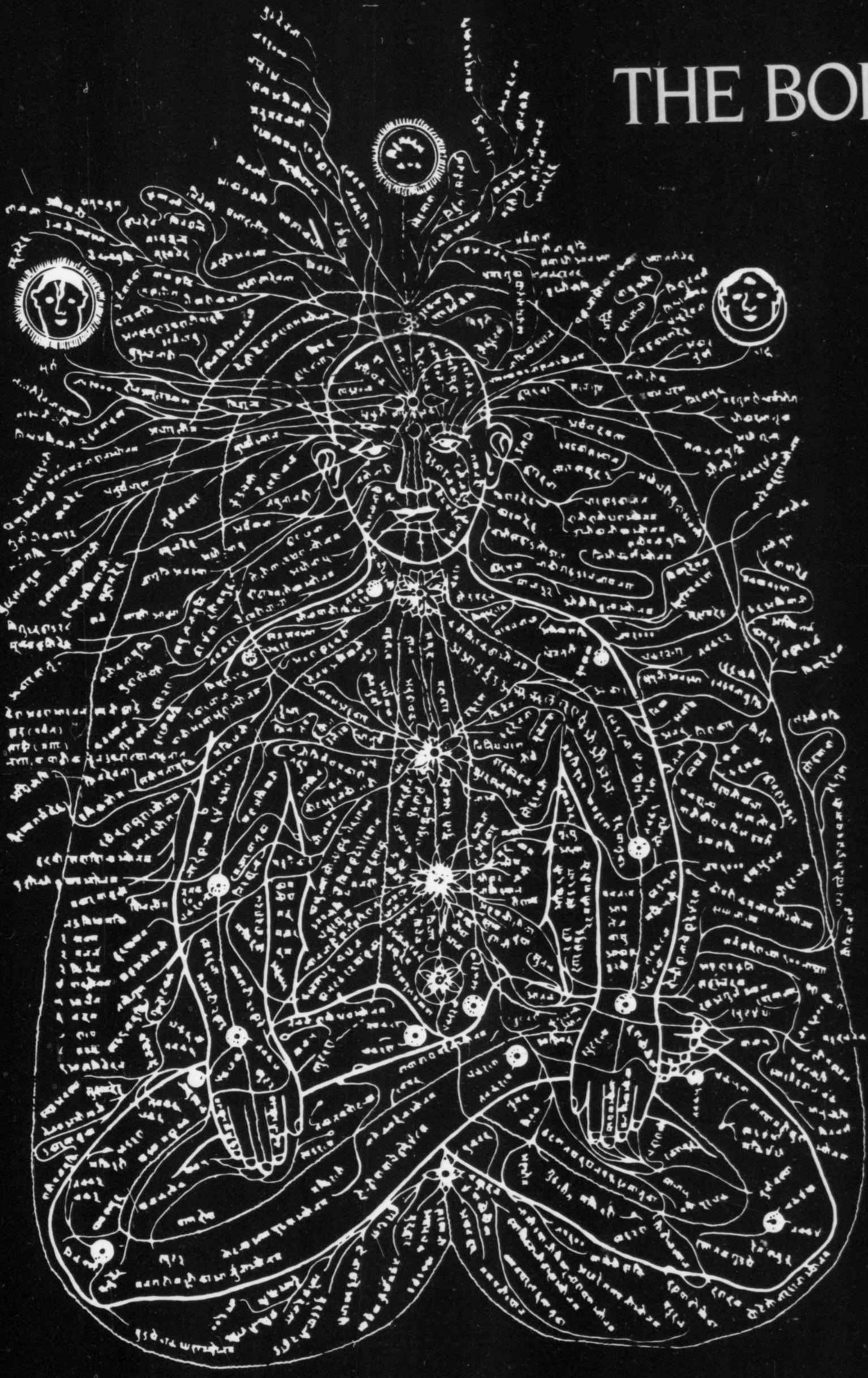
PARABOLA

THE MAGAZINE OF MYTH AND TRADITION

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THE BODY



PARABOLA

MYTH AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

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THE BODY

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Cover: The circulation of the body, after a tablet in the Monastery of the White Clouds, near Peking.

FOCUS

"When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female; and when you fashion eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in the place of a hand, and a foot in the place of a foot, and a likeness in the place of a likeness, then will you enter the Kingdom." These words attributed to Jesus in the gnostic gospel of Thomas are echoed throughout the teachings of the traditions. The human being has two natures, inhabits two realms equally natural to him; it is the human task to "make the two one."

In his article in this issue, Gai Eaton writes about Jallaludin Rumi's vision that the body is "the shadow of the shadow of the Heart." In our time we are much more likely to see the mind and psyche as shadows cast by the body—results, as it were, of the physical presence. "Whether consciously or not," he writes, ". . . the apparent massive solidity of the material world mesmerizes us and we are convinced that the outward produces the inward." This conviction is both deeply-rooted and unexamined while being reinforced at every moment by our contemporary society.

Everything we know, we know through and in the body. But what is the body? "Is the soul one thing and the body another?" the Buddha was asked. "That," he said, "is a matter on which I have expressed no opinion." Definitions are traps, and yet we define



our body at every moment. Sometimes we look at it as a possession, and dress and feed it to reflect yet another definition. At other times this "possession" turns on us and becomes a bully and a tyrant, with demands opposed to what we think and feel. It can be called a child, a victim, or a seer, but the tendency is to see it in isolation from the destiny of the whole being. It is here that the insights of the traditions come to our aid.

From the traditional perspective, the body is less an object than an event, and intense field of many levels of energies in constant process, tending either toward integration or fragmentation. In our talk with him in this issue, Henri Tracol speaks of the inherency in us toward "dream and disincarnation." Our attention is continually attracted outside; rarely do we occupy our bodies, rarely is even part of this attention "incarnated," dwelling within the body. In the perceived opposition between inner and outer, we try to "make the two one" by going outward wholly or withdrawing—neither of which brings us to the sense of unity we seek. "It is not enough," he writes, "to awaken to the evidence of a more inner, subtle presence, it is necessary to have an exchange in which [man] takes part as a whole being."

Throughout the issue we see the body as an avenue of exchange between inner and outer, sense and spirit, above and below, a meeting place where the two currents of life can come into balance. Through the body alone can the sense of separation and distance be overcome. There is, after all, no space, no gap anywhere between the elements within the body, between one's body and the whole of humanity, the whole of nature.

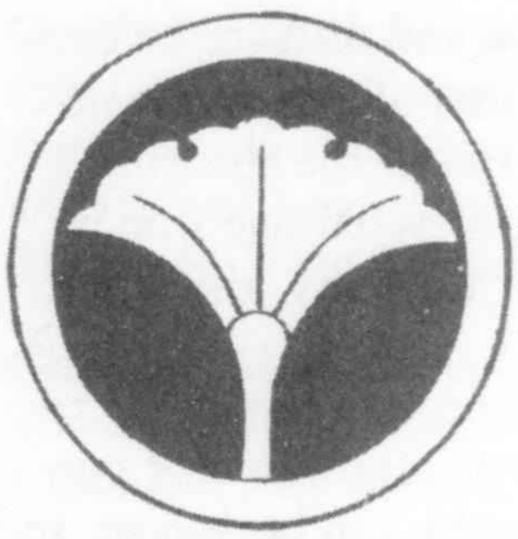
Our senses, through which we receive and interpret impressions of ourselves and the world, can both open and close us to this essential unity. Jacques Lusseyran, who lost his sight as a child, speaks in this issue about the dimensions of the senses which appear when one's attention dwells within and is open to an exchange. All too often, he tells us, "our eyes run over the surface of things . . . they 'half see' more than they see, and they never weigh." Content with habitual cues and associations we remain closed to the depths of which our senses could inform us.

In the East, birth in a human body is considered a great and rare opportunity. Why is this so? What is available to us because of the unique human structure? What is the role of the body in fulfilling the purpose of each individual life? What is it that needs to take place in the body? In one way or another, each of our contributors is asking these questions, and throughout the issue it is implied that we stand in need of a reversal in the direction of our motives. How could the body participate in an activity which answers the needs of the whole being?

—Lorraine Kisly

FULL CIRCLE

A Readers' Forum



I just finished reading my first issue of PARABOLA (Vol. X, No. 1). It was very pleasing to find a deliberate effort in your pages to focus attention on the spirituality and devotion to wholeness of women. Finally, true attention is being given to this area of life by those who communicate about spirituality and growth in our world today. I find that one outgrowth of today's feminist movement is that many women are feeling freer to search out their own paths toward wholeness, to question traditional religious and cultural values and old psychological dogma, and to seek female spiritual role models from past and current traditions.

I have thought for a long time that *perhaps* we have heard little about the great female enlightened ones in our history not only because men controlled the transmission of history and neglected those women, but also because Whole Women may feel less of a need to teach, less inclined to go into the world to spread the word. I sense that wholeness implies a contentment with being rather than with direct action, and sense also that this particular state of true being may be very feminine.

Wholeness is a goal to be loved on many levels; and a step in the right direction—a step toward even the most elementary degree of wholeness—is taken when all areas of life are appreciated and taken into oneself.

Rita Regnier-Yvarra
Ventura, California

The interview with Elie Wiesel, "We Are All Witnesses," (Vol. X No. 2) could not have been published at a more urgent time. Forty years after the War the question has arisen: should we continually mourn the Holocaust or go on with our lives? After listening to many different views from people who did not live through the Holocaust, I feel our guides must be the victims themselves. Wiesel's suggestion reconciles the problem; to remember the Holocaust in the context of the whole of Jewish history provides a necessary balance in our lives. For Wiesel and other victims the mission must be to write so that sixty years from now when all of them are gone the new generation will know that they can't remember but must try to understand.

Catherine Bickel
Winfield, Missouri

I wanted to write and congratulate you on the Tenth Anniversary issue of

PARABOLA ("Wholeness," Vol. X, No. 1).

As I read the issue, something became very clear to me. There is a fundamentally different meaning to "wholeness" depending on whether one sees God's creation of the world as an "emanation" of His abundance, in which case to be whole is to be in contact with that plenitude, or as a "Self-emptying" by God, a *kenosis* as it is called in Greek. The latter is the idea that before God created, He *constricted* Himself, leaving an abyss where God is not, so that He could then *give* of Himself to the creation. He has to create a gap, a space wherein He is free of us and we free of Him, for creation to be a *gift*. That is also the meaning of the idea that creation is a risk, for God and for us. God cannot give, in the true meaning of that word, if we are only His emanation, like fishes swimming in the sea. We are separate, and thus He can give and we can choose whether to receive or reject the gift. If He were all-inclusive, there would be no giving because there would be no freedom. So, before God creates, He has to "die," has to suffer Self-emptying. Only if we return voluntarily what He has given will He be whole.

With this kenotic understanding, the desire for abundance can be seen as a betrayal of God and of His *deed* in *giving* us abundance.

Moreover, wholeness is in fact not the perfecting of our abundance, but the acknowledging of God's kenosis and the gift, and our willingness to repeat that deed — the real meaning of love: "spending" the talents, as Christ says. Here, to be whole is to sacrifice wholeness in the sense of a yearning for abundance as a state, a willingness to make the kenotic deed in one's deep heart. A "Giveaway," as the Sioux understand it.

With this understanding, the distinction between ego and Self is utterly artificial. There is a heroism at the heart and of the heart, a deed, a *self*-emptying and a *self*-giving, that requires self-control, bravery, and generosity — the three marks of the man of "Great Heart," according to the Sioux. It is this heroism of the heart that is true holiness, and is first in God in the very act of creation, and we are then called to imitate it.

A suggestion: why don't you do an issue on kenosis? It is a distinctly Western mysticism, and one that puts suffering at the heart of the creation, and gives dignity and mystical meaning to the *deed* of the heart. By implication, kenosis unites our outer action with contemplation. At least three Western traditions seem to speak of this: Jewish, Christian, and Native American. It may be a failure of understanding on my part, but I do not see it in any of the Far Eastern traditions. It seems to me that the "death" they speak of is of the ego, in order to return to the Self, but kenosis is a more radical death — that of the Self itself.

James Moran
London, England

The Mystery of Rebirth

HENRI TRACOL

This essay has been translated and adapted by D.M. Dooling from "Homme, ciel, terre," which first appeared in L'Age Nouveau, *No. 112. A talk with Henri Tracol follows the article.*

"At the moment of creation," says the Zohar, "the four cardinal points unite with the four constituent elements of the world here below: fire, water, earth, and air. It was by mixing these four elements that the Holy One, blessed be He, created a body in the image of that above. The body is thus composed of the elements of both worlds, those of the world below and those of the world above."

Two worlds: Heaven and Earth. And between these two worlds, there is a ladder, each rung representing an intermediary world, a level of realization, a degree of participation in the total Being. In the mysteries of Mithra, each corresponds to one of the seven planetary spheres that the initiate traverses, one after another, before attaining the highest Heaven. This is the ladder of Seth, whose posts were supported by the four sons of Horus to allow the dead Pharaoh to enter Heaven. It is the ladder of light which was to lead Mahomet from the ruins of the temple of Jerusalem to the foot of the divine Throne. It is Jacob's ladder, of which St. John was to say: "Henceforth ye shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending *upon the Son of Man*."

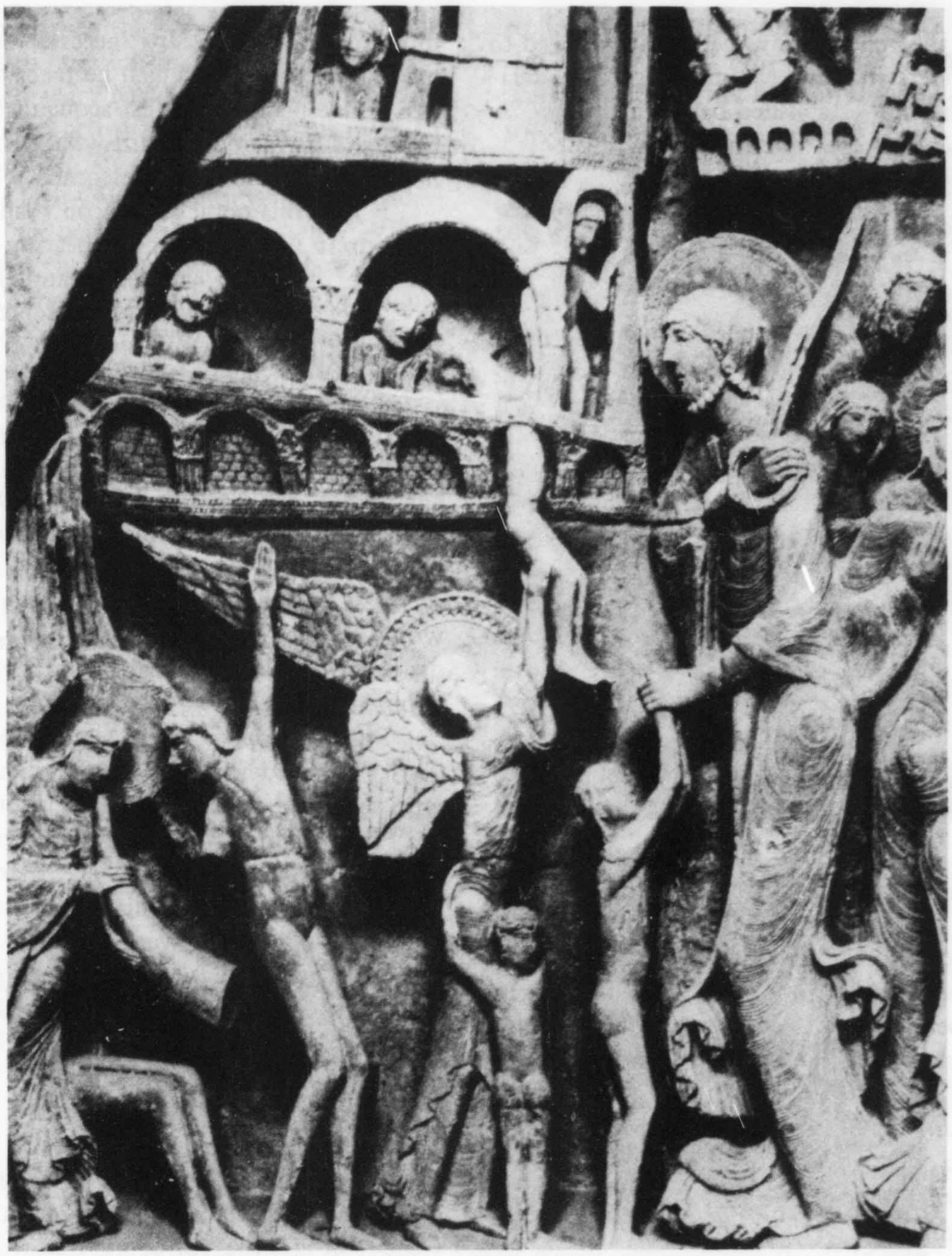
But any attempt to push the analogy too far is bound to fail if too much weight is put on surface resemblances. The only way to avoid useless correlations, and to penetrate closer to the source of the common essence of traditional wisdom, is with a more open interest, a freer inner movement. This means putting oneself in a state of *resonance* to the vibration of the true analogy; this is the key to that universal symbolic language which we lost the use of so long ago. For even within a single tradition, there may be differing views; numbers and terms often disagree. Brahmanic thought holds to the division of the Tribhuvana: Heaven, Atmosphere, Earth. However, according to the Upanishads, the being who, after the death of his physical body, is reintegrated into the primordial unity by the *dêva-yâna*, passes first through the Kingdom of Fire, whose Ruler is Agni, then through the various domains of the Rulers of the day, that of the bright half of the lunar month, those of the months of the Sun's ascension, and finally that of the year.*

Israel, like Islam, distinguishes seven earths under the seven firmaments, some gloomy or arid, others fertile and drenched with light, peopled according to their level of being by the degenerate descendants of Adam and of Cain.

The Chinese, for their part, count nine heavens, but here again we find the idea of the Axis of the World—in the *Kien-Mou*, an erect piece of wood analogous to the sacrificial stake of the Brahman, or to the shaman's birch tree, cut into seven, nine, or sixteen notches—"by which the Sovereigns ascend and descend."

In the course of these ascensions the

*See René Guénon, *Man and His Becoming according to the Vedanta.*



spiritual "space traveler" is often called upon to rid himself gradually of his various "garments," so that he can put on the "tunic of light" which becomes a sort of reflection of his own transformed being. The garments are the different "bodies," the temporary supports of an inner process of becoming.

But what misapprehensions we weave into these bodies! Since there is nothing within or outside of us that remains motionless, it is a little absurd to try to enclose the moving aspects of our being in summary concepts. Besides, the multiplicity of the systems proposed and their differences of opinion soon put a stop to this sort of self-limitation. The points of view are so different that there is no use in trying to establish an exact correspondence, for instance, between the four bodies of Christianity—the carnal, natural, spiritual, and divine—and the five envelopes (*koshas*) described by the Vedanta, in their relation with the three *shariras*—principial or causal form, subtle form, gross or corporeal form. It

is the general movement that we need to understand, and the meaning of the relationships established between the elements of each doctrine as a whole.



On the other hand, this ascension has for an accompanying theme (though in an opposite sense) the "fall" of the soul into forms which are increasingly material and gross. The very idea of the liberation of the imprisoned soul by its escape from the accursed body plunges us directly into Manicheism—whereas man's true destiny on earth is linked to his effort to bring about the laborious fusion of the opposing tendencies in himself.

"One cannot move the soul without the body, nor the body without the soul," writes Plato,* and St. Thomas Aquinas speaks of a "natural inclination" of the soul to unite with the body; "considered as the height of human perfection, the soul is not able to live separated from the body."**

For a human being also, the mystery of incarnation exists. How can he approach it? For it is not enough to awaken to the evidence of a more inner, more subtle presence. It is necessary to have an exchange in which he takes part as a whole being. He must acquaint his body and its members with what his head and his heart have welcomed.

It is at this point that Jacob's ladder is set up in him, with angels bearing messages ascending and descending. Between these two poles of his presence, between his Heaven and his Earth, a new life circulates, in which he is now beginning to believe.

"I am a doubting Thomas," say the sceptics. And the orthodox look at them scornfully—or rather, through them, at St. Thomas himself. Both would do well to take another look. Judas betrayed, Peter denied, Thomas doubted—how easy it is to say this!

Thomas—one of the twelve whom Christ himself chose and appointed, and who remained close to him even after the "hard sayings" of Capernaum; who followed his Master everywhere, shared his trials, was present at his miracles. He was there when Jesus went into the house of Jairus, whose daughter had just died, and he took her by the hand and bade her rise; when the son of the widow of Nain sat up in his coffin and began to speak; he was there when Lazarus arose from his sepulchre at his Lord's command. He needed no conviction of Jesus' divinity. He believed in it, not with a sanctimonious and bigoted belief but with all the force of an inner certainty which was to lead him, in spite of taunts and threats, even to the Mount of Olives. After the "It is finished," he was still there, one of the eleven who remained united in their faith.

What did he still need to see? What new proof was necessary for this believer? What was the nature of the doubt that arose in him? He was an apostle. He had fully accepted his mission. He felt himself pledged, "committed," as we would say today. And this is precisely why he doubted—not Christ, certain-

Timaeus.

**Summa theologica.*

ly, nor the others, but himself. What was in question for him was not so much Mary Magdalen's testimony, nor that of the other ten; it was his own belief.

There was something that he had not yet been able to understand. Why was it that Jesus, the son of God, needed once more to assume the human condition? Son of David, are you never to be delivered? Has not everything then been fulfilled? And yet, to deny the resurrection would be to deny the divine utterance, to deny the Word.

Thus Thomas awoke to himself and knew that he was two. His soul had not ceased to believe, but it had left his body in the shadows. And inasmuch as his flesh hesitated, as his senses did not know or refused, he trembled before his destiny as an apostle; he felt helpless to bear witness in full. So evidently it was his body that he had to convince before he could go any further. "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, *I will not believe.*"

Thomas, the Didymus, twin of Jesus, as the Gnostics were to call him—did he not feel Christ in himself as his divine brother? In order to realize this presence fully, he needed to experience this mystery in himself, to know for himself the return of Jesus of Nazareth into his body, allowing his faith to become incarnate through the communion of sense and spirit. And at this instant, the apostle Thomas was reborn. "My Lord and my God." He was transfigured by the overflowing joy of a new encounter; for at that moment, he *met* Christ, both in his spirit and in his body.

Jesus had said to Mary Magdalen, "Touch me not." She had been the first to see him; but she "knew not that it



was Jesus." Then his disciples from Emmaus had met him. He walked beside them, he spoke to them; "but their eyes were holden that they should not know him." A little later, Jesus appeared and "stood in the midst" of the disciples; "but they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." And he said to them: "Behold my hands and feet, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Finally, he appeared to them again on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias. There again they failed to recognize him. A miraculous haul of fish was necessary to convince them.

What they saw, and what filled them with amazement, was clearly the *body* of the Son of Man. But it was his resurrected body, his body from now on incorruptible, his "radiant body." It was he and it was not he. The great mystery was accomplished.

But there he was among them. He broke bread. He ate with them. Surely this transcends human experience. And yet it is to this rebirth that we are called, even before death. It can be given to us to experience this in our lifetime—by analogy.

But as Karl von Eckharthausen writes: "So that this deification and transformation of earth into heaven can come about, there must be a change, a conversion of our being. This change of being, this conversion, is called rebirth.

"The rebirth is threefold: firstly, the rebirth of our *reason*. Secondly, the rebirth of our *heart* or *will*. And finally, the rebirth of our whole being.

"The first and second are *spiritual rebirths*; and the third, *corporeal rebirth*.

"Many serious men in their search for God have been reborn in intelligence and will; but few have known this rebirth of the body."

PARABOLA "Corporeal rebirth". . . . There are so many things which are really the body which we call something else. I think most people think of the body as something very separate from the mind and the feelings.

Henri Tracol Separate, yes, and even alien. Alien and despicable. I must confess I always feel distressed when I am confronted with this tendency to look down on the body. Looking down on it, and ignoring the essential part it has to play in the awakening to reality.

P. Isn't it a question of levels?

H.T. Indeed, but on which scale? I can think of the body as the lower part that has to be hidden and left behind, but I may also rediscover it as something that evokes a very different approach to the experience of life.

P. But here is the problem: it *does* have to be left behind. If there is anything of more duration in us, it is going to have to get along without the body, the body as we know it. What is the real relation, then, between what we might call the body and what we might call the soul? If this evident body is going to be discarded, what will take its place? Perhaps that is what I'm asking. What is this possible "corporeal rebirth," as von Eckharthausen puts it?

H.T. Maybe it has something to do with recurrence.

P. Recurrence? What do you really mean by that?

H.T. Beyond the lure of time in succession, we have been given the idea that endlessly we come back, and come back, and come back, that we are born again and again. So, we have a sense of recurring time which can be perceived even in a very simple way through breathing in air and breathing out, through waking

again and again to the alternation of day and night, the round of the seasons, and so on. Of course, there is decay and there is death, but what is my experience of rebirth? I cannot just sweep this idea away. It is something I am offered to welcome—being born again. I have been absent for hours and all of a sudden I wake up: I am born again. Where am I born again? In this body.

P. I think my question has to do with the necessity for understanding to be incarnated. In the piece you wrote you said that the "body and its members need to participate in the knowledge which the heart and head have welcomed." Right away, one agrees and knows that it is so. At the same time one recognizes the difficulty, and resistance, and sort of darkness which the body at times can represent. Yet one knows that without that organic understanding, all knowledge is empty and without any force. I suppose I'm asking: what is the contribution of the body in understanding?

H.T. I would say that when one is granted this awakening to a deeper reality, the body does take part in it. I cannot but appreciate the resonance of it in my body. There is something which responds quite naturally to it—it is neither invented nor imposed. It is there of its own accord. Why should I blame the body for any resistance? In fact, is it not the mind that resists?

P. When we speak of human experience, do we speak of the physical body alone?

H.T. The physical body alone—what does it mean? It means a crippled man in a way. There is no communication, no coming together. Maybe most human beings are like that—these millions of seeds that disappear for lack of the ferment of life. But insofar as a man is sensitive to what he is offered as a means to awaken and be part of something which gives him a new meaning, the distinction between mind, body, and feeling becomes meaningless. We are much more concerned by the *relationship* between mind and body, feeling and body, and by the presence of something that bears witness to their unity. And here again, looking down on the body has no relevance.

P. I wonder if I understand the idea of two opposing forces and the reconciliation of those forces. Perhaps there isn't a split between the mind and body so much as a distance between them. And yet every tradition recognizes two opposing forces that do not automatically tend toward unity. In this article, too, you speak of the "laborious fusion" of opposing tendencies in oneself. But is the body at one end of the pole and the mind at the other? And if it is, isn't it necessary? Is there any movement without that initial separation?

I have been absent for hours and all of a sudden I wake up: I am born again. Where am I born again? In this body.

H.T. I think this is a source of many misunderstandings. There is no doubt that there is an opposition, which may be applied to mind and body; its origin, its source, however, is not mind itself, or body itself. It seems that the mind has a natural tendency to feel independent from the body. And the body is rather passive there. Now, the necessary opposition between "yes" and "no" takes advantage of this division. And we

also know that it is possible not to refuse this contradiction, but to make use of it in order to go further, and to reconcile "yes" and "no"—which is not at all what we do when we look down on the body.

P. So you would say that it is a false idea that the source of the "no" is the body and the source of the "yes" is the mind?

H.T. It's mainly a delusion—the pretense of the mind to be superior. Both are meant to take part in a process which brings them together—a reconciliation. Otherwise, there is only an endless opposition between yes and no, yes and no.

P. This is where the mystery is, in the relation between the two—there is a mystery in the relation between yes and no, in the relation between any two opposing forces. I was thinking of the physical body as the ground in which something can appear. And yet if I put a stone into the earth, nothing is going to appear; but if I plant a seed—what is this something in the ground and something in the seed through which the shell of the seed breaks and life appears? That is where the mystery is, isn't it? In the relation. A yes and no can oppose each other forever without bringing about a result.

H.T. That's exactly the way I look at it. It is a mystery and I seem to ignore it when I stick to this opposition of yes and no, or body and mind, or whatever contradiction. It's a mystery which I have to respect and I have to bow to its evidence. How to awake to it? I think there is room for opening to the great miracle of nature itself. If I am moved by the vision and perception of nature—looking at the sky, looking at a tree, or any natural phenomenon—I can look at the body with the same awe and gratefulness. Then, I am given to perceive

. . . there is a recurring temptation of, I would say, dream and disincarnation . . .

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something which in itself is so great: it is a call, and I hear it.

P. Yes, but it only becomes marvelous and worthy of respect when one knows that by itself it is nothing. And even the soul by itself is nothing. Isn't it so? It's only in the name of what it makes possible that it has value.

H.T. Yes; and we may be helped by seeing how objective art makes use of the body as a subject. It is not naturalistic with emphasis on all sorts of awful and wonderful details; the body itself is an intermediary. It bears witness to that which is far beyond our ordinary perceptions. I see how so often my mind interferes and tries to analyze. But in certain statues of the Buddha, let's say, there is a sense of oneness. Not "What is the body? What is the mind?" It is *one*. There is a sense of unity, of oneness.

I would say that when I try to come back and awake again, when I hear the call and try to answer it, I feel invited to experience *myself here, now*. I could be in China—"here" is not China—"here" is my body. And "*now*": neither yesterday, nor tomorrow. Right now, here and now. . . this is when and where mind and body come together, and I am left with the impression that there is no longer any opposition. That's what made me feel so deeply this text of von Eckharthausen, this third possibility, to welcome the rebirth *of our whole being*.

The first tendency is to discard the body. Yet at times, more subtle forces coming from an independent source, and not from the mind alone, the feeling or the body alone, can bring about their reintegration. Obviously, there is a recurring temptation of, I would say, dream and disincarnation, a dream of being free

from all this. And then arises the possibility of reincarnation, with the acknowledgement of the reality of what is offered me through the perception of my body, transformed as it is by these subtle forces.

Of course, I cannot claim to "understand" what is meant by this reincarnation, but neither can I deny it. Sometimes, I come closer to a recognition of the process of creation; I feel worked on, and permeated by an impression of being born again. I'm not the master, I'm not the one who directs this—but it is granted me, I am here to receive it, and I do receive it—not passively, but taking part in it as actively as possible. It does require my participation, otherwise it passes through me but it leaves practically no trace.

P. When you spoke before about the possibility of reincarnation, somehow you gave me the idea of a connection between that and the Christian idea of the divine incarnation.

H.T. One can try to think about this fantastic sacrifice of God accepting to be reincarnated into a human body. That I cannot understand, but it calls for a deep wish to come closer to it. Christ accepted and assumed this incarnation, and moreover, after his death—the death of his provisional body—he even decided to come back to it. . . . This is far beyond our capacity of thinking, except by analogy; I mean there are moments when I am lifted towards another sense of my own reality, another way of being, through very subtle thoughts and feelings that seem to have nothing to do with my body—until all of a sudden it opens itself to a real wish to join and take part in this experience: it reminds me of its existence and calls me back. As far as I am able to awake, and keep awake, to this call as to a genuinely objective demand, I may feel a little bit—a very little bit—closer to Christ's situation when he does come back.

P. What can you say about the real relationship between my ordinary body—my ordinary self in this body—and its relationship with this possible subtle body that it seems to recognize at moments? What is the relation?

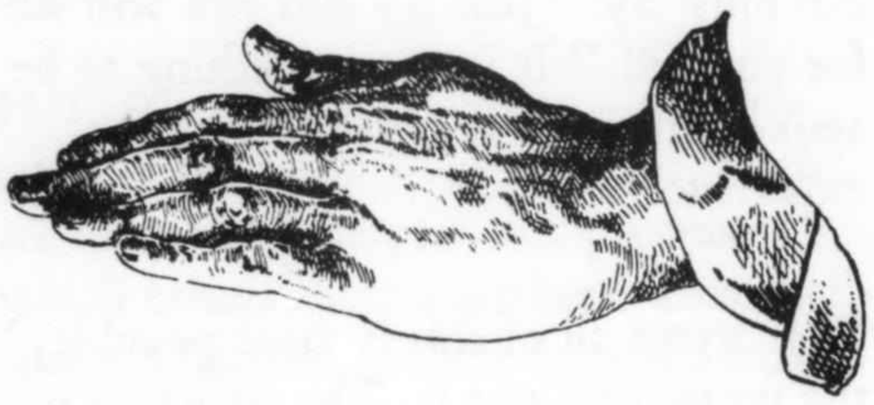
H.T. It cannot be understood from outside. It is like asking a craftsman: "How do you do it?" He cannot explain. He can only say: "Just try and you will see for yourself." It is not something to be spoken about, it is something to experience.

P. It seems all of this is more possible the more open one is. The difficulty is we live most of our lives completely closed, and we start from a closed place and want to figure out how to be open—in words. How can we begin to find an approach to the body through an idea? In the last issue Kobori Roshi said that the instinctual functioning needs to be free, and a question for me is: what is a free body free from? What is it free to do—what place can it take? What is it free for?

H.T. There is no easy answer to that. We could go deeper into the question. I am thinking of the familiar experience of looking at a landscape with somebody. I am interested in everything I see, until the other person says, "Have you noticed this or that?" No! "But look." And all of a sudden, it appears. In fact, I had seen it, but without realizing that I had. It is there as if it were not there, but it is there. And this applies to myself as well. There are times when I come back to myself, here, now. Then something else emerges, which we call memory. It's amazing, isn't it? What is there to remind me of myself when I have been swept away? The memory is there. I see there is a purpose, an intention. It is not mine; it works through me. I am reminded of what I have been granted to experience—for a purpose. ■

The Hand and the Mind

JEAN BERNARD



The Association Ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir is one of the traditional workers' organizations, or "Guilds," that has been in existence in France since at least the fourteenth century and perhaps longer, and which remains active today. Its goal is "the professional, moral, and spiritual perfection of its members" through manual work and the simultaneous nurturing of conscience. Jean Bernard, a leader of the present-day Compagnons du Devoir, has written, "Because the life in and surrounding the trades provides a normal and proper condition of life, it prompts and generates learning, and makes possible the development of conscience. It is then between these two domains—the man and the conditions of his life—that education takes place."

Today, each member of the Guild works for his living in his chosen profession, whatever it may be—that of a stonecutter, a shoemaker, a metalworker, a plumber, or any other craft or trade—coming back after the day's work to take part in the activities of the community. One of the training practices is the Tour de France, in which each apprentice journeys to various cities in which the Order maintains one of their houses, to practice their calling there for a certain time. As in the days of the medieval guilds, each apprentice must produce a "masterpiece"—a work worthy of a master of his trade—before his training is completed. Today, it is a piece of work that satisfies his own conscience rather than any outer specifications.

The Compagnons du Devoir publish a monthly journal, Le Compagnonnage, *at the Presses Universitaires de France in Paris. The following article is taken from editorial essays written by Jean Bernard.*

Among the many changes of our time, one which strikes me is in the meaning accepted by our contemporaries of the terms "intellectual", and "manual," as applied to man and his work; in our society they tend to appear under a guise that is as definitive as it is misleading and crude. In the course of accepting the development of technology, people have been swept away by the resulting flood which carries them along in an irreversible direction. But what is put again in question is that part of man's nature by which he has been known for thousands of years as *homo faber*, "the maker," the ingenious worker with his hands, discoverer of the relation with matter, the father of us all—and above all, the father of our Guild. Later he became *sapiens*, the wise one, the one whose way to control the material world was not only by the simple, rational use of his hands but also by a deep knowledge of the material in itself, the discovery of its structure, the understanding of its nature—in short, by the power of his mind.

We are the heirs of both these men; the *faber* and the *sapiens* live in each of us, with infinite variations in the proportion of their mixture. It is an aberration to wish to divide or separate them, indeed to put them in opposition to each other, under the names "manual" and "intellectual," by the application of a false scale of values. From the beginning, the human being has been at the same time a user of his hands and his brain. Hand and mind develop simultaneously without hindering each other. The hand is not the mere instrument of the mind, but its close associate.

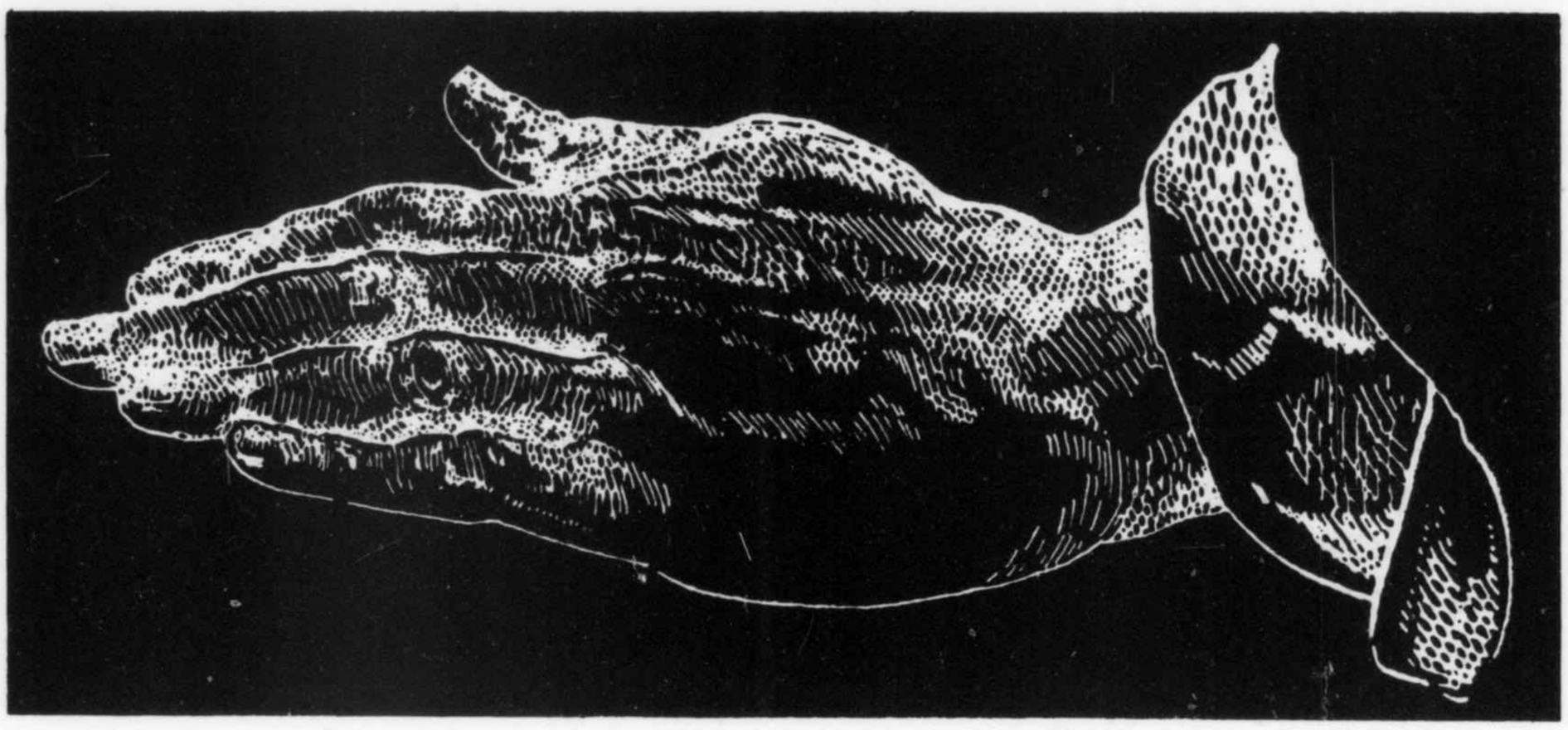
Even before the advent of the tool, thought and hand worked together in the unceasing search which is humanity's special characteristic; and there we find the deep root of a true equilibrium. From the beginning, clay, wood, and stone were used in the search to achieve something perfect. The creative gift of the potter, a purely manual worker, has allowed him to discover form in all its fullness. From stone, man made his first tools which were also weapons, but before he had a real tool, he polished one stone with another; with patience, skill, and adroitness he chipped flint with flint. From their first and simplest expression, a close contact established itself between the hand and the brain. So matter remains what it has to be in this world, that for which it is essential and admirable—a perfect support for the mind, which one would tremble to think of having to do without.

If one considers one of man's most ancient activities, stoneworking, in which from time immemorial mind and hand have been so notably related, it is evident that the tools used for it began to develop only with the introduction of metal. From that moment on, work in stone began to diversify and its art became a craft, a trade. This is what has happened in all human handiworks. The Egyptians, however, worked stone with stone for thousands of years, and it is not the least of their merits to have brought beauty to a very high point in their great works using methods which for a long time remained prehistoric. Craft, indeed, tends to create a tool for each thing, and art does nothing of the kind because it wishes to get rid of means. So the first manual workers, and by extension, doubtless, all primitive people, were and are (if any still exist) artists without the name—and the distortion of the word in our epoch should be taken into account. Unbeknown to themselves, they were artists, and they worked with an innocence and a joy that are surely known to very few in our day.

Tools, then, bring crafts, or trades, which are no longer art; and from their inception, specialization begins, paralyzing discovery and drying up search. As soon as the tool gives us a craft, science comes in and gives us techniques. The process begins from there, and it is thus

that technology at the peak of its development engenders economic systems. Science and technology together separate us from nature which has always been our home, and economic systems break down and betray us one after another. The result of all this is that at this level and in most cases, work is no longer the marriage of the hand and the head, and matter becomes less and less our support.

But looked at in this way, humanity today is on the threshold of an extraordinary change, brought about through the transformation of work by technology in all sorts of familiar ways. Nature, formerly our source of wisdom, now is being outdone, perhaps even done without. Right there is the cause of the impending change.



