

Proceedings

# Colloquium on World History

Symptomatology and Shifts in  
the Evolution of Consciousness

Sponsored by

the Waldorf High School Research Project

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Participants Back: Meg Gorman, Anne Greer; Middle: David Sloan, Eric Philpott, Karl Frederickon;  
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# AWSNA Waldorf High School Research Project

## Description of project: The Waldorf High School Research Project

Since its inception in the summer of 1998, the Waldorf High School Research Project has focused on three areas of research related to Waldorf high schools and the teenagers of today: The Project is asking

What is different about today's teenagers?

What changes are needed in Waldorf high schools today?

- First, the Project has invited leading teachers and international experts in Waldorf education to take part in three-day colloquia around the country on the Waldorf high school curriculum, specifically on the teaching of chemistry, history, mathematics, and movement (eurythmy and spacial dynamics), environmental sciences, and computer science. Further colloquia are planned in literature and the arts. Proceedings from these colloquia are being published so as to benefit the broadest possible range of Waldorf high school teachers.
- Some 30 veteran teachers from across North America have undertaken original research in topics related to Waldorf high school issues and the needs of teenagers today.
- The Project sponsored a large-scale research conference in Andover Massachusetts, October 18-22, 2001, on the theme of adolescent development and the Waldorf high school program.
- The Committee planned the North American Waldorf Teachers Conference in Kimberton, Pennsylvania June 2002 on the theme "Ascending the Developmental Staircase" covering kindergarten through high school. Over four hundred teachers attended. A publication of the lectures has been printed.

# WHSRP Mission Statement

Formed in August 1998, the Waldorf High School Research Project is charged with strengthening the Waldorf high school movement by creating an updated picture of adolescents today and stimulating curriculum development within the Waldorf high schools.

As a designated committee of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), the Planning Group of this project is specifically responsible for

- identifying and articulating changes in the needs of North American teenagers
- formulating research questions concerning adolescence; commissioning qualified educators and other professionals to undertake research into these questions
- sponsoring subject colloquia as well as conferences on adolescent development and needs for those working in Waldorf high schools
- preparing North American conferences for those working in Waldorf high schools – to share and deepen research; to stimulate dialogue; to activate meaningful change for youth in the twenty-first century
- developing publications and other media resources to assist those working in Waldorf high schools
- stimulating Waldorf high school educators to examine and strengthen their programs
- seeking funds to support the commissioned research, colloquia, publications, conferences, and follow-up initiatives in the Waldorf high schools in coordination with AWSNA Development in line with the overall AWSNA priorities.

# Colloquium on Symptomatology

9-12 March 2000

## Purpose:

To explore a symptomatological approach to the study and teaching of the humanities in the Waldorf high schools of North America.

## Goals:

To invite experienced Waldorf high school humanities teachers for a three-day colloquium in March 2000. Participants will bring to this colloquium prepared vignettes of the Ancient Egyptian and Medieval/Renaissance historical periods, as well as connections between these two historical epochs and modern times. By "vignettes" is meant living moments in history of an event, encounter, individual, group, invention, literary work, experience, or artifact which reveal the changing consciousness of that time, place, or culture.

By means of a round-table conversation we will begin to articulate a symptomatological approach to the teaching of the humanities. The colloquium will include exercises in drama. Results of this conversation will be circulated among all North American Waldorf high schools for further suggestions. These will be incorporated into a published monograph on symptomatology.

## Participants:

Karl Fredrickson (Green Meadow), Douglas Gerwin (Center for Anthroposophy), Meg Gorman (San Francisco), Anne Greer (Toronto, retired), Eric Philpott (Toronto), David Sloan (Green Meadow), Betty Staley (Rudolf Steiner College), John Wulsin (Green Meadow).

Henry Barnes (emeritus) and Jim Staley (Sacramento) were invited but unable to attend due to health issues.

## Schedule:

9-12 March 2000: Colloquium in Spring Valley, New York. Start with shared supper Thursday at 7:00 p.m., continue all day Friday and Saturday (three sessions per day), finish by lunchtime Sunday.

