

No.

# THE COMING AGE

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Autumn  
Issue

# THE COMING AGE



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## ★ Becoming a Madrian

The Ekklesia of our Lady is not just a group of human beings on this earth. It is a vast and timeless family arrayed through all time and space. It includes the Geniae or angels — the intelligences of the highest spheres, the perfected heras or saints who have passed beyond the wheel of birth and death into pure Enlightenment, as well as nature spirits and creatures on countless worlds and levels of being, who have remained in harmony with the primordial Law and way of life laid down by God Herself from the dawn of time.

A person cannot become a part of this family by a merely theoretical attachment to the Faith, for Madrianism is infinitely more than a mere belief. It is a golden chain that leads from the very summit of heaven to the deepest valleys of the earth, and every maid who will return to the harmony (themis) of legitimate earthly life, according to the Way laid down by Inanna Herself, must take up her position as a

link within that living chain, binding herself in love and obedience to the celestial hierarchy in its earthly manifestation. It is necessary that she should meet with her earthly sisters and become a part of their community; and when she is ready and has a sufficient understanding of the primordial Truth, she will be ritually offered to our Lady, which will make her a full member of that family.

## How to go about it

A person wishing to do this should first gain a basic understanding by carefully reading and re-reading the three introductory booklets listed on the back cover and several back issues of this magazine. She should then arrange to meet a qualified devotee or to attend one of the regular gatherings.

Becoming a part of the Madrian community does not necessarily mean giving up life in the profane world, but it does mean finding a new family beyond it.

## Meditations:

### Divine Life

Hail Mari! Thou art the Life that runs through a star, an apple and a human child. Thou art the Sun, Whose ray doth bind us all like jewels upon a string.

### Samhain

This world shall dissolve and its splendours be vanished, its pains and its sorrows shall pass like the summer rain. Life is not long, death is swift in the coming, and the ninety and nine thousand things shall be gone, but the Truth shall remain.

From *The Teachings of the Daughter*  
Available through the Literature Circle.

# BLACK ALCHEMY

THE INNER MEANING OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY



off of the human world from everything "above" the level of the physical has characterised the movement

not only of materialistic "scientism" and "philosophy", but also of the arts, politics, industry and every other facet of the period. This was only to be expected — and indeed had been predicted thousands of years ago — as the patriarchal Dark Age draws to its final and darkest phase.

Today, however, the phase of simple materialism has already been passed. The degeneration of the world must continue to a stage still lower before it is complete, and the renewal of the matriarchal Golden Age can take place. Having cut off the world wholly from all influences "above" matter, the stage is now set for the penetration of influences from "below" through the widening "cracks" or "fissures" in the artificial material surface of the world — the "breaches in the world-wall".

We may see this process in art: at the so-called Renaissance, painters turned from a stylised art designed to depict the inner spiritual essences of things to a purely "naturalistic" representation of outward physical appearances; but the modern "surrealist" schools have turned from physical nature, not back to a spiritual art, but on the contrary, to its inverted parody, to the chaotic regions of inferior psychism. Western religion degenerated into Protestantism, gradually stripping away all but its most outward and moralistic manifestations, until it arrived at

IT IS OFTEN SAID that the predominant tendency of the modern world is materialism — the belief that nothing exists beyond physical matter and the attempt to drag everything, from truth and beauty to the human soul, down to the level of physical epiphenomena. Certainly it is true that for the last four hundred years this process has been the dominant factor in human affairs. The systematic cutting

the agnostic/atheism of the modern world. But it did not stop there. This century has seen the rise of the necromantic cult of "spiritualism", neo-witchcraft, and a welter of "esoteric" pseudo-religions, all drawing on inferior psychism, the inverted parody of religion, for their "inspiration".

Nowhere is this decline through materialism to inferior psychism more apparent than in the development of modern nuclear physics which claims to investigate the very basis of matter. Now what, in fact, is matter? Pure matter is the completely plastic "support" of cosmic manifestation. It has no qualities in itself, but is simply the "mirror" in which Divine Ideas or Archetypes are reflected; the medium through which they are manifested; the formless wax upon which the stamp of all forms is impressed. To seek this pure matter is impossible, since it has no size, no weight, no colour, no shape, no qualities of any sort, until these are impressed upon it. Obviously, it is not "physical" in any sense.

This is "first matter", but there is also a "secondary matter" relative to our plane of existence. This is the extreme-point of material consolidation, the furthest possible remove from pure Spirit. Then again there is "ordinary" earthly matter. The ancient matriarchal alchemists took lead as the symbol of this "ordinary" matter. Theirs was a complex spiritual dis-

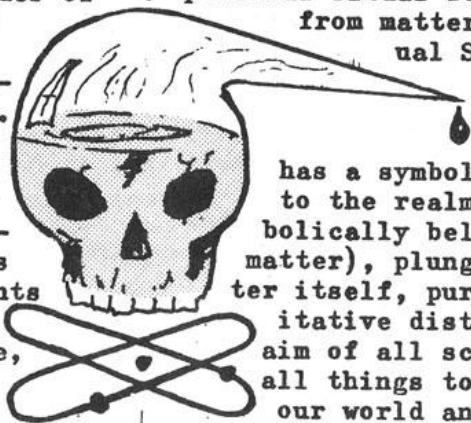
cipline which symbolically sought to transmute this leaden matter into pure Spirit, represented by the solar metal, gold.

Now if we look at the Periodic Table of the elements, we can quickly grasp the special position of lead. The first element, hydrogen, is the most chemically simple, having only one proton to its atom (hence its atomic number, one). Its name means literally "birth of water", and hence it is the origin of all life. As we progress in atomic weight, we come quickly to 6, 7 and 8: carbon, nitrogen and oxygen, the basic building blocks of organic life. Later we meet with elements more concerned with "solidity" - 20, calcium, the builder of bones, 26, iron (still a necessity for life). One might suppose the process of adding protons to be infinitely extendable, but it is not. When we reach 82, lead, a turning point is reached. All elements beyond this point are unstable. They decay radioactively, emitting radiation. Uranium, for example, decays through a number of unstable elements until it becomes lead. Ten radioactive elements are found in nature, the heaviest being uranium. They are always found in tiny deposits. In larger amounts their radiations are harmful to all life, causing mutation, cancer and disease. An accumulation of uranium exceeding about 35lbs is so abhorrent to nature that it decays in a split second, setting up the chain reaction which we call an atomic explosion. A nuclear reactor contains several tons of uranium carefully separated by other materials. It is a controlled atomic bomb.

No element heavier than uranium exists in nature, but ten others have been created artificially through nuclear fission, including 94, plutonium - named after the patriarchal god of death, and rightly so, since it is more poisonous and radioactive than any natural element - americium, berkelium, californium\*, the latter a truly horrendous element which probably forms the basis of the neutron bomb, which, without actually "exploding", simply destroys all life within a given radius. Just as the

First elements are the basis of all physical life, so these final super-heavy elements are wholly destructive of all life.

Now the ancient matriarchal alchemists really did have the secret of transmuting lead into gold. But the physical effect was for them the least important part of the operation (unlike those later patriarchal alchemists who tried - and failed - merely to enrich themselves). They knew that physical things are no more than the shadows of spiritual Realities reflected in the "mirror" of matter; that all things have a symbolic essence which is far more "real" than their temporary physical existence. Alchemy was a powerful ritual for the release of the soul from matter (lead) into the spiritual Sun (gold) which is the Mother.