It is not a question of taking an easy attitude either of optimism or of pessimism, but of going deeper and seeking to understand. It has been said that we have lost our common sense, and to tell the truth we are also losing our "senses." The same causes that have transformed our work have also altered our vision, deformed our hearing and our sense of smell, and weakened our backbones. Will we, in the same way, lose the use of our hands and our sense of touch? In these conditions, if the change we are prophesying makes final the divorce between hand and brain, while transforming the latter by a kind of compensation as important to mankind as the mastery of his hand once was, what will the brain become? The humorous reply would be that the last manual workers will be the artists; those of our day, by a curious and symptomatic return to the sources, in general have recourse to the primitive ones, which will always be there.

There is no question, of course, of renouncing progress, or to speak more exactly, the irreversible evolution of events. No, it is not a matter of returning to the past, nor even of looking back on it with regret. While it leaves in us indelible traces, it is by the very nature of things a finished cycle. But why are some aspects of this evolution so questionable?

Nothing could offer better conditions than the work of the Companions of Duty for an in-depth study of manual work considered as an essential activity, one that is inherent in human nature. We believe that today, at the beginning of the immense upheavals caused by technology, a new generation is now ready in our Guild for this investigation,

without a glance behind, with no reactionary attitude. We do not deny progress, neither do we set it up against the mind nor against the hand; and as a matter of fact, we don't necessarily oppose the machine to the hand, as is done ordinarily. We don't take sides with a reaction which only takes the immediate instance into account, like that of the weavers against the Jacquard loom. We don't put the manual workers in opposition to the intellectual ones, as it is too easy to do, and so false to think. However, by "manual worker" we do not mean the unskilled laborer, but the workman who creates with his hands, and who has to think in order to create something out of matter. The others are sham manual workers, and like sham intellectuals they are legion.

All this leads us to the conclusion that between the hand, the brain, and the material taken from nature to be worked on, there exists a relation in which man has always lived and moved. But he could not move freely in it without the help of a faith in front of the mystery presented by life and by inanimate things; and it would be very unwise, in our opinion, to accept the conclusions drawn from the experience of those who have chosen to do without it.

In the face of this situation, it has to be admitted that man's treatment of both great things and small is frivolous, ignorant, and abusive. He behaves as if he thought he had no further need for nature. This attitude brings him the intoxicating feeling of a kind of emancipation which leads him to discard the faith which was indispensable to him for so long. But at the same stroke, he irrevocably loses hope. And as he has gone beyond the limits which nature had set up around him, he is ready to overstep his own. It seems that perhaps the first thing to be sacrificed would be his hand—or at least, its control of the work which was set apart for him—for man, the unique human being.

As Gandhi said: "Work with the hands is the apprenticeship of honesty. May the work of your hands be a sign of gratitude and reverence to the human condition." His whole teaching was based on the support of manual work. He even made it obligatory for people who were not manual workers: "No one is by nature exempt from the necessity to work with his hands." Above all, he found in it a kind of spiritual exercise applicable to the social renewal of India and so of the whole world. It was not a matter of returning to the past, but of the search for human equilibrium, a kind of wisdom which took into account the human hand and its contact with matter through work, as a means that could help the individual to attain a personal peace; this could generate the harmony and redemption necessary for the peace of the universe. And we must put great emphasis on this: there is no true progress except in each one of us, through our personal effort.

There must be no mistake about the collective aspects of the Guild of the Companions of Duty, which are more developed now than they were formerly to respond to the accumulated needs of the Guild as it is today: they exist only to help each one of its members to become himself, and not to swallow him up.

The tendency to standardization in our culture does not bring a meeting of minds in approaching the intellectual and the manual worker. It creates an aberrant creature who has neither shape nor color.

We think that true communication, love perhaps, cannot arise except through an exchange, and that the mind and the hand, united at the source of movement and its search for completion, and reunited at the moment of highest achievement in the great vocations, are complementary in the deep workings of the whole. ■

A Fine Upstanding Man

MARTHA HEYNEMAN

My dog and I are walking in the woods. He trots along, tail up, nose down, with his back toward the sky. He is on the track of something, tracing upon the earth with his black nose a line full of sudden turns, meanderings, reversals of direction.

I stride along behind him on my own two feet. To arise from all fours and stand erect is to emerge from a low-ceilinged place—almost a plane—and issue into the great spaces of our three-dimensional world, with sky above, and the high tree-tops and the flashing birds; earth below, solid under my sandal-soles; beauty before me, behind me, to the right, to the left.

But I, like my dog, am on the track of something. My mind makes sudden turns, comes up against blank walls, reverses direction. It traces an erratic line in a low, dark world. It is difficult to remember where it was a moment ago, impossible to foresee or control where it will be a moment from now. It sniffs its way along, convinced it can find what it's looking for in that dimension. When it takes my attention and runs, with it, the whole outer world goes dark, and not until it comes up against the thought, *I am unaware of anything around me*, do the bird calls suddenly pierce the air and the flecks of sunlight tremble and race in the inner world as well as the outer one.

It seems impossible to think and sense at once. When I come to myself for an instant in this sunlit wood, my mind stands still, attentive as my dog when he suddenly hears a twig crack. Someone is coming.

The dog begins to growl. I bend down and grab his collar, drag him off the path. A man runs past, sweating and gasping. He flicks us a weak smile for reassurance. A few years ago there would have been no runners in these woods, but back here in the bushes long-haired kids lying hidden, smoking marijuana, wholly given over unto gravity. Now they are on their feet and running, "to feel good about myself," to live long in the physical body.

I squat close to a great, fallen tree trunk, my back against the mossy bark, my arms around the dog. I lay my cheek on his satiny back. Crouched together in a shaft of sunlight, close to the ground, we wait for the runner to pass. The old world tree has fallen, the vertical dimension that held together the world view. People scurry in all directions, like these black beetles rushing away from the fallen tree trunk, every one to his own way. But this man's running is at least an upward turn, a renewal of effort, and freely chosen. Nothing compels him to run—except perhaps his suggestibility and his fear of death.

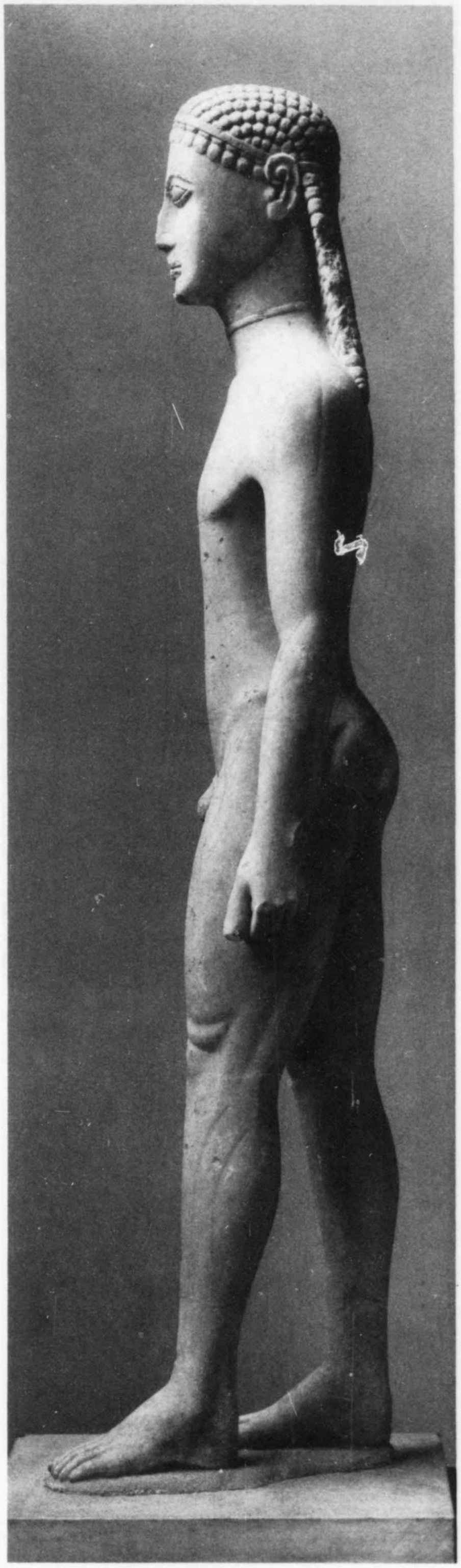
The dog is restless, jumpy, he turns and licks my face. I let him go and slowly straighten up. As I rise, the woods, like a tent when the central pole is pushed up straight, arise around me, shaking out their folds with a billowing of boughs, taking on shape and meaning. Like two lovers of equal stature, the inner world and the outer one mir-

ror each other, for a moment, in silence.

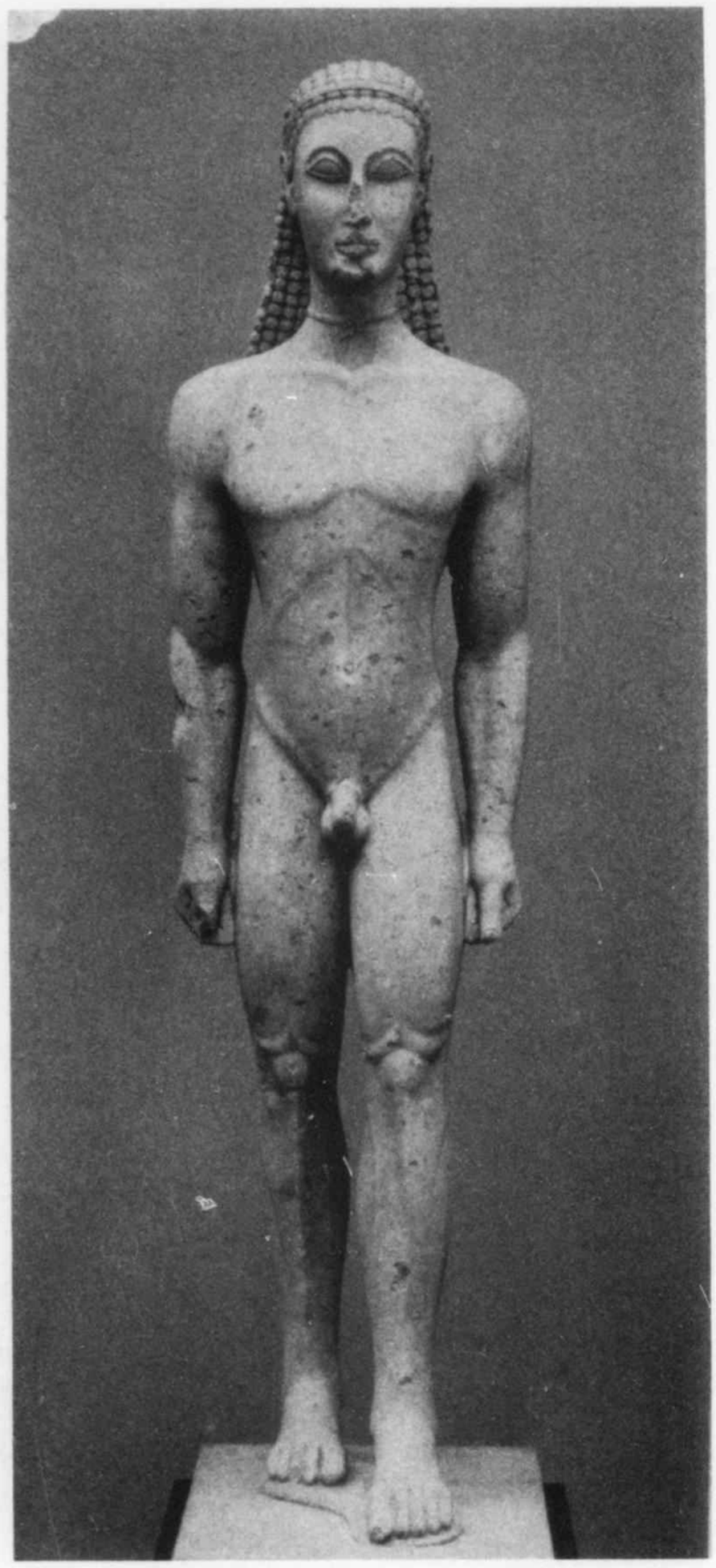
Then the mind drops down again and goes upon its belly, living along a single dimension, confining my awareness to something like the tunnel of an earthworm. Could I not learn to remain standing upright within as well as without?

When I straighten up my body with awareness, I feel the effort of it, the enormous daring. It is no mean feat to have achieved, though none of us has had any choice in the matter. Sooner or later, if there was nothing physically wrong, whether we would or no, we stood up. I can't remember doing it myself; but four times, astounded, I have seen my children do it. One day, for no earthly reason, this small creature will rise up, hanging on to the crib bars, an expression of mischief and delight on its face. Why did he (she) do it? It was so much easier sitting down! And then the long agony of learning to walk: the falling down, the crying, the getting up covered with dirt and blood, the lurching on again. Each time I have stood with awe before these dogged heroes, two feet tall, who would not give up until they had mastered this extraordinary feat of balance. The one who watches feels the presence in human beings of a force—what used to be called the human spirit—that opposes gravity, opposes the easy. There is nothing personal about it, though in some it is stronger, in others weaker. If it is governed from a supraindividual level by a conscious aim, a deliberate purpose, the one in whom it is manifesting doesn't know about it. He just blindly struggles to his feet.

Upright posture is the first of the peculiarly human characteristics to appear in the fossil record. It was the really hard part, requiring effort, extensive redistribution of muscle, realignment of bone. What survival value it could have had in itself is difficult to see—to carry



Apollo, Archaic Greek

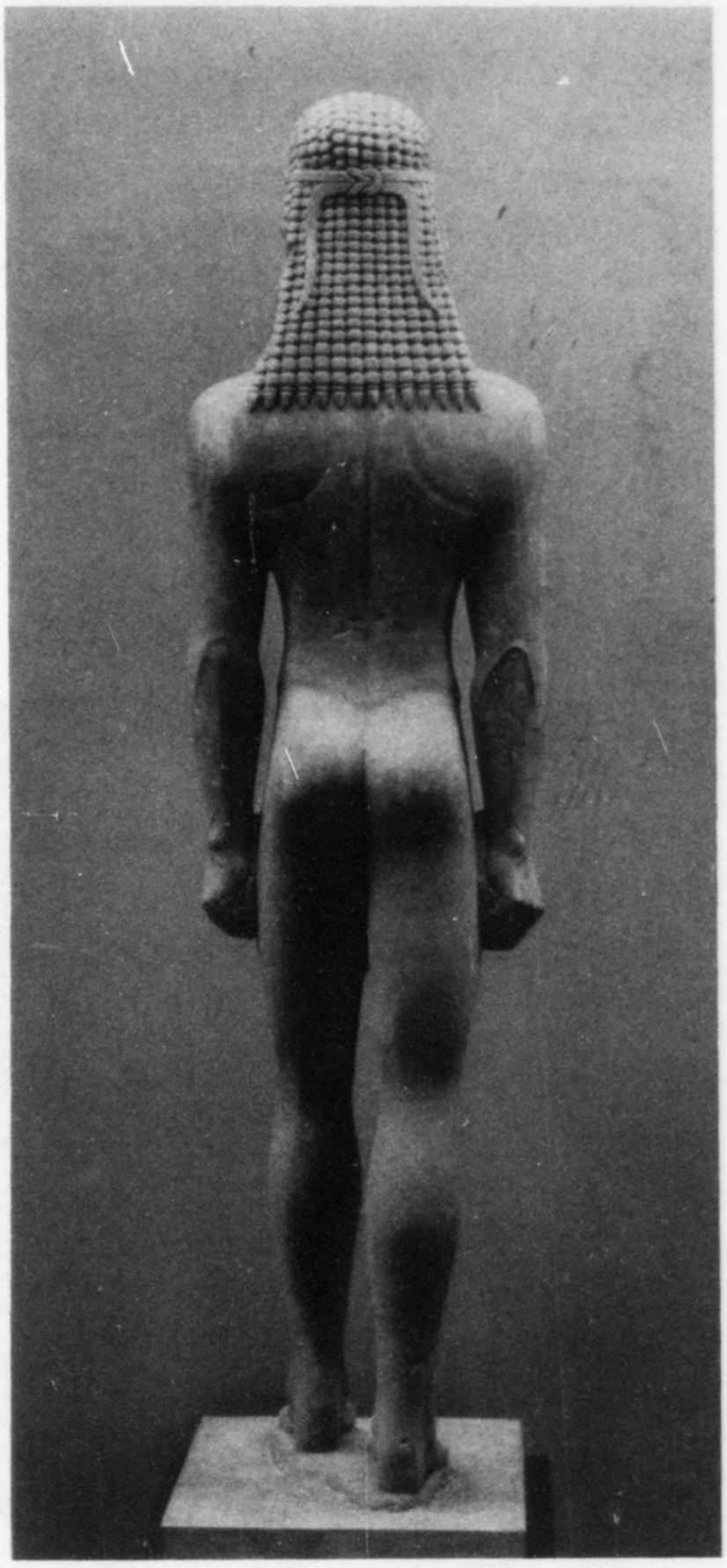


out in front, exposed to every shock and blow, the vulnerable breast and belly, which my dog keeps carefully sheltered within the temple of his four legs. Yet upright posture was prerequisite to everything else. It freed our hands from the exigencies of running and our skulls from the need to grow muzzles to seize, carry, and tear, so that they grew almost spherical, like the dome of the sky, and our brains grew to three times the size of those of the australopithecines, who were the first hominids, as far as we know, to get up onto their two feet, and stay there.

All the blind struggles of my ancestors, all the blind, forgotten struggles of my own infancy, have brought my physical body upright, bequeathed me, like you, a large brain, set me face to face with the world, in a position for contemplation—but attention will not stay. Like the tiny, shining sphere of mercury the dentist used, so carefully, to place in the palm of my hand, it quickly slips away, falls down, breaks into a thousand miniscule droplets and vanishes.

Now the dog and I come out of the woods. I call him to me, bend down and fasten the leash to his collar. We walk down the hill. I have to brace myself to keep from descending too fast. I think of all the historical nuances of upright posture, expressing our changing understanding of what the universe is, what is possible for us, how we ought to live. The statues on Chartres cathedral are elongated as if each person depicted there had a string, exerting a steady upward pull, attached to the top of his head. All of the muscles in the body are relaxed, there is no willed resistance to the pull, but the faces look as though the person, thin as he is, were suffering from his own weight. In the field between the two opposing forces, the very substance of his body is undergoing a transformation into something finer—more sensitive, more intelligent—even than flesh. Then, in the paintings of the princes of Renaissance

Italy, the "Big Dogs," the string has been cut. Man is the measure of all things. He stands proudly braced upon the earth, holding himself up with no celestial help, bull-chested under his armor, his neck arched like that of his own magnificent horse. The saints of El Greco look upward as though they were following with longing eyes the cut end of the string rapidly disappearing in the fathomless altitudes of clouds. Then come all the rigid backbones, stiff necks, disapproving or superior looks, betraying inner division and self-deception. But also the heartbreaking straight backs of seventeen-year-old soldiers. And then the flappers, with their insolent, S-shaped slouch; and finally the blissed-out hippies supine in the Woodstock mud, their heads drifting far away in space like colored balloons.



Will the vertical dimension be restored to our cosmology, defining a direction for human aspiration within a coherent picture of the whole of things? Will it grow up slowly and quietly from below, out of our blind need, like a plant; or will it flash down upon us from above, in a lightning bolt of revelation—or both? In the Hindu myth, the spear of Indra drives down vertically from above, fixing the head of the cosmic serpent. Then the new world grows up around the spear as axis, as crystals grow upon a string let down into a saturated solution.

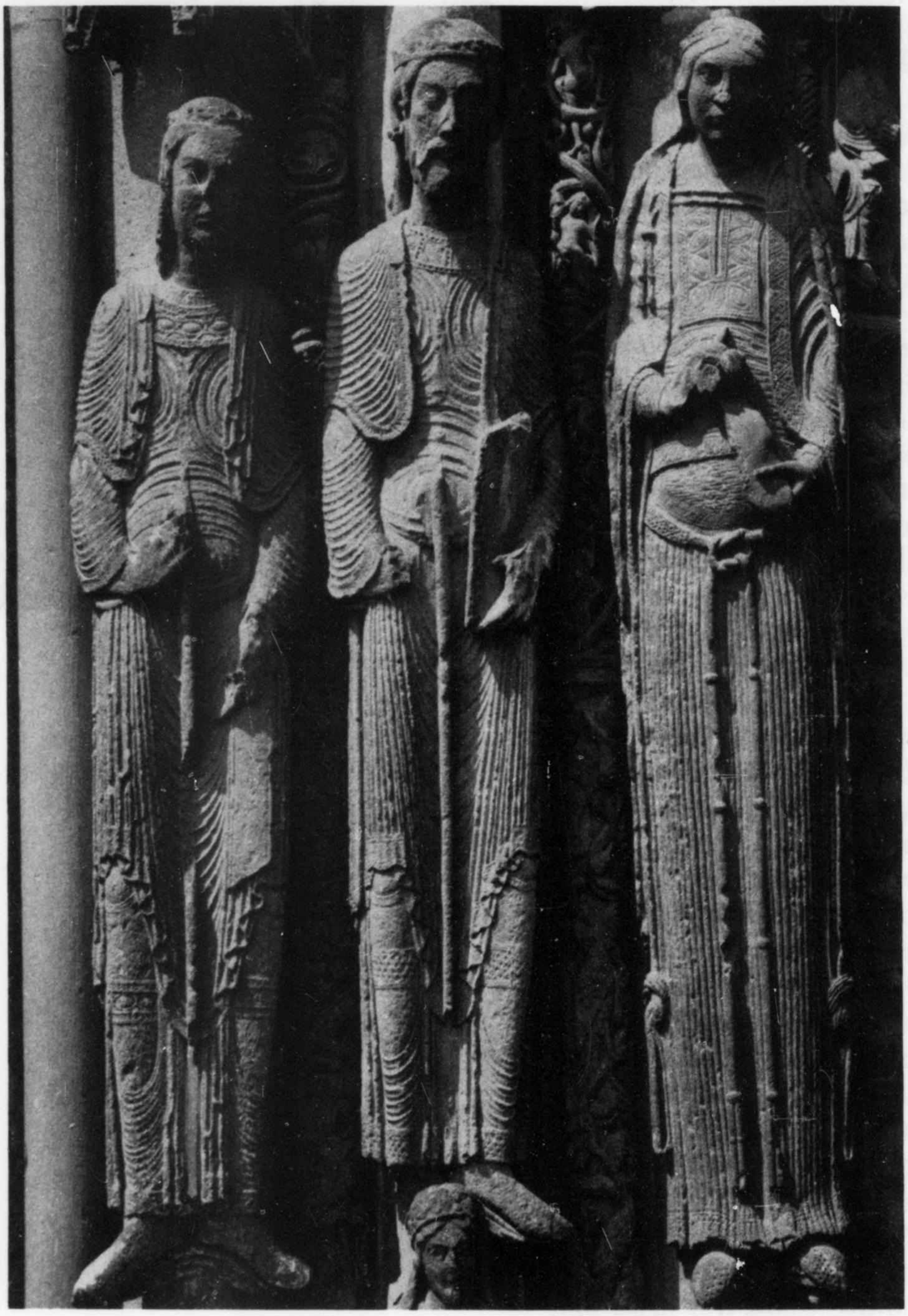
Is the cosmic serpent linear time, creation of the one-dimensional mind? A sharpened attention is capable of piercing this instant, a point of no dimension, and in through that zero door, sometimes, streams everything the heart desires, together with a totally new understanding of what the world is and who I am. I have had, by now, and so, probably, have you, these experiences—moments in and out of time—but they do not stay. What would give us staying power, so that a new way of seeing,

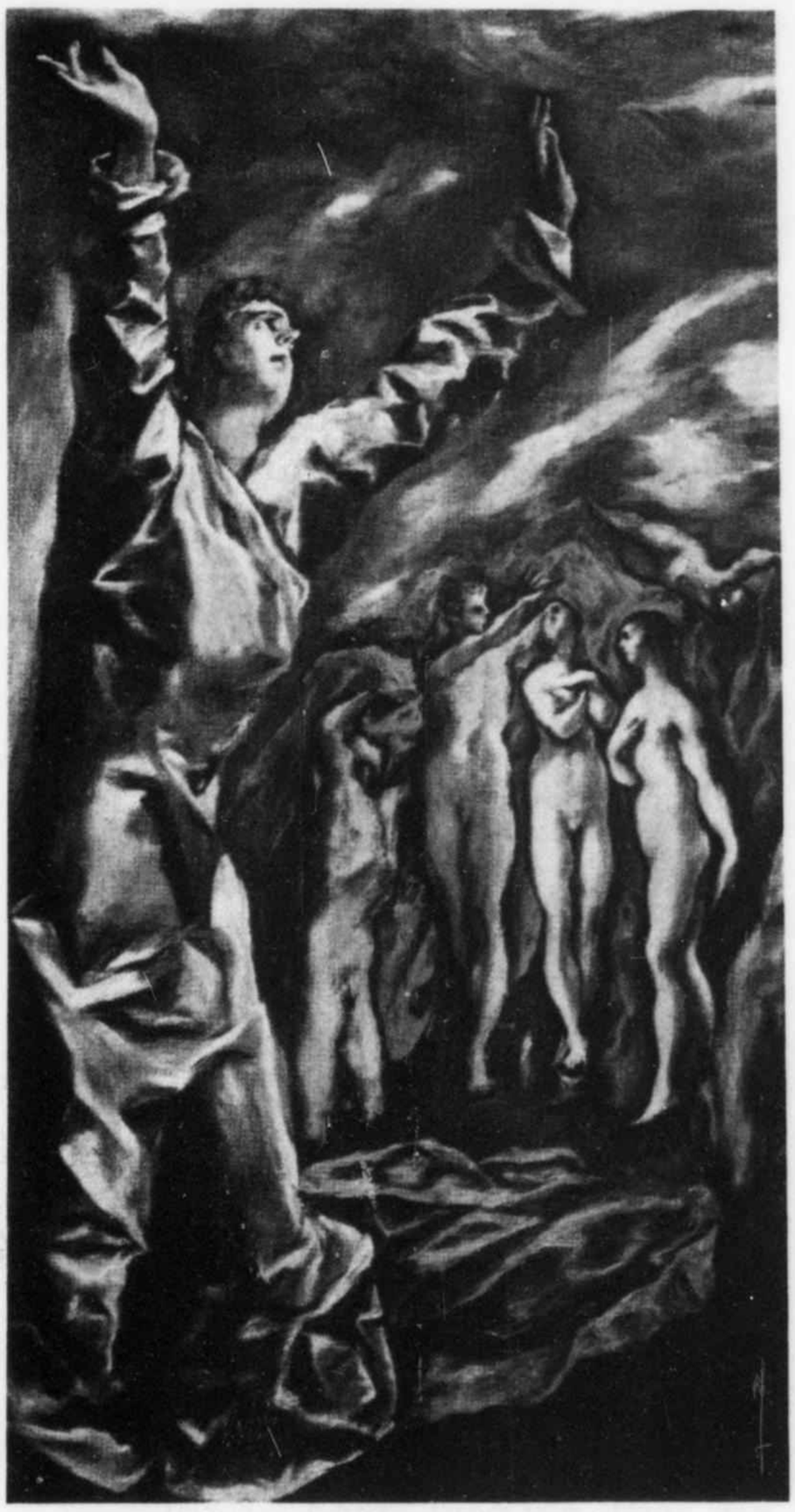
a new picture of the universe, with a place in it for our aspirations, could crystallize out of the saturated solution of our need and our longing?

The dog and I have come to the bottom of the hill. I rein him in, look to the right and left, wait for an opening between the opposing streams of cars. Holding the dog on a short leash, I dart through, then turn and look back at the way I have come.

This broad straight avenue ends on my left in a cemetery, out of sight. The street I grew up on began in one, in full sight, on the right. The street is an emblem of my life in one-dimensional time. At one end of it I struggled to my feet, at the other, no matter how faithfully I do my daily running, my body will lie down again, never to get up.

But memory goes along behind me, winding linear time into a ball. It has a magical palace in whose numberless rooms everything I have ever experi-





"The Vision of St. John" (detail). El Greco



"Portrait of Charles I" (detail). Van Dyke

enced is stashed away, kept in order by the order inherent in the structure of the physical body, rediscovered by consulting the memory in the muscles, the body's spatial sense. In which room did the event take place? Ah yes, the body says, turn right at the top of the stairs. Or it took place in the great room of the outdoors, with the sky for a ceiling: I lifted my head, says the neck, looked in just that direction, and there was the moon. All the streets I have ever lived on coexist in this one. The hysterical palm-trees of California occupy the same space as these placid, matronly beeches and maples. When I turn and walk toward my house, it is every house I have ever lived in, every building I have ever entered, making the transition from the outer world to the inner one.

I open the door and enter. I let the dog go. Standing here in the vestibule, my body is the origin of all cosmologies, its center of gravity the navel of the earth, its structure defining the six directions, the three coordinate axes of space intersecting at its center. Along its vertical I rise and fall with every breath. The unconscious effort to remain up-

right in the field of gravity creates in me the sensation of a polarity of above and below, the sensation of a scale of densities and qualities. I sense my house in the same way: the lower parts are denser, darker, stronger, designed for supporting, upholding what's above; the upper parts let in more sun and air, their atmosphere is dryer, clearer, more rational. Up under the roof I have the sensation of being up under the roof of my skull. There is a great deal of dust up there, piles of dog-eared paperback books whose contents I cannot remember, mementoes of my children—a single sneaker, a high school yearbook, a red plastic rose.

Do I want to keep all that old stuff? It is the heart that hangs onto it, refusing to let time tear from its bosom all the dear, dead dogs and cats, the stuffed animals with the eyes pulled out, the vanished children. By this it also betrays the fact that linear time is not its home, is alien to it. But the house of memory, though time stands still there, is full of ghosts. It needs a good cleaning and airing out. Is it the business of the backbone to lift up the heart into the light of a consciousness transcending time?

I climb the stairs, immortal emblem of inner ascent. On my desk in the study are two photographs, set where I will always see them when I lift my eyes from my work: in a rectangular frame a black-and-white one of my father, striding down a San Francisco street forty years ago; in front of that, in a small oval frame, my mother, in a red-and-white paisley dress, seated before a gold curtain. "He is my backbone," I wrote a friend once, "and she is my heart."

"A fine, upstanding man," I think when I look at him. That was his own expression of highest praise, and he himself embodies it in his very stance. To my sister and me he held up the ideal of his famously beautiful cousin, who "sat her horse like a queen." His stance and stride embody his fiercest admonition to all of us children: *You're nobody's slave*. It is the quintessence of America with an Irish accent, an edge of vehemence acquired in reaction to generations of servitude. His straight back stands for freedom and self-respect, refusal to grovel before any fellow human being. *Be a hardy mountaineer*, he used to say, *Be your own boss*. When he was dying, my mother asked him, "Dave, are you afraid?" *Not a God damned bit*, he said. Even lying down he was upright.

And here is my mother, held against his bosom, with her back to him, looking straight into my eyes, still keeping her secret. After he had died, she and I talked together for a while like two young girls. She spoke of her college days, her master's degree, her teaching career, how scared she was, how she was just beginning to gain confidence when my father asked her to marry him and she dropped the career in an instant. "Aren't you sorry you didn't go on with it?" I asked her, and she gave me that look. I had been feeling superior to her, with my new-found assertiveness about my own ambitions, but that look stuck me down like a thunderbolt. I understood that she had consciously and deliberately regressed into a state of dependency, hung herself and all us children around my father's neck, and that had she not done so, he would have been an alcoholic. Because he loved us, and because my mother had secretly arranged things so that whether we all lived or died was completely up to him, he was forced to overcome his own weakness, to stand up straight in order not to let us fall, to grow the muscle, the moral fiber, to do so. By the sweat of his brow and the strength of his back, he carried us all safely through the Great Depression.

My mother remained, for all her wonderful intelligence, childlike and self-effacing, without a wrinkle on her lovely face, keeping, except for that one silent, all-revealing look she gave me,

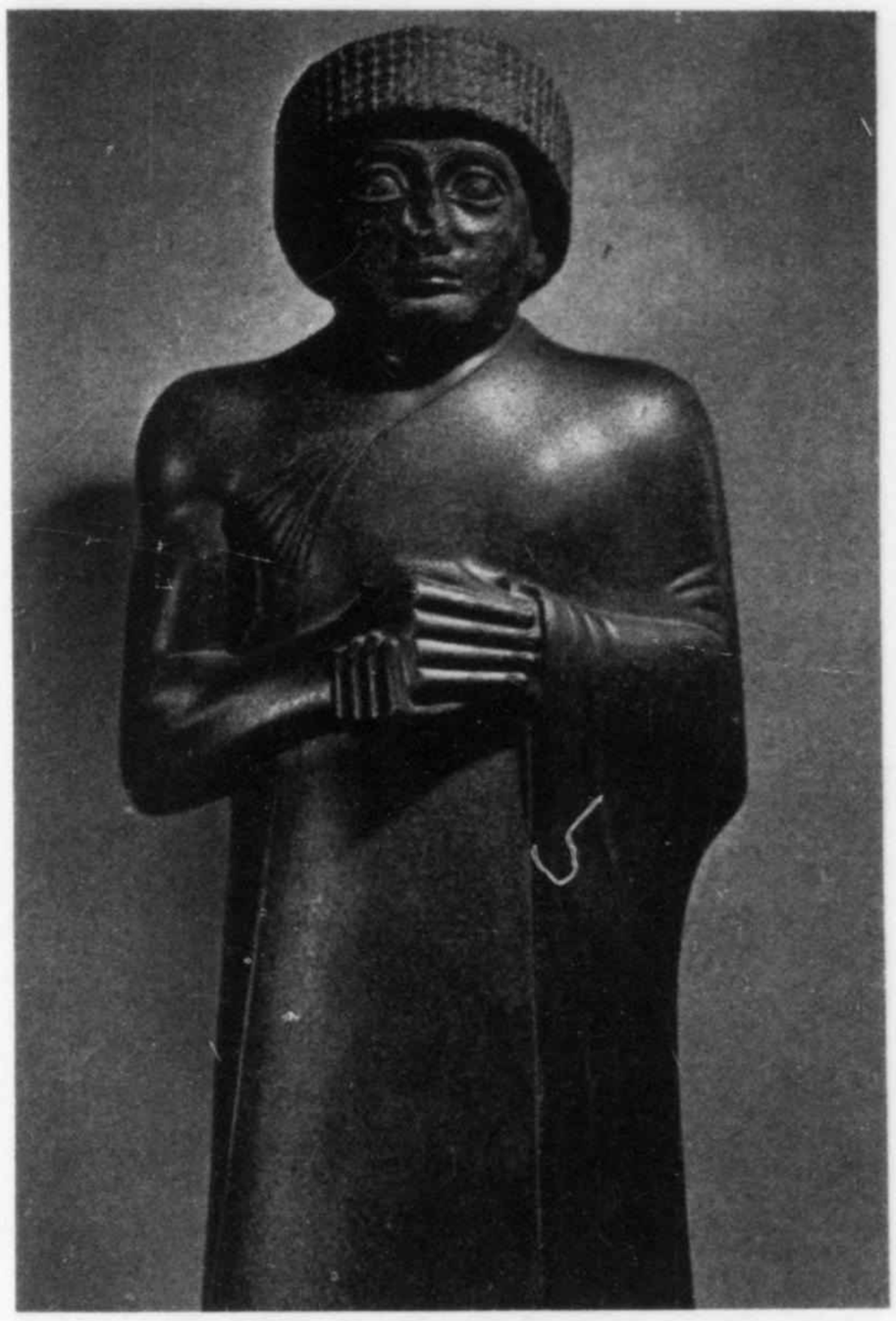
her secret until, at ninety-five, she died.

I could not, as she did, deliberately relinquish my ambitions so that another could grow strong. I tried, and for me it was a lie. This is another time. It seems that each of us has now to encompass both heart and backbone.

Because we know in the very sensation of muscle and bone the struggle of two forces that has created and maintained our upright posture, learning to stand up straight and remaining erect have always provided us with all our metaphors for moral struggle. Righteousness is from *rectus*, straight. We hear an echo of the original meaning of "justice" when we say we "justify" a margin. Justice carries in her right hand her straight sword pointing vertically upward, in her left hand her scales with the two pans hanging down, reminiscent of the balance of right foot and left required to keep the spine erect: "nothing in excess," not inclining too far in any direction, or we fall from grace.

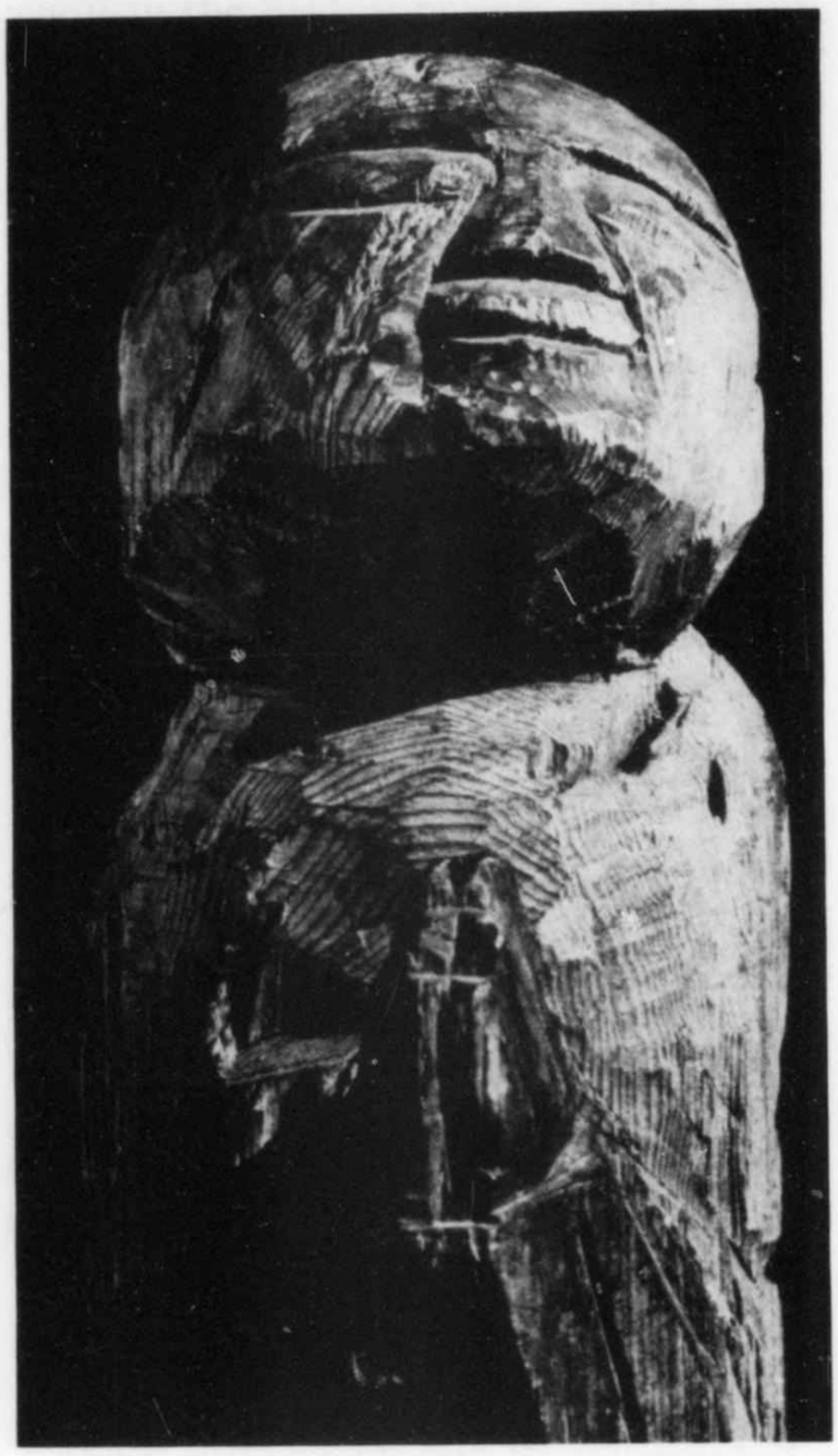
The body understands the metaphors clearly enough, but what would "moral effort" mean in practical terms, and for what aim would we who, thanks to the struggles of our ancestors, are now nobody's slaves, undertake it? As it is, when I make a "moral effort," I only set one desire against another, vanity against gluttony, fear of death against laziness, and it all goes to serve my feeling of superiority to you. At best, it serves my physical health and feeling of self-confidence—both important aims, prerequisite to every other accomplishment in life. But the original aim of moral effort was immortality.

Understood psychologically, the figure of Justice must represent an arrangement of inner forces, desires, impulses, aims. Around a single aim the points vertically upward are hung—not so heavily as to bring it down, but with enough weight to compel it to maintain its tensile strength—all the downward-weighing desires, ruled by gravity and passivity, and they are maintaining such



a balance among themselves as to keep it upright, exactly in the center, directed at the zero-point. The single aim does not, like a Puritan, try to cut away the down-weighing desires, because, by their very opposition, they are adding to its strength. The whole arrangement, like that which maintains our upright physical posture, is a kind of machine for spinning tough fibers, but in this case inner fibers to keep us upright within, so that inner and outer worlds might also come into perfect balance and attention remain at that zero door—here and now, this instant—where all opposites meet, all forces balance and thus cancel each other out, and I am home free. "Then from a stream of images," says Henry Corbin somewhere, "the psyche becomes a motionless crystal full of light."