Thursday 9 March

7:00 p.m. Shared supper

8:30-10:00 Session I:

Vignettes on "Ancient Egypt and the Collapse of the Old Mysteries"

Facilitator: Karl Fredrickson

Friday 10 March

9:00 a.m. Session II:

Drama exercises (with Anne Greer and David Sloan)

Conversations on vignettes

Facilitator: Douglas Gerwin

- 3:00 p.m.      Session III:  
Drama exercises (with Anne Greer and David Sloan)  
Conclusion of conversation  
Facilitator: Betty Staley
- 7:30 p.m.      Session IV  
Vignettes on “The Middle Ages and the Advent of the New Mysteries”  
Facilitator: John Wulsin

**Saturday 11 March**

- 9:00 a.m.      Session V:  
Drama exercises (with Anne Greer and David Sloan)  
Conversation on vignettes  
Facilitator: TBA
- 3:00 p.m.      Session VI:  
Vignettes on “The Renaissance and the Birth of the New Mysteries”  
Facilitator: TBA
- 7:30 p.m.      Session VII:  
Drama exercises (with Anne Greer and David Sloan)  
Conclusion of conversation.  
Facilitator: TBA

**Sunday 12 March**

- 9:00 a.m.      Session VIII:  
Summation and planning of next steps  
Facilitators: Douglas Gerwin and Betty Staley
- 12:00 noon    Colloquium ends.

**Coordination:**

Douglas Gerwin and Betty Staley, co-chairs of the research project, will be responsible for preparing the colloquium, which will be facilitated by a different participant during each session.

**Tasks:**

To explore three historical epochs – Ancient Egypt, Middle Ages, Renaissance – and through the presentation of vignettes from each period come to understand symptomatology as a way of teaching history in a Waldorf high school.

- To relate these vignettes to our own times, on the one hand, and to societies other than our own, on the other.
- To compare different ways of teaching history symptomatologically and to share how one might offer the same historical vignette to different age groups (grades 9-12) by different approaches such as

chronology  
polarities  
narrative  
biography

theme  
retrospect and prospect  
social analysis in its cultural,  
political, and economic aspects

To discern the deeper currents in the evolution of human consciousness as they express themselves in the unfolding epochs of history: specifically in the “old mysteries” lasting through Ancient Egypt (and beyond) and the “new mysteries” starting already in the Middle Ages. This has to do with finding the path to human freedom in our time: no longer through the discovery of one’s ego by old means but through the discovery of one’s ego through the ego of the other.

Fundamentally to pose the question: what are our basic goals in teaching history in the broadest sense. Beyond these overarching tasks there lie some more practical assignments:

- To make suggestions for appropriate subjects of study in each of the high school grades (9-12)
- To compile helpful source materials for Waldorf high school teachers of history and mythology
- To offer new approaches to the teaching of history.



**Betty Staley and Ann Greer listen to the discussion**

# Introduction to Teaching History in a Waldorf High School

Stewart Easton, formerly a teacher of college history and the author of several history texts, wrote the foreword to Werner Glas' pamphlet, *The Waldorf School Approach to History* (Highland Hall Books, 1963).

"The grade school pupil is regarded, not as a receptacle for information but as a young human being who can be awakened by history taught through mythology and biography, which work upon his imagination. Only in high school is the appeal made to his growing intellect, his understanding. Thus when he has passed through all the grades he has acquired far more than knowledge, pumped into him by a teacher and regurgitated at regular intervals by means of examinations. . . . by means of the Main Lesson technique they have saturated themselves for a brief period in the historical epoch or civilization they have been studying, learning even the geography of the country and how the people actually spent their lives. . . . The facts and ideas, given in high school by a specialist teacher, superimposed upon a residue from earlier days which might by then consist mainly of a kind of imaginative feeling for the epoch or civilization, could not fail to stimulate to thinking." P. V.

**From *The Educational Tasks and Content of the Waldorf Steiner Curriculum*:**

"In Classes 5-8, history lessons have depicted the process of humanity from a mythical, pre-historical cultural stage up to the development of a material civilization and its religious, social, political and ecological consequences. This has brought the pupils more and more practically into the present time. This progress is now repeated and deepened at a new level, in keeping with the developing capacities of the young people. The transition in consciousness from Class 8 to Class 9 with respect to history has been likened to the transition from the Middle Ages to Modern times. The analogy is not to be taken literally but does characterize the shift in perspective," p. 159.