Nuclear technology also has a symbolic essence. It delves into the realm heavier than lead (symbolically below the realm of ordinary matter), plunging toward secondary matter itself, pure quantity with no qualitative distinction (and is not the aim of all scientism the reduction of all things to quantity?). But between our world and the domain of undifferentiated matter lies an abyss, which is the abyss of chaos. Below lead we find elements not denser and more consolidated, but chaotic and unstable elements which destroy themselves and everything about them. Nuclear fission is truly a black alchemy which sinks below lead rather than rising above it, first gathering the heavier-than-lead elements which nature has dispersed in harmless quantities, and then literally transmuting them into elements heavier and more chaotic still.

And this black alchemy has a ritual potency, just as true alchemy did, for just as gold symbolises the solar Spirit, so the super-heavy elements symbolise the chaotic and unstable forces of inferior psychism. Just as the true alchemist called upon superior influences to lift maid above her earthly condition, so the black alchemist unwittingly invokes the most degenerate influences of the psychic plane to drag her

# Work-in-Progress

**HALF-CALENDARS:** Full calendars for this year are still available at 60p post free. Half-calendars covering the rest of the year up to the Spring Equinox are available at 45p. Both include major and minor festivals, natural rites, a table of correspondences for each day of the sacred and secular years and other information, and are delightfully illustrated.



**S.O.S:** The work of Lux Madriana is increasing rapidly, but unfortunately, our finances are not. We try to keep all our prices as low as possible so that the word of God is available readily to all who are seeking Her. At the time of writing the state of our finances is such that when we have paid for the printing of this issue, Lux Madriana's funds will contain less than nothing!



below it. Black alchemy is both the product of the inferior psychic movement of the final days of the Dark Age and an effective force for its acceleration. Its effects on the physical plane are well known to be deadly; but its effects on the psychic plane, though more subtle, are no less so. It is the "sacrament" of the final phase of the patriarchal descent into matter.

Sister Alethea

\* The west, "land of the setting sun", is a symbol of the decline of civilisations. Materialism was born in the west and imposed upon the east. America, especially the eastern seaboard, has for a century been the extreme type of western materialism. It is no coincidence that today California, the far west of America, plays an important part in black alchemy, and is also the world's largest centre for pseudo-religion.

To help offset this problem, we are offering membership of Lux Madriana at a minimum of £10 per year (we would suggest £10 for people earning under £2,500 per year and £20 for those earning more, but personal circumstances should be taken into account) or a minimum of £100 for life membership. Lux Madriana is essentially an organisation of people making known the ancient faith in obedience to Inanna's words "go you out among maids and teach them the good doctrine". If you cannot work actively for Her, why not put some of your money to work in Her service? What is earthly wealth for, except to glorify She who has created all the good things of the world? But whether you join or not, what is most needed are *regular* donations, great or small. Why not make out a bankers' order for regular payments to Lux Madriana, to commit a portion of your daily work as a love-offering to Inanna?



**BADGES:** We are now producing a range of eight badges. They are metal, 2" in diameter (pictures on this page much reduced), bearing the following legends: "God is our Mother"; "Many names, one God"; "The Future is Female"; "A cock's egg, A snake's leg, A male god"; "God is our Princess"; "Talk to God - She listens"; "One God, Queen of Heaven and earth"; and the matriarchal-feminist symbol (centre of page). They are 30p each post free, four for £1 or eight for £1.80.



**DANCE:** A new course in traditional Madrian ritual dance-drama is beginning in Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire this Autumn.

# Hail Inanna!

*How to meet God  
in your heart*



RELIGION IS A PATRIARCHAL INVENTION. The special area of life set aside and designated "religion" would mean nothing to a person brought up in a traditional Madrian society. To such a person, her craft, with its deep inner meaning and ritual is just as much "religious" as any rite in the Temple, her stories and songs of love and adventure, with their profound traditional symbolism of the soul's quest are just as "religious" as hymns and sermons. Spiritual truth is simply the meaning of life, the inner essence of everything said and done in a traditional society which lives according to the law and harmony — the *themis* — laid down by God Herself from the beginning. It is only when a society breaks away from this rhythm that something called "religion" as opposed to something else called "ordinary life" emerges.

It might be argued that "religion" involves faith, but in a normal society the acceptance of spiritual truth is no more a question of faith than the acceptance of gravity or the colour blue. It is only when spiritual blindness sets in that the question of "faith" arises.

But we live in the Dark Age. Our eyes are darkened by the blindness of the darkening world. How can we unify our lives into that divine Wholeness which is the natural state of human existence? The answer is contemplation. If we can control our minds and fix them on She who is the Source of all life, we will soon come to see the divine Reality through all the outward appearances of the world.

But that is far easier said than done. In these dark days our minds are scattered among the illusions of the world of matter. It is harder for us to come to true contemplation than for any generation before us. This is not only because of the noise and scurry of the modern world, nor the false attitudes of "Fools' Perspective" conditioned into the mind (although these things make it worse). Even people like myself, brought up in traditional

matriarchal communities largely cut off from these things find it very difficult. The truth is that the very psychic substance of the world is becoming at once "denser" and more "fragmented" (like the heavier-than-lead elements) as the Dark Age draws to its conclusion.

So what can we do? Most certainly Inanna has not deserted us. She has given us a method suited to the conditions of the Dark Age, by which we may come to Her. A method simple and yet wonderfully effective. It consists in the repeated invocation of Her Name. Normally our minds are a jumble of stray thoughts, half-thoughts and impressions, but the divine Name descends through them like a pillar of light, organising the entire soul about the Reality which it represents.

One may repeat simply the name "Inanna", or a longer phrase, such as "Hail Inanna, Princess of Heaven, Mistress and Queen of my heart", but most usual is the simple repetition of "Hail Inanna" to a rhythmic chant; preferably to one of the traditional chant-rhythms, but it can be to any rhythm that comes naturally.

Many people suppose that the continual repetition of the same words must be a useless exercise; but they do not understand the power of the Name; for the name Inanna is identical with Inanna Herself. She is, so to speak, incarnate in Her name. To med-



itate not with any rational thought, but simply to fix our minds upon the sound of Her name will slowly bring us to know Her.

When a devotee repeats the Name constantly, in every spare moment when the mind is not otherwise occupied, the repetition becomes automatic. It continues in waking and in sleeping. Even when she is thinking of something else, the chant continues on as a background. Such a devotee comes truly to live with Inanna, to know Her as a personal friend and companion.

In danger, distress or pain, when normal concentration is impossible, we can always chant the Name, and hold fast to Inanna. We can chant alone, or together in groups, using the many beautiful chant-rhythms that the Tradition has given us. It may be accompanied with drums and other instruments. The important thing is always to listen closely to the sound of the words, for Inanna's name is identical with Inanna Herself. This is the method by which She has chosen to give Herself to us in the Dark Age. Our minds will wander, but the sound will always pull us back again after a little. Inanna knows our weaknesses. She wants to help us by giving us a method that is easy for us.

The chant is a rhythm, just as all life is a rhythm: the seasons, the moon, the day and night, the sacred rhythms of agriculture and of all the sacred crafts. Sometimes I have walked through the countryside chanting silently or just above my breath, and have seen "through" the beauty of the trees and flowers, the clouds and the limpid sky,

into the beauty of She Who creates and sustains them. She walks with me in the sound of Her name, showing me the inner essence of Her world.

And when we are among those things which are against nature - the disharmonious (anathemis) artificialities of the modern world, oriented solely toward material ends and made by modern industry, which is the diabolic parody of true craft - then the Name, turning within us, becomes a fortress and a gentle haven, protecting us from the assaults of Irkalla and the metallic laughter of her chaotic world.



*Inanna shows us the inner spiritual Essence of all natural things*

When a person chants regularly and the chant becomes a part of her life, she will begin to notice subtle changes taking place in herself. She will become calmer and quieter, more able to concentrate, more cheerful, and, above all, more compassionate and tender towards all creatures, human or otherwise. Inanna is the friend of all creatures, and as we become Her friend, so we too begin to feel Her divine serenity and compassion.