The word processor hums in various tones. I straighten my back and look up. My mother and father are looking into my eyes. Behind them, in front of the windows, rises a tall geranium plant. Afternoon sunlight is streaming in. Every hair on every leaf is shining. ■



The Body of the Buddha

ROBERT AITKEN

The body of the Buddha is my body and yours. "Yours" includes human and nonhuman, sentient and nonsentient—individually and collectively. "All beings by nature are Buddha," Hakuin Zenji says in his "Song of Zazen." "This very body is the Buddha."[1]

There is nothing that is not the Buddha body. In the Mahāyāna tradition, it is said that the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni, resolved his questions about suffering in the world and exclaimed, "Wonderful, wonderful! Now I see that all beings have the wisdom and virtue of Buddha. They cannot testify to that fact because of their delusions and preoccupations."

With this statement we have definition. All beings are the Buddha, but they cannot say so. They cannot acknowledge what is called Buddhahood: the emptiness, oneness, and uniqueness of their perceptions and all they perceive. They cannot acknowledge that delusions and preoccupations create suffering, yet have no substance.

The two elements of Śākyamuni's statement, the nature of beings, and their inability to formulate that nature, are the foundation of Buddhist experience, practice, and philosophy. Experience is the realization, by each according to individual capacity, of the truth Śākyamuni expressed. Practice is the way of realization, and philosophy is its post hoc formulation. I begin with the philosophy:

The three elements of Buddhahood, emptiness, oneness, and uniqueness, are the so-called "Three Bodies of the Buddha," the Dharmakāya, the Sambhogakāya, and the Nirmānakāya. All beings have these three qualities, as do all communities of beings, even the largest community, the universe itself.

The Dharmakāya is the "Pure and Clear Law Body." "Law," the etymological meaning of "Dharma" in Sanskrit, refers to the nature of things, animate and inanimate. In this context, the term refers to the infinite, fathomless void, charged with possibilities, that produces, infuses, and indeed is the "material" of all bodies. According to some Buddhists, one's body is only momentarily substantial. In the Zen view, and in the view of the Mahāyāna School generally, it has no substance, even for a moment.

Complementary to this emptiness, the Sambhogakāya is the body of fullness, or oneness, exemplified by the "Net of Indra" in Hua-yen philosophy.

The whole universe is a vast, multidimensional net, with each point of the net a jewel that perfectly reflects and in fact contains all other jewels. "Your body is not your body, but is a constituent of all bodies."[2] The Sambhogakāya is known as the "Body of Bliss," a name that expresses the delight of freedom from the "small self" and oneness with all beings.

Finally, uniqueness. The Nirmānakāya is exemplified by Śākyamuni Buddha in the archetypal pantheon of the Three Bodies (the other two Bodies have their Buddhas too). Śākyamuni is surely a prime example of uniqueness, but so am I. So is each "I." The earthworm and the nettle are individual; no other being will ever appear like this particular earthworm, this particular nettle.

Each of the Three Bodies is qualified and made possible by the other two. The potent void is the source and essence of being in its fullness and oneness. Uniqueness gives interpenetration its dynamism—without it, there would be no Chinese, as distinguished from the Norwegian, to be one with the Norwegian. And if in essence all things were not empty, then skins would be barriers, and unity would not be possible.

The Three Bodies of the Buddha are implicit in Śākyamuni's teaching, but it was his successors who formulated them, sometimes without being clear that work is necessary to realize them, and work is necessary to maintain and deepen that realization. Without practice philosophy is superstition. When he was very young, Dōgen Kigen looked at just one side of Śākyamuni's statement about all beings, and asked why he should train at all, since he was already intrinsically Buddha. This is like suggesting that one can harvest without first preparing the ground, and then planting and cultivating.

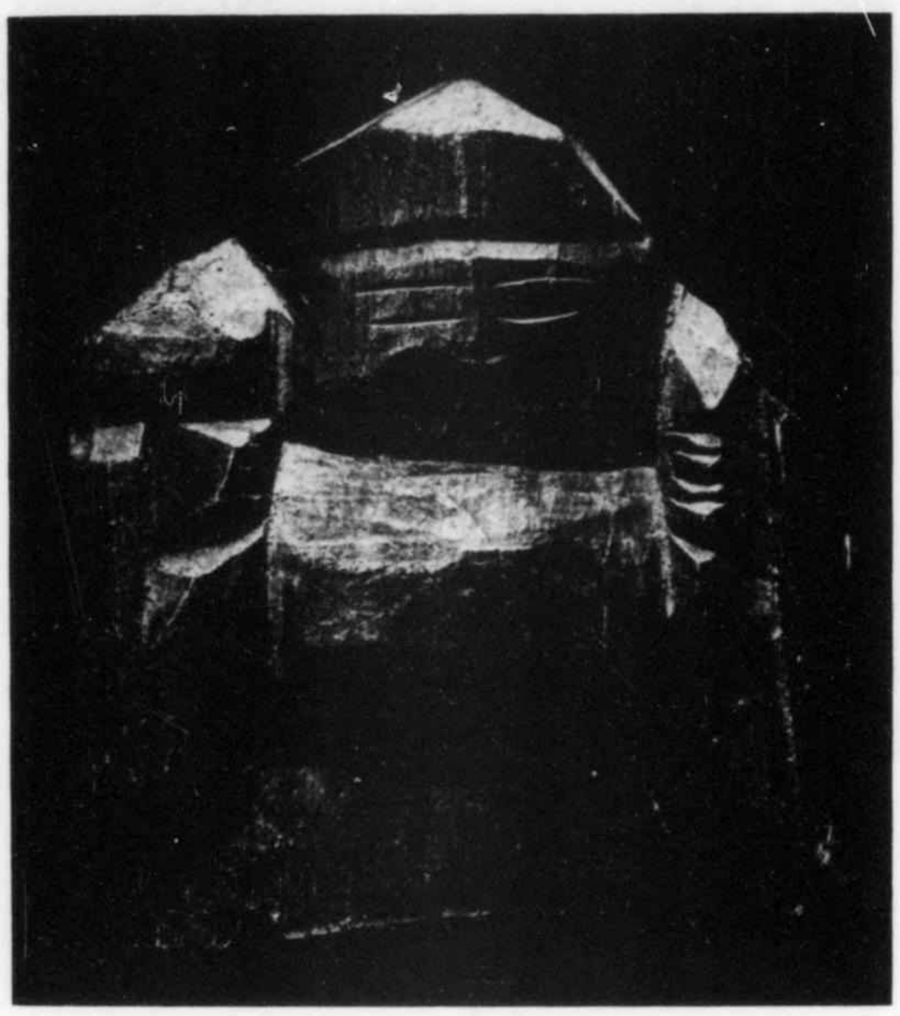
All forms of Buddhism that teach practice are designed to bring one to Śākyamuni's realization—though sometimes not until the next life, as in the Pure Land schools. Practice in the Zen mode is a program of realization in this life, involving coordination of body, brain, and will, in directed meditation.

This is zazen. You sit, facing the wall, and place your legs in the half-lotus or full-lotus position. Lower your eyes, but do not completely close them. Breathe naturally, and count your inhalations and exhalations up to "ten," then up to "ten" again, and repeat. Try to settle yourself as you exhale. Keep your back straight, with your backbone bent slightly forward at your waist. Let your thoughts and feelings come and go, and pay no particular attention to them. Your practice of breath-counting is your home base, and your thoughts and feelings are your environment. When this environment entices you into some plan or memory, and you notice that you have drifted from your counting, then return home to "one" and begin again.

At first this is a practice of learning to concentrate. Then one discovers that each point in the breath-counting sequence is the only point in the whole universe, each point is the universe, and the body that counts and the universe are not separate. This experience is called *makyō*, "mysterious vision," a melting of the usual configurations of perception. Distinctions become blurred, or they disappear altogether. "Inside and outside become one,"[3] as do past, present, and future; tiny and huge; life and no life. This is not realization, but it is a milestone on the path.

Kōan study follows breath-counting for the student who is interested in experiencing the Buddha's realization for himself or herself. This involves examination of the salient points in old Zen stories and making them clear. This act of making clear is called realization, and the first such experience is the most important. It is grace, if that word can be used by a Buddhist, after which everything is seen differently. One under-

stands, more or less vividly, that the configurations which were blurred in *makyō* are really complementary, each completely true in itself, each identical with the other: I and that; time and no time; tiny and huge; form and emptiness; life and no life—in present time and place. As to the depth or quality of this first insight—it is likely to be rather superficial in nature, just a peep perhaps, something that will need further clarification in further practice.



I remember that when I first tried zazen many years ago, I could verify Śākyamuni's words a little. There was a tranquil tone in my breath-counting, reminiscent of the inner and outer calm I found as a child, listening to the silence of the house when I awoke in the night. This was an important hint for me. I also found that it was very difficult to attend to the simple act of counting my breaths, and I learned how readily I followed up on the least distraction. My mind turned out to be quite unsettled. This encounter with my delusions and preoccupations, my own suffering, pointed up my need to practice.

Zen practice is the work of the Zen student in the dōjō, the meditation hall, but that is only the beginning or foundation of one's life work in following the way of the Buddha. Dōgen Kigen said, "Zazen is itself realization,"[4] but realization is not limited to meditation on one's cushions. Singing and dancing are forms of profound truth, as Hakuin Ekaku said.

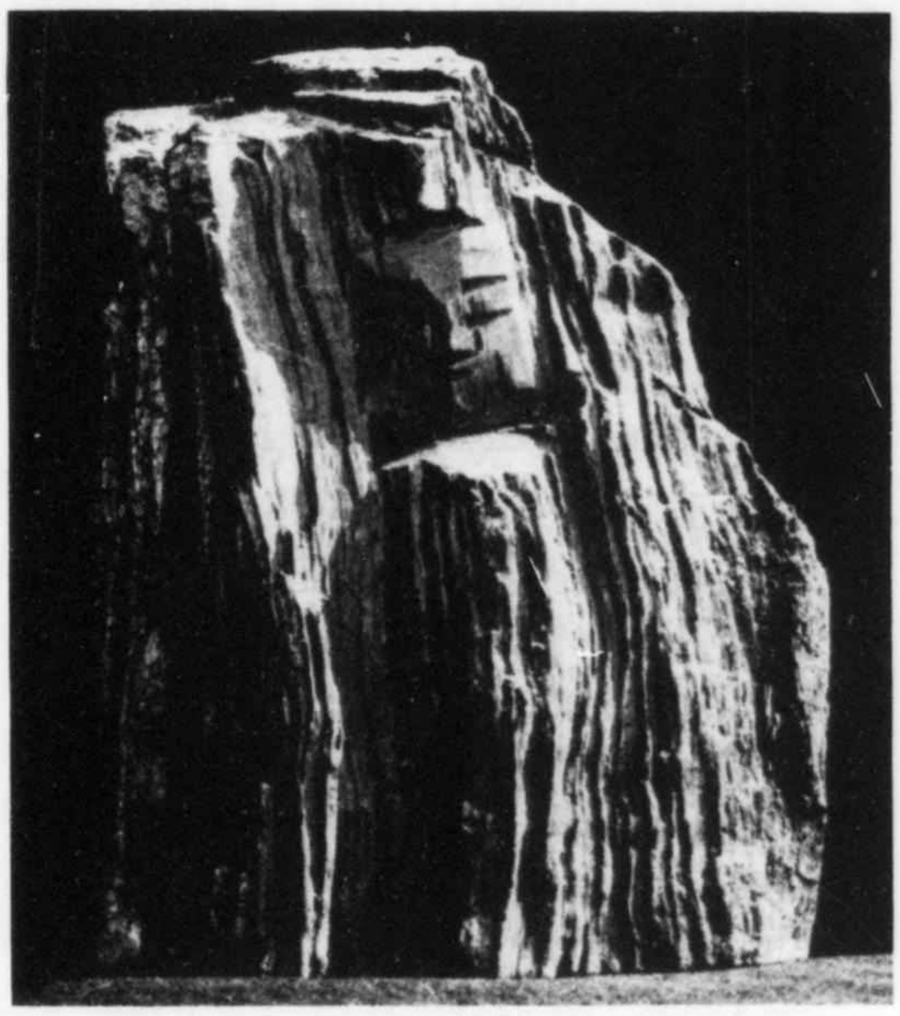
Unlike the way of zazen, the way of singing and dancing, and of eating and drinking, talking on the telephone, changing a diaper—this way of everyday life is not always so clearly set forth in the literature. Yet Zen Buddhism is not just a cult of people who sit around on cushions. As a Zen teacher, it is my responsibility to clarify what the essence of things has to do with the workaday world.

First of all, though the *Heart Sūtra* says that all perceptions and things perceived are empty, and there is "no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind," we do see, hear, taste, and so on, as any child can testify. When the priest Tung-shan Liang-chieh was a child and his teacher instructed him in the doctrine of emptiness, he protested, "Well, I exist!"[5] The child of a physicist, hearing an exposition of the relatively vast reaches of space that lie between bits of matter, and the weightless, yet not weightless nature of those bits, would probably object in a similar way. There is a certain experience of emptiness that comes with maturity, just as there is an experience of sex and an experience of death that appears when the time is ripe. Until one passes through such experiences, they are difficult to appreciate. The intellect alone cannot understand them.

Almost all Zen students understand that the way of the intellect is a byroad. They know that Śākyamuni's exclamation, "All beings have the wisdom and virtue of Buddha," was not just a simple deduction. At the same time, there is a widespread tendency to direct zazen toward analyzing the "delusions and preoccupations" which keep one from realizing one's own wisdom and virtue. The priority thus becomes therapy, rath-

er than realization, and realization is postponed.

It is important to put one's priorities in order. Zazen has therapeutic results, but it is not useful to make therapy the primary target. Śākyamuni did not practice in order to emancipate himself and the world, but rather to understand the nature of suffering, and with this understanding came emancipation. I have an idea that therapy cannot be attained if it is the goal even in psychological practice. I suspect that good psychologists attain positive results with their clients by making the process interesting, and holding forth understanding as the mutual intention of their work. (One of my students, a psychologist, comments, "There is an esthetically satisfying quality to good therapy,



which is to say that therapy is more art than science, and like all art, therapy is made narrow by our intentions and our goals, especially our virtuous ones.")

When I meet inquirers who have the conscious or unconscious purpose of correcting themselves, I try to encourage them, but I tell them that Zen is gnostic, a pursuit of knowledge. The process works when the motive is curiosity. If the motive is better human relations, then zazen can help bring improvement, but underlying questions about birth and death remain unanswered, and one's heart is not really put at ease.

The Buddha is the "King of Doctors," treating and curing all beings. When I asked the abbot of a large monastery in Kyoto about Zen practice for people with uncertain mental health, he replied, "Zen practice is for people who are exceptionally healthy." With the movement of Zen Buddhism to the West, the monastic walls came down, and anybody can enter.

When I speak of the Buddha as the King of Doctors, I am quoting Yung-chia, an early eighth-century Zen master, in his long poem in praise of realization, the *Cheng-tao ko*:

> The sick meet the King of Doctors;
> Why don't they recover?[6]

"They don't recover" because they—or we (Yung-chia includes us all)—expect the teaching to be medicine. It is not. The teaching is the prescription. Many people are content just to display the bottle.

Once the attendant of Bankei Yōtaku asked him, "How can one arrive at complete attainment?"

The master said, "On the whole, Zen students can reach seven or eight parts out of ten."

The attendant asked, "How does one get past them?"

The master said, "There is no way."

"They haven't reached complete attainment and there is no way that they can . . . Where does the fault lie?"

The master was silent for a moment. Then he said, "It's because, after all, their aspiration in the great Dharma is not strong enough."[7]

Two things should be said about this passage. The first is that some people have more capacity than others, as Dante makes clear in the *Paradiso*. Seven or eight parts for one person may be ten for another. All beings may be Buddha, but not everyone is Sākyamuni. It is appropriate to work toward deeper and

clearer understanding, whatever one's insight may be, using great teachers like Sigmund Freud and his successors as well as those in the Zen lineage. At the same time, it is good to accept one's limitations, and enjoy one's own configurations.

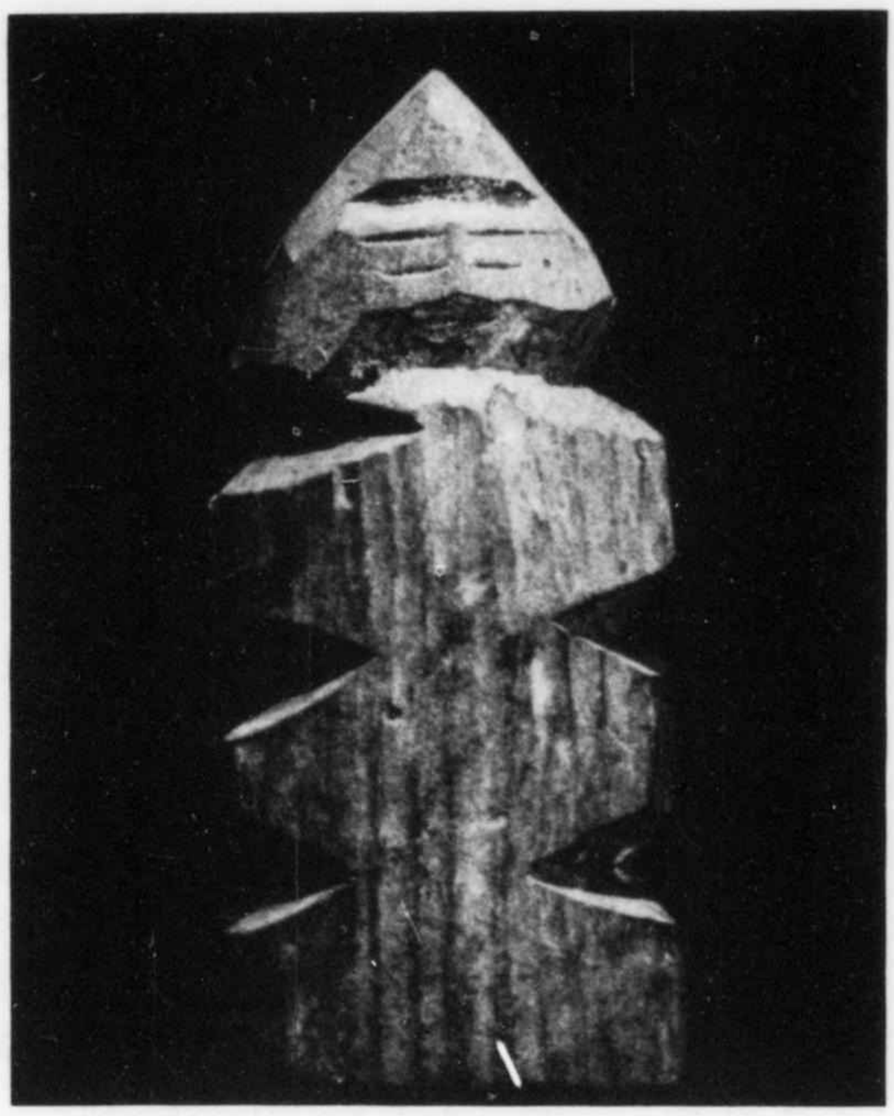
The second point that should be made in connection with Bankei's observation relates to the quality of will or aspiration that is necessary. Concentration of mind is not a matter of tensing the muscles, as Simone Weil says.[8] Aspiration that is grim tends to be self-centered. Friends and family members are neglected or exploited. In my view, correct aspiration is a means that partakes of the end, a light, inclusive condition.

Will in Zen practice is not only light, it is delight. This is not an idea that is easy for the new student, struggling to bend into the half-lotus position, and enduring the pain of that unaccustomed position without moving for twenty-five minutes or longer, but even at such a time, one can find humor. Yamada Kōun Rōshi says, "Pain in the legs is the taste of Zen." Then looking around at his students, he says with a smile, "I wonder if you know what I mean!"

Thich Nhat Hanh says, "Sit with a half-smile."[9] When I look about the dōjō at the people sitting quietly and firmly, sometimes I will see someone wearing a broad smile. "Ah," I think, "a student with a strong will."

This kind of delight is different from ordinary, casual pleasure. It is an enjoyment of the emptiness of the self, of unity with all beings, and of the uniqueness of oneself and of birds and clouds and other people. Understanding the light nature of this enjoyment, quite short of any realization, one can stay light in the practice. However, if faith in the possibility of realization is faint, then the practice becomes difficult.

With realization the practice continues, even for Śākyamuni. This is a matter of maintaining a daily schedule of



zazen, and of keeping aware of empty unity in the busiest times, when eating or cooking, talking or listening. Nyogen Senzaki used to say, "When you are at a party, and feel distracted by all the chatter, just close your eyes for a moment and you'll find your treasure right there." I would say that you don't even have to close your eyes.

One renews awareness of this treasure in the delight of ceremonies at the Zen center, as well as in daily zazen. See, for example, the Refuge Gāthā which Zen students recite regularly, as do all Buddhists:

I return to the Buddha;
I return to the Dharma;
I return to the Sangha.

Buddha, or realization; Dharma, the law; and Sangha, fellowship or harmony, are the Three Bodies of the Buddha, Dharmakāya, Sambhogakāya, and Nirmāṇakāya, set forth in different order. "I return to" is a translation of the original Sanskrit and Chinese words that also mean "I find my home in." To say, "I find my home in the Buddha," is to affirm that my home is already the Buddha. "I return to the Buddha," is to take Hakuin's words personally, "This very body is the Buddha." Likewise I find the Dharma, infinite emptiness, is

none other than myself. I am the full and complete Body of Oneness, and I vow to realize that fact more and more clearly.

The Sambhogakāya, the Body of Oneness and Fullness, harmonizes self with its counterpart, the void. It joins all the relative counterparts, life and no life, time and no time, I and that. Sexual play and intercourse at their most loving are poignant models of the Sambhogakāya, bringing delight in mingling with the other. Sung-yüan Ch'ung-yüeh asked his disciples, "How is it that all the completely accomplished sages remain attached to the vermillion thread?"[10] The vermillion thread is the line of illusions and discriminations, according to Zenkei Shibayama, but the association of the color with women's undergarments and with sexual relations should not be glossed over. Sung-yüan's question points up the Buddha-nature of desires. If it is true that "This very body is the Buddha," then our practice must be directed toward its appropriate use, not toward its denial.

Vajrayāna people are fond of criticizing Zen students for their black robes, black cushions, and solemn faces, implying that we tend to shut ourselves from our natural being. They are right in some respects. Dark, unpatterned clothing and black cushions help to minimize distractions in the dōjō, and encourage the deep-dream dimension of *makyō*, but solemn faces and the overemphasis on "great determination" and endurance reflect our samurai inheritance, an accretion on the Buddha Dharma that should be wiped away. For "samurai" read "male." In Far Eastern culture, the female virtues in women and in men tend to be covered over. In wiping the samurai from Zen practice, we expose gentle human nature that nurtures our own aspirations and those of all beings.

The highest and best kind of endurance, in the classification of the ten kinds of endurance, is *kūnin*, the endurance of one who knows that afflictions are empty.[11] Realization of this *kū*, this *śūnyatá*, this emptiness, is endurance transformed to delight. Lightly and joyfully, I return to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. With each recitation of the Refuge Vows, I set forth my aspiration for more clarity, more understanding.

And more compassion. That is the upshot. When there is a selfless spirit, a sense of unity with other beings, and an acknowledgement that each person, animal, plant, stone, is unique—then the personal, human mind is the mind of the universe. ■

NOTES

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2. Shaku Sōen, "The First Step in Meditation." First translated in a typescript broadside by Nyogen Senzaki.
3. Wu-men Hui-k'ai, *Wu-men kuan*, Case 1.
4. Hee-jin Kim, *Dogen Kigen—Mystical Realist* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975).
5. Norman Waddell, "Hakuin's Poison Words for the Heart," *The Eastern Buddhist*, Kyoto, Vol. XIII, No. 2, Autumn, 1980.
6. Yung-chia (Hsuan-chueh), *Cheng-tao ko*. Cf. "Song of Enlightenment," trans. D.T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 1960).
7. Norman Waddell, trans., *The Unborn: The Life and Teaching of Zen Master Bankei, 1622–1693* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984).
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9. Nhat Hanh, *The Miracle of Mindfullness!* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1976).
10. "Miscellaneous Kōans," mimeo, Diamond Sangha, Honolulu and Haiku, Hawaii.
11. William Edward Soothill and Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Trubner, 1937).

Can these Bones Live?

Man has no body distinct from his soul, for that called body is a portion of soul discern'd by the five senses, the chief inlets of soul in this age.[1]

—*William Blake*

I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul,
The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are with me,
The first I graft and increase upon myself, the latter I translate into a new tongue.

I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,
And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,
And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.

I have said that the soul is not more than the body,
And I have said that the body is not more than the soul,
And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is,
And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his own funeral drest in his shroud,
And I or you pocketless of a dime may purchase the pick of the earth.
And to glance with an eye or show a bean in its pod confounds the learning of all times,
And there is no trade or employment but the young man following it may become a hero,
And there is no object so soft but it makes the hub for the wheel'd universe,
And I say to any man or woman, Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million universes.

I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God not in the least,
Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself.



O my body! I dare not desert the likes of you in other men and women, nor the likes of parts of you,
I believe the parts of you are to stand or fall with the likes of the soul (and that they are the soul,)
I believe the likes of you shall stand or fall with my poems, and that they are my poems. . . .
All attitudes, all the shapeliness, all the belongings of my or your body or of anyone's body, male or female,
O I say these are not the parts and poems of the body only, but of the soul,
O I say now these are the soul![2]

—Walt Whitman

I want to speak to the despisers of the body. I would not have them learn and teach differently, but merely say farewell to their own bodies—and thus become silent.

"Body am I, and soul"—thus speaks the child. And why should one not speak like children?

But the awakened and knowing say: body am I entirely, and nothing else; and soul is only a word for something about the body.

The body is a great reason, a plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd. An instrument of your body is also your little reason, my brother, which you call "spirit"—a little instrument and toy of your great reason.

"I," you say, and are proud of the word. But greater is that in which you do not wish to have faith—your body and its great reason: that does not say "I," but does "I."

What the sense feels, what the spirit knows, never has its end in

itself. But sense and spirit would persuade you that they are the end of all things: that is how vain they are. Instruments and toys are sense and spirit; behind them still lies the self. The self also seeks with the eyes of the senses; it also listens with the ears of the spirit. Always the self listens and seeks: it compares, overpowers, conquers, destroys. It controls, and it is in control of the ego too.

Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage—whose name is self. In your body he dwells; he is your body.[3]

—Frederich Nietzsche

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

—Corinthians 6:19–20

Worship of the body alone leads to one result, worship of the spirit to another. So have we heard from the wise.

They who worship both the body and the spirit, by the body overcome death, and by the spirit achieve immortality.[4]

—Upanishads

The Almsman is always mindful and purposeful whether in going forward or back, in looking before or behind, in drawing in or stretching out his limbs, in conduct of cloak bowl and robes, in eating and drinking, in chewing and tasting, in attending to the needs of nature, in walking or standing still, in sitting or in lying down, asleep or awake, speaking or silent. As he dwells thus unflagging, ardent, and purged of self, all worldly thoughts that idly come and go are abandoned, and with their abandonment his heart within grows stablished and planted fast, settled and concentrated.—In this way, an Almsman develops mindfulness of body.[5]

—Kāyagatā-Sati-Sutta

This present life is for manufacturing the next body. This is Vedic knowledge. In this life we are creating our next body. For instance, a boy may be studying very nicely in school. In this way he is creating his adult body. . . . similarly, we are all creating our next bodies according to our karma.[6]

—Swami Bhaktivedanta

But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:



And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

—I Corinthians 15

Those who know the breath of breath,
the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear,
and the mind of the mind—they have realized
Brahman, ancient and primeval.

If here and now one knows him before
the decay of the body, then one is prepared
to receive a body in the worlds of creation.

When the wise man knows the sense perceptions—
their rising and their setting, each one in separation—
and the origin of each, then he grieves no more.

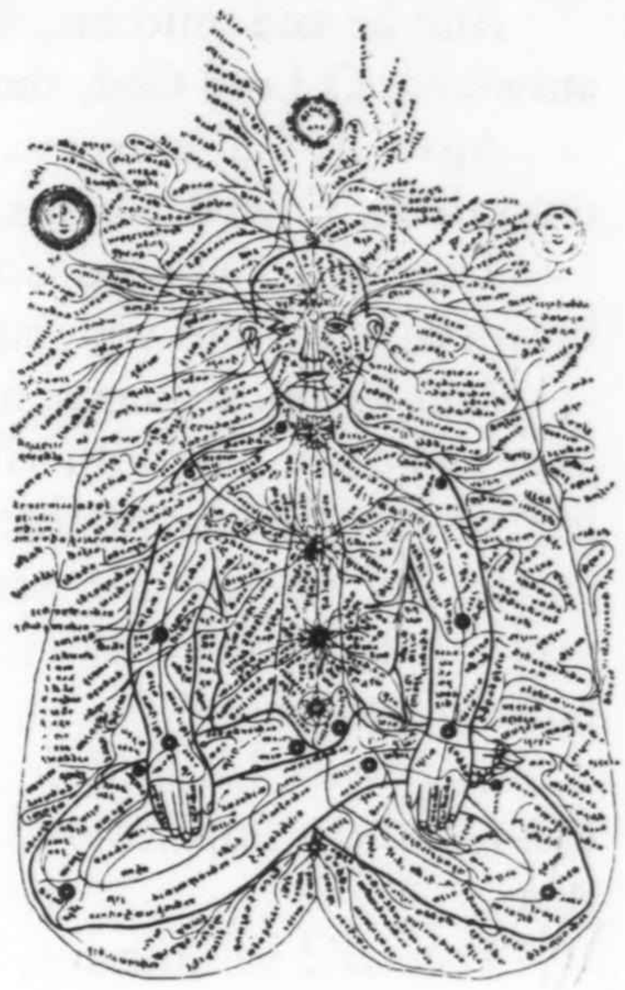
Beyond the senses is the mind,
beyond the mind, pure intellect,
beyond the intellect, the great *ātman*,
beyond the great, the Unmanifest.

Beyond the unmanifest, moreover, is the Person,
all-pervading, uncharacterized.
When a man knows him, he attains liberation
and proceeds to immortality.

When the five organs of perception are still,
together with the mind, when the reason does not function—
this they aver to be the highest state.

This they deem to be yoga—the steady
concentration of the senses. Man then becomes
pure attention, for yoga is both
origin and extinction.[7]

—The Vedas



As often as the mind is outgoing, so often it should be turned within.

—Sri Ramana Maharshi

Inasmuch as there are two desires natural to man,—one of food for the sake of the body, and one of wisdom for the sake of the diviner part of us—then, I say, the motions of the stronger, getting the better and increasing their own power, but making the soul dull, and stupid, and forgetful, engender ignorance, which is the greatest of diseases. There is one protection against both kinds of disproportion—that we should not move the body without the soul or the soul without the body and thus they will be on their guard against each other, and be healthy and well balanced.

And we should consider that God gave the sovereign part of the human soul to be the divinity of each one, being that part which, as we say, dwells at the top of the body, and inasmuch as we are a plant not of an earthly but of a heavenly growth, raises us from earth to our kindred who are in heaven. And in this we say truly; for the divine power suspended the head and root of us from that place where the generation of the soul first began, and thus made the whole body upright.[8]

—Plato

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

—Ezekiel 37:1–10

The gait of the human being is as evocative as his vertical posture; whereas the animal is horizontal and only advances toward itself—that is, it is enclosed within its own form—man, in advancing, transcends himself; even his forward movement seems vertical, it denotes a pilgrimage toward his Archetype, towards the celestial Kingdom, towards God. The beauty of the anterior side of the human body indicates the nobleness, on the one hand of man's vocational end, and on the other hand of his manner of approaching it; it indicates that man directs himself towards God and that he does so in a manner that is "humanly divine," if one may say so. But the posterior side of the body also has its meaning: it indicates, on the one hand the noble innocence of the origin, and on the other hand the noble manner of leaving behind himself what has been transcended; it expresses, positively, whence we have come and, negatively, how we turn our backs to what is no longer ourselves. Man comes from God and he goes towards God; but at the same time, he draws away from an imperfection which is no longer his own and draws nearer to a perfection which is not yet his. His "becoming" bears the imprint of a "being"; he is that which he becomes, and he becomes that which he is.[9]

—Frithjof Schuon



The paradise of the faithful believer is his own body. His virtuous works (after the manner previously described) are its trees, fresh running water, castles, and houris. The Gehenna of the unbeliever is likewise nothing but his own body; his hateful works are its fiery furnaces, monsters, serpents, dogs, dragons.[10]

—*Shaikh Muhammad Karīm Khān Kirmānī*

There was never a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor any of these kings. Nor is there any future in which we shall cease to be.

Just as the dweller in this body passes through childhood, youth and old age, so at death he merely passes into another kind of body. The wise are not deceived by that.

Feelings of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, are caused by the contact of the senses with their objects. They come and they go, never lasting long. You must accept them.

A serene spirit accepts pleasure and pain with an even mind, and is unmoved by either. He alone is worthy of immortality.

That which is non-existent can never come into being, and that which is can never cease to be. Those who have known that inmost Reality know also the nature of *is* and *is not*.

That Reality which pervades the universe is indestructible. No one has power to change the Changeless.

Bodies are said to die, but That which possesses the body is eternal. It cannot be limited, or destroyed. Therefore you must fight. . . .

Worn-out garments are shed by the body: worn-out bodies are shed by the dweller within the body. New bodies are donned by the dweller, like garments. . . .

He who dwells within all living bodies remains forever indestructible. Therefore, you should never mourn for anyone.[11]

—*The Bhagavad-Gita*

The human body is the magazine of inventions, the patent office, where are the models from which every hint is taken. All the tools and engines in earth are only extensions of its limbs and senses.[12]

—*Ralph W. Emerson*

"If my body," said Shun, "is not my own, pray, whose is it?"

"It is the bodily form entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth. Your life is not your own. It is a blended harmony, entrusted to you by Heaven and Earth," replied Ch'eng, his tutor.[13]

—*Chuang-Tzu*

The Body of B. Franklin,

Printer,

Like the Cover of an Old Book,

Its Contents Torn Out

And

Stripped of its Lettering and Gilding,

Lies Here

Food for Worms,

But the Wórk shall not be Lost,

For it Will as He Believed

Appear Once More

In a New and more Elegant Edition

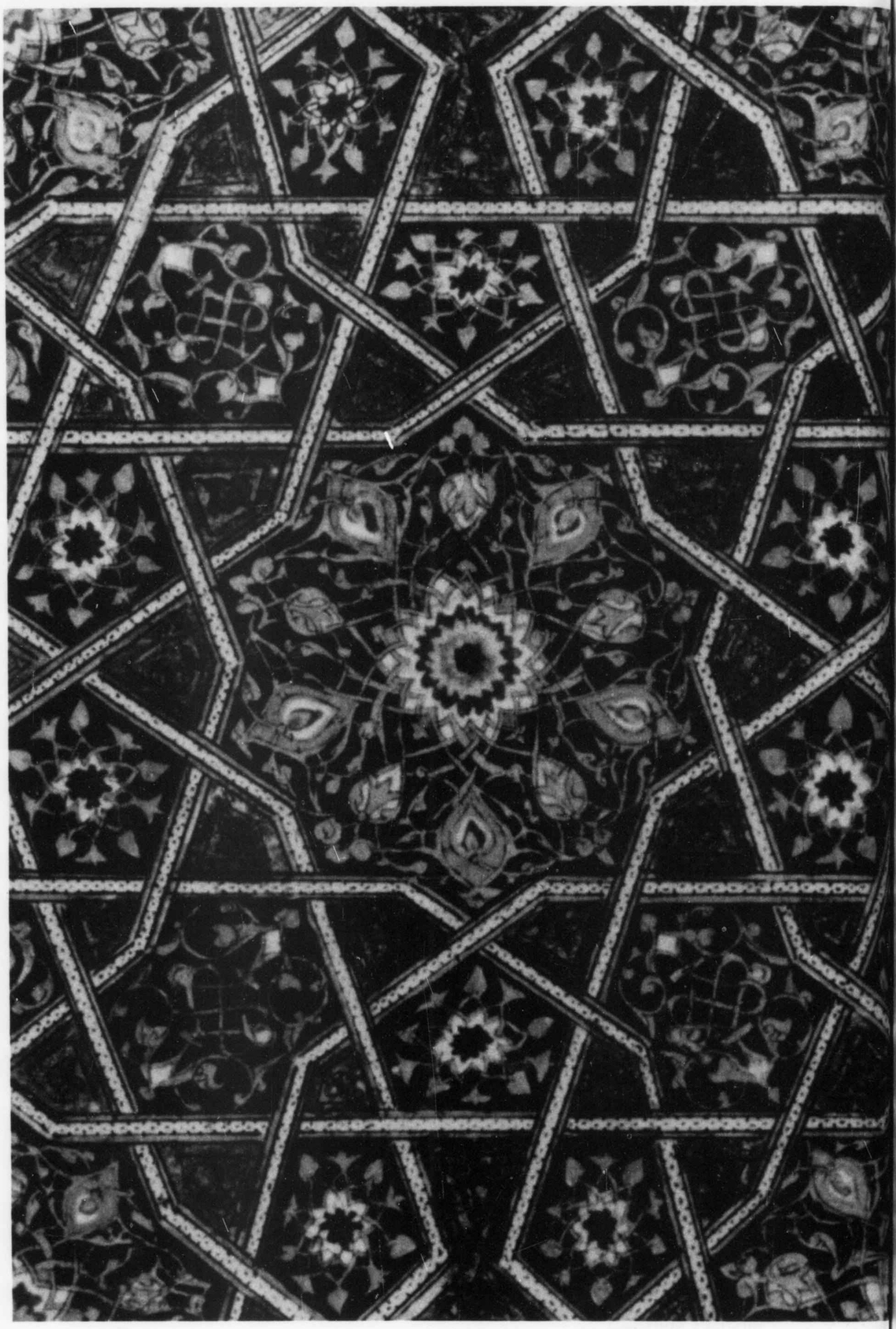
Revised and Corrected

By the Author.

—*Benjamin Franklin*

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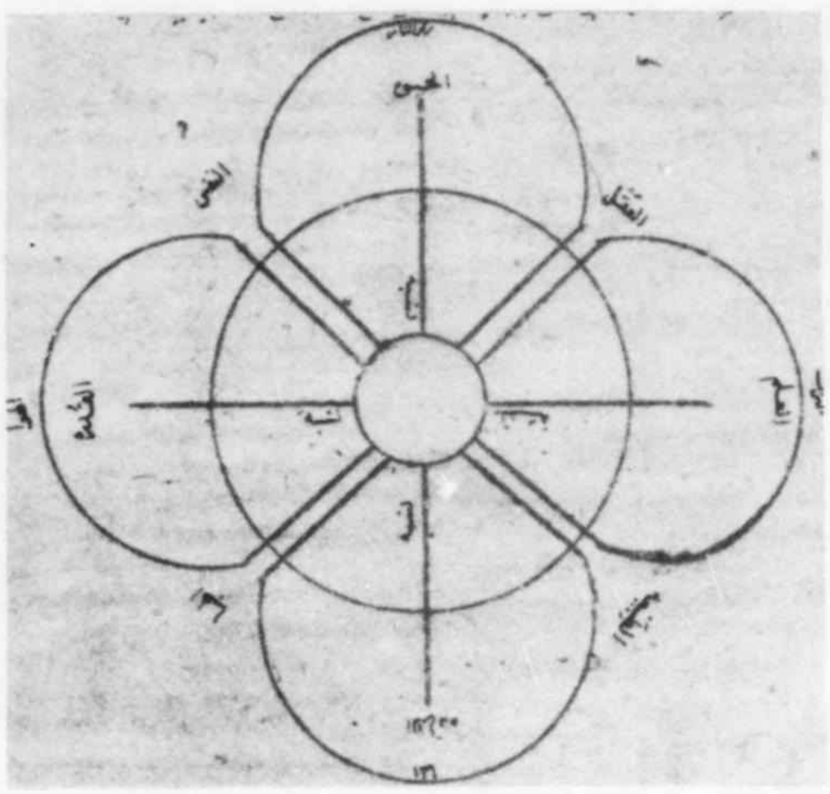
Perfecting the Mirror

GAI EATON

Traditional symbolism represents a mode of thought and of understanding which is so alien to the modern mind that it can seldom be left to stand on its own. The people of earlier times did not have the same need for explanation and elucidation; they possessed a capacity for sensing the meaning of a symbol (existentially rather than in terms of mental concepts) that has been lost. The assumptions of the modern mind must be questioned and, in many cases, reversed before traditional symbolism can be seen as something more than "superstition."

So far as the symbolism of the human body is concerned, the contemporary Westerner's understanding is blocked twice over. In the first place his "scientific" culture blinds him. Secondly his Christian background introduces certain unconscious prejudices. Each of the great world religions is in some measure colored by the environment into which it was initially projected, and the early environment of Christianity was shaped by the decadent naturalism of the Roman world. An entirely profane glorification of the human body (and of the natural world) obliged Christianity to react by considering the body chiefly in its aspect of corruptibility and its association with "the sins of the flesh." This attitude was balanced—perhaps fully compensated—on the one hand by devotion to the body of Christ and, on the other, by the doctrine of the resurrection. Had the physical body been regarded as inherently (rather than accidentally) "vile" the dogma of incarnation would have been unthinkable as would the notion of the body "raised incorruptible."

The heirs of Christianity, completely secularized, have to a large extent returned to Roman "naturalism," and the "body beautiful" has become a cult object, but without a symbolic element. The modern mind finds the notion of bodily resurrection particularly incomprehensible and the clue to this incomprehension is to be found in one of its most fundamental assumptions. Whether consciously or not—whether as a scientific "fact" or as a "superstition"—the apparent massive solidity of the material world mesmerizes us and we are convinced that the outward produces the inward. The body is the real person; mind, personality, and so on are a kind of by-product of this tangible physical reality. In the light (or darkness) of this conviction, not only the resurrection of the body but also the posthumous survival of the soul become untenable concepts. If mind and personality are



shadows cast by the body which, in its solid actuality, is the one thing that cannot be doubted as all else is doubted, then it follows that the shadows disappear when the object that cast them is annihilated.