"The content and method of the lessons take account of the pupil's growing capacity to understand ideals as the moving forces in history and their developing capacity to take in overall insights. Rather than giving them finished images, it is now more a matter of appealing to their own capacities to form judgments. The teacher becomes the helper in bringing to birth knowledge that arises out of the young people's own forces of personality. History lessons should help them tread the path from passing judgments to forming judgments, which is the equivalent of building up a new relationship between their own individuality and the world," (p. 159).

Historical Symptomatology as an approach to the teaching of history was described by Rudolf Steiner as a way of gaining knowledge of phenomena. A symptomatological approach to natural science was exemplified

by Goethe's work, and Steiner carried it further. In natural science the symptomatological approach leads one to the archetypal phenomena. "Pursuing knowledge of the organic realm, the investigator meets the living form: the **type**. In order to apprehend the type, first the whole type and the functions of its members must be understood in the context of its way of life and environment: and second, the metamorphoses of the type must be traced in their various forms (e.g. egg-caterpillar-butterfly), (Lindenberg, p. 23).

When we use the symptomatological approach as a way of understanding history, we need to activate our world. Lindenberg in **Teaching History** compares this process to the process of reading scripts. On the first level we identify a script as of human origin (e.g., the Rosetta Stone), but we don't understand the script. On the second level we decipher the script, but we don't understand the language at first. We need to figure out the meaning of the script by asking questions or by setting up hypotheses. On the third level we decipher the text and translate it. Even though we may know what certain of the words are, we don't know the context. We have to understand the situation before we can understand the meaning of the text.

When we apply this approach to history this means that we are dealing with riddles because we are not certain about the context of each historical period. We may find artifacts or deal with facts, but those are not enough to understand the meaning. The historian has to develop new ways of seeing and sensing by developing his or her own inner experience or consciousness. This is a complex process that involves the historian's viewpoint as to the periods of history. In this way the teacher needs to steep himself or herself in the "changing relationship of the soul to the world and to itself in the course of the centuries. This is what Rudolf Steiner referred to as the **evolution of consciousness**.

The symptomatological view of history involves penetrating the facts that one confronts about a period and seeking the deeper meaning behind the symptom. "History is an empirical science, and in each individual case the historian will have to decipher the language of the symptoms anew. Applying all means of exact study to the sources—that is, through the historical phenomena – he will try to approach what lives within them. Allowing the phenomena to be his teacher, he will seek to recreate and bring to life in his own soul that which gave rise to them." (Lindenberg p. 27)

I refer the reader to the full discussion of historic symptomatology in Christoph Lindenberg's **Teaching History, Suggested Themes for the Curriculum in Waldorf Schools**, published by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (translation by Peter Laborsky), 1989. ISBN 0-9623978-0-6.

## Introduction to the Colloquium on History Teaching

This proceeding covers a colloquium on teaching world history. It will be followed by a colloquium on United States History. Two areas that needed special focus included gaining a clearer picture of what a symptom in history is, and how the Waldorf high schools were teaching United States history. Discussing symptoms would open up a discussion on the broader history curriculum, as well as stimulate discussion about needed changes in the curriculum.

As described in the previous page, Rudolf Steiner indicated using phenomena as a way of understanding specific events or artifacts in history or literature. Each event or artifact would be a symptom of something greater than itself. Through penetrating the effect of the symptom, a deeper meaning would emerge. We asked ourselves if we clearly understood what a symptom is. What is the difference between a symptom and a change? None of us had a clear answer, therefore we felt gathering experienced history teachers to discuss this could bear fruit for teaching history in a Waldorf high school, or any high school for that matter.

Individual teachers were asked to prepare vignettes of a particular period of history which would become a basis for conversation in the group. In the following sections, the individual vignettes are credited to the teacher, but conversation among the group is not connected with a particular individual. Comments by various teachers are indicated by leaving spaces between statements. They are there to stimulate others to come to their own considerations.

In both colloquia it was fascinating to experience the individual differences in various schools as well as the variety of perspectives of teachers across North America. We could experience Waldorf high school teaching as dynamic and creative. Issues that arose included: how and where to involve a broader treatment of the developing world, how to meet the diversity of American life in history teaching, in what way to involve students more actively in their education, ideas of projects and community action, sharing of resources, what is unique about Waldorf high school history teaching, and how to inspire one another in asking difficult questions and respecting individual responses.