A maid that I know once told me that if she does not chant either inwardly or outwardly for even a few hours, she feels lost and lonely. Inanna is her dearest friend, and without Her she is unhappy. Yet her love for her friends and relatives and all the members of her community on this earth has grown deeper and stronger than ever. This is what we should expect, for Inanna is the Friend of Friends, and all true love flows directly from Her. In chanting Her name, we are taking the hand of love that She has offered to the world in the Dark Age.

Sister Julia



Scenes from a

Extracts from a new autobiography available  
through the Literature Circle



# Madrian Childhood

**M**Y EARLIEST memory is of the little wooden statue of our Lady set in a niche a little way from my crib and lighted by a little flickering dish-lamp. I often used to gaze at Her before I fell asleep.

My mother had told me that She would enfold me in Her mantle as I slept, and in my earliest days I imagined that as soon as my eyes were closed in dream, the statue would step down from her niche and cover me with her blue cloak. I often hoped that, just once, She would allow me to see Her doing it.

The statue had been carved by my mother during the time that she was expecting my birth, and painted by my father in its rich blue and violet and gold. It was blessed by our priestess on the same day that I was named and offered to our Lady; therefore it had a special magical link with me.

While my immortal soul was shaping my body within my mother's body, so she was shaping that other human form without; turning it from a shapeless piece of wood into a delicate and powerful representation of the Mother of all souls and the Maker of all souls. There was magic in this - I felt it deeply from the time I could first understand; but later I was to learn how every craft is sacred, and how a supernatural element is present in every art practised in the true Tradition, passed down from mother to maid since the dawn of time.

My mother was "a most consummate worker in the wood", as I once heard the ancilla\* say. She not only made statues, but pieces of furniture and many other things. The great dark dresser which dominated the kitchen was her handiwork. She was usually busy making and repairing all manner of farming implements. Her hands were a growing source of wonder to me. When I was very young I believed all grown-ups to be capable of accomplishing anything they chose, but as I grew older, I came to realise that my mother's hands were something special. Small, strong and deft, they performed the most complicated tasks with deceptive ease.

In those hands graceful and harmonious shapes were conjured from the brute, unyielding wood - and how unyielding it was, I soon discovered when I was first allowed to try my hand at the craft. The lovely stylised roses along the mantel-piece, the twirling scroll at the end of a lute: forms that seemed almost fluid, and yet were fixed forever.

There was something in this that savoured of more than magic, for, as my father told me, "even so did God fashion the world with Her hands." I could never listen to a certain passage from *The Creation* either in the Temple or at our domestic Rites, without thinking of my mother at her work:

"And Her hands knew cunning, and She stretched forth Her hands and gave a shape to each fragment, and no one was like any other."

"...And each fragment was filled with Her delight, and therefore was living, and some grew in the deep earth and became plants and trees, some ran about the ground or flew above it; and those first-made that had no place to be set down became the fishes and the creatures of the sea."

Many years later, I was to learn that the Greek word for "matter", *hyle*, originally meant "wood". So the Greeks also thought of God as a carpenter, carving all things from the *prima materia* of the world. Or, more truly, they saw carpentry as the perfect image or "reflection" of creation.

This was the way we looked at things. A way that any ancient Greek or Indian would have understood, or from any part of the antique world. But a way that has become quite strange and foreign to our own countrypeople in our own time.

It was not only with her hands that my mother was clever; she had a sweet and clear singing voice and knew a very great number of the traditional songs of our people: sweet, wistful songs, light dancing songs, tragic songs of the sorrows we have suffered in centuries past, glorious hymns of praise and adoration. How often we would sing together when we were at some work in the kitchen, and others would join in too, for rarely were we alone there together for long. There were my sisters and my brothers, there were the maids that worked with my mother at the craft, there were people from the farm, and there were other children too. Some were just passing through, others had come to fetch something, and others again were working there, for several activities went on at once along the huge trestle-table in our vast and bustling kitchen.

The kitchen was a centre of our household, and it was certainly the centre of my life in my earliest years, for mother would never take me into the workshop. So, with her or without her, I was usually there, amid its cheerful clutter and warmth, its burnished copper and wrought iron, its pottery and terracotta, its wonderful mixture of smells — fermented yeast and herbs, pepper and vinegar, new-baked bread and animals, all jumbled together.

My mother was the complete matriarch in her house, and strict, although not unusually so by Madrian standards. Woe betide any maid, man or child that acted "out of time" — out of the rhythm or pattern of themis life — or who was slow to obey her. Sometimes she carried a supple switch of sally (willow), or of cherry in symbol of her office, and would use it to give

sharp, stinging little reminders to anyone who was coming close to offending. Everyone was a little in awe of her, but they did not just respect her, they loved her; for she was painstakingly just as well as firm, and she was also cheerful, kind, and always ready with a song. Singing was not such a casual thing with us — it was almost a minor ritual, but we loved it no less for that. When things went wrong and life was difficult, my mother's courage and good cheer, as well as her practical resourcefulness and competence, never failed to raise our spirits; while hard work and a flick of the switch was a certain cure for self-indulgent depressions.



Mother was a Ranya at her craft. That meant not only that she was mistress of its technique and mysteries and a teacher of pupils. Her position was in some ways more like that of an eastern *guru*. For the craft was not simply a means of "producing the goods"; it was, first and foremost, a spiritual discipline. The "mystique" and the perfectionism of all the old crafts is a remnant of the time when their more-than-earthly significance was understood by those who worked

them and known of by all. A large part of the discontentment of the modern world is due to the fact that the work people do has no significance beyond the mundane. Cats and dogs were made to do nothing but eat and sleep and gratify their physical senses. Human beings were made to live this life in the light of Eternity — not just on Sundays, but in every act of life. Among the urbies\*\* most of the crafts have now been replaced by factory methods. But this could not have happened until after the last trace of the true meaning of craft had been forgotten, and its outward and lesser part was taken for the whole.

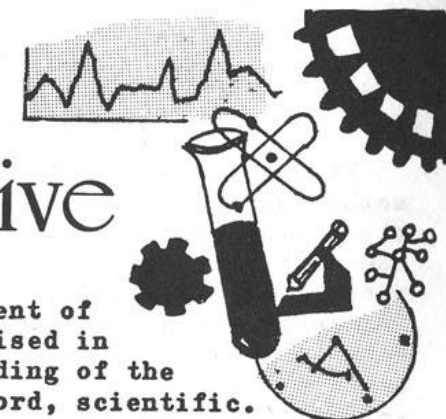
Elysia.

\* Ancilla: priestess's handmaid. \*\* Urbies: non-Madrians.

"The earth and heaven the fool beholds, and all the things therein, are not the same as those the wise maid sees." *Teachings*

# Fools' Perspective

*Or: The World Turned Upside Down*



THE WORLD, rather than being a random arrangement of atoms, is in reality a symbol-system crystallised in matter.\* This statement is the key to any understanding of the world which can be called, in the true sense of the word, scientific.

It is sometimes said that the material world is an illusion. In a certain sense that is true, for material "things" are no more than the shadows of spiritual Realities thrown upon the veil of matter. Whether the shadow in question is a blade of grass, a civilisation or a universe, it is born, comes to maturity and dies within a relatively short space of time (seen from the standpoint of eternity). The Reality does not change, nor does it die, and it is to this transcendent spiritual Reality that we must look if we wish to know anything about the real nature of any physical thing, as opposed to its outward and transient physical appearance.

