

Man as a Focal Point for Channelling the Light

by Sir George Trevelyan

We all know the experience of waking in the early hours with a sense that in sleep we have been filled with forebodings. The Victorians had a saying: 'no man is solvent at four o'clock in the morning.' The heart sinks and the pit of the stomach seems possessed by anxieties. If you can consciously transform this it can become a very significant experience. This is in fact the very best time for meditation. One can rarely drive out the devils while cuddling up in bed, but one can get up, light a candle, wrap oneself in a warm cocoon of blankets and forget the body.

The task is to clear out the anxieties which have taken possession and create a centre of inner stillness. This is the first object of all meditation. First become quite still physically with spine erect and check through your body to see that you are not tensing brow, jaw, neck, shoulders, hands or legs. Enter the inner chapel and sweep out the cobwebs and drive out the disturbing thoughts. Quietly watch the breathing rhythm and note how it gets ever, more gentle until you are in absolute inner stillness. You may feel that you are, in a sense, 'being breathed' by the universe. It is as if your heart were breathing. You can in your imaginative experience inhale spiritual light down through the crown of the head, impregnating the body, filling the heart, to be breathed out in love for all being.

You have created something that was not there before, a protected centre or chamber of stillness and tranquility. It is like a cathode ray, a vacuum which begins to glow when an electric charge is passed through it. You have in the surrounding psychic field made a glowing point of stillness defended against attack by dark emotions. In time the alarms and fears are just not there anymore. One begins actively to experience the qualities or attributes of the Higher Self which are, basically, stillness and tranquility, courage and love, gentleness and joy.

A variant in this imagination is to see yourself as in a chalice like an opened flower. You are a point of consciousness in this flower, opened up to receive the light of the spiritual sun streaming down from higher worlds. Bask in that sunlight. Every fibre of your being can be impregnated by the light. Just as there can be no more darkness in the room when we turn on the light, so the dark and negative emotions of the Lower Self cannot enter at the same time as the positive attributes of the Higher Self. They are a polarity.

In Omar Khayyam we find the wonderful lines:
"Oh my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
Today of past regrets and future fears".

These are the negative time-ridden emotions of the lower self. Since man possesses the faculty of looking before and after, he will be hounded by remorse and anxiety and self pity. The animals of course do not suffer in this way. As human beings we are bedeviled by such emotions and meditation is

a way of lifting above them. Lift this chalice of the self until it floats like a water lily on the surface of the psychic atmosphere of earth; See the blue heavens above. We are lifted into stillness, out of time. We are touching the eternal in ourselves. We have indeed become an "intersection point of the timeless with time", and we are discovering in inner experience our real being, our Higher Self, a Self which is free from the ravages of time-ridden thinking.

We are sounding positive soul attributes within ourselves; we are reaching up towards the spiritual worlds. We are creating by our own initiative the attribute of tranquility within the heart and thus expelling anxiety. Against all odds we can sound courage in the heart. We begin to discover the great truth known to the Greeks - "Man know thyself end thou shalt know the Universe". We begin to sense what this means, sitting in that cocoon in the early hours when all is still before dawn. By now beautifully warmed so that our body is forgotten, the worries are dispersed, we are open to the penetration of the light and can begin to sound the qualities in the heart.

Just as when you strike middle C on the piano, the note reverberates in response in higher octaves, so we can innerly attune to higher planes to which the soul attributes belong. Actually these are the attributes of the great spheres of the planets. The old notion of the "Crystal Spheres" still held in Shakespeare's day, becomes acceptable again in our time. Venus is not just the shining orb we call the morning star. The crystal sphere is the great area round which the planet makes its orbit and this represents the field of its 'sweet influences'.

Each of the planets has its sphere and they all interpenetrate, the earth lying more or less in the centre of them all. Thus the sphere of influence of every planet is in this room, the cosmic soul attributes are all here, Courage from Mars, Joy from Jupiter, Love from Venus. They are also within our own soul. When, like sounding Middle C, we sound Courage, it reverberates up on to higher levels and draws down a response from the spiritual worlds. This is the mystery of Attunement.