We shall never understand any traditional doctrine unless we are prepared to turn the contemporary view of the human entity upside down, just as we have to turn the dogma of "progress" upside down before we can consider the traditional doctrine of human decline over the course of time. What is this body, this little parcel of flesh and bone, in terms of prescientific beliefs? It is an outer layer of clothing. A geometrical image may be useful in this context, the image of a vertical ray striking a horizontal plane and provoking a process of crystallization at the point where vertical and horizontal intersect. To realize its potentialities—and this may be seen as the whole purpose of its issuing from the unseen "sun" which is the source of its being—this ray requires instruments constructed from the material of the plane which it has penetrated, and its act of self-expression is necessarily circumscribed by the limitations of this material.

In the world known to us, not only the body but also the mind and personality express what is inherent in the being as such—in the "ray"—but they can do so only in terms of this locality and within the boundaries of what is possible here. The quality of vision, for example, is universal (in Islam one of the Names of God is "He who Sees") as is the quality of audition (God is "He who Hears"), but these universal faculties are particularized in our world by means of the physical structure of the eyes and the ears. It is not difficult to imagine that, if the ray of which we spoke had penetrated a different horizontal plane composed of quite different elements, there would necessarily be "seeing" and "hearing" but the limits set to their range would be of another kind. It follows that there would also be a "crystallization" comparable to the body.

It is in terms of this imagery that we can best understand Jalaluddin Rumi's saying that "the body is the shadow of the shadow of the Heart" or the Hindu doctrine of the *koshas*, the "envelopes" which clothe the nakedness of the spirit (or, quite simply, of the being's nucleus), "envelopes" which are both psychic and physical.

This imagery would however be misleading if it were thought to be entirely adequate to the reality it illustrates. If the outward were no more than clothing for the inward, then it would follow that the inward is unaffected by outward actions just as shadows do not affect the object which casts them. Images of this kind are helpful to analytical understanding, but they must be transcended in the light of the doctrine of unity, the doctrine of *tawhid* (in Islamic terms). The outward does indeed express the inward, but the inward is—at least in a certain sense—shaped by the outward. It is not by chance that the "nucleus"—the Heart—has taken on this particular clothing and no other, and the theater it has chosen for its manifestation fits it as a glove fits the hand.

What might be described as the interdependence of "nucleus" and "en-

velopes'' is brought out very clearly in the argument used by the Muslim mystic and philosopher, al-Ghazzali, concerning the obligation to follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad even in his recorded bodily movements, that is to say in his manner of walking, eating, putting on his sandals and so on. Every Muslim acknowledges the obligation to follow the prophetic example, the *sunna* in the moral sphere, in worship and in social life, but al-Ghazzali insisted upon an even more total and meticulous practice, and he based his case on the intimate relationship between the phenomenal or ''worldly'' level of existence and the divine level and therefore between the movements of the bodily members and the state of the Heart, the ''nucleus.''

The condition of the Heart, he said, is profoundly influenced by the outward actions of the body. This may at first seem an untenable argument, since it is axiomatic that the Heart as such is inviolable and can no more be affected by the actions of its ''envelopes'' than can God Himself by events in this world. What al-Ghazzali means is that the Heart which has clothed itself in soul and body is obscured—''covered'' as Islam expresses it—by inappropriate actions. This recalls a major theme found both in the Quran and in the sayings of the Prophet according to which the Heart is comparable to a mirror over which a coating of rust forms when soul and body fall into sin (ancient mirrors were, of course, made of metal). Al-Ghazzali points out that this mirror can reflect the true nature of things only if it is ''polished, illuminated and maintained in proper balance.'' Regarding this state of balance, he says that the movements of the different parts of the body are themselves governed by a general law of balance and harmony. There is in consequence an appropriate pattern of movement for each bodily member, and this pattern conforms to what is, in the highest sense, natural and therefore in accordance with the will of God. The balanced and harmonious movement of the members thus has an effect upon the most inward dimension of the being. When this movement obeys the law of balance, then—he says—there occurs in the Heart a state of ''natural disposition'' which is capable of ''absorbing Reality'' in the same way that a mirror in proper balance reflects the true form of objects without any distortion. It is not only wrong actions in the moral sphere that produce a veil of rust over the inward mirror; disordered movements of the body may have the same effect. This could be said to follow logically from the Islamic doctrine of *tawhid*, ''oneness'': the human creature is a being of many levels, many aspects, but he is nonetheless a unified whole in which all the parts are interdependent.

Even in our everyday experience we are aware of this and may find confirmation of al-Ghazzali's argument. An ugly man scarcely seems ugly if all his movements and gestures are coordinated and harmonious; a beautiful girl seems less beautiful if all her bodily movements are clumsy and her outward behavior is uncouth. We tend, whether consciously or not, to judge people or ''know'' them by their bodies, and physical contact is a form of knowledge (hence the Biblical term for sexual intercourse, ''he knew her''). This is true of all touching between human beings, and it is significant that in the Islamic context Satan is said to lament whenever two Muslims shake hands. This simple physical contact between two human creatures is a token of the unity which Satan—the force of evil and disharmony—wishes to shatter. It is in accordance with the very nature of all symbolism that the most outward should reflect or express what is most profoundly inward and hidden. In Islam the principal objective of the spiritual techniques of Sufism is to make awareness of spiritual realities (initially abstract), and ultimately of God Himself, as simple, immediate, and concrete



Maori chief

as are our sense impressions. Physical experience has a certain quality of wholeness. Spiritual experience is—almost by definition—the encounter of the total being with Totality. From this point of view, "extremes meet."

Among so-called primitive peoples this point is sometimes underlined by the practice of painting symbolic images on the body; that which is most inward is made visible on the surface of the skin, the most outward "envelope" of the Self. Such practices are alien to Islam, but the body is nonetheless adorned by clothing which expresses the innermost nature of man, or was so adorned before the impact of the West shattered this image. Clothing may indeed be considered as an additional "envelope" both veiling and expressing the "nucleus," the Heart, and a man or woman dress in accordance with what they believe to be their identity, their meaning, and their role. Those who regard themselves as a species of ant, as was the case in Mao's China, must necessarily dress identically in boiler-suits which confirm their ant-like function, indistinguishable one from another. Those who believe that this world is the only reality, the beginning and the end of our experience, will dress either in terms of sexual enticement or of physical vanity.

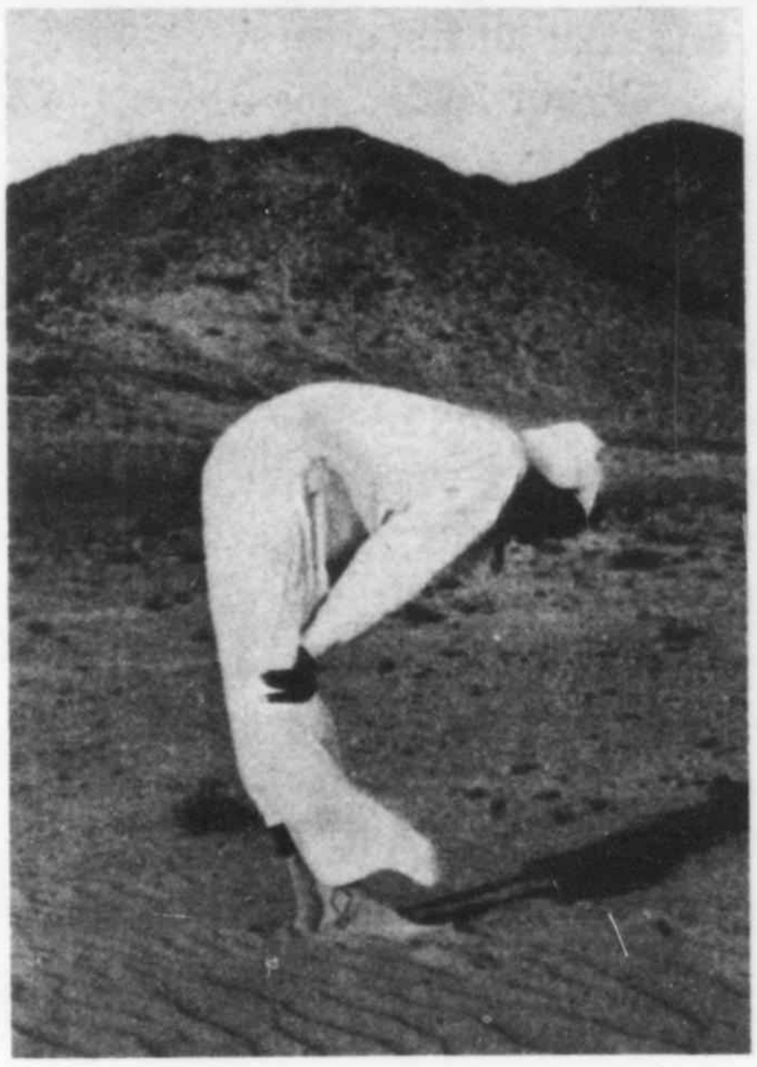
A perceptive French traveller in North Africa earlier in this century remarked with some surprise that the ordinary merchants, tradesmen, and craftsmen in the cities of Islam had "the demeanor of our ecclesiastics," in other words they might have been taken for priests, an impression created partly by their physical bearing and partly by their traditional costumes. Since there is no priesthood as such in Islam and each in-

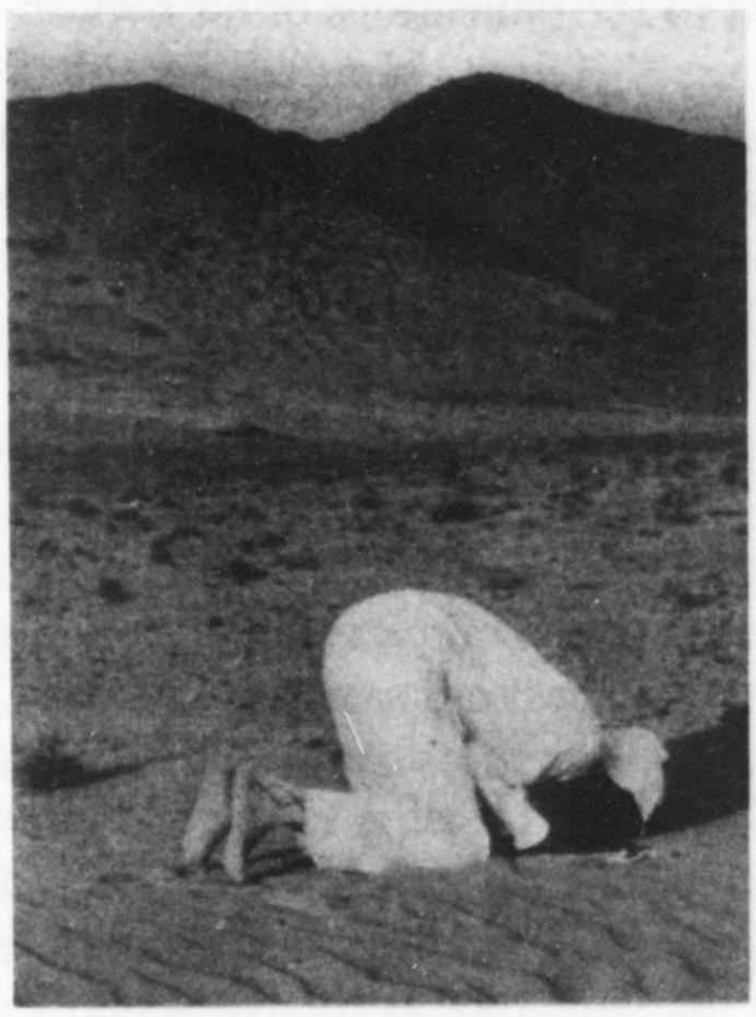
dividual Muslim is potentially a "viceregent of God on earth," his clothing as well as his manner of walking, standing, or sitting might be expected to conform to this role (as they did until fairly recently).

Whatever the arguments for or against the imitation of the Prophet's example in bodily actions, there is one aspect of life in which every Muslim imitates his movements with meticulous precision and this is in the ritual prayer (as also in preparing for it). The prayer is preceded by full or partial ablution, according to the circumstances, and the purification of the body by means of water—God "created all things from water" according to the Quran—is a constantly repeated act of renewal, the body's purification implying that of the soul also. Through this virtual rebirth the worshipper is made fit to stand in all simplicity before his creator and engage in intimate talk with Him. In order to do so effectively he orientates his body, facing the Ka'ba in Mecca, and here again a physical action represents a movement of the total being at all levels. All men seek a direction and an identifiable goal. For the Muslim the Ka'ba symbolizes the center of the universe and therefore, by transposition, his own innermost center—the Heart. In the Pilgrimage he traces by bodily movement the route from his peripheral home to the center, his eternal home, but this is already prefigured in the positioning of his body in prayer.

In the ritual prayer itself the spiritual and intellectual element is represented by the recitation from the Quran and the emotional element by the feelings of fear and of hope with which he is commanded to call upon God, but what might be called the existential element is acted out in physical movements which utilize the body as a vehicle for the spirit. In the first part of each unit of prayer the worshipper stands upright while he







recites certain passages from the Quran, and this uprightness, this verticality, is an image of the "straight" (or "vertical") path upon which he asks God to lead him. The body has itself become a symbol of the ray which connects heaven and earth, the divine and the human.

But the Muslim prays not only on his own behalf and on behalf of his fellow men and women but also in the name of creation as a whole; this is an aspect of his function as the "viceregent of God on earth." The standing is followed by a bowing in which the worshipper is instructed to keep the upper part of his body, from head to hips, parallel with the ground, and it is sometimes said that all the creatures which move upon four legs, their bodies horizontal, are represented by this posture. This bowing is followed by the prostration in which the worshipper places his forehead on the ground, his body folded up as though in the foetal position, and although this is primarily an acknowledgement of the power and glory of the Transcendent it is also, according to certain sages, a representation of the inanimate realm, the mineral order in particular. Upright, he had prayed as God's viceregent. While bowing he had glorified God as the infinite, the all-embracing on the horizontal level. Now—in the prostration—he is, as it were, reduced to the dimensions of his own innermost "nucleus." In this way the worshipper's physical body has acted out the variety of relationships between Creator and creation.

There is a further aspect of the body's natural activity which is of great—though complex—significance in Islam. This has to do with articulate speech and the breath which is its vehicle. The Quran itself is to be recited aloud rather than merely read. The Arabic word for "breath," *nafas*, comes from the same root as the word for "self" or "soul," *nafs*. It is said that God created everything that exists by means of *al-nafas al-rahmani*, "the breath of the Merciful." He "breathed out" creation and, at the end of time, He will breathe it in again, absorbing it once more into Himself, for He is the Origin and the End, the First and the Last. Moreover Islam, according to the Quran, "expands the breast"; the Faith is, in a sense, inhaled so that it fills the lungs and thereby penetrates the body.

We ourselves draw into our lungs a parcel of the universal atmosphere which may be likened to infinity, vivifying and maintaining the body in physical existence by what we take from beyond ourselves, and the gift of oxygen is intimately combined with our blood to circulate through every crevice of our physical being. By expelling this same breath, we speak. The breath is shaped into meaningful words by the vibration of the vocal cords and the air we were given is given back to express our glorification of God, our identity as his viceregents, and our function as "bearers of the Message."

The Quran tells us that: "The Merciful taught the Quran (that is to say, sacred knowledge), created man, taught him articulate speech." Here man is the central figure, receiving sacred knowledge and disseminating it, a channel between what is hidden in God and what is to be made actual and immediate on the periphery of the great circle of being. The Word has taken the form of a recitation just as, for Christians, it took the form of Christ's body.

In Sufi practices the summit of speech is the name *Allah*, sanctifying the breath which is its vehicle and ultimately sanctifying the soul. In the final stage of the Sufi "Dance," after the chanting of the Confession of Faith (*la ilaha illa 'Llah*) has given way to the single word *Allah*, this word itself fades away leaving only the final 'h'-sound carried by rhythmical breathing, a *ha* deep in the throat accompanied by the beating of a



drum. The Mevlevi Dance (that of the "Whirling Dervishes") is a special case but has the same qualities of rhythm and balance. When disordered, fragmented time is ordered and unified by rhythm, then time as we know it in our everyday lives is already transcended; moreover this fast, shallow breathing at the conclusion of the "Dance," when the soul gives itself up utterly to God, is not unlike the breathing of a dying man when, in the most immediate physical sense, he is about to "give up the ghost."

Islam, as the religion of balance, reflecting the "coincidence of opposites," both divides and unites. The Quran itself is sometimes called *al-Furcan*, "the Discrimination," and discrimination divides, putting each thing in its proper place. But Islam is above all the religion of unity and unification, and balance as such reflects in dynamic tension the unity which is, by definition, peace. First there is analysis. Then there is synthesis. In the order of creation the physical body is at the opposite extreme to the "nucleus" of our existence, the Heart, yet the outermost reflects the innermost, and the human creature, composite and multidimensional, is a unity reflecting his Creator, who is supremely One. ■

The Human Image: A Portfolio

There is a true man in the mass of red flesh. He always goes in and out through the face-gate of every one of you. He who has not realized it, look, look!

—Lin-chi

Is there a central image in world art, a theme in relation to which all else is variation? To the unexpected degree that the answer is yes, the image at the center is of man himself, the human being male and female, and the divinities we resemble. The great cultures that forbade the human image in sacred art acknowledged its power by doing so; thus even for them, that image secretly occupies the center.

The center belongs not to a random man or woman but to a radiant one. Standing or seated, impassive or optimistic in expression but never taut, engaged in a simple religious act or simply present, as if that were an action—these words say something of the true man as he appears in art. And these also: intensely alive, endowed with profuse health, free of every drama but the fundamental one of existing separately and seeking inseparability from the real.

The unforgettable cry of the *Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad* captures the theme of the central image of humanity as surely as anything in literature:

From the unreal lead me to the real!
From darkness lead me to light!
From death lead me to immortality!

But there is no anguish in this central image. On the contrary, the human being that makes itself known here is fulfilled, its intensity contained by confidence, by knowledge, by a firm bodily envelope. The cry has been answered.

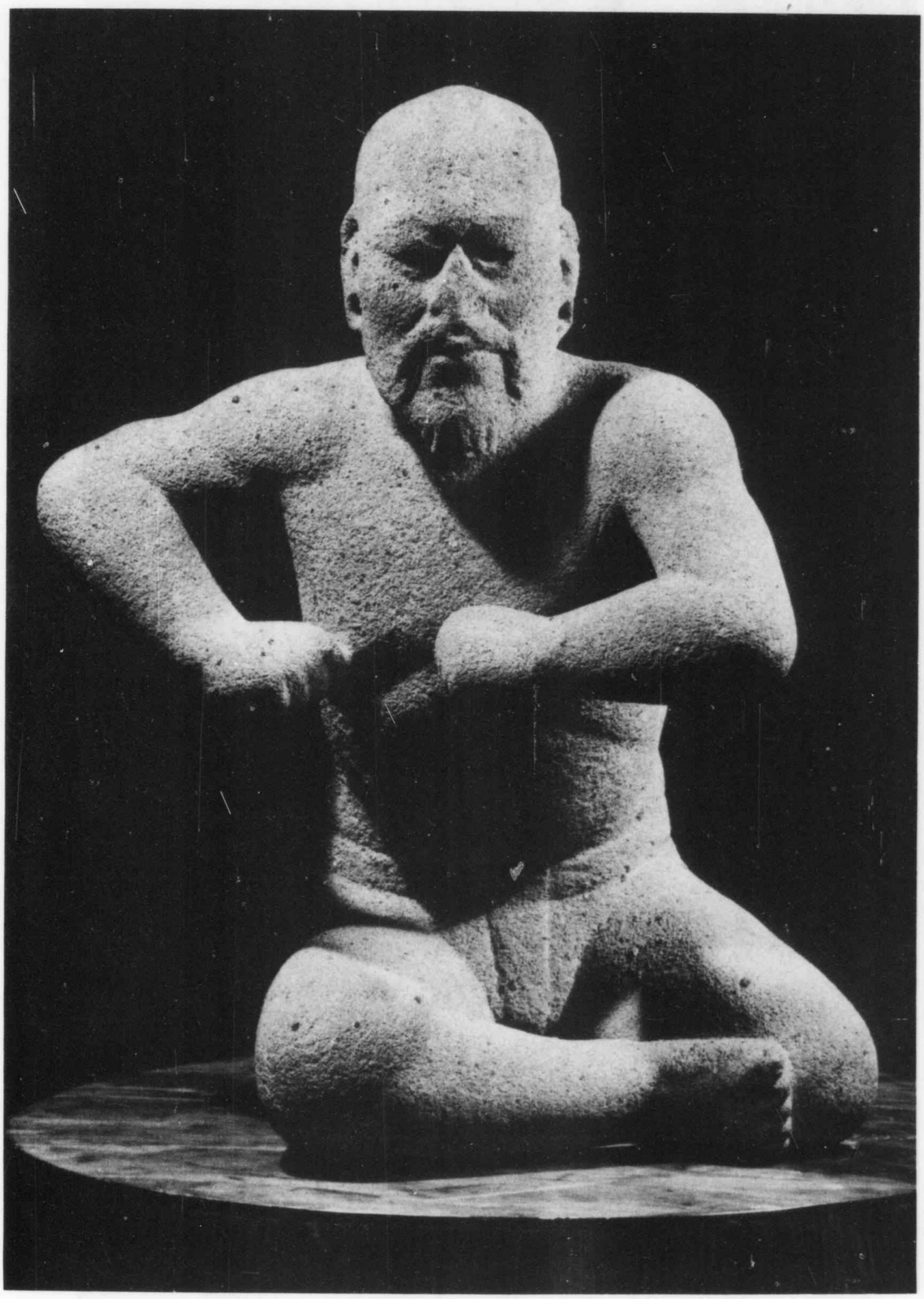
—Roger Lipsey





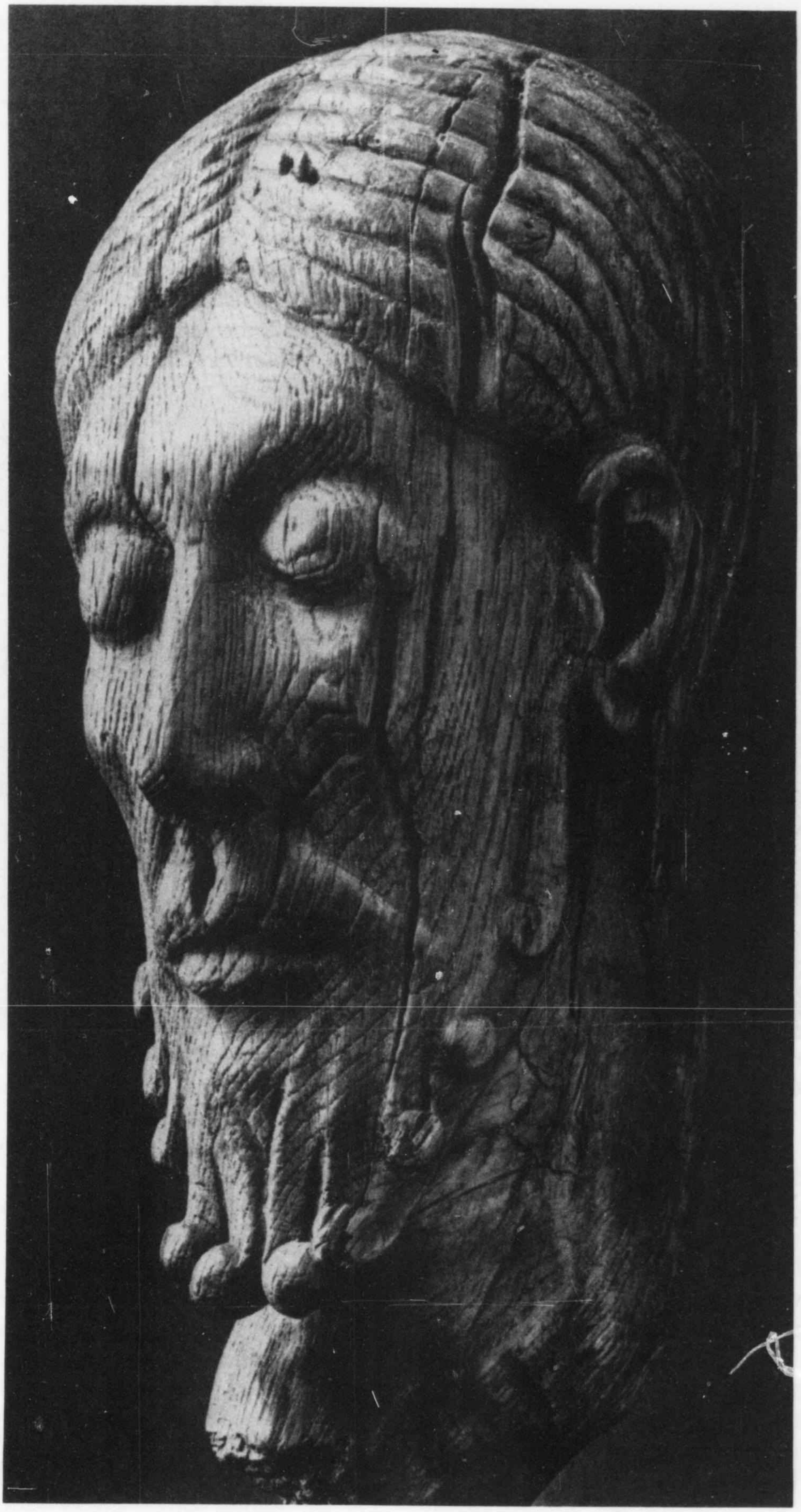








From the unreal lead me to the real!
From darkness lead me to light!
From death lead me to immortality!





Photographs by Lee B. Ewing

Sense and Presence

JACQUES LUSSEYRAN

I went blind at the age of eight. It was a great surprise to find myself blind, and being blind was not at all as I imagined it. Nor was it as the people around me seemed to think it. They told me that to be blind meant not to see. Yet how was I to believe them when I saw? Not at once, I admit. Not in the days immediately after the operation. For at that time I still wanted to use my eyes. I followed their usual path. I looked in the direction where I was in the habit of seeing before the accident, and there was anguish, a lack, something like a void which filled me with what grownups call despair.

Finally, one day, and it was not long in coming, I realized that I was looking in the wrong way. It was as simple as that. I was making something very like the mistake people make who change their glasses without adjusting themselves. I was looking too far off, and too much on the surface of things.

This was much more than a simple discovery, it was a revelation. I can still see myself in the Champ de Mars, where my father had taken me for a walk a few days after the accident. Of course I knew the garden well, its ponds, its railings, its iron chairs. I even knew some of the trees in person, and naturally I wanted to see them again. But I couldn't. I threw myself forward into the substance which was space, but which I did not recognize because it no longer held anything familiar to me.

At this point some instinct—I was almost about to say a hand laid on me—made me change course. I began to look more closely, not at things but at a world closer to myself, looking from an inner place to one further within, instead of clinging to the movement of sight toward the world outside.

Immediately, the substance of the universe drew together, redefined and peopled itself anew. I was aware of a radiance emanating from a place I knew nothing about, a place which might as well have been outside me as within. But radiance was there, or, to put it more precisely, light. It was a fact, for light was there.

I felt indescribable relief, and happiness so great it almost made me laugh. Confidence and gratitude came as if a prayer had been answered. I found light and joy at the same moment, and I can say without hesitation that from that time on light and joy have never been separated in my experience. I have had them or lost them altogether.

The amazing thing was that this was not magic for me at all, but reality. I could no more have denied it than people with eyes can deny that they see. I was not light myself, I knew that, but I bathed in it as an element which blindness had suddenly brought much closer. I could feel light rising, spreading, resting on objects, giving them form, then leaving them.

Withdrawing or diminishing is what I mean, for the opposite of light was never present. Sighted people always talk about the night of blindness, and that seems to them quite natural. But there is no such night, for at every waking hour and even in my dreams I lived in a stream of light.

Without my eyes light was much more stable than it had been with them. As I remember it, there were no longer the same differences between things lighted brightly, less brightly, or not at

all. I saw the whole world in light, existing through it and because of it.

Colors, all the colors of the rainbow, also survived. For me, the child who loved to draw and paint, colors made a celebration so unexpected that I spent hours playing with them, and all the more easily now they were more docile than they used to be.

Light threw its color on things and on people. My father and mother, the people I met or ran into in the street, all had their characteristic color which I had never seen before I went blind. Yet now this special attribute impressed itself on me as part of them as definitely as any impression created by a face. Still, the colors were only a game, while light was my whole reason for living. I let it rise in me like water in a well, and I rejoiced.

Still, there were times when the light faded, almost to the point of disappearing. It happened every time I was afraid.

If, instead of letting myself be carried along by confidence and throwing myself into things, I hesitated, calculated, thought about the wall, the half-open door, the key in the lock; if I said to myself that all these things were hostile and about to strike or scratch, then without exception I hit or wounded myself. The only easy way to move about the house, the garden, or the beach was by not thinking about it at all, or by thinking as little as possible. Then I moved between obstacles the way they say bats do. What the loss of my eyes had not accomplished was brought about by fear. It made me blind.

Anger and impatience had the same effect, throwing everything into confusion. The minute before I knew just where everything in the room was, but if I got angry, things got angrier than I. They went and hid in the most unlikely corners, mixed themselves up, turned turtle, muttered like crazy men and looked wild. As for me, I no longer knew where to put hand or foot. Everything hurt me. But when I was happy and serene, approached people with confidence and thought well of them, I was rewarded with light.

The summer after the accident my parents took me to the seashore. There I met a little girl my own age. I think she was called Nicole. She came into my world like a great red star, or perhaps more like a ripe cherry. The only thing I knew for sure was that she was bright and red.

How natural that people who are red should have red shadows. When she came to sit down by me between two pools of salt water under the warmth of the sun, I saw rosy reflections on the canvas of the awnings. The sea itself, the blue of the sea, took on a purple tone. I followed her by the red wake which trailed behind her wherever she went.

How could I have lived all that time without realizing that everything in the world has a voice and speaks? Not just the things that are supposed to speak, but the others, like the gate, the walls of the houses, the shade of trees, the sand and the silence.

Still, even before my accident, I loved sound, but now it seems clear that I didn't listen to it. After I went blind, I could never make a motion without starting an avalanche of noise. If I went into my room at night, the room where I used to hear nothing, the small plaster statue on the mantelpiece made a fraction of a turn. I heard its friction in the air, as light a sound as the sound of a waving hand. Whenever I took a step, the floor cried or sang—I could hear it making both these sounds—and its song was passed along from one board to the next, all the way to the window, to give me the measure of the room.

If I spoke out suddenly, the windowpanes, which seemed so solid in their putty frames, began to shake, very

lightly of course but distinctly. This noise was on a higher pitch than the others, cooler, as if it were already in contact with the outside air. Every piece of furniture creaked, once, twice, ten times, and made a trail of sounds like gestures as minutes passed. The bed, the wardrobe, the chairs were stretching, yawning and catching their breath.

When a draft pushed against the door, it creaked out "draft." When a hand pushed it, it creaked in a human way. For me there was no mistaking the difference. I could hear the smallest recession in the wall from a distance, for it changed the whole room. Because this nook, that alcove were there, the wardrobe sang a hollower song.

It was as though the sounds of earlier days were only half real, too far away from me, and heard through a fog. Perhaps my eyes used to make the fog, but at all events my accident had thrown my head against the humming heart of things, and the heart never stopped beating.

You always think of sounds beginning and ending abruptly. But now I realized that nothing could be more false. Now my ears heard the sounds almost before they were there, touching me with the tips of their fingers and directing me toward them. Often I seemed to hear people speak before they began talking.

Sounds had the same individuality as light. They were neither inside nor outside, they were passing through me. They gave me my bearings in space and put me in touch with things. It was not like signals that they functioned, but like replies.

I remember well when I first arrived at the beach two months after the accident. It was evening, and there was nothing there but the sea and its voice, precise beyond the power to imagine it. It formed a mass which was so heavy and so limpid that I could have leaned against it like a wall. It spoke to me in several layers all at once. The waves were arranged in steps, and together they made one music, though what they said was different in each voice. There was rasping in the bass and bubbling in the top register. I didn't need to be told about the things that eyes could see.

At one end there was the wall of the sea and the wind rustling over the sand. At the other there was the retaining wall, as full of echoes as a talking mirror. What the waves said they said twice over.

People often say that blindness sharpens hearing, but I don't think this is so. My ears were hearing no better, but I was making better use of them. Sight is a miraculous instrument offering us all the riches of physical life. But we get nothing in this world without paying for it, and in return for all the benefits that sight brings we are forced to give up others whose existence we don't even suspect. These were the gifts I received in such abundance.

I needed to hear and hear again. I multiplied sounds to my heart's content. I rang bells. I touched walls with my fingers, explored the resonance of doors, furniture, and the trunks of trees. I sang in empty rooms, I threw pebbles far off on the beach just to hear them whistle through the air and then fall. I even made my small companions repeat words to give me plenty of time to walk around them.

But most surprising of all was the discovery that sounds never came from one point in space, and never retreated into themselves. There was the sound, its echo, and another sound into which the first sound melted and to which it had given birth, altogether an endless procession of sounds.

Sometimes the resonance, the hum of voices all around me, grew so intense that I got dizzy and put my hands over my ears, as I might have done by closing my eyes to protect myself against too much light. That is why I couldn't stand racket, useless noises, or music that went on and on. A sound we don't

listen to is a blow to body and spirit, because sound is not something happening outside us, but a real presence passing through us and lingering unless we have heard it fully.

I was well protected from these miseries by parents who were musicians, and who talked around our family table instead of turning on the radio. But all the more reason for me to say how important it is to defend blind children against shouting, background music, and all such hideous assaults. For a blind person, a violent and futile noise has the same effect as the beam of a searchlight too close to the eyes of someone who can see. It hurts. But when the world sounds clear and on pitch, it is more harmonious than poets have ever known it, or than they will ever be able to say.

Every Sunday morning, an old beggar used to play three tunes on his accordion in the courtyard of our apartment house. This poor sour music, punctuated at intervals by the metallic scraping of rails from the streetcars on the avenue nearby—these in the silence of a lazy morning created a thousand dimensions in space; not just the steep drop into the court and the parade of the streets on the ground, but as many paths from house to house and court to roof as I could hold with my attention. With sound I never came to an end, for this was another kind of infinity.

At first my hands refused to obey. When they looked for a glass on the table, they missed it. They fumbled around the door knobs, mixed up black and white keys at the piano, fluttered in the air as they came near things. It was almost as if they had been uprooted, cut off from me, and for a time this made me afraid.

Fortunately, before long I realized that instead of becoming useless they were learning to be wise. They only needed time to accustom themselves to freedom. I had thought they were refusing to obey, but it was all because they were not getting orders, when the eyes were no longer there to command them.

But more than that it was a question of rhythm. Our eyes run over the surfaces of things. All they require are a few scattered points, since they can bridge the gap in a flash. They "half see" much more than they see, and they never weigh. They are satisfied with appearances, and for them the world glows and slides by, but lacks substance.

All I needed was to leave my hands to their own devices. I had nothing to teach them, and besides, since they began working independently, they seemed to foresee everything. Unlike eyes, they were in earnest, and from whatever direction they approached an object they covered it, tested its resistance, leaned against the mass of it and recorded every irregularity in its surface. They measured it for height and thickness, taking in as many dimensions as possible. But most of all, having learned that they had fingers, they used them in an entirely new way.

When I had eyes, my fingers used to be stiff, half dead at the ends of my hands, good only for picking up things. But now each one of them started out on its own. They explored things separately, changed levels and, independently of each other, made themselves heavy or light.

Movement of the fingers was terribly important, and had to be uninterrupted because objects do not stand at a given point, fixed there, confined in one form. They are alive, even the stones. What is more they vibrate and tremble. My fingers felt the pulsation distinctly, and if they failed to answer with a pulsation of their own, the fingers immediately became helpless and lost their sense of touch. But when they went toward things, in sympathetic vibration with them, they recognized them right away.

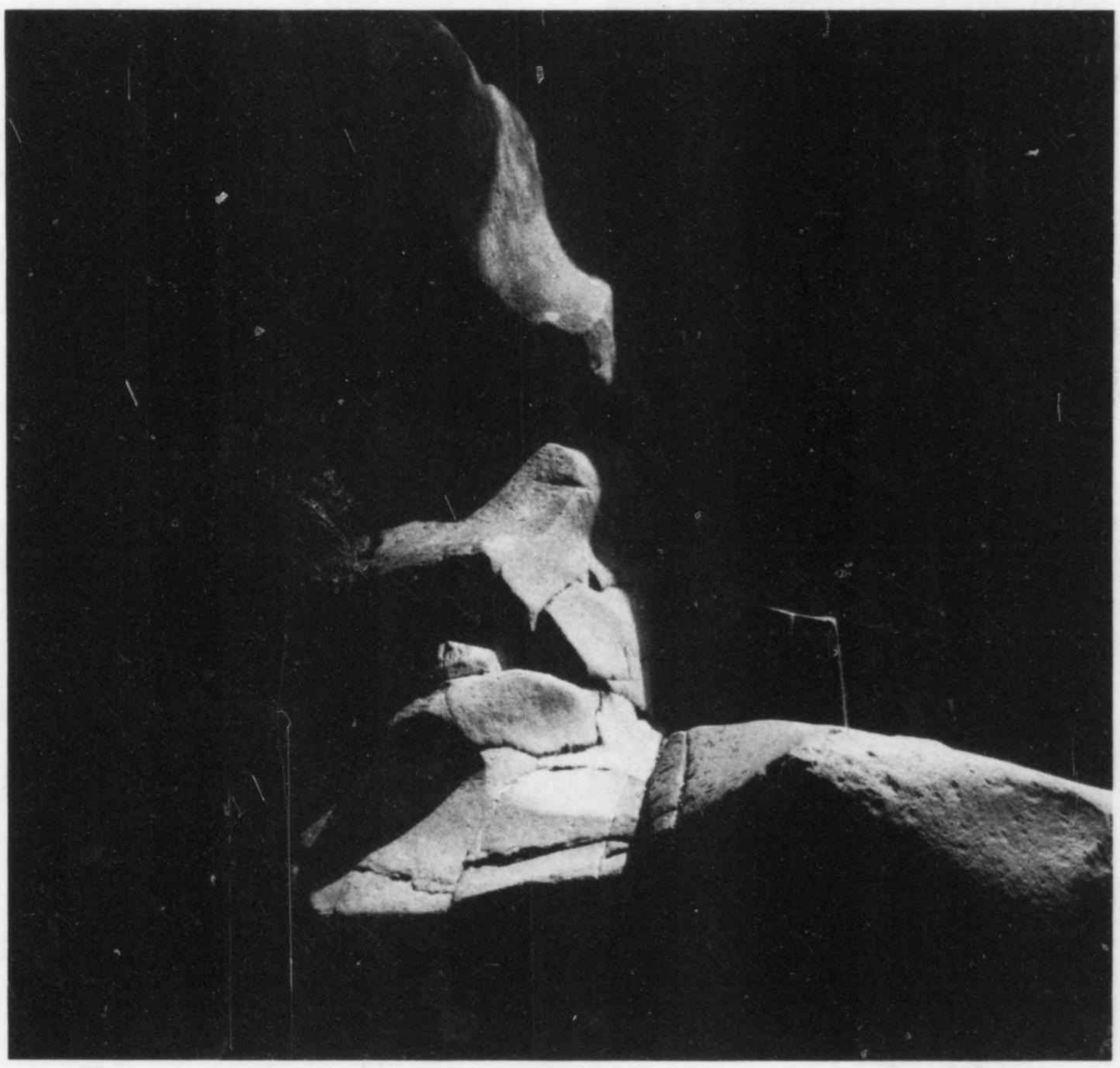
Yet there was something still more important than movement, and that was pressure. If I put my hand on the table

without pressing it, I knew the table was there, but knew nothing about it. To find out, my fingers had to bear down, and the amazing thing is that the pressure was answered by the table at once. Being blind I thought I should have to go out to meet things, but I found that they came to me instead. I have never had to go more than halfway, and the universe became the accomplice of all my wishes.

If my fingers pressed the roundness of an apple, each one with a different weight, very soon I could not tell whether it was the apple or my fingers which were heavy. I didn't even know whether I was touching it or it was touching me. As I became part of the apple, the apple became part of me. And that was how I came to understand the existence of things.

As soon as my hands came to life they put me in a world where everything was an exchange of pressures. These pressures gathered together in shapes, and each one of the shapes had meaning. As a child I spent hours leaning against objects and letting them lean against me. Any blind person can tell you that this gesture, this exchange, gives him a satisfaction too deep for words.

Touching the tomatoes in the garden, and really touching them, touching the walls of the house, the materials of the curtains or a clod of earth is surely seeing them as fully as eyes can see. But it is more than seeing them, it is tuning in on them and allowing the current they hold to connect with one's own, like electricity. To put it differently, this means an end of living in front of things and a beginning of living with them. Never mind if the word sounds shocking, for this is love.



You cannot keep your hands from loving what they have really felt, moving continually, bearing down and final-

ly detaching themselves, the last perhaps the most significant motion of all. Little by little, my hands discovered that objects were not rigidly bound within a mold. It was form they first came in contact with, form like a kernel. But around this kernel objects branched out in all directions.

I could not touch the pear tree in the garden just by following the trunk with my fingers, then the branches, then the leaves, one at a time. That was only a beginning, for in the air, between the leaves, the pear tree still continued, and I had to move my hands from branch to branch to feel the currents running between them.

At Juvardeil, in the holidays, when my small peasant friends saw me doing these magic dances around the trees and touching the invisible, they said I was like the medicine man, the man with an old secret who heals the sick by mesmerism, sometimes at a distance, and by methods not recognized by medical science. Of course, my young friends were wrong, but they had a good excuse, and today I know more than one professional psychologist who, for all his scientific knowledge, cannot account for these incongruous motions.