Every authentic science proceeds in this way. First understanding the transcendent Principles which lie behind all physical manifestation, and then studying particular physical phenomena in the light of those Principles. In this way, what one achieves is not a vast accumulation of "facts" tied together by "theories" which change with the tide of fashion (for any set of facts can be explained equally well by numerous different theories), but a meaningful picture of the world based upon an understanding of the spiritual Principles which constitute the actual meaning of the physical universe. This is the only thing which can legitimately claim the title of science. In all ages up to the present, science has meant precisely that.

"Science" means literally wisdom. The reverse of wisdom is folly. The scientific perspective looks at the world from the highest point, from the transcendent Principle, and in the light of that understands everything else. The fool's perspective is the opposite of that. It takes all the scattered "facts" of the material world, amasses them together and tries to concoct some sort of pseudo-principle out of the

result. This exercise is doomed to failure from the start, because one can never derive the greater from the less. One set of facts can be explained by numerous theories, so facts can never by themselves lead us to Truth. They may be useful for manipulating things in the material world, for increasing worldly wealth and comfort, but they cannot discover the meaning of the world. They can provide the basis of a technology, but not of an authentic science. That is why the modern world is so full of conflicting "philosophies". Facts alone can never settle the issue.

Without a genuinely scientific world-picture, the world appears to be a mere jumble of accidental physical phenomena with no inner meaning. The desolate emptiness of this meaningless vision is disastrous to the health of the soul. We live in a world racked with anxiety and neurosis; in which one in six maids and one in nine men, according to statistics, are treated for clinical psychiatric derangements; in which young (and not so young) people turn to drugs and indiscriminate sex in their desperate search for meaning.

Most of us have encountered a particular type of puzzle which consists of a familiar object pictured from an unfamiliar angle — for example, a water tap seen from below. Often one has to give up, quite perplexed as to what this meaningless shape may represent. Now it is just this sense of meaninglessness and perplexity which the modern mentality feels in relation to the world as a whole — and for exactly the same reason. The view of the world propagated through popular "science" and "education" and the media in general is not exactly false (except in the case of certain highly tendentious theories such as evolutionism, which are presented as "established facts"); on

the contrary, it is quite factual as far as it goes, but the facts present a very small proportion of the whole, torn out of context and made to stand by themselves. The result is a lack of understanding.

When we look merely at the physical aspect of things without their transcendent context, we can never make any real sense of the world. In order to see the tap, we must stand back from it. The same is true of physical nature. If we stand far too close to it, believing it to be "all there is", believing our own minds to be no more than a by-product of it, how can we hope to understand it? It is like twisting our necks underneath the tap to look at it from below, rather than seeing it from the natural vantage point of our human intelligence.

For Fools' Perspective is an unnatural position; a wilfully cramped and contorted approach to life. No society before the Dark Age has ever taken it up, and even now it takes several years of compulsory "education" backed up by continual booster shots from the mass-media to brainwash the average person into seeing physical "facts" as things-in-themselves cut off from transcendent Reality and symbolic meaning (this is the real inner meaning of the universal establishment of compulsory mass "education" in the Dark Age). The natural human vision sees meaning in all things from the stars to a blade of grass. This has been true of the sage and the peasant alike in all ages until now.

Sometimes Fools' Perspective masquerades as a new knowledge which transcends the ancient wisdom and renders it obsolete: "We now know about atoms", etc. But "knowing about atoms" and all the other "facts" which make up the physical world, if one lacks an accurate overall picture, is just like examining the individual bumps and hollows on

a canvas without being able to see the picture. All the bumps and hollows in the world will not make up a recognisable picture unless we can step back and see it in true perspective. If we think we are wiser, looking at one corner of the canvas through a magnifying glass, than those who saw the picture as a whole, we only prove that we are fools.

No modern theory, true or false, can ever "disprove" the ancient wisdom, because it is a matter of perspective. All the talk of "disproving pre-scientific ideas" is like saying "all that ancient stuff about a picture was nonsense — we now know that the universe is made up of bumps and hollows." Both perspectives are "true" on their own level; but one is wise and the other is foolish. One is oriented solely toward transient material gain at the expense of meaning. The other is concerned with the true aim of maid in her earthly incarnation, in the light of her eternal destiny.

In modern Madrian education, children are taught the "facts" of Fools' Perspective as well as traditional science and the relation between them is explained, so that they cannot later be tricked by the "revelation" of these facts and the claim that they represent a "superior knowledge". For example, the blue sky is traditionally a type of the heaven of the angels. Ancient sages knew

perfectly well that Heaven is not really a physical place, but to say this too openly might destroy the faith and world-picture of simple people and would be a needless cruelty. Anyone ready to learn deeper truths would be taught. The great modern scientists and historians believe themselves to have "disproved" the ancient world-view only because they are incapable of understanding it on any level above that of the goatherd. But the blue sky is not an accident. It is an adequate and providential symbol of heaven. The ancient goatherd, on her own level, had a perfect picture of the real world. The modern person, whether she

Contd. p. 14.

# THE COMING festival meaning



## Autumn

Correspondence of sacred and secular calendars for the season:

Mala: Sept 5th - Oct 2nd  
Hathor: Oct 3rd - Oct 30th  
Samhain: Oct 31st - Nov 27th


### MAJOR FESTIVALS

THE FEAST OF DIVINE LIFE: 17th  
Mala (Autumn Equinox, Sept 21st).

SAMHAIN, the feast of the dead: 1st  
Samhain (October 31st).

FESTIVAL OF ARTEMIS: 23rd Samhain  
(Nov 22nd).

### Mysteries of Life



Autumn is the third of the year's five seasons, and marks the midpoint of the sun's journey. Earth is the element and the apple the fruit of the season. Its time is evening and its compass-point the West.

All these symbols are closely bound together and related to the great Mysteries of Life cycle which spans a quarter of the year and is a mirror image of the Easter cycle, which runs from the Feast of Lights to the Exaltation on the opposite segment of the ring of the year. The cycle began with the late-summer festivals of Regeneration and Moira. Now, as the year enters its dark half, we turn to the deeper and darker aspects of the Mysteries of life and death.

Earth is the fruitful ground, whence all life comes, whereto all must return. As such it is a symbol of God, and in particular of the first and most mysterious Person of the Trinity, the Dark Mother, or Absolute Deity, Who has no form,

Who is beyond being and unbeing, from Whom all manifestation proceeds and to Whom all must return in the night of time.

The apple is the fruit of eternal life. Avala, the western paradise of Inanna, to which those go after death that have loved Her in this life, is pictured as an apple-orchard (indeed, our very word "paradise" comes from a word meaning "orchard"), and is situated mythically "west of the sunset". The west, of course, is associated with the close of day (in German it is called *Das Abendland* "the evening land"). *Abend* (evening), apple and Avala are all closely related words.

Thus Autumn is a time of ending and return to the Source, but it is also a time of fruitfulness (as the apple reminds us) and of harvest. The corn, which dies and rises year by year, is associated with the cycles of human death and rebirth, and also with Inanna Herself, Who has said "I am the ear of corn that is reaped in silence." (*Mythos VII*, 19). In memory of these words, the last sheaf of a harvest is traditionally reaped silently and with great respect, and is often made into a corn doll or Kern Baby (from Ceres). Corn dolls are made throughout the season in honour of Inanna, and of Mari, the Mother, Whose continuous Act of creation maintains all the cycles of life from seed to harvest.

### DIVINE LIFE

Life, Light and Love are the three "Primal Virtues", and of these, Life is attributed to the Dark Mother. If any of the five Great

# NG SEASON

## ngs & celebration



Festivals is Hers, this Autumnal Equinox is the one. But it is also a festival of the whole Trinity, for without the life-giving graces of each of the Persons, the universe would "decompose... into black eternal chaos".

for a soul and thrown, with a spoken or silent prayer, into the bonfire.