Since man is the measure of all things, we discover the universal quality in our own souls and deliberately sound it up into the planetary spheres to call forth an answering response. In so doing we blend with the Whole. We experience in this secret hour of meditation that we are truly part of this eternal and timeless world of Spirit, and that we can build the qualities of our higher self into our lower self. By now perhaps it is a quarter to five in the morning and you may be approaching the stage of wonderful inner stillness and tranquility, which the East calls "bliss consciousness". The dark possession is wholly evaporated and you can safely come back to earth, unwrap the cocoon and return to bed with light and love in the heart and peace in the mind. Then sleep, and awaken to carry these qualities into your environment of daily activity.

We are really doing a remarkable task in overcoming the anxieties of the Lower Self in order that the Higher Self possesses our being. This is our cosmic duty. We do something to dispel the darkness of our world. For this,

man comes to earth and can thus begin to influence his environment, channelling and radiating light into the whole area touched by his life activities. For every man is a focal point for the in-flooding of the eternal powers of the spirit. What do we mean by that word 'eternal'? Here there has been much misunderstanding. We are still bedeviled by the heritage of medieval belief that we suffer 'eternal damnation' because of some evil done in our earth life, or enjoy praising the Lord to eternity as a reward for a good life. But this concept of eternal suffering or joy is itself a time-ridden idea, for it is assumed to mean time without end. We must change this thinking. The eternal worlds are simply the spheres of being outside time. The realm of Absolute Being, the Divine Creative source, is everywhere, interpenetrating everything, but beyond Time. When substance and form are created, then time has to come to birth as well. In solid matter events must appear to move one after another.

Thus when a spiritual being wishes to become active in a solid planet like the Earth it has to enter the field of Time. We are spiritual beings. We are able to return to source, to revisit the Timeless or Eternal planes to which we belong. You can drop back into them for an hour, a day, or a hundred years. You move into the Eternal in sleep, leaving the physical and etheric bodies on the bed. During that time you are free to range in soul-travel, though we mostly do not possess faculties of perception to know it. The great adepts have developed what is called 'continuity of consciousness and can therefore know of their sleep experiences. This is a great source of spiritual investigation.

In meditation we again get in touch with the Timeless World and of course re-enter it when we discard the physical body at so-called death. A spiritual being can move freely anywhere in the Timeless field, moving instantly wherever thought is projected and of course returning instantly to the waiting body when this is necessary. When we discard the physical body at so-called 'death' we are released back into a world of much greater life. There can be no extinction for this droplet of the Divine source. Thus fear of extinction at death is removed if we can grasp the great concept that man is a being of Spirit, Soul and Body.

The reason for the wide fear and doubt about death is that we have mostly lost the understanding of this great truth. In the centuries following Christ's descent and of course earlier in the teachings of the mystery temples, it was known and understood that man was a spiritual entity in a universe spiritual in its essential nature, and that in order to live upon earth he had to take to himself a physical body. This consciousness was gradually lost, and the date 869 A.D. may be seen as a kind of watershed. In that year at the Council of Constantinople, the Pope decreed that henceforth it was heresy to speak of men as body, soul and spirit. From now on he was body and soul, soul having certain spiritual attributes. This really opened the possibility of the materialistic view of death.

The New Age vision is now, so to speak, reversing the Council of Constantinople by recognizing once again that man is not his physical or astral body, but that these are the necessary sheaths which make life and

activity possible and effective in the limitations of the physical plane. The true entity of man is a spiritual being, ageless, eternal and indestructible. If this could be destroyed it would undermine the whole concept of a Creator. The spiritual being in you always was and always will be.

Let us follow through with this thought. Firstly, it means that survival is axiomatic. Of course you survive, since you are evolving through an endless evolution with further life and wider consciousness. But the more important implication is that you were there before you were born. We have to conceive this condition of un-bornness or pre-bornness - pre-existence. It implies that we enter birth as an already developed soul. As a timeless being we choose to enter Time at birth.

