?

The much we shall miss?

Three lives hath one life –

Iron, honey, gold.

The gold, the honey gone –

Left is the hard and cold.

Iron are our lives

Molten right through our youth.

A burnt space through ripe fields,

A fair mouth’s broken tooth.

Isaac Rosenberg

... POETRY AT THE FOOT OF THE WORLD

Where then does the poet stand within this time? He will speak of the darkest spectres, follow 'to the bottom of the night', and yet also see beyond, casting ahead at man's highest potential. The poet WH Auden, amidst the tensions building up to the Second World War in 1939:

*In the nightmare of the dark
All the dogs of Europe bark,
And the living nations wait,
Each sequestered in its hate;

Intellectual disgrace
Stares from every human face,
And the seas of pity lie
Locked and frozen in each eye.

Follow, poet, follow right
To the bottom of the night,
With your unconstraining voice
Still persuade us to rejoice;

With the farming of a verse
Make a vineyard of the curse,
Sing of human unsuccess
In a rapture of distress;

In the deserts of the heart
Let the healing fountain start,
In the prison of his days
Teach the free man how to praise.*

WH Auden – from 'In Memoriam
William Yeats', 1939)

Thus the poet as witness and as visionary. But she may also be the victim, and yet soar above any self-pity to a global consciousness. Irina Ratushinskaya was a political prisoner, suffering torture, exposure and hunger strikes when she wrote this, in her twenties, in solitary confinement in a Soviet jail in the 1980's:

To my Unknown Friend

*Above my half of the world
The comets spread their tails.

In my half of the century
Half the world looks me in the eye.

In my hemisphere the wind's blowing,
There are feasts of plague without end.
But a searchlight shines in our faces,
And effaces the touch of death.

And our madness retreats from us,
And our sadnesses pass through us,
And we stand in the midst of our fates,
Setting our shoulders against the plague.

We shall hold it back with our selves,
We shall stride through the nightmare.
It will not go further than us
- don't be afraid
On the other side of the globe!*

Irina Ratushinskaya

And what did we experience here, on our side?
- Through the calamity and fires of the twentieth century a new consciousness announces itself. Thus a voice in Christopher Fry's 1951 play 'A Sleep of Prisoners':

A Sleep of Prisoners

*The human heart can go to the
lengths of God.

Dark and cold we may be. But this
Is no winter now. The frozen misery
Of centuries breaks, cracks, begins to move;
The thunder is the thunder of the flocs,
The thaw, the flood, the upstart Spring.
Thank God our time is now when wrong
Comes up to face us everywhere,
Never to leave us till we take
The longest stride man ever took.
Affairs are now soul size.
The enterprise
Is exploration into God.
Where are you making for? It takes
So many thousand years to wake,
But will you wake for pity's sake?*

Christopher Fry'

Half a century later, Nigerian poet Ben Okri released a poem he called 'Mental Fight' (after William Blakes' words of 200 years earlier: 'I will not cease from Mental Fight, Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand, Till we have built Jerusalem, ...'), his invocation of 'the redemption of humanity through the power of the word':

Wilfried Bohm

Mental Fight

*Clear our minds
Make ourselves present to ourselves
And our age
That we be focused
On this stage
That we concentrate
And listen
That we prepare ourselves
In seriousness and with joy.
Let's be wonderfully awake
For what we are going to create,
To make happen
In this mass co-scripting of the future.*

Ben Okri

Report back on the Conversation group at the Foot of the World Conference

A group of about 12 participants met at 17:30 from Monday to Friday to share thoughts, ideas, experiences, inspirations and even dreams relating to the presentations and poetry of the previous day.

What unfolded over the four days of sharing was a very rich and thought provoking palette of stimulating contributions. We began by exploring the way in which war had developed over the ages from a bringer of positive change to "total War" - beginning with the Anglo-Boer war - since which time each conflict has become the instigator of more and more conflict in which the net result is always negative and in which the highest casualties are always numbered amongst non-combatants - namely the elderly, women and children.