The apple still dominates in the ritual games, including duck-apple and snap-apple. Baked and toffee apples are seasonal foods, as well as jacket potatoes and parkin, a sweetmeat of oatmeal, butter and treacle.

Shrines should be decorated with the fruits of the season — flowers, nuts, loaves from the new wheat, pine cones and sprigs from the day's two symbolic trees, the apple and the white poplar or aspen. Apple pie, cyder and seed cake are the traditional festival foods.



### FESTIVAL OF ARTEMIS

This is above all the festival of Ekklesia, the great family of our Lady which includes not only Her earthly devotees, but the Geniae and angels of the higher realms, the spirits of nature, the heras and saints who have walked this earth and passed on into Perfection and all the souls in different worlds

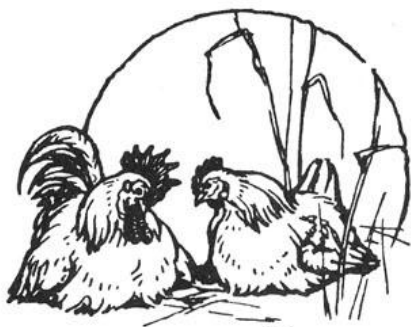
### SAMHAIN

Samhain is a short season comprising the first three days of the month of the same name; though it is primarily celebrated on the first of the month. It is a fire-festival, celebrated with bonfires and fireworks. Fire is the element of transformation, and Samhain is concerned with the great human transformation which is death. At this season the gulf between the physical and other worlds is narrow, as it is at midsummer and midwinter. We pray for the souls of the dead, and welcome them to our altars. We light candles and offer "soul-cakes" for our departed loved ones, and perhaps feel their closeness and learn something of them. A soul-cake is sometimes wrapped in a written prayer

and planes of being who have given themselves to Her.

Artemis is Inanna in the form of Huntress of Souls; She Who "calls us out" (*ek-kaleo* hence "Ekklesia") from attachment to the material realms into Her family. Her silver shafts are beams of Her Mother's pure Light which destroy the darkness in our hearts, killing the false egoic self, that our true, "flighted" self may soar upward like an arrow from a bow out of illusion and into divine Reality.





# KERN'S QUEST

ONCE UPON A TIME, when the seven princesses still ruled over the seven realms and sat upon the seven chairs of granite carved from the Holy Mountain, when their anger could still darken the sky, and their compassion bring rain to the parched ground, and all the earth was fruitful, a maid named

Grania lived in a cottage in the furthest corner of the seventh realm with her three sons. All the three of them were brave and handsome and kind-hearted, nor could Grania find any fault with them. Yet the youngest, whose name was Kern after the mistress of the ripening fields, was called simple by his brothers, for, they said, if he had his wits he never used them. Even this was no cause for quarrel between them, and they worked together and played together and were each other's greatest friends.

Their peaceful life in the cottage lasted until Kern's sixteenth year. Then one day Grania called her sons to her and told them she could no longer look after them and they must go out and find their moira in the world. "But first" she added, "bring me a hen from the Palace of the Morning Star, for I have need of one." She said no more, but sent them away with an oaten cake and the blessing of the house.

When they were but a league from the cottage, the eldest told the others that he would take service as one of the Princess's foresters, and the middle brother replied that he would go to the sea and join the Princess's fleet. They bade Kern choose which of them he would go with, as he had not enough sense to make his own way. But Kern said that he would look for the Palace of the Morning Star as their mother had

commanded, and he was surprised that they would not do likewise. The face of his eldest brother darkened with anger. "Only a fool would go on a fool's quest," he said. "There is no palace and no hen-coop except in tales of the fireside. It is better for me to stay near our mother, for, who knows, she may have need of me more than an imaginary chicken."

"Well, I do not know," said the middle brother. "There are many things of mystery in this world. But it is foolish indeed to start on a quest penniless, without a horse to ride or a dog to defend you. Earn a little first; mayhap in a year we will set out well-provisioned and have better chance of success."

"I will do my mother's bidding," said Kern, "for she is wiser than any of us. And I will do it though I starve on the path." Nor could they persuade him otherwise, not with their best arguments. They were more unhappy than angry at his stubbornness, for they believed he would indeed starve, and would sooner have starved themselves. "Well, you are a good, obedient child, that is certain, but I could wish you were not," said the eldest brother finally. "May fortune smile on you," added the other, troubled but helpless. And so they went their ways.

Kern also travelled, choosing the mountain path because it was the longest, and the sun rose in front of him and set behind him. He saw an old maid gathering herbs by the wayside, and reverencing her, waited for her to speak that he might ask her the way to the Palace of the Morning Star. At first she laughed and rebuked him for teasing her, but seeing he was serious, shook her head. "I am over a hundred years old," she said, "and have over a hundred great-grandchildren and there is little that I do not know. But I have never heard of the

## *Fool's Perspective*

be an "intellectual" or an "ordinary maid" has nothing but the barren void of Fools' Perspective. Modern materialism has given her hot and cold running water; but in return it has replaced her vision of Reality - her rightful human heritage - with the underside of a tap.

Sister Angelina.

\*Pallas Academy, Foundational Diploma Course, Paper IV, page 5.

Palace of the Morning Star except in old tales, and where it is they do not say." He thanked her sadly, and she felt pity for him and thought what a fine, strong lad he looked. "Come, my grand daughter is seeking a boy for her farm, will you not join our household? The work is hard but the living good." "No," he replied, "I must do my mother's bidding," and he told his story. "You are a good, obedient boy, and I wish you all joy," she said, but shook her head as she moved away.

Next Kern saw a horse in the distance and stood in the middle of the road to halt it, that he might ask the rider the same question. "I am one of the Princess's horsemaids," she answered, "and I have travelled to every corner of the seven realms. I have never heard of this palace, and I am certain it exists only in fantasy. But we are short of grooms at the royal stable. Will you not mount behind me? To work with horses is joy, and to serve the Princess glory." "No," he replied, "I must do my mother's bidding," and when she had heard his story, she commended his obedience and wished him success, but he thought she smiled as she rode away.

When he sat down to eat his oaten cake, a vixen crept from the bushes and looked up at him. "Well, Mistress Fox, you cannot tell me my way, but nor can you tempt me from it. Would you care for some cake?" When she had swallowed a good half of the cake, she asked politely if he were travel-

ling far. Hearing his story, she asked whether he would do her bidding if she took him to the palace. "I promise I will," he answered, "if you can do it, but I doubt that." "Mount on my back," she answered, "and hold onto my ears." "Well, this is a strange business altogether," he thought, and obeyed her.



him. "Be quick and quiet," said the vixen behind him. "Everyone is asleep." The hens were shining like the palace itself, all golden and half as bright as the sun. He picked one up, put her under his arm, and was out again before she could raise a squawk. He mounted the vixen again and they were off like the wind.

At the end of the journey, he tumbled from

As soon as he was mounted, off she raced, and the speed of her was like the thunderbolt. It was the greatest wonder in the world that Kern did not fall off, but the vixen had said "Hold on", and he held on. He lost count entirely of the mountains and the valleys they crossed and he thanked the heavens that the sun was not rising at that moment, for he feared that they would run right into her heart.

At last the vixen stopped, and Kern was unable to keep his feet for some minutes from dizziness. The palace was before his eyes, glinting and shining, on the very edge of the world, and as soon as he could walk, Kern was in through the gateway and staring about

her back and fell asleep at once from weariness, and when he awoke the hen was nowhere to be seen. "Do not rebuke me, friend Kern," said the vixen, "my little ones were hungry; they have not had food for many days." "I do not rebuke you, Mistress Fox, for I know the call of family. But may I ask you to carry me again?"