With smell it was the same as it was with touch—like touch an obvious part of the loving substance of the universe. I began to guess what animals must feel when they sniff the air. Like sound and shape, smell was more distinctive than I used to think it was.

As I walked along a country road bordered by trees, I could point to each one of the trees by the road, even if they were not spaced at regular intervals. I knew whether the trees were straight and tall, carrying their branches as a body carries its head, or gathered into



thickets and partly covering the ground around them.

This kind of exercise soon tired me out, I must admit, but it succeeded. And the fatigue did not come from the trees, from their number or shape, but from myself. To see them like this I had to hold myself in a state so far removed from old habits that I could not keep it up for very long. I had to let the trees come toward me, and not allow the slightest inclination to move toward them, the smallest wish to know them, to come between them and me. I could not afford to be curious or impatient or proud of my accomplishment.

After all, such a state is only what one commonly calls "attention," but I can testify that when carried to this point it is not easy. The same experiment tried with trees along the road I could practice on any objects which reached a height and breadth at least as great as my own: telegraph poles, hedges, the arches of a bridge, walls along the street, the doors and windows in these walls, the places where they were set back or sloped away.

As with the sense of touch, what came to me from objects was pressure, but pressure of a kind so new to me that at first I didn't think of calling it by that name. When I became really attentive and did not oppose my own pressure to my surroundings, then trees and rocks came to me and printed their shape upon me like fingers leaving their impression in wax.

This tendency of objects to project themselves beyond their physical limits produced sensations as definite as sight or hearing. I only needed a few years to grow accustomed to them, to tame them somewhat. Like all blind people, whether they know it or not, these are the senses I use when I walk by myself either outdoors or through a house. Later I read that they call this sense "the sense of obstacles," and that some kinds of animals, bats, for instance, are highly endowed with it.

According to many traditions of the occult, man has a third eye, an inner eye, generally called "the eye of Śiva," located in the middle of his forehead, an eye which he can bring to life in certain conditions by certain exercises. Finally, the researches undertaken by the French writer and member of the Academy, Jules Romains, have demonstrated the existence of visual perception outside the retina, situated in certain nervous centers of the skin, particularly in the hands, the forehead, the nape of the neck and the chest. I hear that more recently this kind of research has been carried on with success by physiologists, especially in the U.S.S.R.

But whatever the nature of the phenomenon, I experienced it from childhood, and its effects seem to me much more important than its cause. The indispensable condition for accurately pointing out trees along the road was to accept the trees and not try to put myself in their place.

Before I was ten years old I knew with absolute certainty that everything in the world was a sign of something else, ready to take its place if it should fall by the way. And this continuing miracle of healing I heard expressed fully in the Lord's Prayer I repeated at night before going to sleep. I was not afraid. Some people would say I had faith, and how should I not have it in the presence of the marvel which kept renewing itself? Inside me every sound, every scent, and every shape was forever changing into light, and light itself changing into color to make a kaleidoscope of my blindness. ■

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Washing the Feet

CHRISTOPHER BAMFORD

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. . . .

—Ephesians 4:1–6

The fundamental relation of humanity to the ground of its being is paradoxical; it is a relationship which presents two faces. One is built upon the premise that each living, individual human being is potentially in contact with the eternal and uncreated ground of all being. This is the divine spark in each person to which Meister Eckhart refers when he writes, "There is something in the soul which is uncreated and uncreatable; if the whole soul were this it would be uncreated and uncreatable; and this is the intellect." Intellect here is the latin *intellectus*, synonyms for which are *spiritus*, spirit and *animus*, mind. There exists a spiritual ferment in the soul, says Eckhart, which, under certain conditions, can transform and spiritualize it. "In this power, God is fully verdant and flowering, in all the joy and

honor that he is himself.'' That is to say, each particular has potentially a unique connection to the universal; but the connection must be made.

Such is the relation of the individual to God: alone before the alone. But the uncreated ground present in each also has a relationship to all other human beings—indeed to all of creation. This is the second face of the paradox. Both relationships are religious in the sense of ''binding together'' in order to re-form the whole, religion and reformation being one. Today there is a tendency to emphasize the mystical spirit immanent in each human being and to ignore the aspect of humanity itself as a mystical body. And yet these two aspects cannot be separated, any more than the many can be separated from the one, or the body from the spirit. All things in the universe are essentially two—uncreated and created, creator and creation—and these two must be made one or, at least, not-two: that is the paradoxical work of creation. In the phrase of Maximus the Confessor: ''. . . always and in all his Word God wills the mystery of his embodiment.''

A precursor of Meister Eckhart, the ninth-century ''Holy Sage'' John Scotus Erigena, is of help in two ways. He tells us that the virtue of the soul is faith, while that of the intellect or spirit is knowledge. Secondly, in his interpretation of the Johannine story of the encounter of Christ with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's Well, he makes the logic of their relation quite clear: the soul must summon her spouse, the intellect, in order for them both to receive the inexhaustible gift of the Holy Spirit, the invisible divinity that can act in man to guide him to all truth. Everything hangs, therefore, upon the soul, the *anima*.

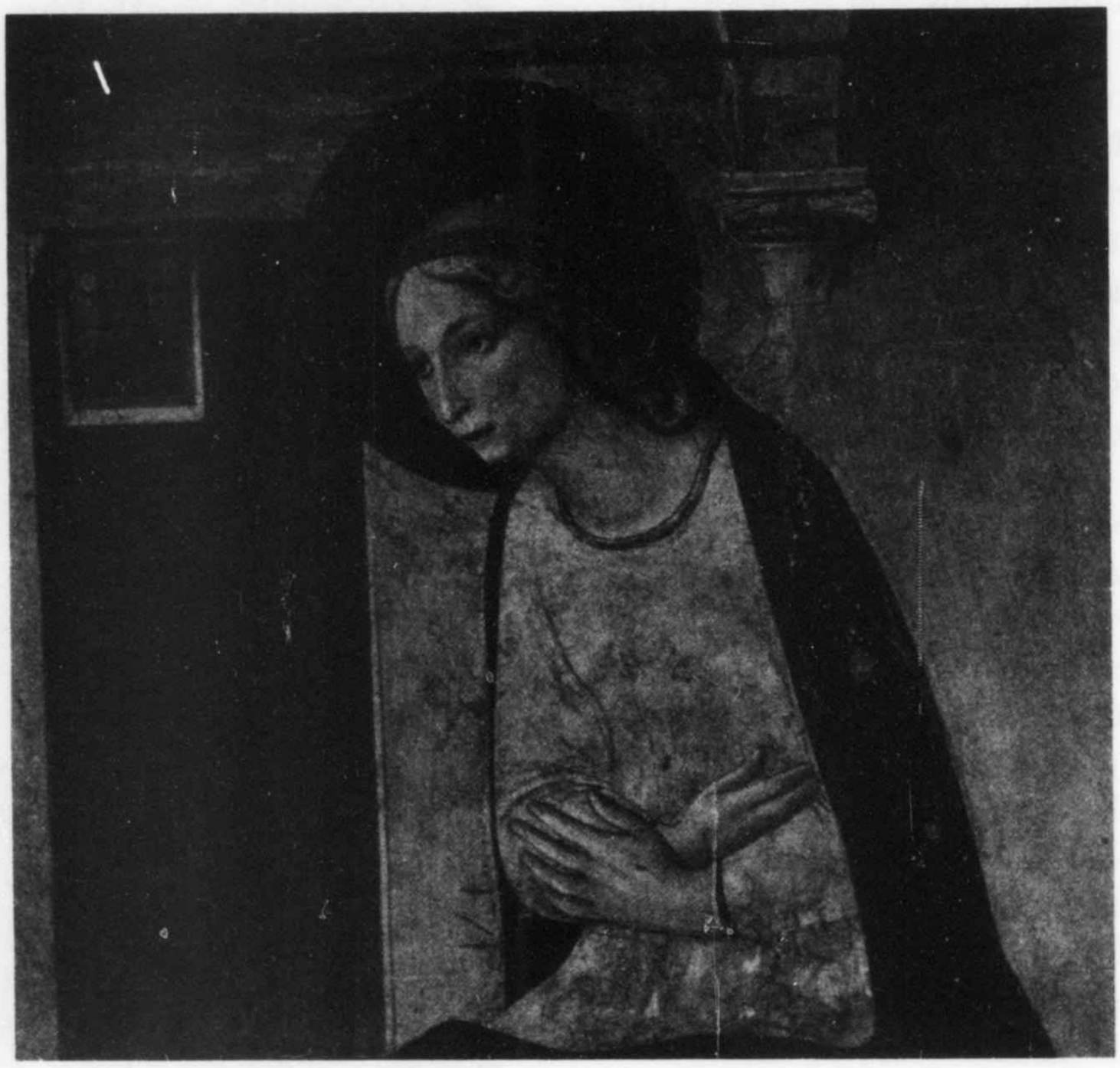
Contrary to what one might expect, this soul or *anima* is traditionally taken to be the individualized and individualizing aspect of the human being, the separative, discursive faculty which establishes the line between this and that, past and present, self and not-self, I and other. By means of such distinctions human beings begin to feel themselves at first distinct; later, isolated; and finally, opposed to each other in fear, greed, envy, lust, etc. Faith, according to tradition, is the hidden virtue and cure of this. It is the eye, the opening of the soul, by which she first sees and gives birth. For this reason, in Christianity, the exemplar of faith in its purest form is the Virgin Mary, the ''handmaid of the Lord,'' whose perfect surrender, epitomized in the phrase, ''Be it unto me according to thy Word,'' echoes down the centuries to instruct us still.

''Virgin,'' according to Meister Eckhart, ''designates a human being who is devoid of all foreign images, and who is as void as he was when he was not yet.'' ''Listen closely to the instruction that I am going to give you,'' he continues.

> I could have so vast an intelligence that all the images that all human beings have ever received and those that are in God himself were comprehended in my intelligence; however, if I were in no way attached to them, to the point that in everything I do or fail to do I did not cling to them with attachment—with its before and after—but if in this present now I kept myself unceasingly free and void for the beloved will of God and its fulfillment, then I should be a virgin, without the ties of all images, as truly as I was when I was not yet.

By images Eckhart means the contents of consciousness: the finished, fixed forms—past thoughts and memories—which we take to be the world, but which in fact are not the world in its immediacy and presentness, but only our own past, our own habits and fixed tendencies. Immured within these images, we feed upon ourselves and take our self-feeling for the world. These im-

ages interpose themselves between us and the world, breaking the continuum of being, and making any true meeting or true knowledge impossible. The antidote to the attachment to these, which is the normal condition of human consciousness, Eckhart calls *Gelassenheit*, releasement or detachment. Attachment imprisons us in the past, dismembers and fragments us. Detachment releases us for and to the present. Surrendering what is dead, materialized, and arrested in us—our mineral body—we become open to the genuinely new, a new body.



Such detachment and openness is faith, the body of faith. Voidness is its activity; dematerialization, spiritualization is its effect. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Now, hearing is listening, attending. It requires silence and patience; for if you are talking or in a hurry you cannot listen. Faith is inner silence. Listening in silence, renouncing and dissolving the categories of thought which rule us, relinquishing our ego's claim to be self-constituted and autonomous, we become open to the true awareness of things as they are. We hear the word spoken in silence, hear the word that silence speaks. In this way, as Eckhart says, the Virgin becomes a wife, a mother.

In the words of St. James: "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. . . . For, as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead." What this might mean is suggested by the fact that Eckhart's "Hymn to Detachment," quoted above, explicitly echoes St. Paul's "Hymn to Love," with its refrain that whatever gifts I may have "and have not love" I am nothing, a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal:

> Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no scores of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but

delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope and its endurance.

Love in this tradition is the *fruit* of faith. "For the beginning is faith and the end is love and when the two are joined together in unity it is God" (Ignatius). Faith is "freedom from the known" (in Krishnamurti's phrase); the *sine qua non* of unmediated knowing. The openness of faith or active release dissolves the carapace of habitual images and fixed circuits which we took to be the boundaries of the self. The objectified, materialized self opens into an experience of a provisional, contextual, "empty" self. Who we are becomes immanent in the network of relations we are engaged in. For a moment, indeed, we seem to be constituted by those relations, determined wholly by our recognition of an "other." Who we are becomes who we are *with*, as the Word is with God. In that space of our relations we first come to be, and awaken.

But perhaps that is to move too fast. To truly meet another one, as we are one, to feel something or someone in our inmost being as truly *real*, is very rare. We do not have *gelassenheit*, and for the most part feel ourselves as more real than what surrounds us. We are the center of our attention. Indeed, if we are honest, we rarely attend to anything else. Love, *agape*, as St. Paul means it, begins with the terrifying recognition of the reality of something, someone, truly "other." In this sense, love and beauty are closely allied—beauty which, in Rilke's words "is the beginning of a terror we can hardly bear": the sudden, overwhelming presence of a reality that seems greater than we are. Love recognizes the unconditional significance of something other than ourselves. We have a dense and carefully cultivated sense of our own importance—which we forever shore up and reinforce by projecting the world in our own image and then acting in it like a god. Then, suddenly, standing before a great work of art, a beautiful landscape, a person, something happens: we lay down this objectified self in recognition of something larger that, momentarily, takes possession of us and makes us feel more fluid and less bounded than we felt before. This is all well known. Lovers, like mystics, feel themselves "melt" into their surroundings. We have all felt it. Truly, our subject is one of the most ordinary. Of all the miracles of the everyday, it is perhaps the most clearly available—each time we meet. "When two or three are gathered together in my name I am there." The mystery is, if this is so, what *body* shall he have, shall I have?

St. Paul can best guide us here, for he makes the right distinctions, separating flesh (*sarx*) and body (*soma*). Flesh he uses above all to refer to the outward, visible, mortal condition—to creation in the solidarity of its dismemberment, pain, and solitude. Flesh is the letter, the law, idolatry, by virtue of which sin (which is unfreedom, ignorance, suffering) comes to be. "Flesh" thus connotes the human being in his distance and difference, his isolation. It is "sin" because, denying the consubstantiality of humanity, creation, and God, it distorts the fundamental relationship of the universe, which is harmony, wholeness, and unity. Only by virtue of the spirit are humanity and human beings open to and together with the whole. Walking "after the spirit" is therefore contrasted by St. Paul with walking "after the flesh;" and "carnal-mindedness," which is death, division, strife, and envy, is contrasted with "spiritual-mindedness," which is life and peace.

St. Paul, however, also uses the word "body" to refer to the external man, but this time with the connotation of wholeness or unity. Wholeness in-

deed is of the essence of what a body is, and therefore body comes to mean what is essentially whole or has become so. It is the body, not the flesh, which is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, the place of God's manifestation or glorification, where his Word is magnified.

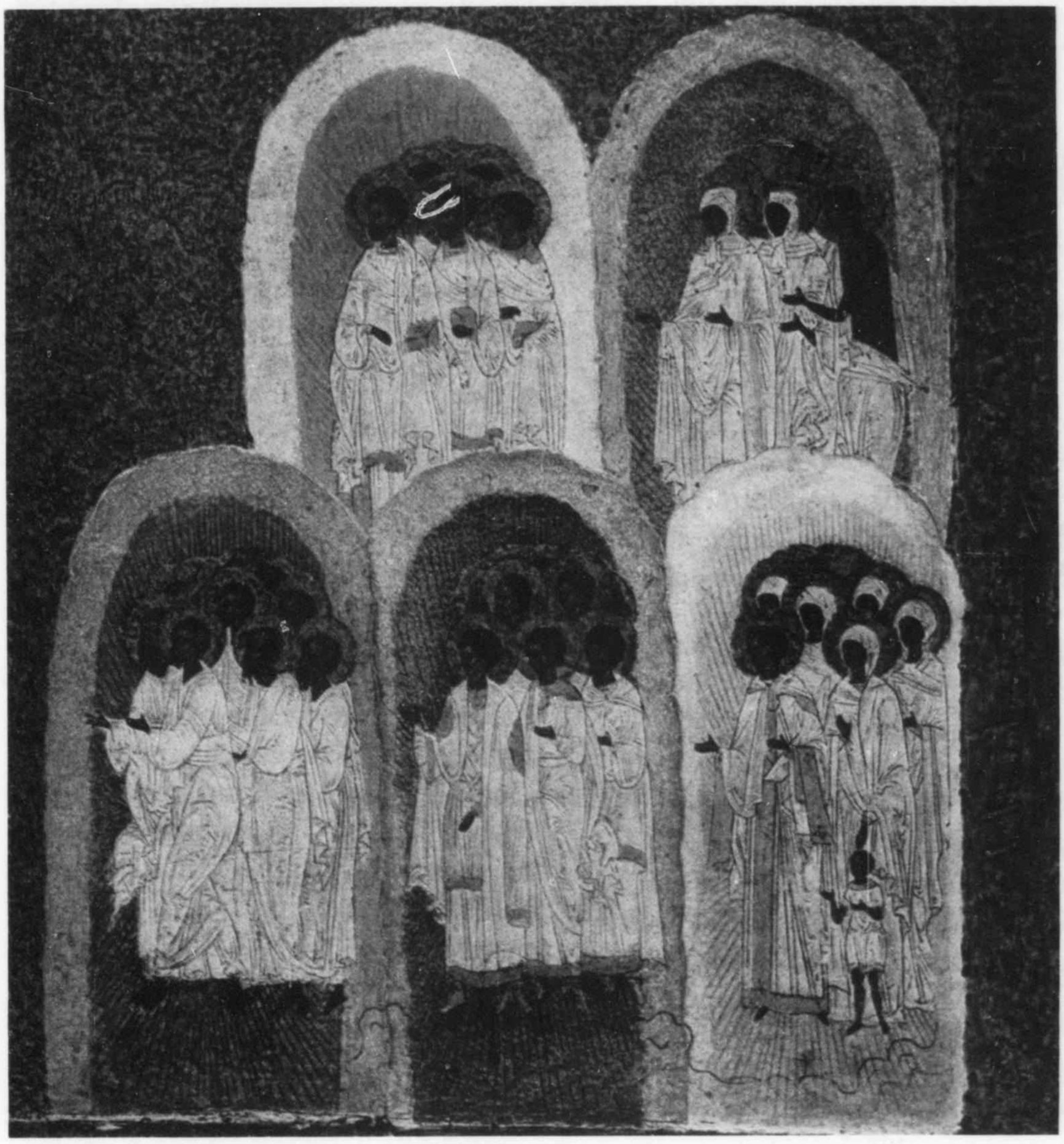
We come closer to the mystery we are approaching when we notice that St. Paul uses the term "body" collectively as well as individually. Indeed, he moves freely from the one to the other, speaking now of the "individual" body, now of "the redemption of *our* body," of Christ reforming "the body of *our* humiliation." By this usage, body comes to connote what human beings have in common, irrespective of what appear to be individual differences. Mystically, we may take this consubstantiality to refer to human nature as a whole. This "body" is what connects human beings to each other and the universe. While "flesh" establishes human solitude and otherness, "body," joining human beings together, is the bearer of the resurrection. There is a body of sin, death, and humiliation, but there is also an immortal, resurrection body. In this sense, there is no resurrection of the flesh. It is the body that is for the Lord and the Lord that is for the body.

Looking more closely at this body, which from another point of view is the bride whose disunity is fragmentation and exile, we find that it is made up of beauty and love: it is, finally, a body of beauty and love. Call it Shekhina or Sophia. Love binds together what is separated, overcomes what separates, brings parts together into a whole, a body. Love makes the body. But this love is not *eros*; it is *agape*. Platonic *eros*, though beginning with the soul movement inspired by the beauty of sensible things, leads the Platonist out of this world, intensifying desire into a single-pointed heavenly desire, whereby what is human is raised up. Platonic love, unlike Christian, proposes as its end not identity-in-difference (i.e. relation) but identity-in-union. Its last term is death. But for *agape* or *caritas* (charity) death is the beginning. Love, which was death, becomes life, particularity. As God's love is particular—"He first loved us"—human love too must be particular, specific, from moment to moment.

"A new commandment I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you." There were two old commandments—to love God with all one's heart and all one's mind, and to love one's neighbor as oneself. These are human loves; they derive from the human point of view and indicate the path from the human to the divine. Such is the activity of *eros* by which all things yearn for unity. The new commandment, fulfilling but not eliminating the old, proposes an inversion: that one love, not from a limited, human perspective, but from an absolute, universal, limitless point of view. This inversion is profound; by it "human" love is "divine presence." To love one's neighbor as oneself means to love one's neighbor *as if* he were oneself. The new commandment inverts this. It enjoins one to love for the sake of the other alone, to give oneself unconditionally, to empty oneself utterly: to go beyond oneself, out of oneself, so that one becomes, as it were, "nothing." It is to act as God acts, to love as God loves.

Such action, or love, which does not imitate but makes present, has been called (by J. Edgar Bruns) "the Christian Buddhism of St. John," who is the greater teacher here. According to this, it is what humans *do* that reveals God's presence, and is God's presence, just as for the Mahayanist it is his understanding that is the Buddha-nature—not conversely. "No one has seen God," but the Son has "acted him out." Similarly, "No man hath seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us"—because, for St. John, God *is* love. God is not

some thing; he does not do anything: he is the doing. God cannot be identified with any faculty or any entity: in our activity we reveal him, he is there. Consequently, to be born of God means to bear God—in both senses of giving birth to and carrying. If we "love" we make "God" present, because "God" is "love." "God is love, and whoever abides in love, abides in God, and God



"The Body of the Saints"

abides in him." If we abide in love, remain in and one with it—if it becomes our body—our activity becomes what is divine. There is no dualism here—no difference between the love that is our body and our spiritual unity with God, because God, Spirit, True Self, is simply

another name for the love which is our body. What is most important in this is that the activity of love, which allows for such presence and realization, requires the recognition, the presence, of another. The making of God present is an interhuman, relational activity. It is not achieved on the mountain-top. St. Basil had something of this kind in mind when, after a trip to the eremitical settlements of the Egyptian desert, he remarked, "That is all very well, but whose feet will they wash?"

To wash the feet, as an activity paradigmatic of love, means the laying down of our own sense of unconditional value in recognition of the unconditional value of another. By this we shift the center of our lives away from ourselves as objects of our own attention; we change the direction of our attention and we become other. Forced to acknowledge the reality of another, we are forced to relinquish the sense we have of ourselves as isolated, atomic, egoic beings, to abandon the selves that we have constituted by materializing past memories, thoughts, and desires into the complex artifact with which we are identified. As the Russian philosopher Solovyov puts it, "The meaning of human love, speaking generally, is the justification and deliverance of individuality through the sacrifice of egoism." Otherwise stated: "The truth, as a living force, taking possession of the inward essence of man, and effectively rescuing him from false self-assertion, is termed love." As to the difference between true individuality and the false individuality which is egosim, Solovyov is very clear. The fundamental illusion of egoism lies not in the absolute self-assertion and self-estimation of the subject; rather, that while rating himself in accordance with what is due to unconditional significance, the subject denies that significance to others, relegating them to the circumference of his being and giving them only an external and relative value.

Washing of the feet, in this sense, is more than simple humility or ordinary selflessness. By its active identification with the other, the love it manifests at the same time overcomes "materiality" and affirms the consubstantiality of creation, the body of the whole. "Materiality," material existence, which from this point of view stands opposed to the consubstantial unity of the world, presents us with a twofold impenetrability; in the words of Solovyov:

1. Impenetrability in *Time*, in virtue of which every successive moment of existence does not preserve the preceding one within itself, but excludes it or, by itself, dislodges it from existence, so that each new thing in the sphere of matter originates at the expense of, or to the detriment of, what preceded it.
2. Impenetrability in *Space*, in virtue of which two parts of matter (two bodies) cannot at the same time occupy one and the same place, i.e. one and the same part of space, but of necessity dislodge one another.

By this we define our selves, our bodies, and thereby irrevocably make the world a place of dismemberment and conflict. Unmaking this view, transforming ourselves by love as spoken of above, we become consubstantial with one another. We become many persons in one body.

What is this body? According to one view it is *Sophia* or Divine Wisdom. Florensky speaks of Sophia as "the great root of the created world in its wholeness and unity," and "the original substance of creatures, the creative Love of God in them." Sophia is at once the ideal substance of the created world, its truth or meaning, and its spirituality—its holiness, purity, sinlessness, beauty. At the same time, she is the beginning and center of the redeemed creation, the Body of the Lord. In Christian terms,

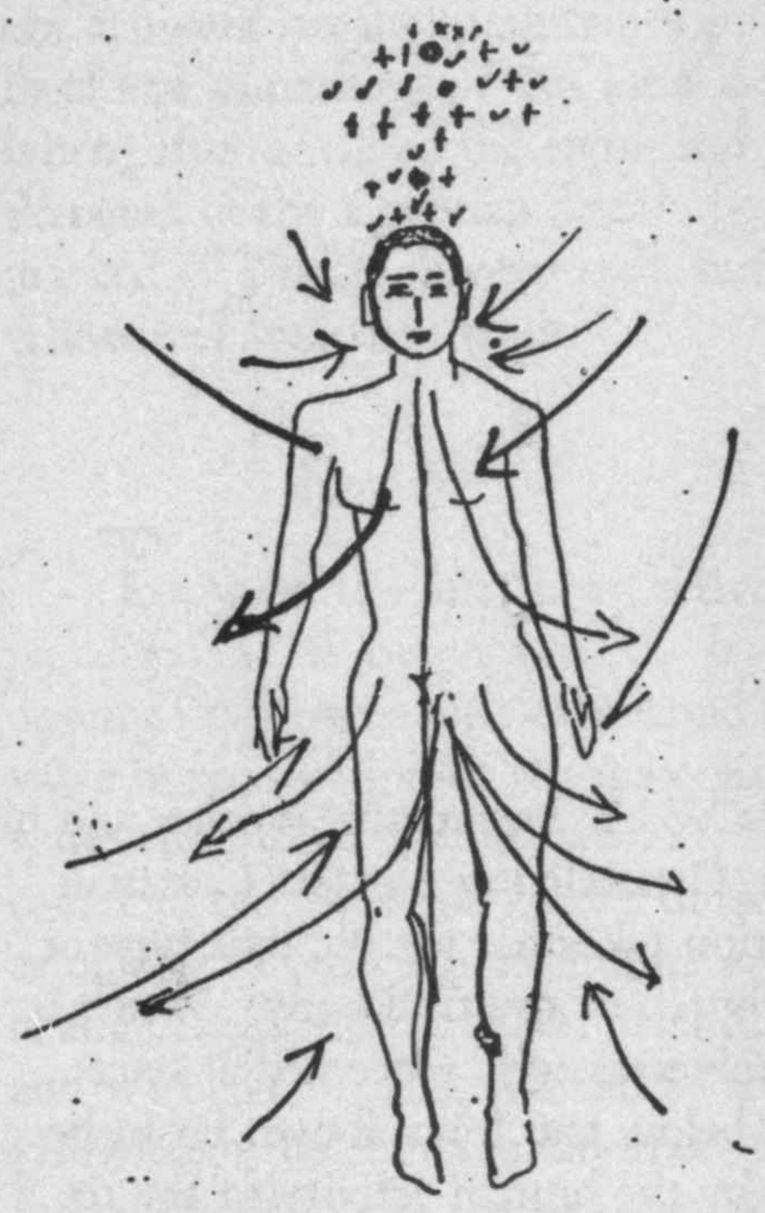


she is the Virgin, Mary, the purified human soul. But there is a mystery here, that Boehme brings out, but that the Russian Sophilogists (Solovyov, Florensky, Bulgakov) also knew; there is an uncreated Sophia, a sense in which Sophia is "God's revelation and the Holy Spirit's corporeality, the body of the Holy Trinity." That is to say, as on earth Sophia is the unity of creation, so in heaven she is the Godhead's unity.

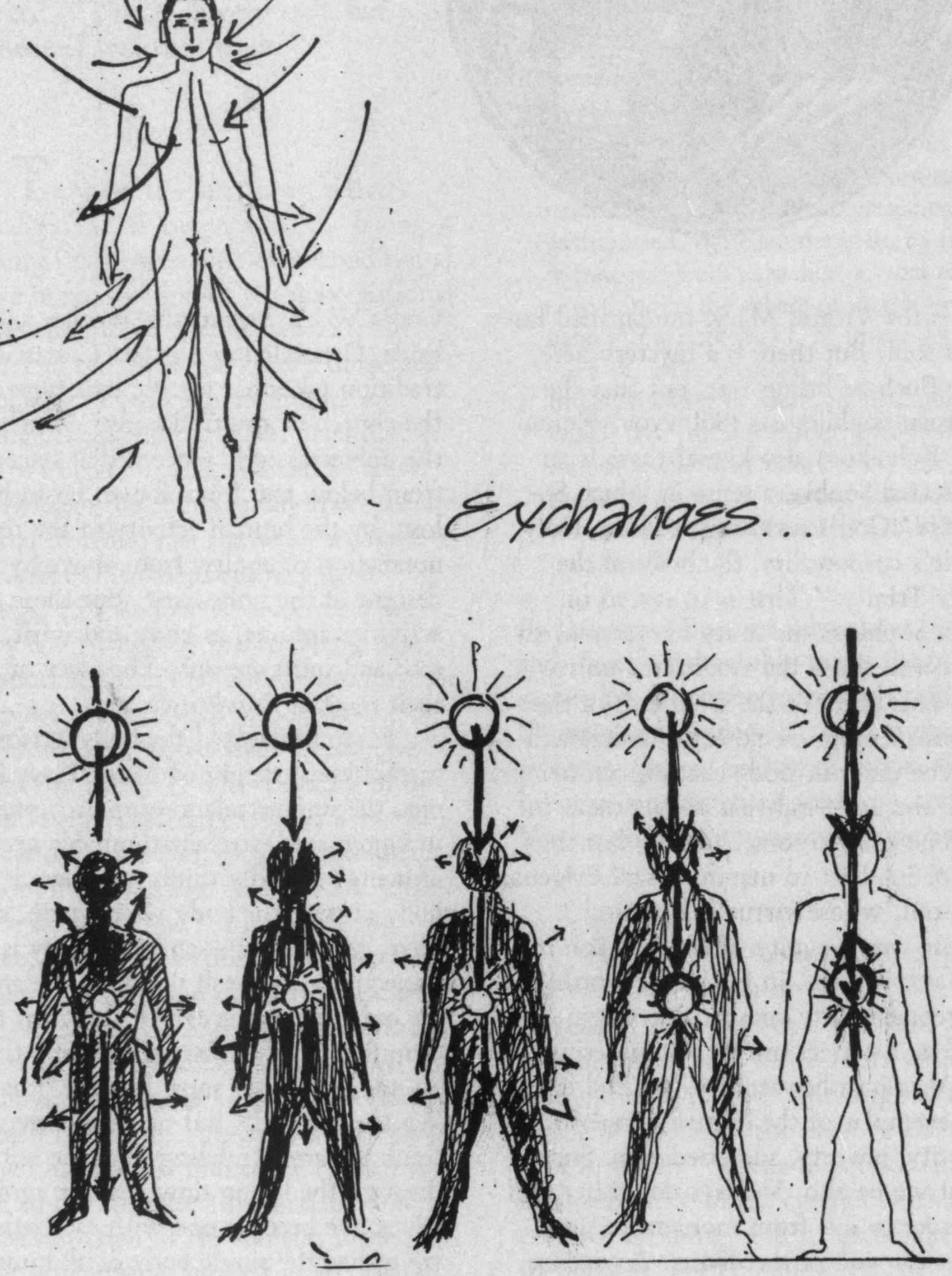
This unity of the Godhead, of the Persons, brings us closer to understanding the unity or body that human beings have and are—and that allows them to become true persons likewise. For the self or intellect to manifest, said Erigena, the soul, whose virtue is faith and whose vice is egoity, must summon it. By faith it must, in Eckhart's words, overcome egoity and become virgin, imageless, a perfect mirror. Considering the Virgin in her activity, we find her the exemplar of the human virtues of chastity, poverty, and obedience. Such must we be also. She lays down her will in order to live from moment to moment the will of the divine. According to Christian story, by that activity of perfect love and surrender, the Virgin was able to form a body for the Logos, God's Word: become his mother and his bride. Generalizing on this, Christian tradition takes her for the true type of the church or mystical body—which is the universal body redeemed at once from below and from above. From below, by the human activity of the renunciation of egoity, from above by the descent of the holy spirit. But these two activities are one, as body and spirit, soul and spirit are one. The place of their meeting is who we are.

Have I dissolved the body by some metaphysical sleight-of-hand? Have I denied the unique relationship each one of us enjoys with the unfathomable ground of being? I hardly think so. There is no body outside the body we cognize, perceive, think about—and that body is the projection of the self we think we are: we only see ourselves. All the great traditions teach us to become other—thereby, too, our body must become other. We are our body, but not the body we think we are. Realizing our true self through the laying down of our egoic selves, we become one with each other, we realize the single body of all humanity and become truly one for the first time. He who would find his life must lose it. ■

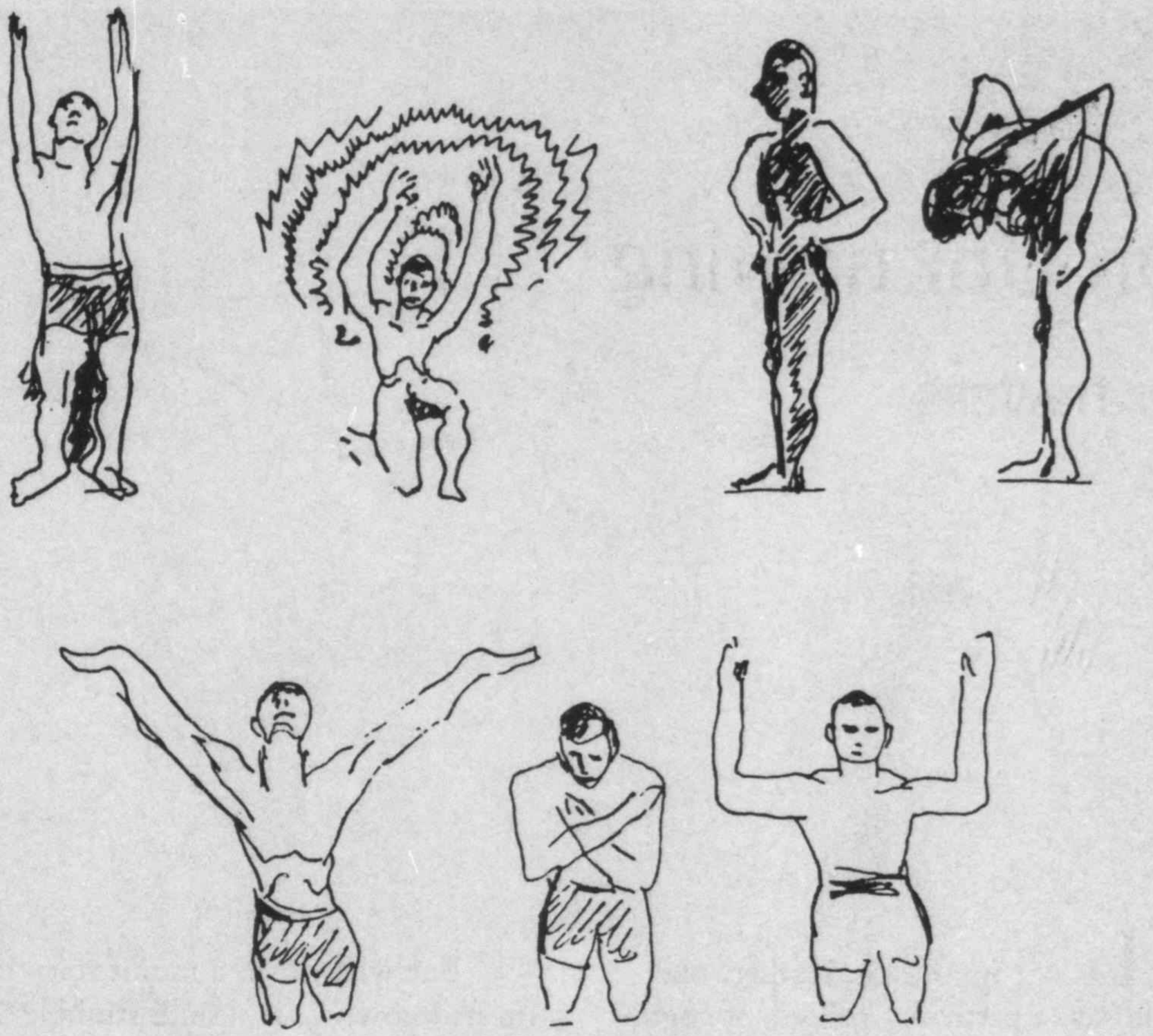
TRANSFORMATIONS:
From a Sketchbook



Exchanges...



stages...



EXPRESSIONS...

WCS

On Unknowing

P.L. TRAVERS

It is not ignorance. Rather, one could say, a particular process of cognition that has little or no use of words. It is part of our heritage at birth, the infant's first primer. And the young child lives by it, gathering into its growing body and aboriginal heart a cosmography of wonder.

"The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown," says Thomas Traherne of this period. "I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold; the gates were, at first, the end of the world."

But soon the chattering mind takes charge and obscures Unknowing with information. For the ego, while presuming to ape what D.H. Lawrence called the "truth of truth," is avid, rather, for the truth of fact, relevant or irrelevant, and swells up, bloated, like the frog in the fable, as it records its dossier, the story of its ego-life. It has a name, if not a meaning, for everything and dares without compunction at any moment or on any subject to declare "I know!"

But what if, in a momentary lapse in its knowing, it should stumble upon Unknowing? On Jalal-uddin Rumi, for instance:

Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment,
Cleverness is mere opinion, bewilderment is intuition.

Or maybe it happens on a passage in *The Four Quartets.*

What you do not know is the only thing you know,
And what you own is what you do not own,
And where you are is where you are not,
Leading to a condition of complete simplicity
Costing not less than everything.

Will it have the courage, or even the wish, to pay the price? Throw overboard all the information that Unknowing does not need? Let go and set itself to listen so that the condition of simplicity may arise?

That is not the way of the mind though it is ready to make use of all the Unknowing that, over the aeons, has



become manifest.

For instance, it is from Unknowing that all the myths, and, one may say, all religions issue forth and reveal themselves. Not invented but, as it were, summoned.

It is back into Unknowing that the mind-stuff of all the burnt libraries of the world repair. Never a page left to turn, but what the spirit of man has once conceived it can conceive again. All that is lost is somewhere.

Destroy the world, you men of the atoms, and Unknowing will retain the pattern. "Trust that which belongs to the universe to the universe itself," says the Tao. "From that there will be no escape."

Unknowing, if one can be open and vulnerable, will take us down to the very deeps of knowing, not informing the mind merely but coursing through the whole body, artery and vein—provided one can thrust aside what the world calls common sense, that popular lumpen wisdom that prevents the emerging of the numinous.

Unknowing needs that a man be in a certain state of grace, playful, artless, inwardly acquitted of opinion, not at all as children are but rather as fools or saints.

One thinks of Ryokan of Zen, playing hide-and-seek with the village children, secreting himself behind a woodpile, monkish sleeves drawn over his head. The game was soon over and the players called home but Ryokan still stayed hidden and when found next morning by a brother monk who asked him what he was doing, an eye peeped out from under the sleeve.

"Hush! Don't speak so loudly. The children will find me!" said Ryokan.

Or again, when thieves ransacked his house, Ryokan was at pains to thank them for leaving him the moon at the window.

We, too, in the West, have our quota of fools—Kasperle, walking forever through the world, his old grandmother on his back, the crocodile always at his heel, the abyss always before him. He lives with danger, safely, like the Fool of the Tarot, that zero of the pack, the nought, the nothing that, when added to any other number, inevitably exalts it.

And we must not forget St. Francis who called the ass and the mouse his brothers and sang songs with the birds. Nor St. Catherine of Alexandria, the saint invoked by learned men, those mighty scholars who, being ignorant of the Unknowing, have need of such patronage.

And what about the fairy tales, diminutive kith and kin of the myths, in which, coming as they do from the same ancestral stock, Unknowers abound? Think of the third of those ubiquitous three brothers. He is always the simpleton, the one who, aware that he has little wit and needs help, is humble enough to accept advice from the frog, the dwarf, or the little old woman which the elder brothers have spurned. And help never fails to come to him from the cauldron of Unknowing, the treasure, the princess, the cup from the well of the Water of Life.

But it is not only in story or in calendar that Unknowers are to be found. They appear among us in the streets and in the fields, their feet are upon the mountains—lunatics, lovers, and poets in their train; Blake seeing angels preening their wings in the trees, and singing songs on his deathbed; the Sufi camel-driver whose very toes cried "Allah!"; the centipede, who, when asked by the one-legged man "How do

you manage all those legs?'' replied ''I do not manage them.''

Such as these are natural Unknowers. But now the question arises—how can anyone intentionally attract to himself an epithet so impressive? What will lead us to that condition of complete simplicity?