Some of the themes that came up and that we strove to penetrate a little were:

- The seductiveness of evil when all law and order is suspended - even for very ordinary civilians and children;

- The need to differentiate between people and their deeds; that evil is the work of "beings not of flesh and blood" which use people; how evil is also an opportunity for growth if we face and engage it head on;

- The immense power inherent in the seed nature of man and the earth; how the manipulative war on plant seed in the world is being waged as a tool of control and domination;

- How wonderfully powerful, ingenious and insuppressibly vital the human spirit actually is which is why we can still share the trust of the spiritual world in humanity.

Above all it became more and more clear how necessary it is for the modern human being to develop and nurture an inner, personal relationship to the spiritual world if we are going to make a positive contribution to the earth's fulfilling of its role as the seed of a whole new universe.

This conversation group made us all aware of what a wealth of experience, knowledge and insight lives amongst the members of our society.

Richard Goodall

The Challenge of the Times and the Mission of Truth – Creative Writing, Image, Word and Situation Workshop

The flyer to this year's Foot of the World Conference in Cape Town was stylishly enhanced by deeply emotive 1st and 2nd World War photo-images and unfamiliar pertinent quotes by General Smuts from 1916. The interest caused by the title and fascinating format fed the imagination and caused keen anticipation for the poetry workshops and presentations offered.

The workshop entitled, "Creative Writing, Image, Word and Situation" was led by Cyril Coetzee over 4 days. All our writing activity had as a foundation the 4 archetypal language modalities (which we aligned to the 4 temperaments): Statement, Question, Exclamation and Command. These modalities were wonderfully effective in widening our horizons, whether it was in: - studying details in

a painting; making accurate observations while reflecting uncritically in the present moment; re-recording memories of early childhood; inventing a dream or writing a portrait sketch preliminary to turning it into a sonnet!

In sharing our results within the group we were moved by the revelation of the depth of creativity possible within a safe atmosphere of challenge and trust. It motivated the wish to continue the deepening and fulfilling process. Thank you warmly Cyril.

Marion Penfold



"Photograph taken at the moment the first of the Jewish prisoners at the train became aware of liberation and started to move up the hill toward our troops, near the Elbe in 1945" Dr. (Sgt.) George C. Gross "A train near Magdeburg"

Eurythmy with creative texts Workshop

I joined the Eurythmy workshop led by Cobie Roelvert at the recent Foot of World Conference. What a joy it was to be led so gently into the subtle and intimate beauty of Eurythmy. After this warming up and getting a feeling for one's instrument, we learnt to do two short text pieces, an excerpt from Wilfred Owen's Anthem for Doomed Youth, full of subdued drama, and the beautiful verse by Rudolf Steiner which we got to show at the end of the Conference:

*Spirit triumphant
Flame through the weakness of
timorous souls,
Burn up the egoism,
Kindle compassion
That selflessness, the lifestream of
Mankind,
May rule as the wellspring
Of spirit rebirth.*

Thank you, Cobie for this wonderful experience.

Luise Boeddinghaus, Hermanus

Mandates Updates

Report from the Pedagogical Section

The Section consists of practising teachers in the High School of Spiritual Science, 20 of whom are on our mailing list, and 10 who regularly attend our termly meetings.

Over the years the Pedagogical section has helped to deepen the learning experiences at National Teachers Conferences, Anthroposophical Conferences and Retreats. Further out of this deepening we host and share experiences with fellow colleagues at the annual meeting of combined school Colleges.

In our next combined Colleges meeting in September we are looking to deepen the experience of the College Imagination. This Imagination calls us to build strong imaginations of the Beings of the Third Hierarchy, and know that they aid us as we walk together daily and meet weekly. Through this meditative work, one can reach to the realms of inspiration and intuition.

We will also continue to nurture the seeds planted in the recent National Teachers Conference “the teacher as artist”, and what that means.

Some of our questions within the Section are: How can we be more effective in spreading consciousness of Waldorf Pedagogy and how can we support our fellow colleagues in growing the consciousness of anthroposophy.