And so they returned, faster than an arrow from the bow. Kern leaned unsteadily against the pillar of the gate, and the vixen again whispered: "Be quick and quiet. Everyone is asleep." The hens knew him again and were disturbed, but at last he managed to catch one and put her under his arm. When finally they returned to the seventh realm, Kern was already half asleep and within minutes he was fast. When he awoke, the second hen had entirely vanished. "Do not rebuke me, friend Kern," said the vixen, "for tonight I myself was hungry, and I have eaten the hen." "I do not rebuke you, Mistress Fox, replied Kern wearily, "for I have been hungry myself. Carry me again, I beseech you." And this the vixen was pleased to do.

"Be quick," she said "and quiet," "Yes, I know, Mistress Fox, but this time it will be far from easy." The hens were already scattering. He chased them, but time and time again they were too fast for him. And the noise they made was wonderful to hear. So it was not surprising that when Kern finally secured a hen and turned to the gateway, someone was at the door of the palace watching him. And that someone was a maid of unearthly beauty, with a star in her forehead, streaming forth light.

"Good day, Mistress," said Kern respectfully, bowing deeply, but being careful not to release the hen. "What dost thou here, strange youth?" The maiden's voice was as sweet and cool as winter starlight. Kern was entirely entranced by her beauty and grace, but he answered firmly, with his captive safe under his arm: "My mother sent me, and I do her bidding."

"Thy gentle obedience finds favour in mine eyes", said the maiden. "Thou mayest

keep the hen for thy mother. And dost thou always do as thou art bid?" "Indeed, if he does," cried the vixen, "may he do my bidding now, as was his promise. Friend Kern, do draw thy sword and cut off my head." "It is an ungentle act, and I am loth," sighed Kern sadly, "but I will do it, since you ask." With tears in his eyes, he drew the sword and did the vixen's bidding. And who should stand before him then but his own mother, disenchanted, and she embraced him with a cry of joy.

"Mistress Morning Star," she said, turning to the maiden in the doorway, "know that I am the lady Grania, justly enchanted for foolishly praising my own hens above these. For, indeed, the hens of the Palace of the Morning Star are beyond compare. Yet through this, the one obedient of three sons, having now in my holding three hens worthy of thy palace, I am freed, and offer thee my greeting."

"Thou hast shed thy fox's skin through thy fox's cunning," laughed the maiden, "but it is just, and thou art welcome. Thy son also, if he will stay where he has entered so boldly for his mother's sake."

"Indeed, I would be honoured beyond telling, Mistress, to remain but one hour in thy presence, but if thou wouldst wish me gone, I will go."

"Lady Grania, thou hast vaunted thy meagre hen coop, yet it doth seem to me that thou hast raised that which is not unworthy of my palace. Come Kern, thou mayest stay forever if thy mother will permit thee."

If the sky was dark that month, the Palace of the Morning Star was bright, and the last day of the wedding was better than the first. And if Kern the Obedient was happy that day, he was not one whit the less happy for the rest of his long and delightful life.



# Book Reviews

## MATRIARCHY OR MODERNISM?

*The Politics of Matriarchy:* Matriarchy Study Group, 90p.

It is difficult to do justice to so various a collection as this in the short space allotted to a review. Criticisms are bound to seem too broad and general. Yet there certain general remarks which both can and should be made, not only about this pamphlet, but about certain trends of thought which have gained some currency of late.

The first is a tendency to treat matriarchy as a political system whose religion is merely an expression

of its "ideology". Now, the whole idea of a "culture" as a thing-in-itself with a bit of "religion" tacked on for good measure belongs purely to the late-patriarchal materialism of the last three centuries. Every society before that time has known that society is a product of religion (that is, of transcendent Reality) and not *vice versa*. Whatever the secularist view of matriarchy may be, it is certainly not matriarchal.

To see matriarchy through a filter of modern ideology is not to see matriarchy at all, but a projection of modern ideas upon the past; a pure anachronism. Similarly, to associate ancient matriarchy with democracy, equality, "sexual freedom" and any number of other modern catch-phrases is to assume that the second half of the present century has suddenly and unaccountably reverted to matriarchal values — when in fact, as one would expect, it has never been further from them. We must face the fact that the whole world-view we have learned at school and via the media is *patriarchal* (obvious enough, one would have thought).

The same applies to the so-called "psychological" (usually quasi-Jungian) approaches to "the Goddess", which spring from an ingrained materialism which cannot face any authentic supernatural, and must reduce all to mere personal subjectivism. More subtle, and yet more sinister, is the psychism masquerading as "spirituality", which situates God Herself on the psychic level of becoming and change rather than that of absolute Transcendence (which alone can be called Spiritual) and Truth on the level of mere personal opinion and sentiment. On a subtler level, this also derives from modern patriarchal materialism, for being wholly immersed in matter, it regards all non-physical phenomena as a single

category which it miscalls "spiritual". It is closely related to the modern wave of pseudo-religion, and to the so-called Pentecostal phenomena ("speaking in tongues", etc.) making their appearance within Protestantism and the new decadent Roman church. This opening of the personality to all the flotsam of the psychic domain with no attempt to "try the spirits whether they be of God" is both personally dangerous to a degree which can hardly be sufficiently stressed, and provides the "openings" in the psychic substance of the human world through which inferior psychic entities may infiltrate. The very absence of a healthy fear and caution in these dabblers indicates a mentality which fundamentally regards all non-physical phenomena as less than "real". They certainly would not meddle with electricity or medicines with such cavalier ignorance. Yet the real dangers of artificial rituals of human concoction (especially when "inspired" from some unknown source) and of ecstatic practices performed without guidance by the uninitiated, are infinitely greater.

The modern mentality, in all its forms, however much we may be attached to it, is and can only be the exclusive product of patriarchy. If we want to understand *matriarchy* as it was and is, we will have to face a mental revolution, to accept ideas which seem at once shockingly "simple" (in both senses) and terribly complex.

There *is* a politics of matriarchy. It was outlined, for example, in "With God as our Princess" (TCA 11). It is the politics laid down by God and based on Her divine law; a hierarchy descending from Heaven to earth, with its roots not in human ideol-

*Contd. p. 22.*



# SYMBOLISM

## The Horse and the Unicorn



**L**IKE EVERY PHYSICAL CREATURE, the horse is a manifestation of primordial and transcendent Reality upon the plane of matter. In short, it is a symbol; but of all creatures, the horse is one of the most central and complex symbols of both Divine and human nature. It is scarcely surprising, then, that, with the unerring accuracy of the

Dark Age subconscious, the most frequent example of "evolution" presented by the popularisers, after that of maid herself, is a series of pictures showing the gradual development of the horse.

Nobody would suspect, from looking at an ordinary school textbook, that this series, and the "facts" it was based on have been discredited years ago, and are no longer taken seriously by many modern scientists.

Actually, the fossil record shows no evidence for the gradual development of any species. Rather, it seems to move in jumps. Whole categories of beings appear at once without any real predecessors. There are not just one or two "missing links" — all the links are missing. If this "science" adhered to its own principles and was guided by the evidence, it would be forced to conclude that the most likely origin of species is that they suddenly "appeared" at various points in time. But "science" is guided less by the evidence than by materialistic preconceptions about what is "possible" and what is not.

In fact, each species is a celestial Archetype or Divine Idea, which is manifested in material form at a certain point in the development of the historical cycle — by what means need not concern us here. The horse was first used extensively during the great Amazon civilisation at the beginning of the Dark Age, and is one of the central animal symbols of this aeon.