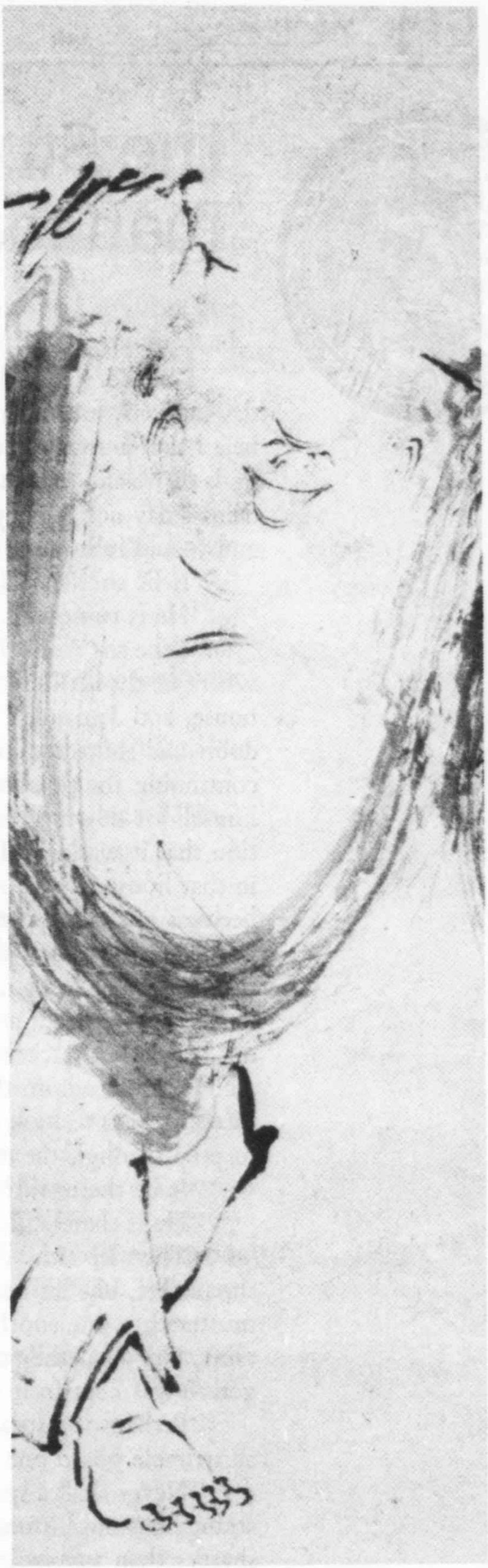
We cannot wipe the mind clean of its knowing, as one would wash a face, for, indeed, paradoxically, we need that knowing. It is an essential part of living and not to be despised. Only when the mind attempts to usurp the whole realm of consciousness, of which, after all, it is but a fragment, are the possibilities of discovering Unknowing overlaid and lost.

The world belongs to silence and stillness. Unknowing, itself being empty, can be approached only in moments of emptiness which the ego-mind mistakes for boredom and hastens to assuage that condition with ever more and more learning. To it the phrase ''I do not know'' is one of self-reproach.

But for one intent on seeking the Unknown, that ''I do not know'' is the door to it, the ''Open Sesame'' which to pronounce costs nothing less than everything. So, he drops from his busy awareness into the stillness whence life springs, into the void within him.

Only by such means can he come upon fullness, the fullness that the mind, with all its acumen, cannot even envisage. Thus, self offers itself to Self, as once Odin on the tree of Yggdrasil, and he knows without knowing whatever is needful to him—that there is manna in the wilderness, that the stone dances, and the rain it raineth every day.

Thus provided, such a one can lay himself down contentedly between the paws of the lion. ■





The Story of Tuan mac Cairill/Irish

The story is told of Finnian, the Abbot of Moville, that one day he went southwards to Donegal, and in great haste, for he had heard that among those who refused to yield their belief in the old gods of Ireland was one powerful person who observed neither Saint's day nor Sunday, a wise and a hardy man that others revered and would follow.

"Is he so?" said Finnian. "That may be as we shall see."

"He is rumored to be a magician," they told the saint.

"Is he so?" said Finnian. "Then I will magic him! Tell me where he dwells!" He was told, and straightaway he went to that house, and demanded entrance, but the Ulsterman barricaded his doors and shuttered his windows and refused entrance to Finnian, continuing the practices of ten thousand years. As for the saint, he himself sat down on the doorstep and sank into such a deep meditation that it was as if Time could not see him. And as for the dweller in that house, it was said that he was Time's own brother-in-law, heedless of that scythe, leaping over it and dodging under it, and it is said too that the only occasion on which Time laughs is when he meets that gentleman, Tuan the son of Cairill the son of Muredac.

So time passed, and each day did the master of that house peep out through a crack in the door and see the immobile figure of the Abbot, upon whom the dust settled gently but continuously, until he could bear to look on him no longer but instead sent his servants to peep through the crack.

"Is he there still?" the master would ask.

"He is there still," came the answer.

"Then let him be there forever, or until he shall go away," said the master, but his heart was troubled. The servants of that house muttered to one another, taking fright at the sight of the motionless saint, but what they muttered—that this was a combat of the gods—was kept from the ears of their master.

"Perhaps if a spear should buzz by his ear he would move," said an irritable guard one day.

"Never shall a spear be thrown from this house at an unarmed stranger!" said his master. "Besides, be of peace, for hunger is sharper than any spear in our keeping, and it shall soon prod that

trespasser away.'' But as still as a rock, and yet more still sat Finnian, and Hunger slunk away, abashed and vanquished.

On the morrow, the master of the house gave in. The door was opened wide and two servants carried Finnian in, for the Abbot could not walk or stand up because of the privations to which he had submitted himself. But tough was that frame, and unconquerable the spirit that dwelt therein, and the man was soon recovered and ready to undertake the conversion of his host.

One day, after some several weeks of intense and concentrated instruction had gone forward, the time came for Finnian to receive some instruction himself, and he asked his host to tell about himself.

''All that is in the past,'' replied Tuan. ''Tell me about the True God.''

''I will that,'' replied Finnian, ''but first must I know the man who is to hear such things. Part of the man is his past, my beloved, and so he is known by it.''

''Very well then,'' said Tuan resignedly. ''If I am not to hear more until you have heard it, I will tell you.

''I am known in these lands as Tuan, son of Cairill, son of Muredac, and this is my ancestral home.''

''I am by blood a Leinsterman,'' replied Finnian, ''yet I know something of Ulster genealogy. Go on.''

''Mine is a long pedigree.''

''Mine is not short nor unworthy. Go on.''

''Yes, I am indeed Tuan, the son of Starn, the son of Sera who was brother to Partholon.''

At this Finnian was puzzled. ''There is some mistake here,'' he said, ''for you have given two genealogies.''

''That I have,'' replied Tuan. ''Different they are indeed, yet they are my own.''

''I do not understand,'' said Finnian.

''I am known today as Tuan mac Cairill mac Muredac,'' said the other. ''But before I was known as Tuan mac Starn mac Sera.''

''But Sera was the brother of Partholon!'' gasped the saint.

''That he was,'' replied Tuan.

''And Partholon came to Ireland shortly after the Flood!''

''And I with him,'' softly replied Tuan.

The saint pushed his chair back and stared at his host, and as he stared, the hair on the back of his neck stood on end.

''Tell me further,'' Finnian said at last, for he was not a man to indulge in puzzlement.

''What would you have me tell?'' asked Tuan with resignation.

''Of the beginning of time in Ireland,'' said Finnian. ''Tell me of Partholon, the son of Noah's son.''

''He was a great bear of a man of sweet deeds and sweeter ways.''

''Go on.''

''We came to Ireland by ship, with twenty-four men and twenty-four women. Before that time, no one had ever come there,

and no human being lived in the western world. Over the whole of the land were trees, and through their leaves came the unceasing singing of birds and through the bracken and bramble the unceasing tumble of water in rocky streams. There were fish in the streams of Eire, and beasts in her coverts. We lived long in that Paradise, and Partholon's twenty-four couples grew to five thousand people who lived contentedly, though they had no wits."

"No wits!" commented Finnian.

"They had no need of wits," said Tuan. "But to continue. One morning there came a sickness, which swept through the people of Partholon, and in seven days all were dead, save one alone, and that was myself."

"Always there is one that escapes," murmured Finnian, and backwards through time he looked with Tuan mac Cairill on those first days of Eire.

"I was alone then, so alone that the dew dropping from branch to branch, the rustling of leaves, even my own shadow sent me to cover. The creatures of the woods scented me and knew that I was alone, and stole behind me softly, waiting for a moment's inattention. I learned to live on the toes of my feet, and so I lived for twice ten-and-two years. I lived as a hunted beast, and came to know what the beasts know. I moved like them, silently and softly, and always I was alone. At the end of that time there came to the shores of Ireland another ship, bearing Nemed the son of Agnoman, with thirty couples of people."

"I have heard it," remarked Finnian.

"When I looked from the cliffs and saw their ships, my heart leaped with joy. As they sought harbor, I followed them along the crags like a goat, and came that way to a pool. I looked in the pool and saw myself for the first time since the passing of Partholon, and what I beheld made my blood run cold. I saw that I was as hairy and bristled as a boar, lean as a bush in winter, grey as a badger, withered as an empty sack, naked as a fish, wretched as a starving crow. I looked like nothing that was known, animal or divine, and I knew I could not go among men as I was, for I would be hunted and slain as a danger. I wept.

"A storm rose then, and the ships were blown to pieces even as I watched. All night it raged, and from my cave I could hear the cries of men and women as they sank beneath the sea. Around me the wind moaned and trees were ripped from the earth. Waves roared from the sea and smashed the rocks around my cave. In that cave I crouched in misery, and betimes fell into a fitful sleep.

"In my sleep I dreamed, and in the dream I dreamed I was a stag, and felt the beating of a new heart within my breast. I awoke, and I was what I had dreamed, with great antlers sprouting from my brow. I stood on the rocks outside my cave and stamped in my new form and sniffed the air, and on it I caught the tang of wolves and my eye stared in fear. But on the air also was the smell of my own kind, and I belled loud, clear and sweet, and with delight I heard the answering call. I leaped and bounded among the rocks, and joined my kind, and knew the life of the stag, and became king

over that race. The beloved was I, well known, the leader of the herds of Eire. Over the whole of the land did I range, but again and again was I drawn to my cave in Ulster. I saw too the survivors of that storm, for Nemed and four couples were saved from its raging. I saw them increase to the number of four thousand, and they lived riotously in the sun, for though their minds were small, they were full of activity, savages and hunters.

"Then there came a time of agony, and when I looked, all of these people were gone, and their bones lay whitening in the sun. After that, old age came on me. My legs trembled as I ran, and the wolves that had never dared to come near now snapped at my heels. One day they ran me back to my cave, and snarled outside it, 'On the morrow, Old Stag, your heart will be ours, and we will tear it from your body and gnaw on your living haunch.' Then a great weariness came over me and I answered them, 'On the morrow, wolves, I will come forth, and ye may kill me. But tonight will I rest.' Oh, they were filled with joy with that, and they howled for the dawning of the day.

"Meanwhile, I slept, and as I slept, I dreamed a dream, and in my dream I felt the beating of a new heart within my breast, and felt myself changing into a boar. When I awoke, I had become what I had dreamed. When day came, grey and cold, the wolves howled near the door of my cave, 'Come out, Old Stag, and meet your death!' Then I thrust out my snout, with its great curving tusks, and when the wolves saw what I was, they fell over each other in their terror and haste to flee. From my lair I swept out among them, and my tusks slashed at them as sabers. A giant boar had I become, and from that day I took lordship of the boars of Eire.

"From that day I knew the love and obedience of my subjects, and the wolves feared my coming. Even the great bear lumbered from my charge. All creatures I challenged, save only one, for men had come again to the land: Semion, the son of Stariath, and his people, from whom the men of Domnann and the Fir Bolg are descended.

"Old age came to me again, and weariness to my bones. The wolves crept closer, and again I went to my cave and dreamed a dream, and on the morn, with a new heart in my breast, I left the ground and rose as a hawk into the sweet air that was to become my kingdom. A hundred miles and more could my bright eye see, and I hung on the air as motionless as stone. I saw from those heights the coming of Beothach, the son of Iarbonel, and the battle between his people and the children of Semion. In the end, the victory went to Iarbonel, and from his people came the next race, the Tuatha De Danaan, known for the excellence of their wisdom, driven now from the lands into the Sidhe mounds; they are now the people of Faery.



"I grew old then, too, and returned to my cave in Ulster. I slept, and in my sleep the sea rose and the green tides swept over me as I dreamed. In my dream I became a salmon, and a new heart beat in me. I awoke, and I was what I had dreamed.

"I had been a man, a stag, a boar, a bird. Now I was a fish, and of all the forms I have known, that was the best. For all the other forms are encumbered with legs and arms, but a fish is one piece from nose to tail, complete, single and unencumbered. In one turn he turns, and up and down the channels of the sea he swims in a single movement. So did I swim, joyous in that soft element that upholds and yet yields, which lifts up and will not let fall. For a man may stumble into a ditch, a stag tumble from a cliff, the hawk, blinded by the storm, may dash his head against a tree. But the home of the salmon is pure delight, for the sea that is Mother takes care of her children.

"The king of the salmon I became, and all fish ranged beside me in the tides of the world. Deep were the green distances beneath me, and bright the golden sun across my back. I knew the secret places under the sea, the caves that were once the homes of the Fir Bolg, now desolate. I swam in those seas, and I was happy until I remembered Ulster. Then there came on me in a flash an uncontrollable anguish and an urge to return. For days and nights I swam tirelessly, with a joy, yes, but with the whisper of a terror that I must reach Ireland or die. From the sea I fought my way to Ulster, and the water was no longer the soft and silken element, but a hard and tough opponent to my longing. But I triumphed, as only the heart of a salmon could have done, and into the rivers of Eire I swam.

"What joy it was to lie under an inch of sunny water or in the shade of a rocky ledge, to watch the creatures of the air and the earth drink from my realm. I saw them all, and I saw men also, and they also saw me and hunted me. Nets they cast, crafted cleverly to look like weeds, but I knew them for what they were and was not caught. Spears they cast at me also, and the scars on my back became numerous, but still I was not caught. My life became one of struggle and escape, and so continued until one day the fisherman of Cairill, the King of Ulster, cast a net and I was caught. Oh, how I leaped in that net, struggling to return to the water. 'Softly, softly, King of the River,' said the fisherman, 'give in to Doom.' The light blinded me, the air burned my throat like fire, I gasped and leaped under the mountain of air. 'Be at ease, O King,' said the fisherman, 'let go of the stream, dear heart, and let the green weeds and the oozy marsh be forgotten.' And he carried me to the King's palace, singing as he went a song in praise of the King of the Waters.

"When the wife of King Cairill mac Muredac saw me, she desired me, and so I was put on a fire and roasted, and then she ate me. And time passed, full nine months, and I was born to her as her son, and the son of Cairill the King, Tuan mac Cairill mac Muredac. All this I remember, I have forgotten nothing."

When Tuan had finished his story, Finnian was silent for the respectful time that he ought to have been, and then he spoke.

"And now, dear heart, you will be born again, for I shall baptize you into the family of the Living God."



Retold by Paul Jordan-Smith. Adapted from the version by James Stephens in Irish Fairy Tales *(New York, Macmillan, 1948).*

King O'Toole and His Goose/Celtic



Och, I thought all the world, far and near, had heerd o' King O'Toole—well, well, but the darkness of mankind is untellable! Well, sir, you must know, as you didn't hear it afore, that there was a king, called King O'Toole, who was a fine old king in the old ancient times, long ago; and it was he that owned the churches in the early days. The king, you see, was the right sort; he was the real boy, and loved sport as he loved his life, and hunting in particular; and from the rising o' the sun, up he got, and away he went over the mountains after the deer; and fine times they were.

Well, it was all mighty good, as long as the king had his health; but, you see, in course of time the king grew old, by raison he was stiff in his limbs, and when he got stricken in years, his heart failed him, and he was lost entirely for want o' diversion, because he couldn't go a-hunting no longer; and, by dad, the poor king was obliged at last to get a goose to divert him. Oh, you may laugh, if you like, but it's truth I'm telling you; and the way the goose diverted him was this-a-way: You see, the goose used to swim across the lake, and go diving for trout, and catch fish on a Friday for the king, and flew every other day round about the lake, diverting the poor king. All went on mighty well until, by dad, the goose got stricken in years like her master, and couldn't divert him no longer, and then it was that the poor king was lost entirely. The king was walkin' one mornin' by the edge of the lake, lamentin' his cruel fate, and thinking of drowning himself, that could get no diversion in life, when all of a sudden, turning round the corner, who should he meet but a mighty decent young man coming up to him.

"God save you," says the king to the young man.

"God save you kindly, King O'Toole," says the young man.

"True for you," says the king. "I am King O'Toole," says he, "prince and plennypennytinchery of these parts," says he; "but how came ye to know that?" says he.

"Oh, never mind," says St. Kavin.

You see it was Saint Kavin, sure enough—the saint himself in disguise, and nobody else. "Oh, never mind," says he, "I know more than that. May I make bold to ask how is your goose, King O'Toole?" says he.

"Blur-an-agers, how came ye to know about my goose?" says the king.

"Oh, no matter; I was given to understand it," says Saint Kavin.

After some more talk the king says, "What are you?"

"I'm an honest man," says Saint Kavin.

"Well, honest man," says the king, "and how is it you make your money so aisy?"

"By makin' old things as good as new," says Saint Kavin.

"Is it a tinker you are?" says the king.

"No," says the saint; "I'm no tinker by trade, King O'Toole; I've a better trade than a tinker," says he—"what would you say," says he, "if I made your old goose as good as new?"

My dear, at the word of making his goose as good as new, you'd think the poor old king's eyes were ready to jump out of his head. With that the king whistled, and down came the poor goose, just like a hound, waddling up to the poor cripple, her master, and as like him as two peas. The minute the saint clapt his eyes on the goose, "I'll do the job for you," says he, "King O'Toole."

"By *Jaminee!*" says King O'Toole, "if you do, I'll say you're the cleverest fellow in the seven parishes."

"Oh, by dad," says St. Kavin, "you must say more nor that—my horn's not so soft all out," says he, "as to repair your old goose for nothing; what'll you gi' me if I do the job for you?—that's the chat," says St. Kavin.

"I'll give you whatever you ask," says the king; "isn't that fair?"

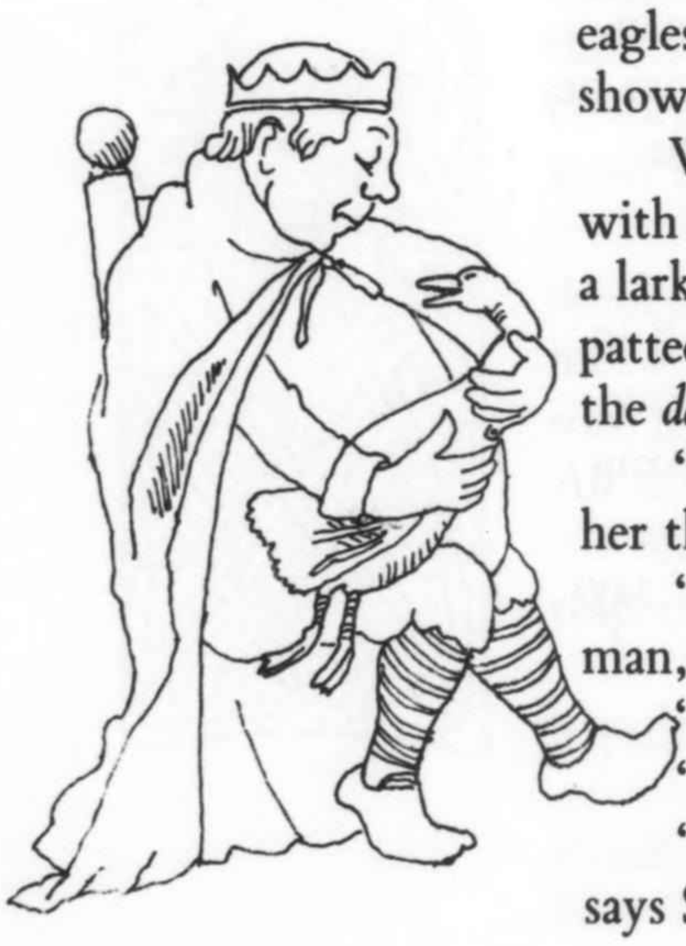
"Divil a fairer," says the saint; "that's the way to do business. Now," says he, "this is the bargain I'll make with you, King O'Toole: will you gi' me all the ground the goose flies over, the first offer, after I make her as good as new?"

"I will," says the king.

"You won't go back o' your word?" says St. Kavin.

"Honour bright!" says King O'Toole, holding out his fist.

"Honour bright!" says St. Kavin, back agin, "it's a bargain. Come here!" says he to the poor old goose—"come here, you unfortunate ould cripple, and it's I that'll make you the sporting bird." With that, my dear, he took up the goose by the two wings—"Criss o' my cross an you," says he, markin' her to grace with the blessed sign at the same minute—and throwing her up in the air, "whew," says he, jist givin' her a blast to help her; and with that, my jewel, she took to her heels, flyin' like one o' the eagles themselves, and cutting as many capers as a swallow before a shower of rain.



Well, my dear, it was a beautiful sight to see the king standing with his mouth open, looking at his poor old goose flying as light as a lark, and better than ever she was: and when she lit at his feet, patted her on the head, and "*Ma vourneen*," says he, "but you are the *darlint* o' the world."

"And what do you say to me," says Saint Kavin, "for making her the like?"

"By Jabers," says the king, "I say nothing beats the art o' man, barring the bees."

"And do you say no more nor that?" says Saint Kavin.

"And that I'm beholden to you," says the king.

"But will you gi'e me all the ground the goose flew over?" says Saint Kavin.

"I will," says King O'Toole, "and you're welcome to it," says he, "though it's the last acre I have to give."

"But you'll keep your word true?" says the saint.

"As true as the sun," says the king.

"It's well for you, King O'Toole, that you said that word," says he; "for if you didn't say the word, the devil the bit o' your goose would ever fly again."

When the king was as good as his word, Saint Kavin was pleased with him, and then it was that he made himself known to the king. "And," says he, "King O'Toole, you're a decent man, for I only came here to try you. You don't know me," says he, "because I'm disguised."

"Musha! then," says the king, "who are you?"

"I'm Saint Kavin," said the saint, blessing himself.

"Oh, queen of heaven!" says the king, making the sign of the cross between his eyes, and falling down on his knees before the saint; "is it the great Saint Kavin," says he, "that I've been discoursing all this time without knowing it," says he, "all as one as if he was a lump of a *gossoon*?—and so you're a saint?" says the king.

"I am," says Saint Kavin.

"By Jabers, I thought I was only talking to a dacent boy," says the king.

"Well, you know the difference now," says the saint. "I'm Saint Kavin," says he, "the greatest of all the saints."

And so the king had his goose as good as new, to divert him as long as he lived: and the saint supported him after he came into his property, as I told you, until the day of his death—and that was soon after; for the poor goose thought he was catching a trout one Friday; but, my jewel, it was a mistake he made—and instead of a trout, it was a thieving horse-eel; and instead of the goose killing a trout for the king's supper—by dad, the eel killed the king's goose—and small blame to him; but he didn't ate her, because he darn't ate what Saint Kavin had laid his blessed hands on.

From Joseph Jacobs, Celtic Fairy Tales *(Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, Inc., 1968).*

The Fabric of Life/Hindu



A group of holy men had gathered around the venerable hermit, Vyāsa, in his forest-solitude. "You understand the divine eternal order," they had said to him, "therefore, unveil to us the secret of Vishnu's Māyā."

"Who can comprehend the Māyā of the Highest God, except himself? Vishnu's Māyā lays its spell on us all. Vishnu's Māyā is our collective dream. I can only recite to you a tale, coming down from the days of yore, of how this Māyā in a specific, singularly instructive instance worked its effect."

The visitors were eager to hear. Vyāsa began:

"Once upon a time, there lived a young prince, Kāmadamana, 'Tamer of Desires,' who, conducting himself in accordance with the spirit of his name, spent his life practicing the sternest of ascetic austerities. But his father, wishing him to marry, addressed him on a certain occasion in the following words: 'Kāmadamana, my son, what is the matter with you? Why do you not take yourself a wife? Marriage brings the fulfilment of all of a man's desires and the attainment of perfect happiness. Women are the very root of happiness and well-being. Therefore, go, my dear son, and marry.'

"The youth remained silent, out of respect for his father. But when the king then insisted and repeatedly urged him, Kāmadamana replied, 'Dear father, I adhere to the line of conduct designated by my name. The divine power of Vishnu, which sustains and holds enmeshed both ourselves and everything in the world, has been revealed to me.'

"The royal father paused only a moment to reconsider the case, and then adroitly shifted his argument from the appeal of personal pleasure to that of duty. A man should marry, he declared, to beget offspring—so that his ancestral spirits in the realm of the fathers should not lack the food-offerings of descendants and decline into indescribable misery and despair.

" 'My dear parent,' said the youth, 'I have passed through lives by the thousand. I have suffered death and old age many hundreds of times. I have known union with wives, and bereavement. I have existed as grass and as shrubs, as creepers and as trees. I have moved among cattle and the beasts of prey. Many hundreds of times have I been a brahmin, a woman, a man. I have shared in the bliss of Shiva's celestial mansions; I have lived among the immortals. Indeed, there is no variety even of superhuman being whose form I have not more than once assumed: I have been a demon, a goblin, a guardian of the earthly treasures; I have been a spirit of the river-waters; I have been a celestial damsel; I have been also a king among the demon-serpents. Every time the cosmos dissolved to be reabsorbed in the formless essence of the Divine, I vanished too; and when the universe then evolved again, I too re-entered into existence, to live through another series of rebirths. Again and again have I fallen victim to the delusion of existence—and ever through the taking of a wife.

" 'Let me recount to you,' the youth continued, 'something that occurred to me during my next to last incarnation. My name during that existence was Sutapas, "Whose Austerities Are Good"; I was an ascetic. And my fervent devotion to Vishnu, the Lord of the Universe, won for me his grace. Delighted by my fulfilment of many vows, he appeared before my bodily eyes, seated on Garuda, the celestial bird. "I grant to you a boon," he said. "Whatever you wish, it shall be yours."

" 'To the Lord of the Universe I made reply: "If you are pleased with me, let me comprehend your Māyā."

" ' "What should you do with a comprehension of my Māyā?" the god responded. "I will grant, rather, abundance of life, fulfil-

ment of your social duties and tasks, all riches, health, and pleasure, and heroic sons.''



" ' "That,'' said I, "and precisely that, is what I desire to be rid of and to pass beyond.''

" 'The god went on: "No one can comprehend my Māyā. No one has ever comprehended it. There will never be anyone capable of penetrating to its secret. Long, long ago, there lived a godlike holy seer, Nārada by name, and he was a direct son of the god Brahmā himself, full of fervent devotion to me. Like you, he merited my grace, and I appeared before him, just as I am appearing now to you. I granted him a boon, and he uttered the wish that you have uttered. Then, though I warned him not to inquire further into the secret of my Māyā, he insisted, just like you. And I said to Him: 'Plunge into yonder water, and you shall experience the secret of my Māyā.' Nārada dived into the pond. He emerged again—in the shape of a girl.

" ' "Nārada stepped out of the water as Sushilā, 'The Virtuous One,' the daughter of the king of Benares. And presently, when she was in the prime of her youth, her father bestowed her in marriage on the son of the neighboring king of Vidarbha. The holy seer and ascetic, in the form of a girl, fully experienced the delights of love. In due time, then, the old king of Vidarbha died, and Sushilā's husband succeeded to the throne. The beautiful queen had many sons and grandsons, and was incomparably happy.

" ' "However, in the long course of time, a feud broke out between Sushilā's husband and her father, and this developed presently into a furious war. In a single mighty battle many of her sons and grandsons, her father, and her husband all were slain. And when she learned of the holocaust she proceeded in sorrow from the capital to the battlefield, there to lift a solemn lament. And she ordered a gigantic funeral pyre and placed upon it the dead bodies of her relatives, her brothers, sons, nephews, and grandsons, and then, side by side, the bodies of her husband and her father. With her own hand she laid torch to the pyre, and when the flames were mounting cried aloud, 'My son, my son!' and when the flames were roaring, threw herself into the conflagration. The blaze became immediately cool and clear; the pyre became a pond. And amidst the waters Sushilā found herself—but again as the holy Nārada. And the god Vishnu, holding the saint by the hand, was leading him out of the crystal pool.

" ' "After the god and the saint had come to the shore, Vishnu asked with an equivocal smile: 'Who is this son whose death you are bewailing?' Nārada stood confounded and ashamed. The god continued: 'This is the semblance of my Māyā, woeful, somber, accursed. Not the lotus-born Brahmā, nor any other of the gods, Indra, nor even Shiva, can fathom its depthless depth. Why or how should *you* know this inscrutable?'

" ' "Nārada prayed that he should be granted perfect faith and devotion, and the grace to remember this experience for all time to come. Furthermore, he asked that the pond into which he had entered, as into a source of initiation, should become a holy place of

pilgrimage, its water—thanks to the everlasting secret presence therein of the god who had entered to lead forth the saint from the magic depth—endowed with the power to wash away all sin. Vishnu granted the pious wishes and forthwith, on the instant, disappeared, withdrawing to his cosmic abode in the Milky Ocean.''

'' 'I have told you this tale,' concluded Vishnu, before he withdrew likewise from the ascetic, Sutapas, 'in order to teach you that the secret of my Māyā is inscrutable and not to be known. If you so desire, you too may plunge into the water, and you will know why this is so.'

''Whereupon Sutapas (or Prince Kāmadamana in his next to last incarnation) dived into the water of the pond. Like Nārada he emerged as a girl, and was thus enwrapped in the fabric of another life.''

From Heinrich Zimmer, Myth and Symbol in Indian Art and Civilization, *ed. Joseph Campbell (Princeton: Bollingen Series, Vol. 6, Princeton University Press, 1971).*



Jack and His Flying Ship/North American

Once upon a time, way back in the country, there was a King whose daughter had got herself witched somehow or other. Now the King promised that any man who could break the spell could marry her. All he had to do was go to the witch that had made the spell and outdo her in every trick she put up. All the young men around liked the King's daughter well enough, but none of them could get the better of that witch. Still, they kept trying, and so one day, Will and Tom decided they'd try too.

Since Will was the oldest, he went first. His mother fixed up a cake and a bottle of wine and real early one morning Will set on the road for the witch's place. He walked down that road all morning, and long about noontime, he came to a big oak tree and sat down under it to eat his lunch. He took the cake and wine out of his poke and was just about to start eating when along came an old man with a long grey beard walking down the road.

''Morning, stranger,'' says the old man.

''Morning,'' says Will.

''I'm mighty hungry,'' says the old man. ''Could you spare a little bite of something for an old man?''

''No,'' says Will. ''I've got hardly enough for myself.''

Well, the old man went on his way and Will ate his lunch and drank up the wine and set to looking for the witch. He asked everybody he met where she was, and finally he came to her house and told her he had come to break the spell and marry the King's daughter. Well, the witch went and got a big sharp-toothed hackle for combing the tow out of flax, and set it down near a stump. Then, without saying a word, she got up on the stump and jumped off and hit that hackle right on her back and bounced right up on her feet again.

"Now," says the witch. "I lay you a bet you can't do that." So Will took out his money and put it down, and the witch put down hers, and Will got up on the stump and jumped; but when he came down on that hackle with his back, it stove right into him and near killed him. Then the witch laughed and took the money, and Will crawled off home.

The next day, Tom decided he'd go and try to break the spell, so his mother fixed him a cake and a bottle of wine and he set out. Around noontime he came to that same oak tree and sat down to have his lunch when along came the old man again.

"Morning, stranger," says the old man.

"Morning," says Tom.

"I'm mighty hungry," says the old man. "Could you spare a little bite of something for an old man?"

"No," says Tom. "I've got hardly enough for myself."

So the old man went his way, and Tom finished his lunch and set to looking for the witch. When he found her, the same thing happened to him as happened to Will: he came down on the hackle with his back and it just about crippled him good. So he crawled off home and the witch took his money.

The next day, Jack got to thinking about it, but his mother wouldn't let him go at first, he being the youngest and the most foolish, but he just stood there and said, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going; I'm going"; until she finally got sick of hearing him and said yes. Only she didn't give him cake and wine like she gave Will and Tom, but just a dried-up old biscuit and a little bottle of spring water.

Now about noontime, Jack came to the old oak tree and sat down and was about to take out his poke, when along came the old man again.

"Morning, stranger," says the old man.

"Howdy, daddy," says Jack. "Come on over here and have some lunch. It ain't much, but you're welcome to half."

"Well, thank ye, sonny, I think I will," says the old man. But when Jack unfolded the napkin around his biscuit, he found instead a whole spread of food, and when he reached for the little bottle of spring water, there was a big jug of the reddest, richest wine you ever saw. Jack told him what he was aiming to do, to break the spell on the King's daughter.



"Now Jack," says the old man, "you better know that lots of young men have tried to do what you're aiming to do, but none of them's succeeded. A lot of them have been killed on that hackle of hers. Still, maybe I can help ye a little."

Then he reached into a little pouch he had on his belt, and took out a trick of wood and handed it to Jack.

"Now, Jack, you can take this and lay it on the ground and it'll unfold and become a ship, just like you see on the ocean, only this one'll sail on dry land. All you have to do is say 'Sail, ship, sail!' and it'll take you wherever you want to go."

So Jack took the ship and laid it on the ground and it unfolded and became a great big ship. Then Jack climbed aboard and the old man said, "Now you sail off to that witch's place, Jack, and whoever you meet along the way, you take them aboard." Then he gave Jack a thousand dollars in gold to bet with the witch, and said Jack could pay him back later.

Well, the old man went on his way and Jack said, "Sail, ship, sail!" and off the ship sailed through the air. Jack was having a fine time up there, when he heard something down on the ground breaking and busting up. He looked over the side of the ship, and there he saw a man running along with his head down, busting up everything he ran into: trees, stones, and stumps.

"Hello, stranger!" Jack hollers. "What's your name?"

"Hardy Hardhead's my name," says the stranger, and butts his head up against a big stone. *Bam!* That stone was just little pebbles.

"Hardy Hardhead you are! Come on up into my ship." So Hardy Hardhead got into the ship and they sailed along some more. Then Jack saw a man running across a pasture, eating up every cow along the way.

"Hello, stranger!" calls Jack. "What's your name?"

"Eatwell's my name," says the stranger, and gobbles up a bull that was standing nearby.

"Eatwell you are!" says Jack. "Come on into my ship." So Eatwell climbed aboard and they sailed on. By and by, Jack looked down and saw a man lying in a lake bed, with his mouth open, drinking that lake dry as a bone.

"Hello, stranger! What's your name?"

"Drinkwell's my name," says he.

"Drinkwell you are! Come on into my ship." And Drinkwell got in and they sailed along some more. Then Jack saw the strangest sight, for a man sped by the ship so fast they could hardly see him, but what they did see was that he was hopping along on one foot, holding the other up.

"Hey, Runwell!" calls Jack.

"That's my name!" says Runwell. "What d'ye want?"

"Come on into my ship!" So Runwell got in, and they sailed on some more. Then they saw a man with his head cocked up like he was listening.

"Hello, stranger! What's your name?"

"Harkwell's my name," says the stranger, "and I'm listening to a chigger grinding his teeth in a tall chinquapin tree over on

yonder mountain.''

''Harkwell you must be,'' says Jack. ''Come on into my ship.'' Then Harkwell got in and they sailed some more and came to a man with his hand shading his eyes, looking at something away far off.

''Hello, stranger! What'll your name be?'' says Jack.

''Seewell's my name. I'm watching a gnat following a hawk flying around over in England.''

''Seewell you are! Come on into my ship.'' So Seewell got in and on they went. Then, standing up on a hilltop, they saw a fellow with a gun, but what he was aiming at they couldn't tell.

''Hello, stranger! What's your name?''

''My name's Shootwell,'' says the stranger. ''Just wait a minute while I shoot a squirrel in a tree over there in Scotland.'' *Bam!* ''Got 'im,'' says Shootwell.

''Shootwell you are! Come on into my ship.'' So Shootwell took his gun and climbed aboard, and Jack said, ''Sail, ship, sail!'' and on they sailed to the witch's house.

Now when they got there, Jack told her what he had set out for, to outdo her tricks and break the spell on the King's daughter. But the old witch just asked him to put down his money, and she went and got the hackle and laid it on the ground.

Then she climbed up on the stump and jumped off and landed on her back and bounced up again, spry as you like. Jack looked at that and said, ''Hardy Hardhead, where are you?''

''Right here, sir!''

''See what you can do.''

Then Hardy Hardhead got up on the stump and jumped off and came down headfirst on the witch's hackle, broke out every tooth in it, and jumped up without a scratch.

Well, Jack took the witch's money, and she scowled and laid out some more. ''Now,'' she says, ''do you have anyone that can outeat me?''

''Eatwell!'' Jack calls out.

''Right here, sir!''

''See what you can do.''

So the witch brought out two fat beef cattle and stood by one and Eatwell stood by the other. Then the witch said, ''Go!'' and commenced eating her cow, but before she was halfway through, Eatwell had eaten his up, horns and all, and run over and eaten her horse, some sheep, and a couple of pigs. So Jack took the money and the witch laid out some more and said, ''Can anyone outdrink me?''

''Drinkwell!''

''Right here, sir!''

''See what you can do.''

Then the witch lay down by one creek, and Drinkwell lay down by another, and the witch said ''Go!'' and started to drink. But she hadn't taken but one swallow when Drinkwell had drunk up his



creek, two or three branches, and started on the river. So Jack took another thousand dollars (that's what they were betting every time), and the witch says, "Now the next thing you've got to do is outrun me. We'll each take an eggshell and run over to the ocean. It's about seven hundred miles from here. Whoever gets back first with an eggshell full of seawater wins the race." Then she laid down another thousand dollars, but Jack says, "I think we'll have to make it four thousand this time, granny." So the witch laid down her money and Jack looked around.

"Runwell!"

"Right here, sir!"

"See what you can do."

Then Runwell took his eggshell and the witch took hers, and Jack says, "One, two, three—go!" and they lit out. Of course, Runwell got to the ocean first, filled his eggshell, and was halfway back when he came to the old witch. She knew it was no sense running any more, so she hollered, "Wait up! It's no use our both running ourselves to death. Let's sit down and rest a while."

So Runwell stopped and they sat down and started talking, when all of a sudden the witch witched him asleep and put a horse's jawbone under his head, and the spell was that he would stay sound asleep as long as that jawbone was under his head. Then she smashed his eggshell and ran on toward the ocean with hers.

About this time, Jack and the others were getting a mite uneasy, since Runwell was taking a long time.

"Harkwell!" says Jack.

"Right here, sir!"

"What can you hear?"

"I hear somebody snoring."

"Seewell!"

"Right here, sir!"

"What do you see?"

"I see Runwell, laying with his head on a jawbone, sound asleep; his eggshell is busted and the witch is pretty near the ocean."

"Shootwell!"

"Right here, sir!"

"Let's see what you can do."

So Shootwell took careful aim at the jawbone, and *Bam!* he shot it all to splinters right out from under Runwell's head, and never touched a hair on him. Runwell jumped up, looked around for a moment, saw his smashed eggshell, and started running for the ocean. He got there just as the witch was bending over to fill her eggshell, gave her a good kick right into the middle of the ocean, filled up her eggshell, and ran back in no time.

Well, that broke the spell and the King was mighty pleased about that, and so was his daughter. So she and Jack were married and Jack gave her the flying ship as a wedding present. Then he gave Hardy Hardhead and each of the others a thousand dollars, and found the old man and paid him back his thousand too, and far as I know, they all lived happy after that.

Retold by Paul Jordan-Smith

CURRENTS & COMMENTS

PUBLICATIONS

Now in its eleventh year of publication, the *Journal of Jewish Art* is a handsome, profusely illustrated annual devoted to exploring traditional and modern Jewish art and its relationship with world art. Each volume presents articles ranging from elucidations of perennial motifs to evaluations of contemporary Jewish ritual and ceremonial objects, as well as book reviews, critiques of exhibitions, and a chronicle of events throughout the world dealing with Jewish art. The just-published Volume Eleven, for example, features a piece by Mira Friedman on "The Four Sons of the Haggadah and the Ages of Man," and Archer St. Clair writing on "God's House of Peace in Paradise: The Feast of Tabernacles on a Jewish Gold Glass."