In July Peter Guttenhöfer offered a 3 day workshop for teachers, under the auspices of the

Pedagogical Section. It was cryptically entitled “The teachers future incarnation meets with the child’s past incarnations”, or “the sculptural forces in the child meet the musical forces in the teacher” (see diagram below).

Over 20 teachers attended this challenging and enlivening course based on a lecture from ‘Art in the Light of Mystery Wisdom’

Michael Grimley last term offered an evening to members of the Pedagogical Section based on his research arising from HSSS Class Lesson 6 and Lecture 6 in ‘The Study of Man’. This event was very well attended.

Michael is now offering a second report session to the Section based on his further research into imagination, inspiration and intuition. We look forward eagerly to this.

On Women’s day, 9th August under the auspices of the Pedagogical Section Michael Merle our South African representative on the International Forum shared with waldorf teachers in the Western Cape news of their recent meeting in Dornach. The hall was filled with eager participants from many schools.

Thus this Section is glad to report that it is effective in sharing and deepening the work out of Anthroposophy into the Waldorf School Movement.

Adrienne Milne



Articles

Michael Grimley – The Karma of Untruth

On Sunday 17th August, we had the privilege of hearing Michael Grimley’s second talk on his researches into the background of the First World War. In the first talk, given as a contribution to this year’s Foot of the World conference, he had focused on the convoluted series of events in the fortnight leading up to the outbreak of war in August 1914, and now he widened the context, going back several decades to trace the tendencies and undercurrents that precipitated the previously outlined events.

The picture he painted for us is a somewhat bleak one – history as the outcome of the all-too-willing acceptance of misrepresentations fabricated by political manipulators. In this way events emerge from what we have been persuaded is the case and not from what actually is the case, and in the midst of this tragic mish-mash of projection and false assumption the main victim is the truth. Once untruth has been manufactured on this kind of scale it prepares the way for further catastrophes, that might otherwise have been averted.

This is the central insight of a series of lectures (The Karma of Untruth) given by Rudolf Steiner in 1916. Michael elucidated the meticulousness of Steiner’s research into the antecedents of the events he was then living through, and traced the path by which Steiner exposed the central untruth that led to the outbreak of the Great War and, as

he intimated, would be the source of “bad karma” for the future. The position Steiner takes is a controversial one; namely, that the Germans were not the militaristic warmongers they were made out to be, and that in fact the warmongering had been almost entirely on the side of the other players in the international equation: France, Russia and Great Britain. This great untruth determined the climate for subsequent events in Europe, for instance, setting the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, by which Germany was made to take the blame for the war and forced to make reparations which crippled her economy. We all now know what this led to, and Steiner relentlessly pointed out the dangers latent in the Treaty in lectures in the early twenties.

It is uncanny, as Michael pointed out, that historians (e.g. Prof. Christopher Clark’s recent book The Sleepwalkers) now seem to be coming round to Steiner’s view. He also described in some detail what might be called the “South African axis” (involving Rhodes and Milner) in the fashioning of the untruth. For the South African “brits” in the audience all this was a hard pill to swallow. There is also the fact that so many generations have by now been formed by this distorted picture that we will surely be busy with it for many years to come.

Norman Skillen

More about Michael Grimley’s research

Michael Grimley has written up this research in a first draft, which he hopes to publish as soon as he can.

Lecture

The Mission of Reverence (Final Part) by Rudolf Steiner, Dornach, Berlin, 28th October 1909

Thinking itself cannot lead the soul out; this comes about through devotion, but thinking must then immediately exert itself to permeate with the life of thought the object of the soul's devotion. In other words, there must be a resolve to think about this object. Directly the devotional impulse loses the will to think, there is a danger of losing oneself. If anyone makes it a matter of principle not to think about the object of his devotion, this can lead in extreme cases to a lasting debility of the soul.