Some people have actually experienced this consciously. The 17th Century poet Traherne possessed the faculty of remembering back into the womb, and beyond, and most of his poems are concerned with this knowledge. Here is a verse from the poem he calls 'The Praeparative'

Before my sinews did my limbs unite
I was within
A House I knew not; newly cloath'd with Skin.
The verse describes the embryo before the body begins to form and goes on:
"Then was my Soul my only All to me,
A living endless Ey,
Scarce bounded by the Sky,
Whose Power, and Act, and Essence was to see;
I was an inward Sphere of Light
Or an interminable Orb of Sight,
Exceeding that which makes the Days,
A vital Sun that shed &broad its Rays;
All Life, all Sense,
A naked, simple, pure Intelligence.
Without restriction then did I behold
The pure Ideas of all things".

Consider the tremendous implications of this possibility. The tacit assumption of a great many people, arising directly from the loss of vision of the spiritual nature of man, is that you begin at conception and that your character and quality are built up solely from family inheritance and of heredity and the impact of your environment. Thus it is felt that our limitations can be explained away and excused on the grounds solely of our heredity and upbringing. Our defects are not our fault but misfortune.

The counter view, arising out of the belief that an eternal spiritual entity is incarnating, lifts our thinking on to a different scale. It is said that Bach, a great spirit who was the Being of Music, needed the absolutely perfect physical ear in order to bring down heavenly melodies to earth.

He therefore chose to incarnate at the end of fourteen generations of musicians. He chose an ancestral stream which would give him the tool for

great music to pour through. This view would explain why Genius so often comes at the end of a line. The postulate of pre-existence implies that we actually choose our parents and the environment into which we are going to incarnate, in order to get the setting the soul needs for developing faculties arid undergoing the great training experience of life on earth.

Now first of all means if you can accept Traherne's testimony, that it is a mistake to think of the newborn child as a 'tiny little soul'. It is possibly a great mature soul beginning to incarnate into a tiny little body. The soul is still expanded in the widths of the universe and begins the astounding process of narrowing down into the growing body through a series of seven year cycles, until at twenty-one the Ego can be fully incarnate and 'comes of age'. Entry into a body must be an appalling limitation for a free ranging spiritual being, something like the entry into a sarcophagus. Birth is thus a kind of death, and death more truly rebirth into a greater freedom.

We begin to see that what Wordsworth expressed in the great 'Ode on the Intimations of immortality in Early Childhood' is indeed the truth. It is for us within the New Age movement to revive the 'Vision Splendid' and as we get older to prepare for the release of this ageless, immortal and therefore ever youthful entity from it's worn out body. The body is obviously a temporal thing, subject to the ravages of time. The soul, though maturing through earth experiences which may even appear shattering, will be released back into a world in which it knows that it is eternally young. A man can only be rightly called a 'poor old soul' if he has identified his soul with his ageing body, and its aches and pains. Listen to W. B. Yeats in the poem 'Sailing to Byzantium':

"An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick unless
Soul clap its hands and sing and louder sing
For every tatter of its mortal dress
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence
And therefore have I sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium".

There is a challenge to the lot of us! That is the text for unending adult education. We can rejuvenate the eternal being in its ageing body by 'studying monuments of its own magnificence' and equally by grasping the future prospects opening to us as the soul advances into wider planes of being. Yeats was convinced of the truth of re-incarnation. This earth is what Keats called a 'Vale of soul making'. We undergo soul trials and ordeals in order to develop qualities and attributes before returning to the eternal realms between death and a new birth.

This field of gravity upon earth gives the experience of drastic limitation and of being separated from the will of God. The result of this is that we develop free-will, that Divine gift. Thus man can evolve to inner freedom. It is all a vast

experiment that man may learn out of his free decision and his own work upon himself to overcome the greed of his lower ego and unite with his Higher Self.