The horse has a double significance. On the one hand, it is a solar creature, an image of the solar Spirit Herself. She was worshipped in this form in the British cults

of the so-called "horse-goddesses", Epona and Rhiannon. The famous White Horse of Uffington is an existing monument to this devotion. She is the Sun that leaves Her "stable" at dawn and gallops across the sky. She is also Themis, her even pace prefiguring the even motion (themis) of the stars.

On the other hand, the horse is also the fallen part of maid, the mind, the body and the passions. The control of the mind in meditation is likened in the *Teachings* to the control of a spirited horse. The horsemaid (knight) in chess symbolises the path of will — the control of the lower self by the higher, and also the bond of love and obedience between Spirit, the rider, and soul, the horse.

This dual aspect is understandable in the light of the fact that maid is the "reflection" of God (cf *Creation: I, 9-10*). The destination of the "lesser" horse is to return to the "stable", which is the ranyam (realm) of God, where she will be unsaddled (divested of all earthly restrictions) and fed. This meaning of "stable" is closely bound up with its other meaning (=firm), as is made clear in the dictum of the same *Teaching*: "Earth moves, but Heaven is still (stable)". The destination is also pictured as a tethering post or tree, and here its identification becomes clearer; for the "stable" is the cave, and the tethering post the pillar of the world, or Tree of Life (see "The Cave", TCA 9). All these aspects of the destination of the lesser horse are made clear in our word "stallion", which is identical in root with "stall" (=stable), "installation" and "stele" (=pillar or turning-post).

The higher or feminine aspect of the horse as the Spirit Herself is enshrined in

our word "mare", which is, of course, cognate with all the "ma" words meaning "mother" in the Indo-European languages (especially the French *mère*), and with the most common name of God the Mother, Mari, used in one form or another from ancient India to Ireland and even adopted by the Christians.

The Unicorn represents a mid-point between the higher and lower aspects of the horse; yet she embodies a perfection no longer to be found in our age, which is why she is not physically manifest in this aeon. The myth that the Unicorn did not survive the Flood (the end of a world era) is highly significant. Her horn (for like Pegasus she is originally female) is the "ray of sunlight" which connects the earthbound soul to the solar Spirit. It is, therefore, the "Pillar of Light", or the world-axis itself. The unicorn is maid in her primordial state, having resumed her central, or axial position relative to this level of being. The spiral twist of her tapering horn represents the spiral, or cyclical, descent of manifestation along the world-axis from the principal, unmanifest Point, which is the Spirit. Strictly, it should have twenty-one twists, corresponding to the seven planetary principles, manifested respectively in Heaven, Earth and Hell; that is to say universally - from our standpoint, on the material level, the sub-material and the super-material.

To the four limbs of the "lesser" horse, representing the four elements of matter, is added a fifth "limb", the great horn, representing Spirit. Thus the Unicorn corresponds to the Pentacle, the symbol of perfect maid. Yet perfect maid herself is a dual concept, for she may be either maid risen up to God, or God descended to the

state of maid. For the one true perfect Maid is Inanna Herself. This truth is shown in the familiar icon of the Unicorn and the Virgin (see illustration). The Unicorn places her head in the lap of the Virgin, and there is slain by hunters. The Virgin here is, of course, the Virgin Mother, Mari Herself, and the act of the Unicorn epitomises Inanna's trust and obedience toward Her Mother in going to Her death. The icon also recalls the corpse of Inanna, lain on Her Mother's knees (*Mythos: VI, 16*).

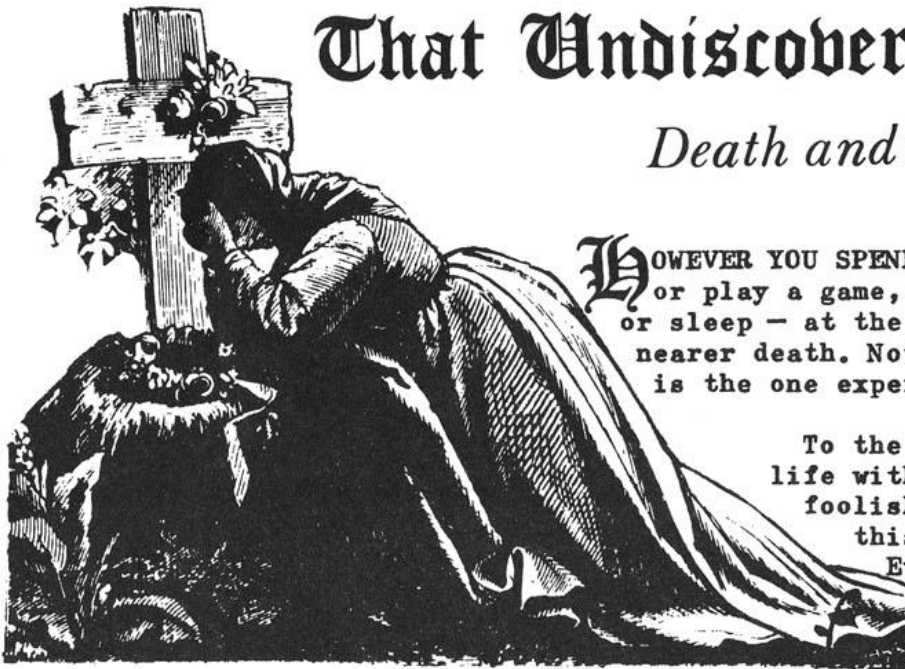


Yet the Unicorn is also a slayer, as may be seen by reference to her close cousin "Pegasus", whose original name is Aganippe (consider the obvious significance of a winged horse). *Aganos* is a traditional adjective for the shafts of Artemis, meaning "giving a merciful death"; *hippe* means mare. This may be applied equally to the Unicorn. Her horn is also the fatal shaft of Artemis which destroys the false "self" of Her devotee, the earthbound ego, and allows her true (winged) Self to soar free.

Yet while the horn is a deadly arrow from the bow (toxon) of Artemis, a cup made from this same horn is said to neutralise all poisons (toxins). Thus it is at once deadly (toxic) and the reverse. The meaning of this becomes clear when we realise that "poison", in a spiritual context, refers first of all to the "three poisons" of Attraction (to worldly pleasure), Repulsion (from worldly distress) and Ignorance (of her more-than-worldly nature), which keep maid chained to the wheel of birth, suffering and death through countless lives. The horn of the unicorn is deadly to the false ego and all its worldly illusions. But for the true Self, the cup of the Unicorn's horn is the true Grail of Inanna's love (cf *Mythos VII, 22*) which preserves her from all harm "in this world and in all the worlds to come".♦

# That Undiscovered Country

## *Death and the Meaning of Life*



**H**OWEVER YOU SPEND THE NEXT HOUR — whether you read, or play a game, or walk the dog, or pray, or gossip, or sleep — at the end of it you will be one hour nearer death. Nothing can be surer than this. Death is the one experience no one can escape.

To the modern mentality, which clings to life with a tenacity as pathetic as it is foolish, nothing is more terrible than this universal, unavoidable fact.

Every death is a "tragedy"; nothing is more important than the "saving" of lives. All the disasters of mod-

ern technology and of "progress" in general are excused by reference to its supposed achievement in making it possible for more people to live longer. To fill bellies, to prevent bloodshed, to cure disease — these are the priorities of the sentimental modernist (though in actuality starvation and bloodshed have never been more rife than in the present century, and cancer, once a rarity, now kills more people than the bubonic plague ever did). They ignore the simple truths: that no life is ever saved, only prolonged; that no death is ever avoided, only postponed.