Is love, the other element in reverence, exposed to a similar fate? Something that radiates from the human Self towards the unknown must be poured into love, so that never for a moment does the Ego fail to sustain itself. The Ego must have the will to enter into everything which forms the object of its devotion, and it must maintain itself in face of the external, the unknown, the supersensible. What becomes of love if the Ego fails to maintain itself at the moment of encountering the unknown, if it is unwilling to bring the light of thinking and of rational judgment to bear on the unknown? Love of that kind becomes more sentimental enthusiasm (*Schwarmerei*). But the Ego can begin to find its way from the Intellectual Soul, where it lives, to the external unknown, and then it can never extinguish itself altogether. Unlike the will, the Ego cannot completely mortify itself. When the soul seeks to embrace the external world with feeling, the Ego is always present in the feeling, but if it is not supported by thinking and willing, it rushes forth without restraint, unconscious of itself. And if this love for the unknown is not accompanied by resolute thinking, the soul can fall into a sentimental extreme, somewhat like sleep-walking, just as the state reached by the soul when submissive devotion leads to loss of the Self is somewhat like a bodily fainting-fit. When a sentimental enthusiast

goes forth to encounter the unknown, he leaves behind the strength of the Ego and takes with him only secondary forces. Since the strength of the Ego is absent from his consciousness, he tries to grasp the unknown as one does in the realm of dreams. Under these conditions the soul falls into what may be called an enduring state of dreaming or somnambulism.

Again, if the soul is unable to relate itself properly to the world and to other people, if it rushes out into life and shrinks from using the light of thought to illuminate its situation, then the Ego, having fallen into a somnambulist condition, is bound to go astray and to wander through the world like a will-o-the-wisp.

If the soul succumbs to mental laziness and shuns the light of thought when it meets the unknown, then, and only then, will it harbour superstitions in one or other form. The sentimental soul, with its fond dreams, wandering through life as though asleep, and the indolent soul, unwilling to be fully conscious of itself — these are the souls most inclined to believe everything blindly. Their tendency is to avoid the effort of thinking for themselves and to allow truth and knowledge to be prescribed for them.

If we are to get to know an external object, we have to bring our own productive thinking to bear on it, and it is the same with the supersensible, whatever form this may take. Never, in seeking to gain a knowledge of the supersensible, must we exclude thinking. Directly we rely on merely observing the supersensible, we are exposed to all possible deceptions and errors. All such errors and superstitions, all the wrong or untruthful ways of entering the supersensible worlds, can be attributed in the last instance to a refusal to allow consciousness to be illuminated by the light of creative thought. No one can be deceived by information said to come from the spiritual world if he has the will to keep his thinking always active and independent. Nothing else will suffice, and this is something that every spiritual researcher will confirm. The stronger the will is to creative thinking, the greater is the possibility of gaining true, clear and certain knowledge of the spiritual world.

Thus we see the need for a means of education which will lead the Ego into the Consciousness Soul and will guide the Consciousness Soul in the face of the unknown, both the physical unknown and the unknown supersensible. Reverence, consisting of devotion and love, provides the means we seek. When the latter are imbued with the right kind of self-feeling, they become steps which lead to ever-greater heights.

True devotion, in whatever form it is experienced by the soul, whether through prayer or otherwise, can never lead anyone astray. The best way of learning to know something is to approach it first of all with love and devotion. A healthy education will consider especially how strength can be given to the development of the soul through the devotional impulse. To a child the world is largely unknown: if we are to guide him towards knowledge and sound judgment of it, the best way is to awaken in him a feeling of reverence towards it; and we can be sure that by so doing we shall lead him to fullness of experience in any walk of life.

It is very important for the human soul if it can look back to a childhood in which devotion, leading on to reverence, was often felt. Frequent opportunities to look up to revered persons, and to gaze with heartfelt devotion at things that are still beyond its understanding, provide a good impulse for higher development in later life. A person will always gratefully remember those occasions, when as a child in the family circle, he heard of some outstanding personality of whom everyone spoke with devotion and reverence. A feeling of holy awe, which gives reverence a specially intimate character, will then permeate the soul. Or someone may relate how with trembling hand, later on, he rang the bell and shyly made his way into the room of the revered personality whom he was meeting for the first time, after having heard him spoken of with so much respectful admiration. Simply to have come into his presence and exchanged a few words can confirm a devotion which will be particularly helpful when we are trying to unravel the great riddles of existence and are seeking for the goal which we long to make

our own. Here reverence is a force which draws us upward, and by so doing fortifies and invigorates the soul. How can this be? Let us consider the outward expression of reverence in human gestures — what forms does it take? We bend our knees, fold our hands, and incline our heads towards the object of our reverence. These are the organs whereby the Ego, and above all the higher faculties of the soul, can express themselves most intensively.