This transformation takes a long time. You cannot hope to pass your A Levels and enter a University by dropping in to school for one term in the third form. Every class offers new teaching. In every historical epoch the consciousness of mankind evolves. It seems obviously necessary that the human being should pass through the whole 'School of Earth' learning the lessons of each epoch. We carry history forward in our own souls. We have all, however, humbly played our part in the age of Greece and Rome or the middle Ages. Therefore 'studying monuments of its own magnificence' means studying in a certain sense achievements of our own souls through history. What memories would lie in each of us if we could but look back through the corridors of time. Steiner tells us that one of the purposes of the present age is to develop our consciousness far enough so that in the next life we shall be able to remember back into this present one and beyond. Flow the study of history would then change, for we all are history!

I know of a doctor psychiatrist who uses hypnosis to discover the point of lesion in the memories of his patients. Often this is found in an earlier life. In one case the patient described a naval battle in Nelson's time, and in this memory was found the moment of soul damage which reflected itself in mental breakdown in this life. Apparently Mountbatten heard of this and asked to borrow the tape to play to his admirals and naval historians in order to hear a first-hand account of a naval battle. This suggests that high authority in this country recognizes the truth and significance of reincarnation.

Naturally all guessing or speculation about past lives is useless and undesirable, but to grasp the general principle can be very strengthening. We can validly note which periods of history we are specially drawn to, knowing that a deep affinity may be showing itself. We may also recognize that souls tend to incarnate in groups. This means that our special friends, our colleagues in work and our relatives are probably beings with whom we have been in incarnation together in earlier lives. In these important days, it is the more likely that we are being/drawn together again of intent and for real purpose. We are in these years finding our spiritual families, which thought gives us strength to meet personality difficulties in our lives and to hold a deeper respect for those souls with whom we are linked.

Man is being called upon to wake up to his responsibility as the organ of consciousness in evolution. We are being prepared for entry into the Aquarian Age when the waters of the spirit are poured out. The great seers have all pointed to the last quarter of this century as the great spiritual turning point for mankind. With the rapid advance of knowledge and consciousness it becomes possible for man to destroy life upon this planet in his folly and ignorance or to take a step onward into cosmic consciousness which could allow the redemption of Earth through a blending of higher intelligence. Cosmic energies imbued with intelligence and love have been released into our sphere since 1975, leading to the greatest spiritual crisis that human evolution has ever experienced.

We are indeed living in an apocalyptic age. If powers of Harmony, Love and Truth indeed began to flood human consciousness it would, to those filled with avarice, greed, rivalry, violence and fear, appear like the outpourings of the Vials of Wrath. All mankind is now overlit by the Cosmic Christ, the Exalted Lord of All Light. A new society is being born in the middle of our old and crumbling social structure. It will be made up of those who can receive into their hearts the new love and power for harmony. The emerging society is based more on what men can give than what they can get. It will be the Ark that can float upon the Deluge. Our scale of thinking has to be greatly widened if we are to find real courage to face the coming changes. Such hope is instilled into us if we can think apocalyptically for after the great tribulation comes the Light. There never was such an age in which to be incarnated. This especially applies to the young, for they have the great task of building the new society in co-operation with the higher intelligence.

Yet, as we have seen, we are each of us eternal souls and therefore however many years we have lived we can carry a young heart. We are all concerned with the great spiritual awakening of our time and it makes little difference whether a man is now in incarnation or working from the freer planes after release from the body. The whole spiritual movement is strengthened by every great soul who moves on but remains in telepathic contact with those still active in the earth arena.

The analogy of war is powerful. We are like fifth columnists in the enemy occupied country. It is our task to hold a bridgehead in the darkened psychic atmosphere of earth and send up the signal for the parachute troops to drop. It looks as if these great Forces of Light are prepared for invasion. Since they will not violate our free will, we have to invoke them. The initiative is ours. Do not let us be discouraged by all the news of violence in our time. This is but the picture of the Beast in Revelation fighting furiously to drag down the human soul "because he knoweth that his time is short". But "look up, for our salvation draweth nigh".