This project is seen as an on-going dialogue among teachers in the humanities rather than a finished product. It is our hope that it will stimulate active conversation of ways to inspire our students, help them understand the past, become active in the present, and create a vision of what the future could be.

# The Symptomatological Approach in the Teaching of History

“To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life, unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history?”  
— Cicero, Orator (46 BCE)

“History is the essence of innumerable biographies.”  
— Thomas Carlyle, “On History” (1830)

“History, if thoroughly comprehended, furnishes something of the experience which a man would acquire who should be a contemporary of all ages, and a fellow-citizen of all peoples.”  
— Joseph Roux, *Meditations of a Parish Priest* (1886)

“The very ink with which all history is written is merely fluid prejudice.”  
— Mark Twain, “Pudd’nhead Wilson’s New Calendar,” *Following the Equator* (1897)

“The historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence.”  
— T.S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1919)

“The disadvantage of men not knowing the past is that they do not know the present. History is a hill or high point of vantage, from which alone men see the town in which they live or the age in which they are living.”  
— G.K. Chesterton, “On St. George Revivified,” *All I Survey* (1933)

“Man himself is the most important creation and achievement of the continuous human effort, the record of which we call history.”  
— Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (1941)

“We can chart our future clearly and wisely only when we know the path which has led to the present.”  
— Adlai Stevenson, speech, Richmond, Va. (Sept. 20, 1952)

[All quotations above are from *The International Thesaurus of Quotations*, Thomas Crowell, New York, 1970.]

## Four Goals of the Colloquium

1. Gain some kind of essential experience of at least three epochs: Egyptian, Medieval and Renaissance as well as the relationship of each of those three to our times.
2. Attempt to understand the relationship of the ancient mysteries and the new mysteries. How or why did the ancient mysteries have to die out, and what does that mean? Where do we begin to see the first stirrings of the new mysteries, and what does that mean in our times, especially?
3. Identify the basic goals of teaching history
4. Look at the different ways we teach history



**Meg Gorman noting her thoughts**

# The Role of the Humanities in Waldorf High Schools: Thoughts from Colloquium Members

The following were contributions made by participants related to this theme.

The purpose of the humanities is to give children an opportunity to relive the epochs of evolutionary consciousness. When we visit all those epochs, in a sense, the students are recapitulating their own development. This is particularly so in the lower school. By the time students enter the high school that development is finished. As high school teachers we draw upon that experience, and revisit the historical epochs again, this time through a more cognitive lens.

In the high school we're trying to have the students move from an experience of a group to an experience much more of their own individuality, and the destiny that that individuality has to pursue. And whether it is history or literature, this is a thread that we follow in the high school curriculum.

It seems to me the humanities offer a humanizing function, because the students are not only experiencing the evolution of consciousness in the grade school, and then more consciously in the high school, but it is that the students are gaining a picture of the human race, and its passage from authority to freedom. So I think having this kind of experience and understanding will help students deal with some of the key questions of their time out of a perspective of the past. In fact, identifying the questions of our time is a focus of the senior year.

Another aspect the students can experience through their study of the humanities is how people problem-solve at different stages of consciousness. Consensus is becoming an important way of solving problems, because it is a **consciousness soul** way of working with problems. But this has not been the way to solve problems in the past. The leader, rather than a group of people working together, gave the answer. In the ancient world as well as in the Middle Ages, people did not problem-solve as a group. In those times a spiritual hierarchy guided the people who then carried out the instructions. That's so different today. I think a strong humanities curriculum can help our young people gain perspective and understanding about the changes. Otherwise, they can get very depressed. We're still fighting wars, we're making the same mistakes we made before. How do our adolescent students find an impulse for the future? The humanities curriculum may help them grasp why they were born in this time and what their task is.