In physical life a man stands upright by firmly extending his legs; his Ego radiates out through his hands in acts of blessing; and by moving his head he can observe the earth or the heavens. But from studying human nature, we learn also that our legs are stretched out at their best in strong, conscious action if they have first learnt to bend the knee where reverence is really strong, conscious action if they have first learnt to bend the knee where reverence is really due. For this genuflection opens the door to a force which seeks to find its way into our organism. Knees which have not learnt to bend in reverence give out only what they have always had; they spread out their own nullity, to which they have added nothing. But legs which have learnt to genuflect receive, when they are extended, a new force, and then it is this, not their own nullity, which they spread around them. Hands which would fain bless and comfort, although they have never been folded in reverence and devotion, cannot bestow much love and blessing from their own nullity. But hands which have learnt to fold themselves in reverence have received a new force and are powerfully penetrated by the Ego. For the path taken by this force leads first through the heart, where it kindles love; and the reverence of the folded hands, having passed through the heart and flowed into the hands, turns into blessing.

The head may turn its eyes and strain its ears to survey the world in all directions, but it presents nothing but its own emptiness. If, however, the head has been bent in reverence, it gains a new force; it will bring to meet the outer world the feelings it has acquired through reverence.

Anyone who studies the gestures of people, and knows what they signify, will see how reverence is expressed in external physiognomy; he will see how this reverence enhances the strength of the Ego and so makes it possible for the Ego to penetrate into the unknown. Moreover, this self-education through reverence has the effect of raising to the surface our obscure instincts and emotions, our sympathies and antipathies, which otherwise make their way into the soul unconsciously or subconsciously, unchallenged by the light of judgment. Precisely these feelings are cleansed and purified through self-education by reverence and through the penetration by the Ego of the higher members of the soul. The obscure forces of sympathy and antipathy, always prone to error, are permeated by the light of the soul and transformed into judgment, aesthetic taste and rightly guided moral feeling. A soul educated by reverence will convert its dark cravings and aversions into a feeling for the beautiful and a feeling for the good. A soul that has cleansed its obscure instincts and will-impulses through devotion will gradually build up from them what we call moral ideals. Reverence is something that we plant in the soul as a seed; and the seed will bear fruit.

Human life offers yet another example. We see everywhere that the course of a man's life goes through ascending and declining stages. Childhood and youth are stages of ascent; then comes a pause, and finally, in the later years, a decline. Now the remarkable thing is, that the qualities acquired in childhood and youth reappear in a different form during the years of decline. If much reverence, rightly guided, has been part of the experience of childhood, it acts as a seed which comes to fruition in old age as strength for active living. A childhood and youth during which devotion and love were not fostered under the right guidance will lead to a weak and powerless old age. Reverence must take hold of every soul that is to make progress in its development.

How is it, then, with the corresponding quality in the object of our reverence? If we look with love

on another being, then the reciprocated love of the latter will reveal what can perhaps arise. If a man is lovingly devoted to his God, he can be sure that God inclines to him also in love. Reverence is the feeling he develops for whatever he calls his God out there in the universe. Since the reaction to reverence cannot itself be called reverence, we may not speak of a divine reverence towards man. What, then, precisely is the opposite of reverence in this context? What is it that flows out to meet reverence when reverence seeks the divine? It is might, the Almighty power of the Divine. Reverence that we learn to feel in youth returns to us as strength for living in old age, and if we turn in reverence to the divine, our reverence flows back to us as an experience of the Almighty. That is what we feel, whether we look up to the starry heavens in their endless glory and our reverence goes out to all that lies around us, beyond our compass, or whether we look up to our invisible God, in whatever form, who pervades and animates the cosmos.