Those who close their eyes to the existence of death do not know what life is, for they think this life is all in all. The obsession with the material, which is one of the distinguishing features of the patriarchal decadence, has resulted in the concentration of maid's attention on the lowest part of her being — her material body — so that she cannot see beyond it. Even those who claim to believe in "life after death" continue to act as though they have not the smallest understanding of the implications of such a concept. They have, consciously or subconsciously, accepted the identification of the self with the body, which is encouraged by the whole tenor of modern society; and having made this identification, it is natural to believe also that when the body dies one's life ends. It is small wonder, then, that death becomes so huge and dreadful an idea that one must ig-

nore it to avoid being overwhelmed by it.

In the traditional perspective, however, life is a broader, grander, more brilliant concept altogether, and death assumes its true proportions. Each of us, in that immortal essence which is her true self, has existed from before the beginning of time and will continue to exist after its end. We participate in the Eternal Life which is the Nature of God, our Mother, and there is nothing which can extinguish that life. The human life which we now experience is only a stage on our journey; an important stage, it is true, for as maids we not only have choices to make, but the power to understand the meaning of those choices if we only will; and if we make the wrong choices, many lifetimes may pass before we are in a position to choose again — but still, we are only on one section of a long road.

What, then, is death? It is a gateway on the path, a door from one life to another. All of us have to pass through death to other lives many times; if we had not forgotten, we would not fear. The magic door which opens into another world is a common fantasy of childhood; it appears not only in folktales, but in many modern stories; C.S. Lewis's *The Silver Chair* and E. Nesbit's *The House of Arden* to name but two. One of my own longed-for three wishes for many years was for a key that would open any door onto a strange country. This is not mere childish make-believe, but the echo of an unre-

membered reality, for just such a door is death. Yet in modern eyes, death is like that cliché of cinema thrillers, a door which opens into nothingness.

When one looks at life and death from the traditional perspective, one's whole view of the situation changes. It no longer seems so relevant to ask, is this an attractive path? is it easy to walk upon? are there flowers on the wayside? The pressing questions are rather: where is this path going, and what is on the other side of the gate at its end? In *The Crystal Tablet*, life is described as a network of cross-roads, at each of which we are obliged to choose, and the choice is between good and evil. That point of the path at which we are at present standing is the result of the accumulation of our past choices in this and other lives. From this moment we can either carry straight on, or take advantage of being maid (she-who-chooses - "maid" is related to "may", the verb of possibility) to change our direction, whether for good or ill. Sooner or later - and it matters little which - we shall come to a gateway - the gate into the new life at the end of our chosen path. And then we shall have no choice but to accept it: our choices will already have been made.

The modern deliberate forgetfulness of death - a not-inappropriate response to the fear of perpetual extinction - is simply foolishness from the point of view of the reality of the gateway. For obviously, ignorance of the gate is ignorance of the path. In the mediæval period, there was almost a cult of the *memento mori* (reminder of death and mortality) which cannot help but seem not only crude but unnecessarily callous to the modern mentality. Grinning skulls and mouldering corpses were considered more

appropriate decorations for a tomb than beautiful angels and lily-wreathed crosses; they were not only disturbing, but were meant to disturb, and to recall the mind to the transience of material things. More recently there has been a fastidious attempt to suppress even such mild forms of the *memento mori* as the Victorian age permitted. Death, when it is dealt with by the media, is distanced by dramatisation - and, of course, it is never presented as other than meaningless.

One *memento mori* can never, however, be suppressed or distanced - that is, the death of those close to us. Death, although not extinction for she who dies, is loss for those who remain, and is always, inevitably, felt deeply. And not the least of the complex welter of emotions which affects us at such times is the chilling thought "One day, I too shall die." It can often be this shock which will turn a worldly maid to the spiritual in the quest for meaning - for it is only in the spiritual that she will find it. The only alternative is to accept the

bleak meaninglessness of an absurd universe - and it must be admitted that it takes a kind of courage to acknowledge that one is completely mad. The modernist is not so brave; more often than not she takes bland reassurance, uncomfortably, from a cold religious heritage, or from the tepid platitudes of post-Protestant "humanism"; and, thinking that grief is distasteful and mourning unfashionable, tries to dissipate the possibility of awakening to the true meaning of life and death with a profusion of distractions, until time brings forgetfulness again.

Ultimately such a course can bring neither ease to the heart nor solace to the mind, and, above all, it does nothing to prepare

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## BOOK REVIEWS 2



ogy, but in transcendent truth. This may be hard for the modern mentality to accept. But that, in the end, is the choice we are faced with: do we opt for modernism, or matriarchy?

### WORLD IN CRISIS

*Rainbow Round the Sun*

Elizabeth Van Buren (Regency Press, £4.00)

This is a very mixed book. It contains a great deal of "new age" silliness about flying saucers, "spiritual evolution" etc. The "message" itself comes via mediumism from various "spirits" - which invariably means that some soul has laid herself open to chaotic psychic influences which may or may not believe themselves to be the "spirits of the dead" which they impersonate. Nevertheless, there is a core of truth in the message. Its prediction of massive natural disasters which will destroy modern civilisation accords precisely with ancient Madrian prophecies and others, such as those of Nostradamus, and with astrological projections. The precise dates and details given are almost certainly incorrect but the picture of the end of the age is essentially right. The need for those who will survive the crisis to opt out of modern society now and to found communities

### *That Undiscovered Country*

the soul to face her own death when it comes. For this we need a clear perception of death as a gateway, an understanding of the purpose of human life and the confidence that we have at least tried to fulfil that purpose. In this belief we call upon Inanna, Guide of Souls, Lady of the Dark Gates, to take our hand as we pass through. Chrysothemis.

based on natural life-rhythms and cultivation of the soil, to study herbal medicine, to "become once more a part of nature", is sound advice from a spiritual as well as a purely practical point of view. But it is precisely on the spiritual level that the subversive influence is felt. A vague sentimentality replaces true spirituality, lacking in vigour, and above all in the unclouded vision of transcendent Reality. Without the crystal fountain of primordial Truth, the garden of the coming age will turn to dust and ashes.

### *The Crisis of the Modern World*

René Guénon (Luzac, paper £2.50)

Over the last century, intelligence has reached what the newspapers call "an all-time low". In place of the giants of the past, the "intellectual" stage of today is dominated by such fifth-rate *poseurs* as Sartre, Marx, Freud, Jung, Wittgenstein, de Chardin, the list could go on ("when small maids cast long shadows, the sun is setting"). One might be forgiven for supposing that it is impossible in this age for a person of intellectual stature to arise; that something in the polluted atmosphere of industrial materialism has turned the human mind to jelly.

Yet in René Guénon, this age has produced one intellectual giant fit to stand beside the ancients. By its title, the present volume might be expected to be of similar type to the preceding one, but in fact it is something immeasurably greater. It is a full analysis of the intellectual and spiritual decay of the modern world, which uncovers its nature and causes from the standpoint of metaphysical principle. There is nothing of "opinion" or of emotion in this book: it is a simple, lucid, logical exposition of exactly what the modern world is and why.

Written in 5029 (1927), few things in this new translation need to be brought up to date. One is that the adherence of the East to traditional forms referred to often in the book has since virtually collapsed. Another is the reference to the Roman Catholic church as the only rallying-point for the revival of the West. Nobody has been more forthright than Guénon's own disciples in pointing out that since Vatican II that

church has embarked upon a course of total self-dismemberment. It should also be remarked that "the Delphic cult of the hyperborean Apollo", which is cited as the one unbroken link of the Græco-Roman west with the primordial Tradition, was originally that of Hera/Hestia, one of the names under which the Goddess was worshipped in late Bronze-Age Madrianism.

These points apart, it is a book not for an age but for all time. It is more than recommended. If you read only one book this year, read this one.

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