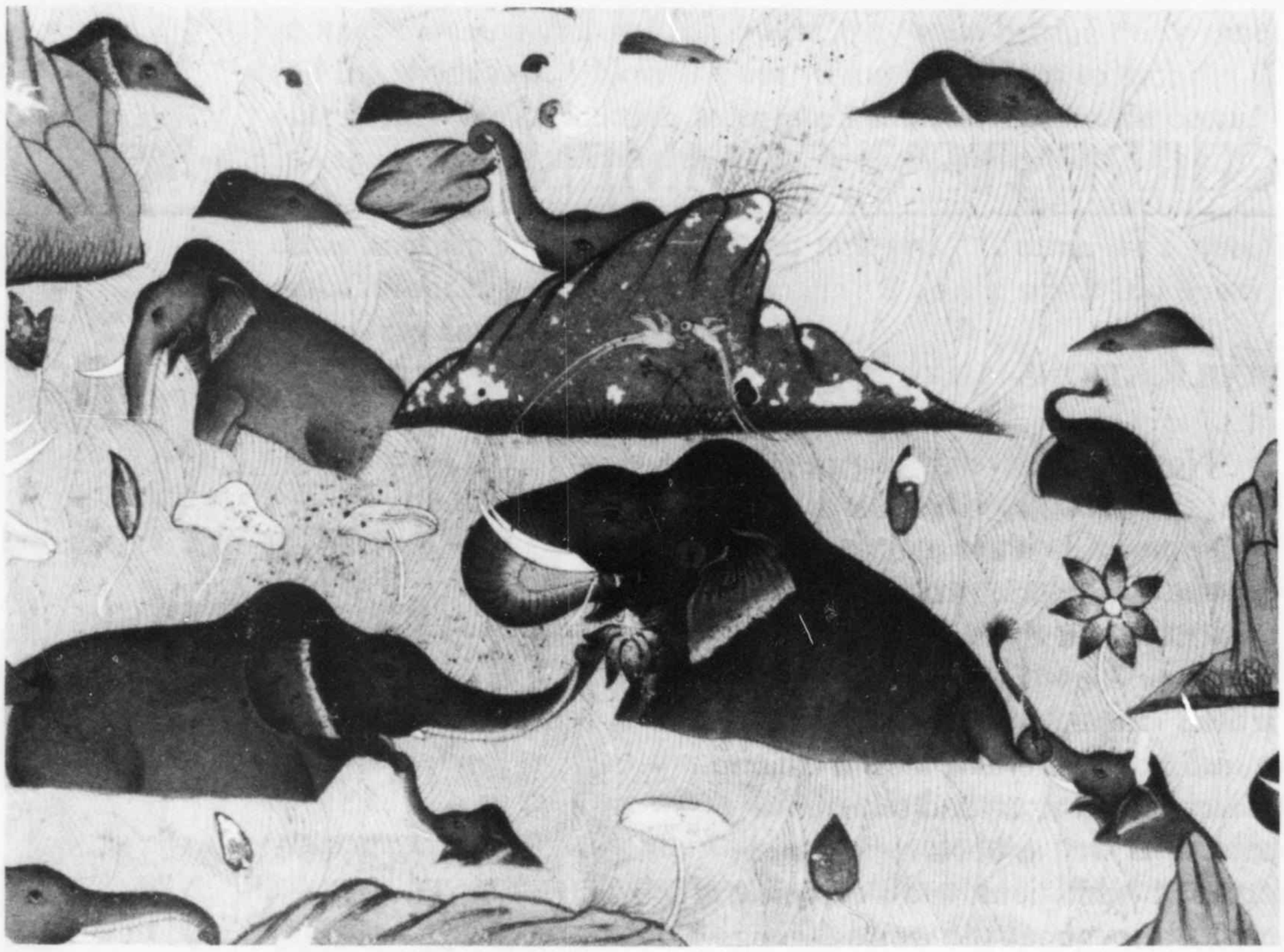
The *Journal of Jewish Art*, edited by Bezalel Narkiss, is published by the Centre for Jewish Art of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and is intended for scholars, art connoisseurs, and laymen alike. The cost per copy is $16.00 to $18.00, depending on the dollar/Dutch guilder parity; for information about subscriptions, please write E.J. Brill, P.O. Box 9000, 2300 PA Leiden, The Netherlands.

MUSEUMS

Most cultures have combined human and animal elements in their mythical imagery—the Egyptian sphinx being perhaps the most famed example—and



through August 25th the Los Angeles County Museum of Art is presenting in its **Man and Beast: Mythical Images from Egypt and West Asia** sixty-three works of art depicting fabulous creatures. Among the objects on display are five panels from the palace at Nimrud of the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal featuring bird-headed and winged genii, a life-sized stone torso of the Egyptian lion-goddess Sekhmet, and a twelfth-century ceramic Syrian bowl decorated with the image of a harpy. The exhibition is composed of pieces from public and private collections, with several objects on public display for the first time. The Museum, located at 5905 Wilshire



Boulevard, is open from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Tuesday through Friday, and from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is $1.50 for adults; $.75 for children ages five through seventeen, students, and senior citizens; free for children under five; and free for all the second Tuesday of each month. For further information, telephone (213) 857–6111.

The **Festival of India**, a year-long celebration of Indian culture throughout the United States, is now under way, and visitors to New York City have the opportunity to enjoy two of the major events of the Festival. From October 10th until January 5th, the Asia Society Galleries will present **Akbar's India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory**, an exhibit of paintings, manuscript illustrations, metalwork, rugs, and textiles representative of the pivotal changes in Indian art wrought by the Mughal emperor Akbar during his reign from 1571 to 1585. And from September 14th until January 5th, the Metropolitan Museum of Art will feature in **India!** a comprehensive display of the art of India from the fourteenth through the nineteenth centuries, including wall hangings, paintings, jewelry, and a red-and-gold imperial tent dating from the mid-seventeenth century.

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The Seven Deadly Sins

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

—Alexander Pope



The next issue of

PARABOLA

The Magazine of Myth and Tradition

The Sound of Compassion

PAMELA BLOOM

John Blofield points out in *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet* that the tantric path (or Vajrayana) does not differ radically from other forms of Buddhism. What is unique in tantra is its methods, designed to first activate, then utilize, all energies towards a state of complete integration of the practitioner with his own true nature. All aspects of the human psyche, including the five poisons of passion, aggression, ignorance, envy, and pride, are considered grist for the mill, and when applied to the rigor of, tantric discipline can be transmuted into fully enlightened energy. This victory, Blofield explains, entails nothing less than "a shattering revolution of consciousness, progressive diminution of cherished egos and ultimately the burning up of the last vestiges of self."

The Gyüto tantric ritual as presented for the first time in America this spring is firmly rooted in an unbroken line of practice more than five centuries old. Today located precariously in Northeast India, near the Chinese-occupied border of Tibet between Sikkim and Bhutan, the Gyüto monastery is one of two Tantric colleges (the other being Gyumë) established to preserve the two meditation and chanting styles of Tzong Khapa, founder of the Gelugpa order (one of the four main lineages in Tibetan Buddhism). For most Western ears, the Gyüto chant is a sound without precedence, without explanation, without apology. A seeming cacophony at times, as trumpets, drums, cymbals, handbells, and conches unite in simultaneous heraldry, the essence of the Gyüto chant is timeless grace; even as the voices begin to rise and swell in uncommon dissonance, they are already dissolving through minute shifts of attention into unexpected chordal consonance. For the initiate, it is a sound of ultimate rightness, as if the ends of the world have finally been untangled and retied. For the Tibetan Buddhist practitioner, who has dedicated his life to the enlightenment of all sentient beings, it is the Voice of Unswerving Compassion.

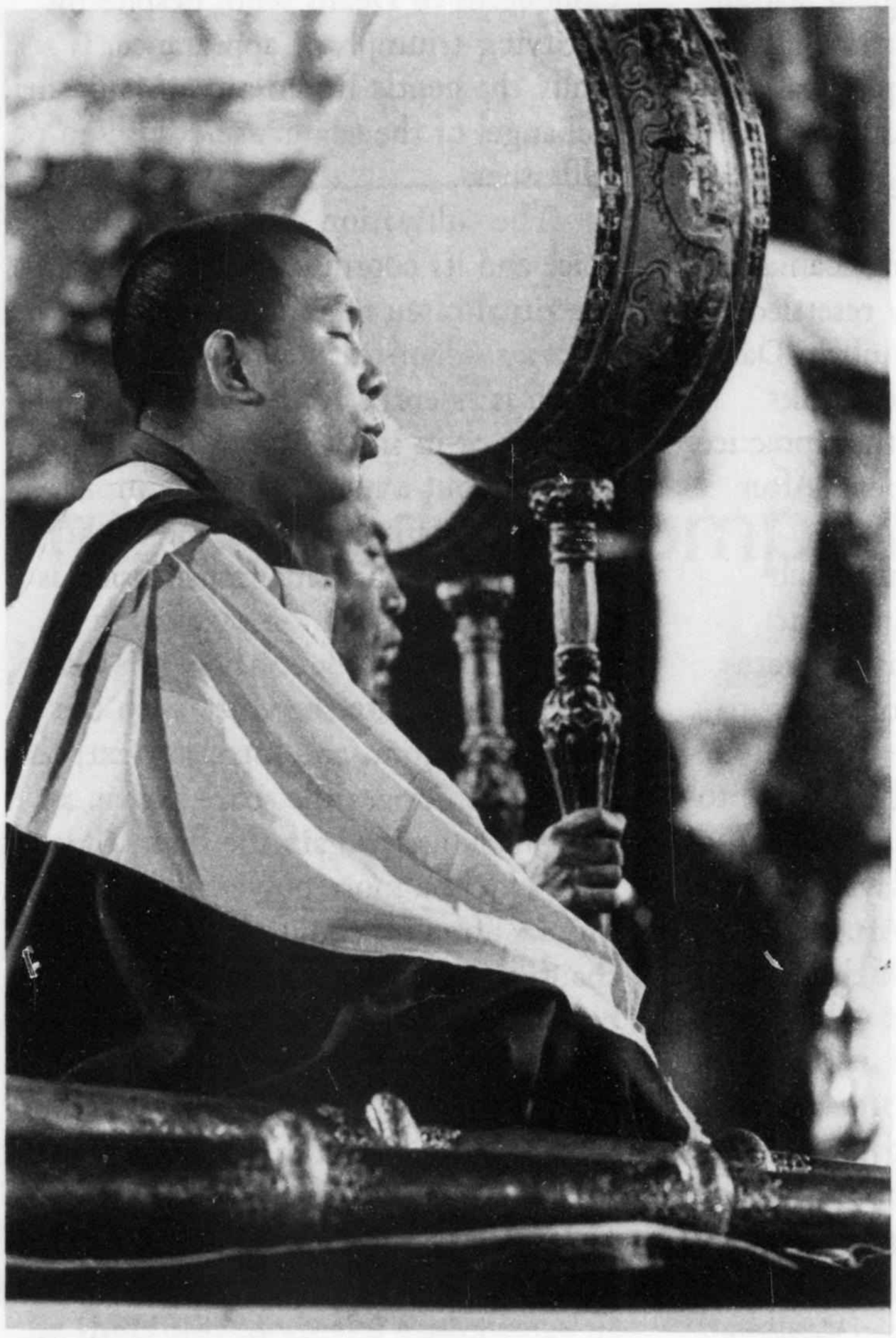
Although the traditional form of practice has not changed since 1959, the

Chinese invasion and subsequent slaughter of the Tibetan people, particularly clergy, has transformed the physical circumstances of the Gyüto monks. Of the original nine hundred, only about one hundred managed to escape Tibet, following His Holiness the Dalai Lama to India, where they eventually resettled. The monastery was first rebuilt in Dalhousie, near Kasmir, and the monks bravely attempted to retain their practice as well as recruit new members. After ten years of struggle, wherein the monks were forced to institute such trades as rugmaking and painting to support themselves, the Indian government, following the policy of trying to help Tibetans settle more permanently in the country, worked with the Gyütos to develop a restricted area of untamed land at the foothills of the Himalayas; this colony of Tenzin Gang, in Arunachal Pradesh, is the present site of the Gyüto monastery.

Much of the Western musical interest in the Gyüto monks stems from their mastery of a chanting technique by which each singer produces a fundamental bass note (lower than most Western basso profundos), and through the manipulation of face and neck muscles manifests as well two or more overtones, thus sounding within himself a harmonious major chord. Within the deep resonation, sacred words are chanted, either rhythmically by syllable, or intoned over long periods of time; the rhythm, melody, and multiphonic voice actually act as ornamentation to the sacred verse which, it is felt, could wreak great danger on an uninitiated listener if left undisguised and perceptible. Contrary to circulated rumor, no nonsense syllables are inserted into the text; rather, the syllables of the words are often elongated to such length that even native Tibetan speakers cannot decipher their meaning. The deep voice also symbolizes the male voice of the deity, Yamantaka, Conqueror of Death who, despite his terrifying triumphant appearance, is actually the gentle Bodhisattva Manjushri, archangel of the adamantine wisdom of selflessness.

The cultivation of this specialized voice and its coordination with the entire ritual often takes up to fifteen years, with a student-teacher relationship which is essential to the training. Individually or in small groups, the novices will seek out a member of the monastery particularly noted for the quality of his voice; the pursuant transmission is one more of absorption by affinity than detailed instruction. As it is difficult to coordinate the voice with the melody, rhythm, and intricate text, the novice memorizes the score first in an ordinary voice to gain the flow, then later adds the more powerful voice. Monks often go about their chores chanting and practicing under their breath, but not everyone attains the same level of mastery; a powerful voice is as rare in Tibetan society as anywhere, although it is said that a large Adam's apple foretells the eventual development of one. "We believe," the abbot explained, "that those persons who possess an extraordinary voice of this kind, or who are famous musicians or singers in this lifetime, made at some time an offering or performed a concert for a Buddha or Bodhisattva. In fact, all abilities and qualities of a person are the result of karmic actions."

The overtones—which vary with each individual—occur naturally, not as a means to an end, but as a by-product of a certain kind of yoga, visualization, and physical attunement which clears the throat chakra and central nervous system in relation to the production of sound. Within a single chant involving a number of voices, there will be different kinds of harmonics; the aural effect becomes quite complex, moving between dense dissonance and precarious consonance. Thus the voice, or speech, as one of the three agents of action, in-



Photographs by Ray Ellis

cluding body and mind, is mobilized into virtuous activity: the mind through visualization, samadhi, and intellectual understanding; the body through its inner cultivation and the use of the energies of body and breath; and speech through melody, chant, and enunciation of sacred text. Since the alternative name of tantrayana is mantrayana, speech in this subtle realm has a very powerful role when acting as mantra; therefore, a single word, a sound that is a sacred word, can have its creative power in the world heightened even further by group chant within the mandala of a specific tradition of discipline. The abbot described the evocative power of mantra thus: "It has something to do with naming something. For example, the word America is just a bunch of syllables, but actually the word America evokes a vast realm of north, south, east, and west, and many people and a great world history, and many complications and problems. All of this is evoked and brought forth by the word America. So that given this mundane example, one can see that in our case, the sacred mantra can contain all sorts of forms of life that are brought forth from these sounds in a powerful way."

The seeker, initially fortified best by the Hinayana path of discipline and renunciation, and softened by the Ma-

hayana path of all-pervasive compassion, may enter the tantric path only through the initiation and ultimate guidance of a teacher who has himself mastered the particular tantra and is able to transmit its essence.

An intimate account of pre-1959 practice at the Gyüto Monastery can be found in *My Life and Lives*, by Rato Khyongla Nawang Losang (Dutton, 1979). The Gyütos' renunciated lifestyle, with a daily schedule from 3 A.M. to 10 P.M., seemed to Losang, a young geshe, far more severe than at any other monastery; and he recalls having to trade in the silken waistcoats befitting his spiritual status (as the recognized reincarnation of the ninth Khyongla of Tibet) for the robes of coarse Tibetan wool required for all Gyüto monks. In rare reportage, he describes the impact the sonorous, solemn chanting made during his first days of training and restless nights spent in quarters much too cramped for the nine hundred monks present: "With my instructor at my side, I took my seat in the back row, third aisle from the left. When we were seated, the chief chanting master made a circular gesture with his right hand and began the chant in a very deep voice. Gradually everyone joined in and soon the whole assembly hall (of Ramoche Cathedral) was reverberating with the deep resonant sound of men's voices in a service of great dignity. The keeper of the hall presently passed out drums and cymbals to the monks in the first two rows, and these then accompanied the chanting with the chanting master conducting. One unfortunate player gave his drum an extra beat and at once the prior descended upon him as though to thrash him." But despite the profundity of the practice and the rigorous monastic discipline, even the most dedicated monk, as Losang notes, could fall prey to fatigue, asleep almost immediately. "Then the prior came by, stopping before me with a little light. The monk at my right, however, had moved closer to give me a little nudge. I woke and received no punishment—though the prior may well have observed our little trick. He could show leniency (as I later observed) to newcomers."

The traditional descriptions of the instruments used in the tantric rites (modeled after Indian royal ritual), as well as the methods of playing them, often reflect that intimate, humorous connection Tibetans have with the primal elements of the universe. For example, according to legend, some of the guardian angels of the dharma, particularly Mahakala, were invited from India by Tibetans in ancient times. In their own homeland the deities were used to hearing the trumpeting of elephants calling to each other in springtime, and they associated that sound with something pleasant and nostalgic. In Tibet, unfortunately, there were no elephants, and the hospitable Tibetans, afraid that the deities might not want to stay in a country where there were no elephants, created through revelation the six-foot *rag-dung*, or trumpet, to imitate the sounds of elephants in the forest. Prominent in the Mahakala chant, the horns are used in pairs, the high and low sound symbolizing the male and female elephant. The smaller thighbone trumpet, resembling the sound of the Jewish *shofar*, is used primarily to summon the deities to receive offerings, and is blown three times in succession.

The *nga* is a large, shallow, two-headed drum, set upright on a long wooden post and struck with an oddly curved, hook-like stick. The specific way to play the drum involves what is known as the three corners and the three relaxations. One holds the drum so that a triangle is formed between the three corners of the drum, one's knees, and one's forehead. With regard to the three relaxations, one must swing the hand in a relaxed way; one must gently recite



the mantra that coordinates with the sounding of the drum; and the inner visualization, which is the realm of the mandala within which the sound of the drum is emerging, must be seen in a relaxed way; as the chant leader expressed it, it "must shine in a relaxed manner." In playing the drum one must strike the upper third and avoid the extreme right or left; as it is said, "One mustn't be too high near the peak of the mountain, or break the lion's jaw by beating the line. And one mustn't hit in the very center because you don't want to go to the bottom of the ocean."

Various cymbals in different shapes and sizes are used; demonstrated at the symposium was the *buk*, large, narrow-rimmed brass disks with large central bosses. There are several techniques of execution: one, called the "lion's scolding," is a dancing sound, as if skipping over water; the second, a specialty of the Gyüto monastery, is called the "support of the jewel," as its particular sliding sound is said to uphold the jewel of the sacred text. Traditional instruction advises that the buk be raised only to the eyebrows, and played in such a vertical manner that if water were inside, it would not spill out. "We don't let the water flow out or let the sky get in."

Considering the esoteric teachings at stake here, one might wonder why these tantric rites are being performed in public at all, even more so in the West where the majority of the audience is not only not trained in the specific meditations, but is not generally Buddhist. In an interview conducted by Sheldon Rochlin during the monks' European tour in 1973, the Dalai Lama foresaw this question and responded thus: "Although it is not possible to witness the interior processes that are the substantial realities underlying these rites, one can observe the exterior aspects . . . . We feel there is a beneficial result from seeing these creations since they create a subconscious affinity with the practices and they purify one's instincts . . . . Based on their inner achievement, the Yogis can unfold energies which serve the benefit of the entire country, such as in ceremonies which consecrate images and icons, exorcize negative forces, prevent natural disasters and epidemics, and uplift the spirit of the times."

Throughout the country, in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Amherst, Providence, St. Louis, Houston, and Berkeley, the Gyüto monks magically drew sold-out audiences, filled with Buddhists and non-Buddhists, avant-garde musicians and curiosity seekers. Constructing special shrines decorated with magnificent tangkhas, pictures of gurus, brilliantly colored brocades and traditional religious objects, they performed in miniature versions of various chants such as Yamantaka, Mahakala, Guhyasamaja, Invocation, and a good luck Offering. They wrapped their ruby and saffron colored robes in a variety of ways, and wore provocative headdresses, the most astonishing being the Yamantaka wig with black bangs, pigtails, and topknot surrounded on three sides by a paneled crown.

The "One World Music" symposium, sponsored by the "Great Music in a Great Space" series at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, teamed the Gyüto monks with leading American minimalist and avant-garde experimental composers whose work has been greatly influenced by Eastern chant: accordionist Pauline Oliveros, pianist/singer Terry Riley, composer Phillip Glass, and David Hykes and the Harmonic Choir.

In addition, a rare overview and demonstration of the ritual instruments was provided by Gen Achin, the elderly chant leader (one of the original one hundred refugees) with crinkly eyes and a sweet smile. When he demonstrated briefly how to play the cymbals, the clarity of his execution as well as his state of mind was so sparkling that the audience spontaneously applauded with great warmth.

Although the Gyüto monks never did "jam" with the American avant-garde musicians (an event the "One World Music Festival" publicity department actually did put forth as a distinct possibility), everyone was keenly interested in the monks' reaction to this Saturday evening concert. I approached Tenpa Guallsam, one of the Gyüto monks, after the concert to ask what he thought of the music.

"Very good. Very Oriental," he said. The monks behind him nodded in agreement. It was, of course, the expected—polite—answer.

Earlier, I had asked the abbot of the Gyüto monastery, the Venerable Lungri Namgyal, if he had any advice for Western musicians who wanted to use their musical practice as a means for spiritual transformation.

"In general," he told me, "we feel that the result of any activity that we do, whether it is artistic or otherwise, depends upon the goodness of mind. And therefore, any music or artistic form, if it is performed with a view of aggrandizing one's self, removing one's own immediate discomfort, gaining profit or fame or drawing attention to one's self in some way, then it will not be good. And if it is done with forgetting one's self, and only concerned with how to be of benefit to others, to inspire them, cheer them, wishing them well and to be free of disturbances rather than further heightening their negative afflictions, then it is almost certain that one's creations would be excellent.

"In our case, in the case of chanting, there have been many great masters in previous centuries who had excellent motivations and developed its affective power according to our view of the Buddha's ultimate benevolence for all beings. We must therefore try to discover the technique that is handed down in this tradition to make our motivation really have impact and be of real help to people."

A classically trained singer, Pamela Bloom contributes jazz/pop criticism to High Fidelity, *as well as features on classical musicians to* Ovation. *She has been a student of Tibetan Buddhist meditation for seven years.*

BOOK REVIEWS

Return to Tibet
By Heinrich Harrer. Translated from the German by Ewald Osers. New York: Schocken Books, 1985. Pp. 184. $17.95.

During a recent visit to Manhattan, some people I know stopped in at the Tibetan Kitchen, a small restaurant of some eight or ten tables serving inexpensive plates of basic Tibetan cuisine. My friends especially enjoyed *momo*, a spiced pastry shell stuffed with meat, washed down with the traditional butter tea. After describing these dishes to me with enthusiasm, they added that, of course, eating *momo* in New York was like ordering lox and bagels in Lhasa; to sample real Tibetan food, they insisted, it was necessary to go to Tibet.

My friends were wrong, as I discovered upon reading Heinrich Harrer's *Return to Tibet*. There is no *momo* in Tibet anymore, and no butter tea; at least not in restaurants open to tourists. "We were served exclusively Chinese food of mediocre quality," writes Harrer dolefully, in recalling his 1982 visit. This is not a big thing in itself, and it occupies no large portion of Harrer's narrative, but Tibet's culinary debacle is only one in a line of tragedies to befall the Tibetan way of life, and it may be said to symbolize them all, for much of a country's soul goes into its cookery, and to ban the food, purge the menu, and kill the cooks that nurture the nation is to begin to crush the soul. Harrer describes a witches' brew of catastrophes initiated by the Chinese occupation, many of them familiar to readers of John Avedon's exhaustive *Exile from the Land of Snows*: the obliteration of monasteries, the mass slaughter of animals (a calculated affront to Buddhist precepts of the sacredness of life), the torture and liquidation of dissenters ("Parents were forced to watch the execution of their older children, sentenced to death for working in the resistance, and to applaud. Children were forced to cheer").

However, *Return to Tibet* offers more than a chronicle of the abominations brought by the Chinese invaders (especially by the Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution). Harrer has undertaken an experiment in time-travel, an attempt to contrast, through the shadows cast by thirty years of foreign occupation, gloomy images of his present-day visit to Tibet with bright memories of the innocent land that he first wrote about in 1953 in his masterful *Seven Years in Tibet*. That astonishing book, a gripping tale of physical adventure and cultural discovery, tells how two Austrian P.O.W.'s—Harrer and his friend Peter Aufschnaiter—escaped from a British camp in India in 1943 and headed north into the Himalayas. With extraordinary resourcefulness, Harrer led the way through a two-year trek across the mountains into Lhasa. There he became a tutor to young Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, teaching His Holiness photography, metallurgy, Western history, and English. Harrer enjoyed a closer relationship than any foreigner had ever had with the Tibetan incarnation of Avalokiteshvara; the idyll lasted until the Chinese invasion of 1950.

Two photos on the jacket of *Return to Tibet* sum up its contents and technique. On the back, we see a small black-and-white snapshot from the late 1940s: the Potala Palace, that remarkable granite sprawl ("the most magnificent structure on earth," writes Harrer) that housed the Dalai Lama, rises in the background. In midfield, an obelisk towers over a saddled yak. Tibetans in folk dress and pigtails fill the fore-

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ground; most have their eyes trained on the Potala. On the front, we see a full-page photo snapped from what appears to be the same location. This picture is in color; the white and ocher stones of the Potala shimmer in the brilliant, thin, dust-free air. The obelisk—whose base, incidentally, carried a decree from 763 A.D. requiring China to pay Tibet an annual tribute of 50,000 bales of silk—has vanished. Chinese soldiers pose in the foreground. They look edgy, unhappy; they keep their backs to the Potala.

The message trumpeted by these two photos is unequivocal. Harrer's book teems with similar blunt juxtapositions of past and present. He describes the beauty of Lhasa's Western gate with its five glorious stupas as it stood thirty years ago, and the "huge highway" that has replaced it; Kyentsal Lupding, an enchanting picnic spot of the past where travellers to and from Lhasa were met or seen off, now a "grey industrial zone" with a cement factory and gravel works; *Jo Utra*, "Buddha's Hair," a willow that once shaded the entrance to Tsuglagkhang Temple (the most sacred in Tibet), now stripped of branches. He casts a keen eye on the odd little cruelties of the Chinese regime: artisans "reviving" the art of print-block carving—but "all the wooden boards I saw being 'carved' were surprisingly wholly finished," remarks Harrer, calling it "*dzüma* (eyewash) for tourists"; a program of Tibetan "folk music" with no Tibetan instruments in the orchestra, that concludes with the singing of "jingle bells, jingle bells"; the emergence of a new word—always a barometer of cultural upheaval—in the Tibetan language: *Thabzing*, "a synonym for mental cruelty and destruction of all human dignity . . . we would call it brainwashing."

In addition to its cultural documentation, *Return to Tibet* contains some high personal drama. The most memorable incident occurs when, by petitioning his Chinese tour guides, Harrer wangles a bittersweet visit with an old friend, Wangdu, now an ardent Marxist and supporter of the Chinese occupation. The book also includes brief conversations with the Dalai Lama, a question-and-answer session with Tenzing Chödak, the Dalai Lama's physician in Dharamsala, who recounts his harrowing years in Chinese prisons, and tidbits of conversation overheard by Harrer or whispered to him in secret. Most poignant, perhaps, are the words of a popular new Tibetan song, worth repeating in full:

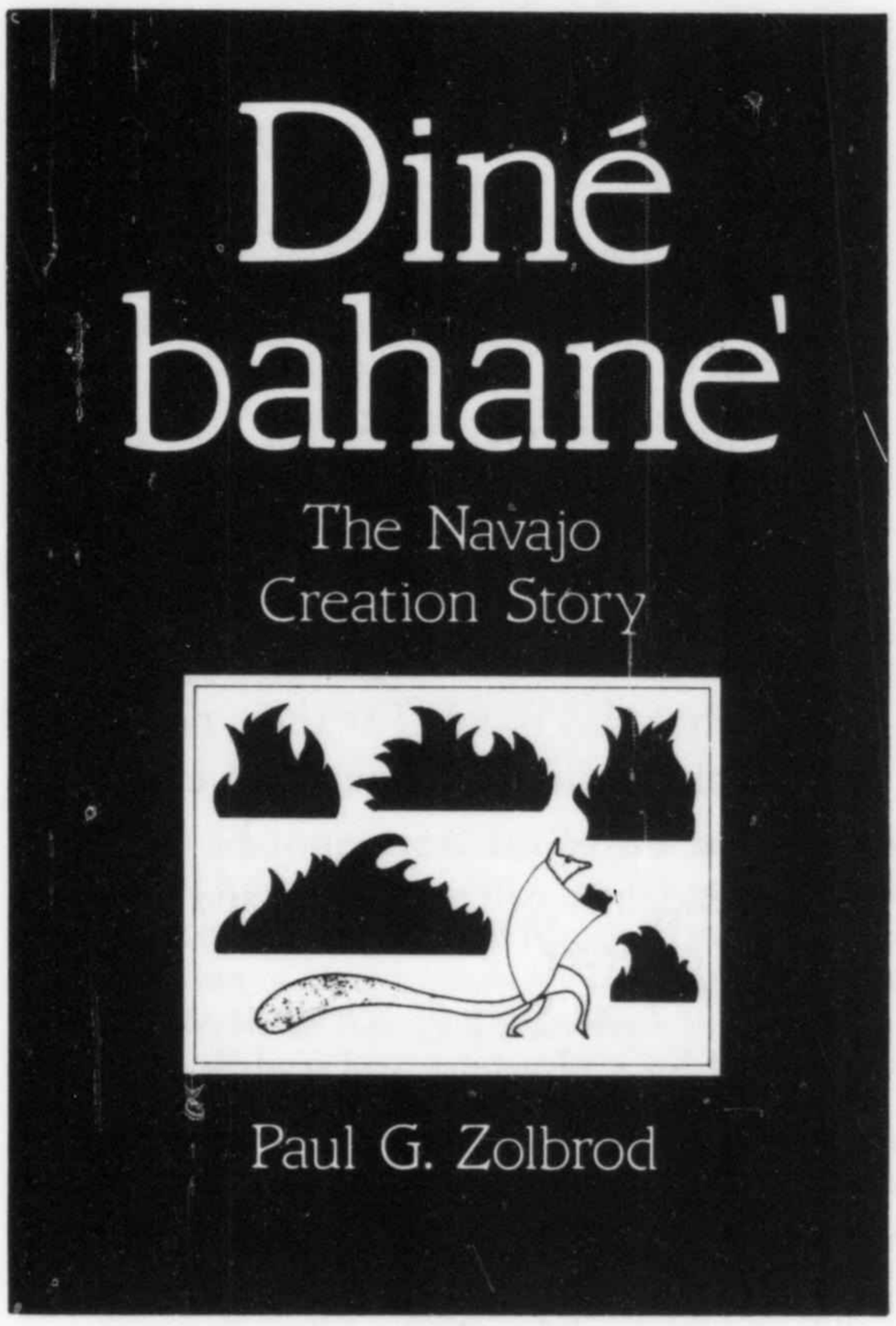
Tibetans now are like young chicks
abandoned by the mother hen
in a wasteland.

Oh may the savior, Tenzin Gyatso,
soon return to Tibet!
Prayers by day! Prayers by night!

The savage cry of the "black pigs"
is getting fainter. Seize the opportunity!
Prayers by day! Prayers by night!
Prayers throughout the past twenty-three
years:
early return of Tenzin Gyatso
to the snow-adorned country.

May the religious centers flourish
in the land of religion and may Tenzin
Gyatso
live a thousand years!

Unhappily, the composition of *Return to Tibet* is not nearly as concise as this song, and the reader occasionally feels like an abandoned chick himself, as Harrer rambles off into one of his frequent digressions or mild harangues. At first, the melodramatic repetitions ("Everywhere we were watched, spied on, followed and observed") are overlooked in anticipation of a rattling good yarn. The nagging about boorish tourists grates after a while, but we understand why it's there—after all, Harrer lived in Tibet when Tibet was Shangri-



Diné Bahane'
The Navajo
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Twelve years in the making, this is the most complete version of the Navajo creation story to appear in English since Washington Matthews's *Navaho Legends* of 1847, Zolbrod's new translation renders the power and delicacy of the oral storytelling performance on the page through a poetic idiom appropriate to the Navajo oral tradition. A story whose origins reach as deeply into the past as the Old Testament, and whose protagonists are as complex as those in the Greek myths, *Diné Bahane'* is a vivid introduction to Navajo folkways and history. It is also an excellent example of native art.

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La. Even the waspish comments about a world gone to seed can be ignored; but as the pointless detours mount up—and there are many—the audience begins to fidget. Some of his excursions, such as accounts of his friendship with Sven Hedin, Tensing Norgay, or Maurice Herzog, or his role in the unmasking of the pseudo-Lama Lobsang Rampa, at least pertain to Tibetology in general, if not to the stated aim of this book. But when the author begins spooning, from his brimming bowl of memories, hard-to-follow anecdotes about obscure German alpinists, or his theory about the abominable snowman (sorry, it doesn't exist), the reader prepares to bolt.

Fortunately, since the course of *Return to Tibet* is as choppy as the mountains of Tibet, every tiresome sidetrack is quickly superseded by a new vista. And at only 184 pages, it doesn't take long to traverse. Moreover, in addition to the jottings of a tourist with considerable advance preparation, it does offer an outpouring of benevolence towards the Tibetan people. We are told again and again, until our ears are ringing with it, that the Tibetans are "patient people," "hard-working and intelligent," that "good-humored cheerfulness is one of their most striking characteristics," that "tolerance has always been one of [their] virtues," that they possess "the faith that truly moves mountains," that they are, in sum, "the most lovable people on earth." Harrer's geysers of goodwill have their effect. Some books win us with their cleverness, others with their beauty, yet others with their virtue. *Return to Tibet* is rarely clever, scarcely ever beautiful (save for

the stunning photos), but its dogged sense of moral outrage and its devotion to a suffering people does command attention and, in the end, applause. Newcomers to Harrer's work should scour secondhand bookstores for a copy of *Seven Years in Tibet*. But for those who have read this priceless work, *Return to Tibet* is worth a look, if only out of loyalty to that wounded land, and for the satisfaction that arises from pursuing a story to its end.

— *Philip Zaleski*

Philip Zaleski is a freelance writer and a Contributing Editor to PARABOLA.

The New Story of Science
By Robert M. Augros and George N. Stanciu. Lake Bluff, Illinois: Regnery Gateway, 1984. Pp. 234. Paper. $6.95.

Through the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, science has hacked away at the soul. As studies of the brain advanced, our insights, memories, and dreams were carefully mapped, relegated to different parts of our great, wrinkled Master Organ; the ebb and flow of our emotions were charted via chemical and electrical pathways. But like the cosmonauts who, confronted with black and silver space, pronounced there was no God in the heavens, scientists finding no physical seat of the soul concluded none could exist.

Our world, our very selves, science told us, were merely products of chance collisions of lifeless atoms. Only the material was considered scientific reality. In a world where science was savior, God, beauty, purpose, and mind were seen as childish bedtime stories that the fearful told the ignorant for comfort.

That was the Old Story of Science—a world view that irreconcilably divided the "real" (matter) from the phantoms that people our inner lives. But *The New Story of Science*, told by Robert M. Augros and George N. Stanciu, marks a new era: a world view in which God dances with the atoms. *The New Story of Science* is animated with the breathtaking implications that the new physics has for psychology, philosophy, religion, and the arts.

The new physics, the authors explain, goes beyond the materialism of the old, Newtonian physics. Quantum mechanics and relativity require the existence not only of matter and physical laws, but also mind. For these new theories claim that the qualities of even the smallest bit of matter cannot be defined independently of the choices and actions of the observer.

The New Story of Science is co-authored by a physicist and a philosopher. Stanciu, a theoretical physicist, worked at Los Alamos National Laboratory and now heads departments of mathematics and science at Magdalen College. Co-author Augros is a professor of philosophy at St. Anselm College. From their combined rich backgrounds, their new book speaks to us in the voices not only of scientists, but also those of Mozart, Van Gogh, Dürer, Aristotle, and Saint Augustine.

The new physics links the painters and composers with exploding stars. It may seem ironic, as physicist and writer Paul Davis has pointed out, that physics is moving toward a more accommodating view of nonmaterial realities, while the life sciences, "following in the path of last century's physics, are trying to abolish mind altogether." It is physics that allows us to begin to answer, with hope and wonder, the timeless questions of existence: Why are the laws of nature as they are? Did the universe have a beginning? Is there a God? What is the mind? Why does beauty exist?

The New Story is that the universe is no accident. We are called upon by our very existence to participate in the

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The music of G.I. Gurdjieff and Thomas de Hartmann, which was composed in the 1920s, has only in recent years become available to the public. This four-record album was rerecorded from tapes of Mr. de Hartmann's playing 30 years ago and represents the definitive rendition of an extraordinary collaboration—a work in which Gurdjieff acted as the source and guide, and de Hartmann developed the themes and transcribed the pieces. As described by de Hartmann:

"Mr. Gurdjieff generally whistled or played on the piano with one finger a very complicated kind of melody, as are all Eastern melodies, although they seem at first to be monotonous. To grasp the melody, to write it in European notation, required a kind of 'tour de force'. . . . Mr. Gurdjieff's music had great variety. The most deeply moving was that which he remembered hearing in remote temples during his Asian travels. Listening to this music, one was touched to the depth of his being."

universe. Mind *can* reign over matter. Big Bang Theory shows how "the material universe cannot be the thing that always existed because matter had a beginning," the authors tell us. Therefore, "the only nonmaterial reality seems to be mind." Which could certainly include, they say, the Mind that existed before the beginning of matter—the Mind we call God.

Mind is not simply a product of our brains' physical and chemical interactions. Quoting neurobiologist Sir Charles Sherrington, the authors show how the stimulated brain only "brings us to the threshold of the act of perceiving, and there bids us goodbye." While the brain provides the organic machinery necessary for sensation, memory, emotions, and the power of movement, it is not the organ of the intellect or will. There is no stimulation of the cerebral cortex that makes a person believe or decide, the authors point out—yet inner experiences influence chemical and physical events in the brain. The mind, the spirit, emerges triumphant.

The implications of The New Story for culture are profound and encouraging. The Old Story of Science preached materialism, defining the world by atoms. The soul wandered the world expatriated, and the gulf between mind and matter seemed unbridgeable. Philosophers like Georg Hegel chose to ignore matter and claim mind was all, asserting the world is "but a projection of the mind." In this view, the mind is retained but the world is lost. The modern philosophers, Camus and Sartre, for example, created from the Old Story a world view marked by intellectual despair. They pictured man imprisoned in a mind that bars him from meaning in

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the natural world. Science—the quest to explore and understand the world—is lost, resulting in pitiless literature, dehumanizing psychologies, and impoverished art. "Truth vanishes and only viewpoints remain," comment the authors.

The New Story, write the authors, gives the world back to man. With the understanding of our newest polysyllabic branches of theory and technology, the book speaks the same truths about our condition and our universe as the Zen poets, Saint Augustine, Epictetus, Aristotle. "The specialized experience of modern science has reminded contemporary man of things he should not have forgotten in the first place."

In general, these conclusions are presented gently, with wonder and grace. Even the creators of the Old Story are spared vicious attack, and lauded for the truths scientific materialism brought us: Newtonian physics and molecular biology, for example. But at one point in the book, the authors seem to show the hubris of pre-Darwinian scientists. The authors rule out the possibility of nonhuman minds. Current dolphin and primate research strongly suggest that nonhumans do indeed reason, believe, and decide with minds highly similar to our own. The authors' argument that the universe "aims at the production of man" also seems to preclude the possible future evolution of nonhuman minds superior to our own on earth, or their current or past existence elsewhere in the universe.

But perhaps humility, along with particle physics, is the lesson we needed to learn from The Old Story before progressing to the new one. Bolstered and transformed by the New Story's outlook, we can rightfully delight in our own souls while maintaining a reverent awe for the rest of our universe, taking our place with dignity instead of despair.

—Sy Montgomery

Sy Montgomery writes on science, medicine, and natural history for Omni, Science Digest, International Wildlife, *the* Boston Globe, *and other publications. She lives in New Hampshire.*

The Traveler's Key to Ancient Egypt: A Guide to the Sacred Places of Ancient Egypt
By John Anthony West. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1985. Pp. *xiv* + 480. $18.95.

From the first, Egypt cannot help but arouse the traveler's interest, but even the most enthusiastic visitor is sooner or later overwhelmed by the tidal wave of impressions flooding his senses. But as John Anthony West leads us in



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his new book from site to site, we begin to become aware of a certainty: for four millennia the Egyptians recorded a history not just of the secular, but of the sacred.

As we travel through the sacred places of ancient Egypt and listen to the explanations given by West, we find our attention constantly focused on this special history. For example, West describes numerous battle scenes depicted on temple walls. Time and again he draws our attention to the incongruity between what is depicted and what is actually known to history. Slowly we realize that what we are seeing is not the portrayal of actual events, but a symbolism that underlies a far more significant story. On these massive walls, which isolate the temple from its surroundings, the king defeats the enemy. At this most significant of boundaries, between the sacred and the profane, we see recorded the triumph of order over chaos, of the forces of light over the forces of darkness.

Most important, however, are the countless indications of the activities that took place within these sacred enclosures. On the walls of Seti's mortuary temple at Abydos we see the stages of the resurrection of Osiris, while in the Valley of the Kings, West skillfully guides us through some of the most fascinating and complicated "literature" of ancient Egypt. Here, in representations of the "Book of What is in the Netherworld," the "Book of Caverns," and the "Book of Gates," we follow the journey of the setting sun into darkness, death, and miraculous rebirth. What are we looking at? Are these the wild imaginings of a primitive people, as some would have us believe? Or, as West constantly demands us to think, are these the visible remains of a truly great teaching—a sacred science of man's possible inner transformation?

The question may be unanswerable. But as we wander with West from pyramid to temple to tomb it remains, provoking in us a continually renewed interest. In spite of West's low opinion of "conventional" Egyptologists, his seemingly excessive support of various exaggerated theories, and his obviously fervent conversion to the teachings of R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz (whose ideas are anything but uninteresting), for the serious traveler to Egypt West's book is probably the best companion guide available. For this is a working book, meant to be carried and used, and it has about it a certain magic: it is able to arouse in us a new interest towards the wonder and the mystery of the sacred.

— *Martin Lev*

Martin Lev holds a doctorate in archeology from the Institute of Archeology, University of London.