We look up towards the Almighty and we come to feel with certainty that we cannot advance towards union with that which is above us unless we first approach it from below with reverence. We draw nearer to the Almighty when we immerse ourselves in reverence. Thus we can speak of an Almighty in this sense, while a true feeling for the meaning of words prevents us from speaking of an All-loving. Power can be increased or enhanced in proportion to the number of beings over which it extends. It is different with love. If a child is loved by its mother, this does not prevent her from loving equally her second, third or fourth child. It is false for anyone to say: I must divide up my love because it is to cover two objects. It is false to speak either of an "all-knowledge" or of an indefinite "all-love". Love has no degree and cannot be limited by figures.

Love and devotion together make up reverence. We can have a devoted attitude to this or that unknown if we have the right feeling for it. Devotion can be enhanced, but it does not have

to be divided up or multiplied when it is felt for a number of beings. Since this is true also of love, the Ego has no need to lose or disperse itself if it turns with love and devotion towards the unknown. Love and devotion are thus the right guides to the unknown, and the best educators of the soul in its advance from the Intellectual Soul to the Consciousness Soul.

Whereas the overcoming of anger educates the Sentient Soul, and the striving for truth educates the Intellectual Soul, reverence educates the Consciousness Soul, bringing more and more knowledge within its reach. But this reverence must be led and guided from a standpoint which never shuts out the light of thought. When love flows forth from us, it ensures by its own worth that our Self can go with it, and this applies also to devotion. We could indeed lose our Self, but we need not. That is the point, and it must be kept especially in mind if an impulse of reverence enters into the education of the young. A blind, unconscious reverence is never right. The cultivation of reverence must go together with the cultivation of a healthy Ego-feeling.

Whereas the mystics of all ages, together with Goethe, have spoken of the unknown, undefined element to which the soul is drawn, as the eternal-feminine, we may without misunderstanding, speak of the element which must always animate reverence as the eternal-masculine. For just as the eternal-feminine is present in both man and woman, so is this eternal-masculine, this healthy Ego-feeling, present in all reverence by man or woman. And when Goethe's Chorus mysticus comes before us, we may, having come to know the mission of reverence which leads us towards the unknown, add the element which must permeate all reverence — the Eternal-masculine.

Thus we are now able to reach a right understanding of the experience of the human soul when it strives to unite itself with the unknown and attains to the Unio mystica, wherein all reverence is consummated.

But this mystical union will harm the soul if the Ego is lost while seeking to unite itself with the unknown in any form. If the Ego has lost itself, it will bring to the unknown nothing of value. Self-sacrifice in the Unio mystica requires that one must have become something, must have something to sacrifice. If a weak Ego, with no strength in itself, is united with what lies above us, the union has no value. The Unio mystica has value only when a strong Ego ascends to the regions of which the Chorus mysticus speaks. When Goethe speaks of the regions to which the higher reverence can lead us, in order to gain there the highest knowledge, and when his Chorus mysticus tells us in beautiful words:

All things transient
 Are but a parable;
 Earth's insufficiency
 Here finds fulfilment;
 The indescribable
 Here becomes deed;
 The eternal-feminine
 Draws us on high —

Then, if we rightly understand the Unio mystica, we can reply: Yes —

All things transient
 Are but a parable;
 Earth's insufficiency
 Here finds fulfilment;
 The indescribable
 Here becomes deed;
 The eternal-masculine
 Draws us on high

Rudolf Steiner

(Rudolf Steiner achieve, www.rsarchive.org - Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung)

Meditation

*We are not granted
A rest on any step;
The active man
Must live and strive
From life to life,
As plants renew themselves
From spring to spring.
So man must rise
Through error to truth
From fetters into freedom
Through sickness and through death
To beauty, health and life.*

Friedrich Hoelderlin, modified by Rudolf Steiner
Found in 'Parcifal – an Introduction' by Eileen Hutchins