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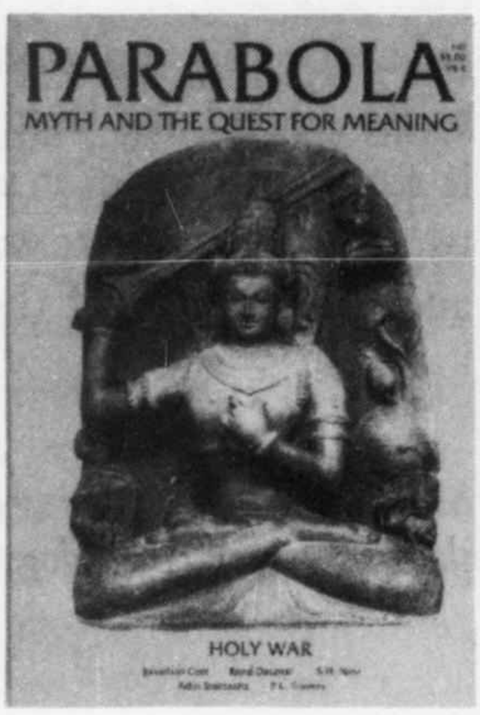
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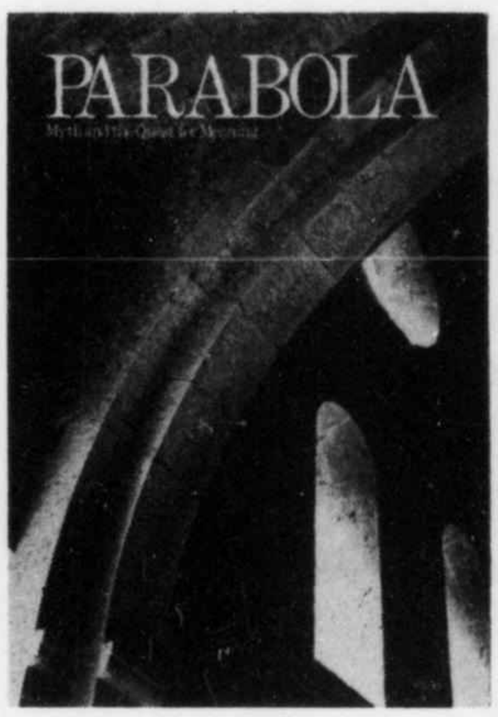
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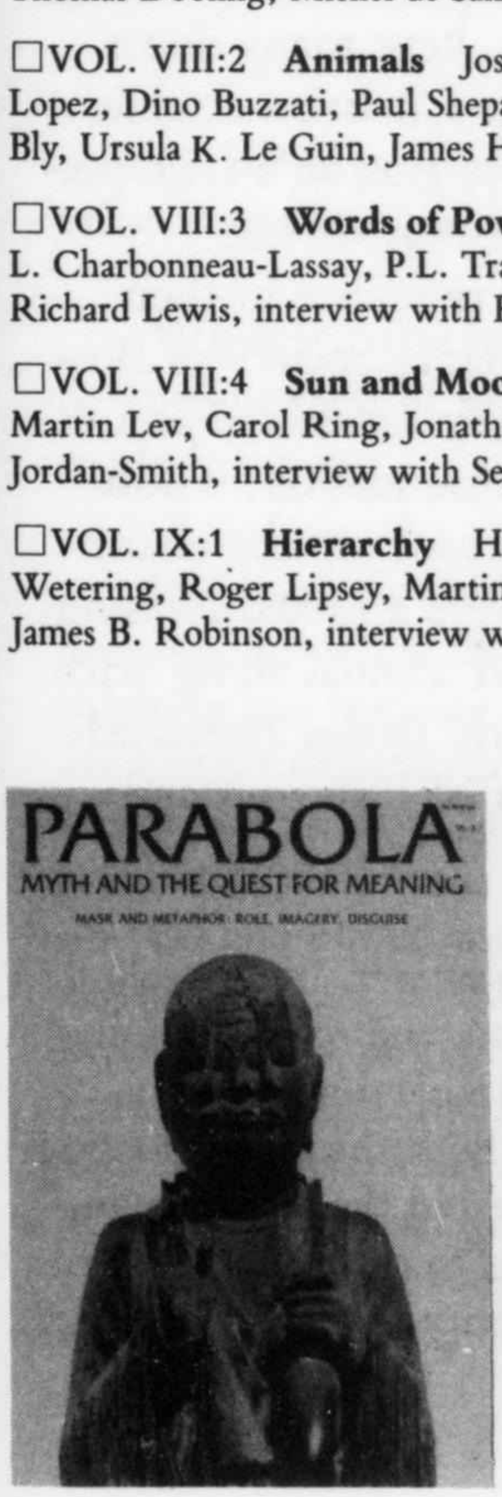
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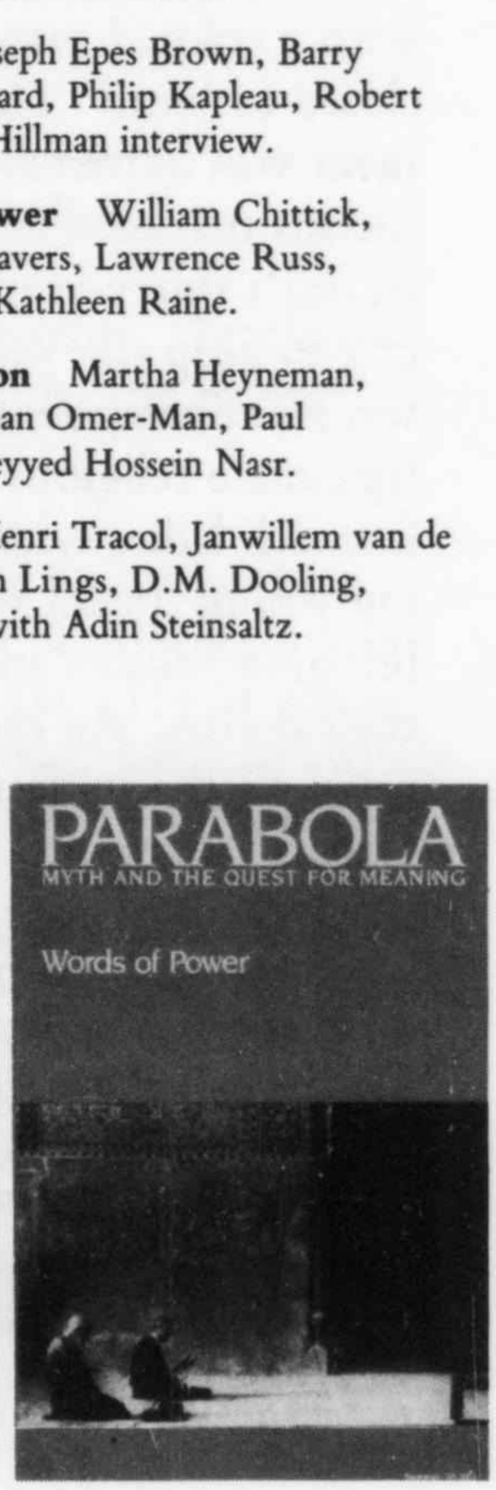
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A Bridge of Dreams:
The Story of Paramananda,
A Modern Mystic, and His Ideal of
All-Conquering Love
By Sara Ann Levinsky. West Stockbridge, Mass.: The Lindisfarne Press, 1984. Pp. 585. Paper. $12.95.

When Swami Paramananda arrived in the United States from India in 1906 the missionary traffic was still overwhelmingly in the opposite direction. Twenty thousand Protestant proselytizers were deployed around the globe preaching the Gospel of Christ to the heathen. Paramananda was in the vanguard of the band, even now comparatively small, who were beginning to return the compliment. What happened to him, a young, tender devotee of the great nineteenth-century Hindu saint, Ramakrishna, when he reached our distracting land is the principal subject of *A Bridge of Dreams*, a striking and instructive biography by Sara Ann Levinksy.

The early stretches of Paramananda's life were exactly analagous to what we expect from the traditional western saint: the youthful vocation, the resistance to it by a poor but devout family who saw in their handsome, intelligent, loving son not a penniless sannyasin, but the sure means of recouping the family fortunes. Then there was the conversion which brought the youth to the giants of the Vedanta Society's first generation: Swami Vivekananda who had already carried the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna to the West, and Swami Ramakrishnananda, a bluff, holy stay-at-home who undertook the promising youngster's spiritual training.

At twenty-two Paramananda was judged ready "to share with others the message of love, unity, and tolerance which lies at the root of all Vedanta teaching." Teddy Roosevelt's America was chosen as the locale for him to pursue this high mission.

After what might have been considered by someone less enthusiastic a discouraging stopover in New York City, Paramananda moved on to Boston. There, "an unknown young foreigner in a strange city embarked on his great experiment, to prove that without plans, organization, or funding and with God's help and guidance alone, he could succeed."

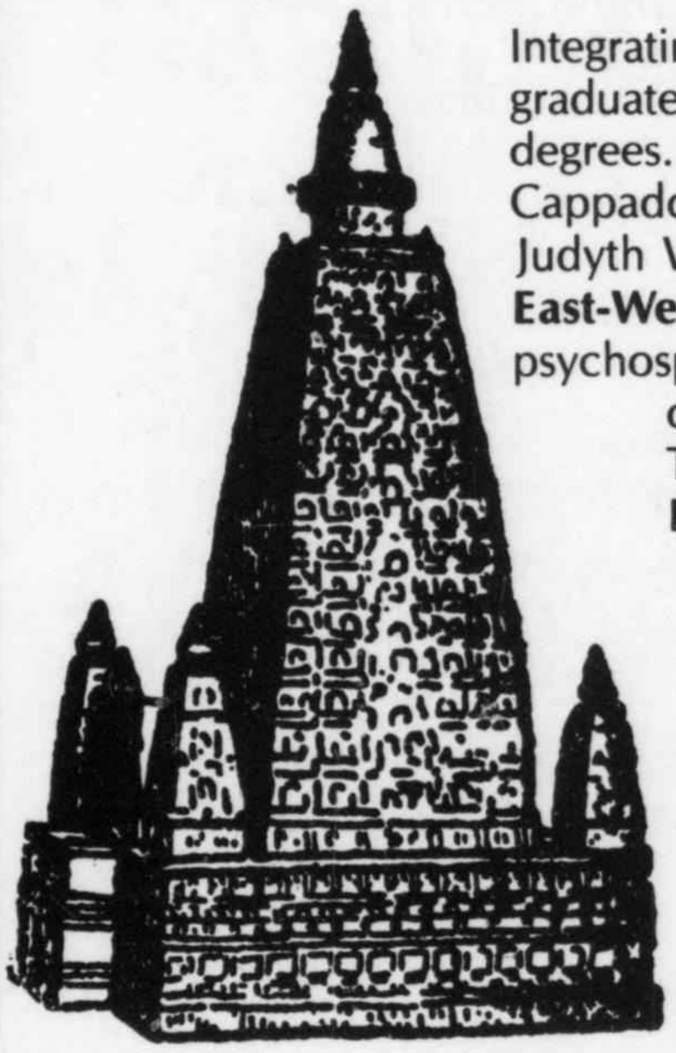
Ms. Levinsky's perceptive commentary indicates that over the next twenty years he did succeed, after his own fashion, although to an outsider it might have appeared otherwise. It certainly wasn't easy.

"The general suspicion that the swami was a fraud and Vedanta a bogus cult, added to the stigma of fraternizing with a colored man, kept many doors closed to him." The Christian establishment was unfriendly; Boston's Irish politicians managed for most of the swami's thirty-year residence in their city to keep the Vedanta Society of Boston from being legally accredited as a legitimate religious foundation. Those few rich ladies who took up the charming young Indian were a mixed blessing, bringing rumors and scandal along with their dollars. An early *Boston Herald* editorial on the subject of "Swamis and Others" stated:

> So clever is he, however, in concealing these habits of his kind, and so successfully does he, when five thousand miles away from home, discover both the art of pleasing the American woman and the occult philosophy which she seems to crave, that he has often gained an authority as a spiritual leader

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entirely out of proportion to his own mental attainment or personal quality.

Whatever the hostility, skepticism, or chronic lack of funds, the swami made his way.

Paramananda found his balance by dressing and acting like an American, while thinking and teaching like a Hindu mystic. He bought elegant (though used) cars which he washed, greased, and overhauled himself, wore fashionable suits (usually snatched up on sale) and played and talked tennis, cricket, and soccer. . . . But he would not compromise the philosophy to suit Western tastes. He taught the traditional Vedanta that Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda had. However gracefully Paramananda the man moved through the world, Paramananda the teacher did not disguise the aim of his philosophy: to transcend the world. His students quickly discovered that Paramananda, handsome, charming, debonair, was an enthralled lover of God.

In Paramananda's own words:

God is the source of all our strength and inspiration, but when we forget Him, through the charm of matter, we become spiritually blind. . . . You cannot have sincere love for God in your heart and at the same time fondness for worldly enjoyments. It is impossible; it is inharmonious—as darkness and light. . . . Do not forget Him, do not neglect to serve Him. Love Him and serve Him and let all else go.

Perhaps Paramananda's most conspicuous attempt to reconcile the ways of East and West was embodied in the

Ananda Ashrama, a 140-acre stake in the hills a few miles due north of Los Angeles. Here the swami envisioned the prototypical religious commune:

> . . . set in the serene beauty of nature, where all facets of human expression would be encouraged: art, music, drama, agriculture, animal husbandry, and a variety of crafts all issuing from the substratum of spiritual consciousness produced by continual prayer, meditation, and selfless service. It would be the home of his monastic community, women and (he hoped) men, and of families who shared their aspirations. Guests could come for short or long periods, partake of the peace and exalted atmosphere of the place, and carry them back into the world. It would be a lighthouse on land, a shrine dedicated to all world religions, a refuge for world-weary souls, an abode of truth, beauty and high ideals. . . . In short, it was to be heaven on the earth of California.

Well, not exactly.

The ashrama's wide spaces and wild naturalness which had originally drawn him, also had their drawbacks. The Santa Ana wind proved as destructive as the former caretaker had warned; it periodically swept the property, breaking limbs, uprooting trees, snapping the cement pillars of the rose arbor, and decimating the grapevines. Skunks and coyotes broke into the chicken coops and killed the chickens, frequent brush fires on the surrounding hills perpetually menaced the ashrama grounds.

In November, 1933 there was a devastating fire. After two days "the community emerged from the Cloister to view what was left of the ashrama. The grounds were a scene of waste and desolation. The sage-covered hills were denuded. Where sprawling sycamores and twisted manzanita and century-old oaks had flourished, only charred stubble remained." However none of the humans, nor the animals—cows, goats, and chickens—who had taken refuge in the Temple of the Universal Spirit had been harmed.

A month later there were torrential rains. "The fire had stripped the ashrama; the flood mangled its body. The familiar terrain was lacerated beyond recognition, terraces swept away, canyons widened and deepened, hills melted . . . ."

Meanwhile back in Boston the mortgage was overdue.

But, as any one who has ever had anything to do with a struggling religious community knows, it is not earthquake, wind, fire, or even lack of money that imposes the worst hardship. It is the human souls in residence.

Paramananda had to put up with the usual parade of salvation shoppers who arrived overflowing with enthusiasm, received his love and encouragement, and departed with mutterings and recriminations. Even the hard-core faithful were subject to destructive explosions. Many spoiled, self-centered disciples sopped up the swami's affection and then turned on him and dragged him down, or tried to; but Swami, for all his wispy physique and look of ethereal bliss, was wiry in body and soul. He could cook a feast for 100 devotees or clear a brush-choked California hillside, replant a grove, or put on fancy dress and sing and dance to raise the sagging spirits of the faithful. To supplement the small income that came to the community from the collection plate or a rare well-heeled sympathizer, he published a magazine, wrote books, and pursued a gruelling lecture schedule which took him continually back and forth across the continent.

There was an occasional triumphant return to India where he was treated as a hero and a saint. But just as surely as Schweitzer returned to his suffering natives in the Congo or Mother Teresa to her old and dying in the Kali temple in Calcutta, the swami returned to his

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bickering, dejected North Americans, cheering up the disconsolate, finding the means to meet the mortgage payments and fighting off the attacks of brash new arrivals from the Vedanta Headquarters on the Ganges who found his spiritual style embarrassingly old-fashioned and unorthodox.

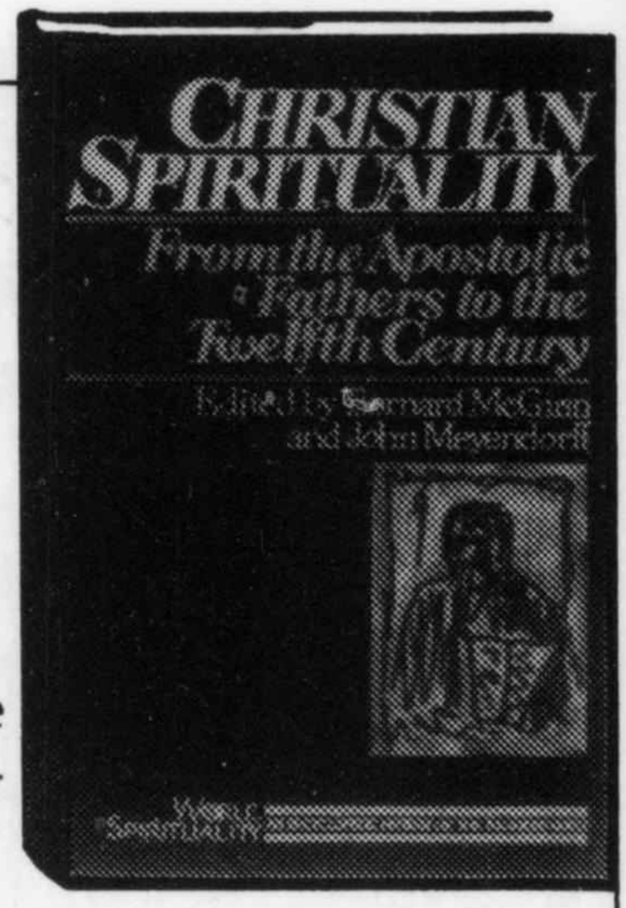
Nor were his disciples idlers, although frequently temperamental and fickle. They tended the cows, goats, and hens which in the thin years kept the community in food with some left over for barter. Their beehives produced three tons of honey a year which was sold for profit. The arts and crafts departments turned out handwoven scarves, illuminated book marks, the swami's poems, illustrated and framed, incense made from home-grown herbs, helping to keep a community afloat which had, after all, at least for some, come quite close to the utopia the young Paramananda had envisioned years before.

In 1940 Swami died, worn out before his time, leaving behind him a few dozen souls who had caught fire and persisted in entertaining his vision of God and a God-filled world. They still carry it on today. He left also a handful of tracts, and some slim volumes of verse; but after his death the strained ties with the parent Vedanta Society in India were broken because his devotees loyally refused to accept a male swami to replace the woman Paramananda had trained as his replacement.

What did all this loving effort, this struggle in a strange land add up to? And what in this apparently minor reli-

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gious figure, already nearly a half century dead, justifies the formidable research and care Ms. Levinsky has given to the telling of this story?

Perhaps the best answer is found in some eloquent words written twelve centuries before Paramananda set out on his crusade to the United States. Sri Sankaracharya's description of "the illumined soul" stands at the head of Ms. Levinsky's account; that it seems neither excessive nor inappropriate is high praise for both the author and her subject.

— *Marvin Barrett*

Marvin Barrett, until recently a member of the faculty at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, is completing a book on sickness as a spiritual search.

The Keystone: A Search for Understanding. A New Guide to the Great Pyramids of Mexico. Book 1: The First Dimension.
By Hugh Harleston, Jr. Bellaire, Texas: Uac-Kan, 1984. Pp.: *xxiv* + 136. $15.00.

At this stage of the computer revolution, I suppose it would not be too outrageous to suggest that, in another few hundred years, human — plus artificial — intelligence might come to understand the principles and laws of the whole universe with a clarity and objectivity that would make our present science appear at a rather early stage of integration, still squabbling over the relative values of each separate specialization's "point of view." For example,

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we recognize that the speed of light is an objective constant, but we cannot express this constant in temporal or spatial whole numbers. Indeed, we still do not have today a common unit or system of measurement for time, space, and angle of rotation (arc), so that our mathematics probes these correlations with incommensurable tools. No wonder we are having so much trouble putting all our myriads of data together to make a coherent whole. The essential "design information" about Spaceship Earth, and its corner of this galaxy, is still missing or at best fragmentary. And the fragments do not fit, which means that a unified field theory is still no more than that — a theory. There appears to be order in the Universe, but the keys to understanding that order are not yet in our hands. We have not reached a level at which we can have more than intimations of the "grand design."

Or have we? Perhaps humans on this planet had reached that level long ago, and lost it — perhaps more than once. This is what shocks our present culture. It is so unacceptable an idea that we are not even willing to look at the evidence that is beginning to accumulate in research like Hugh Harleston's work on the Mexican pyramids. The fact that he is not a professional archaeologist, but an American engineer with a thirty-year-old passion for the knowledge hidden in the Mayan pyramids, makes his work doubly suspect to the establishment. How could the Mayans have possibly known the true radius of the earth when NASA has only just discovered it?

And as for spherical trigonometry and the exact periodicity of planetary cycles? Unbelievable! And yet....

Setting aside disbelief based on an assumed sense of cultural superiority, and disregarding also the fact that Harleston is not a professional writer, Harleston's first book (of seven he intends, to expound his entire work) leaves me with the disconcerting feeling that there is probably much more to this than I would like to admit to my rational modern self. Like other readers of PARABOLA, I have long accepted that there was such a thing as sacred knowledge, including sacred geometry and architecture, encoded in certain myths and ancient monuments, and that the numbers used by some ancient builders in megalithic Europe, in Egypt and in other cultures might indeed be expressions of that knowledge "seen from the top," so to speak, rather than built up from the data base bottom, as our current science assumes is the only way to build it.

What Harleston maintains, with a wealth of detail that is not only exhaustive but exhausting, is that the Mayan ceremonial complex at Teotihuacan northeast of Mexico City contains the design information on macro and micro levels in a system of measures that does resolve the problem of integrating time, space, and arc in such a way that major objective measurements in our part of the galaxy can be expressed in whole numbers, whether they relate to the size of planet Earth, the number of years in a cycle of Venus or Mars, or the tetrahedral form of water or carbon molecules.

Not content with this staggering assertion, Harleston goes on to show that the Mayans who constructed this complex two thousand to twenty-four hundred years ago were far ahead of the Arabs in their use of the zero and multiplication by factors of ten, that they had the oldest, longest, and most accurate time count dating from before the Wisconsin glaciation (16,000 B.C.), and that they succeeded in leaving behind them their knowledge of the cosmos in a form that neither human language could subsequently distort nor natural cataclysms destroy.

The basic unit of measurement used by the Mayan builders, Harleston deduces, was a "unified measure," or Hunab in Mayan, of 1.06 meters. The key dimensions of the major pyramids, the distances between their centers, and even decorative details in the ceremonial complex, almost all turn out to be either multiples or simple fractions of 1.06 meters, which he therefore calls the Standard Teotihuacan Unit (STU). A large part of the book is then spent in detailing the significance of the numbers given by measuring everything in sight in STUs. There are a few intriguing references, to be developed in a subsequent book, to the measurements of the Egyptian pyramids, of the Parthenon, and of Stonehenge expressed in STUs, which he claims fit these structures as neatly as those in Mexico. Far from seeking to show that these more familiar cultures might have seeded the Mayan, he believes that either there was a common cultural ancestor or the Megalithic, Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, and Babylonian stand in debt to the proto-Mayans. At any rate, he considers that all of these other cultures were seeking to preserve and transmit the same sacred science that can be read much more clearly in Mexico than anywhere else. Thanks to the decoding of Teotihuacan, it should now be possible to "read" all these other cultures more exactly than before.

This is a claim that should, I believe, be tested. The specialists in lost knowledge are no less subject than other specialists to their own preoccupation with their particular theories, whether they are working in Karnak (Egypt), Karnak (Brittany), or Teotihuacan. Each has a strong sense of the primacy of his

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or her own discoveries — whether it is the Egyptian Royal Cubit, the "pyramid inch" of Taylor, the megalithic yard of Thom, the Brittany meter of Fleury, or the synergetics of Buckminster Fuller. Nothing could do more for the revalidation of all this research than to subject it to peer scrutiny and criticism like any other scientific endeavor, and either to prove or disprove such claims to a more holistic knowledge having existed in past epochs that we can claim to have attained today. If Harleston's work could provoke this sort of pooling of information openly, and meet the test of peer criticism, we would be a lot closer to understanding the real achievements of the past and the true meaning of sacred geometry.

— *James George*

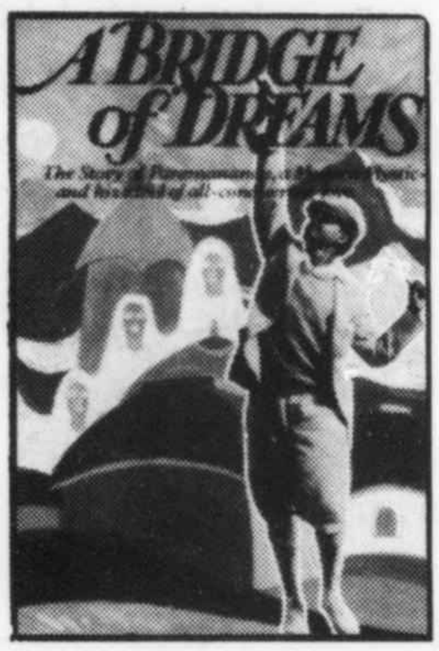
James George has been Canadian Ambassador to India, Iran, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Kuwait, and is now President of the Sadat Peace Foundation.

Diné bahané:
The Navajo Creation Story
By Paul G. Zolbrod. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984. Pp. *xi*+431. $22.50.

Wind, Mist, Corn that becomes First Man and First Woman, tricky Coyote, Giants, Changing Woman, Twins born of different mothers, Cloud, Thunder, Female and Male Rain: each is one of the characters in this recounting of the beginning time in Navajo cosmology. The narrative sometimes recalls Aesop's fables, or the Just So Stories, or the Bible, or an Icelandic epic. It is literature on a grand scale, complementing the grandeur of Creation and the illusive Creator.

The Navajo creation story presented here is preceded by Acknowledgments, a Pronunciation Key, and a lengthy Introduction describing motivations and methods; it is followed by Notes and a Bibliography. Over three hundred pages are devoted to the creation story itself; seventy-five pages are given over to single-spaced, small type notes that are often integral to the unfolding of the creation story. Thus, a reader is placed in the awkward position of continually flipping between primary text and com-

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mentary. The Introduction rationalizes the method of presentation, after discussing and rejecting methodologies advocated by some of the better-known people in ethnopoetics, especially Dennis Tedlock and Dell Hymes. Readers are led to believe that this rendition of the Navajo creation story, in contrast to that of Matthews upon which much of the, present volume rests, is more true, more accurate, and more attentive to oral narrative. Alas, it is not so.

Zolbrod, an English professor with a passion for studying Native American oral traditions—especially narrative poetry—paradoxically chooses to ground his study largely in texts, and particularly the texts of Washington Matthews, an ethnologist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, supplemented by texts from Gladys Reichard, a twentieth-century anthropologist, and texts from Father Berard Haile, a priest-ethnographer who worked in the first four decades of this century. Realizing the limitations of working from texts collected by others and being unable to hear the Navajo creation story in context, Zolbrod instead turned to listening to Seneca oral performances. This is like trying to understand a Catholic mass by attending prayers in a mosque.

To his credit, Zolbrod did study the Navajo language. But while admitting his naivety "in ethnography and folklore and knowing nothing about field research," he apparently did not try to remedy such deficiencies by working with any one of a number of people who could have educated him, preferring to remain a literary person reinventing the wheel of folkloristics and making embarrassing errors along the way. As an example, he states that "no oral tradition should be diminished by referring to it as folk art." Such diminishment is not canon; the term folk art, as he uses it, indicates a lack of understanding of its technical sense as an aesthetic expression of a culture. The term "folk art" is neither pejorative nor to be equated with primitive, as Zolbrod seems to think.

A similar lack of understanding is evident in his discussion of storytellers, and also in the Introduction. Using *Beowulf* as exemplar, he argues for the creative role of the narrator and the influence on a story of the performer-audience interaction; simultaneously, he cautions against the belief that a written version of an oral story is *the* version people once heard in live performance. Performer-audience interactions and the narrator's role have been discussed in folklore literature consistently since the mid-1950s when a series of articles by the late William Bascom appeared in the *Journal of American Folklore*. Zolbrod is

evidently unaware of this discussion or of the more recent performance orientation in folklore research.

But while cautioning against our believing that the published version of a piece of oral literature is the same version an audience would have heard, Zolbrod continually falls into the trap of believing that there was one, original genesis story. Throughout both the Introduction and Notes he labors to convince his reader that this, his own, version of the Navajo creation story is closest to *the* original story, since he has reconstructed it from Matthews's notes as well as his own knowledge of Navajo culture. He seems upset when there are differing versions, simultaneously extant, of the same event even as he asserts that this is always the case with a vital oral tradition. If oral literature is to remain serviceable, it must have the flexibility to accommodate changing life ways and technology; one way such flexibility is assured is through differing versions and differing emphases depending upon both narrator and occasion of narration. It is unnecessary to homogenize versions to arrive at the true, or original, storyline, if, indeed, such an "original" form ever existed.

This striving toward the pristine has dire consequences. I wish to discuss two of them as examples: Zolbrod's incorrect reconstructions, and his unfortunate tendency to try to date narrative by internal elements. In the first section of Part One, The Emergence, Zolbrod modifies the narrative so that the North direction has a stream, and later an ocean, to bring it into consonance with the characteristics of the other three directions. He cites Matthews's unpublished notes as justification and adds his own rationalization that in the Navajo world view everything is symmetrical and often in fours or multiples of it. While this is certainly true, he misdirects the meaning of this initial passage by populating the North in the same way in which the other cardinal directions are populated. The burden of this segment of the narrative in Navajo is that the North is a place of barrenness that does not conform to the rest of the directional world; it is not a place to be inhabited eventually by Diné, The People, the Navajo. Thus, while Zolbrod's intentions were understandable, he distorts the Navajo sense of the inhospitable nature of the North. The North is a place with no stream, no ocean, no place names, no reason for sentient beings to be present at all. Sometimes the lack of symmetry, the lack of the desired four, the lack of information, the lack of essential balance is precisely the point. In his efforts to present the "true" version, he has eroded the cumulative power of

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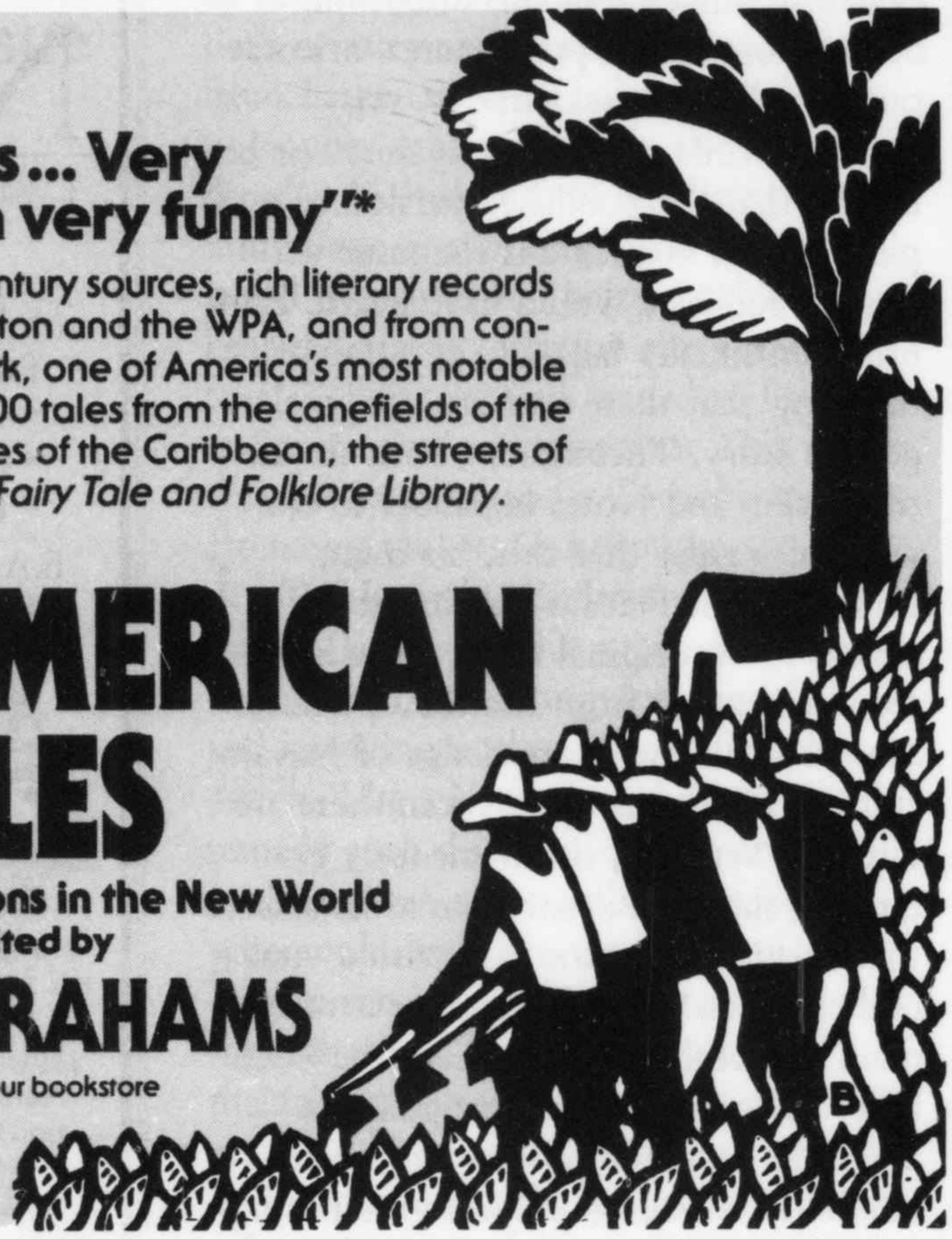
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the narrative. Perhaps if he did not revert into the assumption that there was *an* original form that had somehow been forgotten through time, this kind of error would not occur.

Several years ago in *They Sang for Horses*, a masterful study of the incorporation of horses into Navajo and Apachean mythology, LaVerne Herrell Clark demonstrated how an item of cultural importance can be quickly and thoroughly integrated into the expressive system of a people. Zolbrod should have followed her lead and not tried to date portions of the creation story by internal elements. Despite his saying several times in the Notes how chancy it is to attempt historical dating through verbal materials, he nonetheless does so. His Notes frequently refer to Christian elements in some versions of events he reports; he rejects these elements but he does not reject Puebloan ones. Thus we have First Man and First Woman being created from ears of corn; corn was not a part of life in the north, from where the Navajo came into the Southwest, but was instead food to which they quickly adapted once in the Southwest. Therefore, if he were to be consistent in trying to present the oldest—and supposedly the most accurate—version, he should have accepted the Haile version of creation in which there were twelve worlds preceding this one and no corn. In another place, Zolbrod assigns an episode to a late time period because Mexicans are mentioned; while Mexicans were not encountered until recently, the episode could still be quite old with "Mexican" a simple substitution for another people. Is it really important to

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try to date the narrative or portions of it? Can we not appreciate the narrative as it is with its apparent contradictions, realizing these are precisely what allows it to remain such a vital force for the Navajo?

But in spite of all its faults, the intrinsic power of the narrative shines through and the book is a compelling one. Zolbrod spent much time and effort to bring a little-known literature to the general public and in this he has performed a valuable service. Perhaps through his work it will be easier for mainstream Americans to see the Navajo as a people with a deep and abiding tradition that incorporates complex, abstract thought on the very orders of the universe, and appreciate the prodigious feats of memory necessary to maintain this literature. Caveats aside, Zolbrod has placed Navajo literature before the reading public; he is to be congratulated on making it more readily available to our understanding.

—*Claire R. Farrer*

Claire R. Farrer, an anthropologist/folklorist, is Associate Professor of Anthropology at California State University, Chico. She works with Mescalero Apache Indians, whose cosmology and ethnoastronomy form the basis of a book, Living Life's Circle, *she is writing.*

CREDITS

Pages 7–8 Tympanum at Autun, "Climbing to Paradise" (detail).
Page 9 "Doubting Thomas," MS, 339, f. 426, *Homilies of St. Gregory*, 12th century. From St. Catherine's Monastery, Sinai. Photograph courtesy Richard Cleave.
Pages 14, 16 Drawing by Jean Bernard, after Albert Dürer.
Pages 19–21 Apollo, archaic Greek. Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Page 22 Chartres. Courtesy Editions Tel.
Page 23 left: "The Vision of St. John," El Greco. Rogers Fund, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
right: "Portrait of Charles I," Van Dyke. Louvre.
Page 25 Gudea, Sumerian, 3000 B.C. Louvre.
Pages 26–30 From *Enku, Sculptor of a Hundred Thousand Buddhas*, by Kazuaki Tanahashi. Photographs by Tetsuo Kurihara. Shambhala Publications, Boulder, 1982.
Page 42 Frontispiece to the ninth section of a thirty-volume Qur'an, Egypt, 14th century. MS. Or. 848, f. 1 verso. B.L., London.
Page 44 Mystical diagram from Ibn al-Arabi's *Futubat*. MS. Or. 1610, B.L., London.
Page 46 From *Maori Painting by Gottfried Lindauer*, edited by J.C. Graham, A.A. and A.W. Reed, Wellington, New Zealand, 1965.
Page 47 A muslim at prayer. Paul Popper, Ltd.
Page 49 Dancing dervishes (detail), from a manuscript of the Dīwān, by Hāfiz. Rogers Fund, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Page 51 King Mycerinus and Queen Chamerernebti. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
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Page 68 Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet, detail from a "Six Day" icon. 16th century.
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Page 73 Psalm 148. "The Praise of God" (detail). Munich Psalter. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.
Pages 77, 79 Liang K'ai: Putai. 13th century. Courtesy Kosetsu Museum of Art, Kobe.
Page 80 From *Celtic Renaissance, Prints from Findhorn*, by Alice Rigan. New Findhorn Directions, The Park, Forres, Scotland, 1980.
Page 83 Beard-pullers, from The Book of Kells. From *Celtic Mysteries*, by John Sharkey. Thames and Hudson, 1975.
Pages 85–86 Illustrations by John D. Batten.
Pages 87–94 Illustrations by Gloria Ortiz.
Page 97 Detail from *Christ Carrying the Cross*, Hieronymous Bosch. Ghent, Museum voor Schone Kunsten.
Pages 100, 102 Photographs by Ray Ellis.

ERRATUM

The correct credit for the illustration of the seated Bodhisattva appearing on page 97 of "Exile" (Vol. X, No. 2) is: "The Asia Society, New York: Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection. Photograph by Otto E. Nelson."

PROFILES

Robert Aitken Roshi is the founder, along with his wife, of the Diamond Sangha, a Zen Buddhist center in Hawaii. His most recent books are *Taking the Path of Zen* and *The Mind of Clover: Essays in Zen Buddhist Ethics* (North Point Press, 1982; 1984).

Christopher Bamford is President of the Lindisfarne Association and editor of *The Noble Traveller: the Life and Writings of O.V. de L. Milosz*.

Gai Eaton, a Muslim since 1951, is a consultant to the Islamic Cultural Center in London and a lecturer, broadcaster, and writer on Islamic topics. Previously, he served in India, Africa, and the Caribbean for the British Diplomatic Service. His books include *The Richest Vein: Eastern Traditions and Modern Thought* and *King of the Castle: Choice and Responsibility in the Modern World*.

Martha Heyneman is a poet and essayist, and an editor of *A Journal of Our Time*.

Roger Lipsey, a Contributing Editor to PARABOLA, is the author of *Coomaraswamy: His Life and Work* and the editor of Coomaraswamy's *Selected Papers*. He is currently writing a book on the spiritual dimensions of twentieth-century art.

Jacques Lusseyran, born in Paris in 1924, lost his eyesight in a school accident when he was eight. A leader of the French resistance during World War II, he was incarcerated at Buchenwald from January 1944 until April 1945. Following the war, he taught in France and later in the United States, authoring a number of books and articles. He died in an automobile accident on July 21, 1971.

Henri Tracol has been a photographer, and an anthropologist with the Musée de l'Homme. He is also a writer and a sculptor, and has been for many years one of the chief exponents of the teaching of G.I. Gurdjieff.

P.L. Travers, a Consulting Editor to PARABOLA since the magazine began, is the author of the Mary Poppins books, as well as *Friend Monkey*, *The Fox in the Manger*, *About the Sleeping Beauty*, and *Two Pairs of Shoes*.

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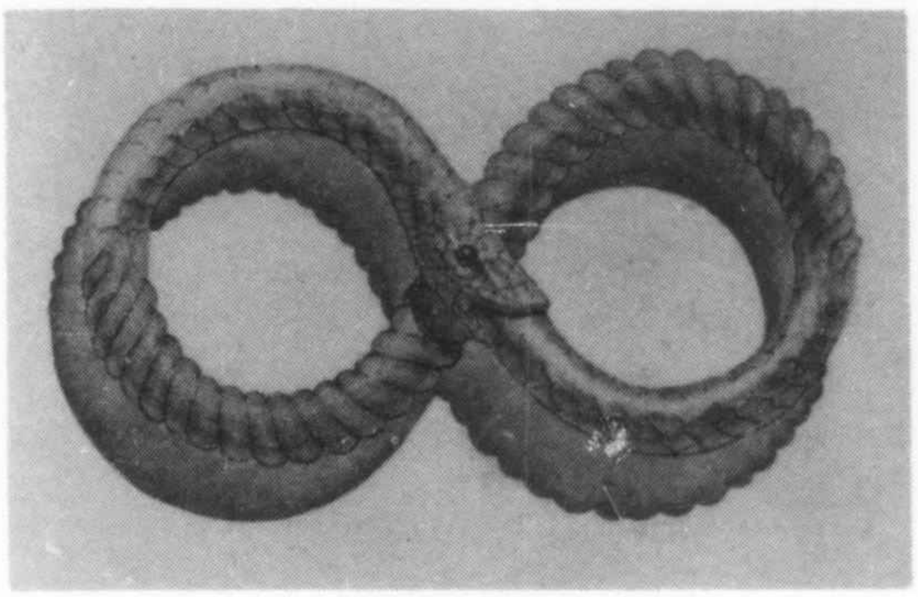
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