I recall an experience I had once at Chartres Cathedral, with someone known to many of you, Malcolm Miller. You may know that Malcolm Miller will take you around the cathedral, but he will tell you at the beginning of this tour, that he's unable to show you the cathedral. Jaws drop, because that's why people go to the cathedral, and that's why they pay him several hundred francs to spend an hour with him. No, he says, I can't show you the cathedral. What he means is he can't show you the cathedral in an hour; it takes more than a year. So what he will do instead is he will show you a window, or a set of windows. I remember as a young person, going to see him with some others, and standing in front of one of these beautiful stained glass windows, and just sort of bathed in the esthetic experience of it. And then he began from the bottom right, zig zagged, to read the window. And suddenly, what was up until that moment, an artistic thing, a beautiful experience, now became a cognitive experience. That is to say, meaning suddenly shone through what was previously just experience. I remembered that moment recognizing, that's what the study of history could do. That is, take the kind of bath of experience, and bath of events and things happening, and biographically juicy narratives and so forth, in a sort of sentient kind of experience.

What history can do, especially in symptomatology, is begin to show the meaning, the patterns, the hand of God, as it were, writing these events. I remember in that moment being so relieved that there was significance, there was meaning in events, and more importantly, the human mind could see them. Like

learning to read a script in a book, suddenly script becomes history, a subject significant, has meaning. It seems to me that's something we can do in the high school.

To finish off that visit, Malcolm Miller said, "Well I'm not going to show you any more windows, but I will now show you the accompanying statuary to this window, related to the figures that were represented in the window." He then took us outside, to some of the stone sculptures of those same characters. And that's when I had this experience that you could have, not so much in a particular image, but in the juxtaposition of images, like he'd chosen. This was an economy in teaching.

I think that in terms of the skill or human faculties we exercise as a history teacher, It's the faculty of thought. Out of that vast panorama we try to create all sorts of perspectives and activities, and out of that to extract how these things hang together, how one thing leads to another.

What history trains you to do is to observe the phenomena. In a certain sense it has that quality of science in the phenomenological sense. When you look at these phenomena, say it's a primary source material given around a certain period, you ask the students to create an essay that is a history of that time. The students have to penetrate the phenomena. This process takes time and thought. It is a different process from reading a chapter in a textbook and answering ten questions at the end with the right answers. Instead, the students study the phenomena, decide what they are looking at. Then they cognize and come up with ideas, argue like mad about them, and a new skill is unfolding.

There is a voyeur quality to living through someone else's biography, and looking at the obstacles that person had to overcome. In this way history is not just a collection of facts. One gets to experience the person's destiny unfolding, revealing itself, touching on deep and intangible questions. Imagine two people met, and the whole course of a revolution changed. Or why did Lenin get locked into a closed train and arrive in St. Petersburg? What did the Germans gain from this? What did the Russians gain? These kinds of questions help students realize the complexity of life.

A Waldorf parent of a ninth grader shared the following experience. Her father was listening to tapes on the way to work. Her daughter overheard her father and mother talking about Greek history. The parents were getting into a very deep conversation about the Bronze Age and mentioned Agamemnon. This ninth grader, who had studied *The Iliad* in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, said, "Agamemnon, that's that Greek king who sacrificed his daughter for a breeze!" I think that comment gives us a sense of the power of imagery in the lower school approach which focuses on developing a rich feeling life in relation to the material studied.

A few nights ago, we had an eleventh grade parent meeting, and it was very interesting. The first part of it had to do with college orientation. And then, we turned to other matters that the parents were concerned about. There was a description that a lot of the parents shared about how hard a year it had been for their children. It was unlike previous years, and they were sure it was because there was too much work. That was the reason that their children were coming home and there was this darkness over them. And we tried to paint a picture through the literature studied, of how perfect it is, in fact, that they are going through what we call the dark night of the soul, in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. We explained that we actually try through the humanities, through "Dante," where they go to Hell, and experience that, and through the Parsifal, and through the Hamlet experience, and even hopefully, through Romantic poetry, towards the end of the year, that they actually are able to experience outwardly in the literature, what their inward experience is.

I'm sure that's true, not just of the humanities, or history, but it seems especially true in that way because the literature can be such a window. It's interesting that you're talking about this stained glass window. I couldn't help but think that every piece of literature that they're picking up is a potential window into their own soul. But clearly, the 11<sup>th</sup> grade parents had a lot of first-borns in that class, so they had to be reassured that this dark night of the soul does transform into a more expansive experience of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Humanities is both a mirror and a window into their own inner experience.

I'm just always aware working with high school students, that they leave at age 18, that they will be experiencing something very profound after this time, but we are not able to join them on this mighty step towards this new birth. So I was eager years ago to teach college freshmen and sophomores to see what it's like on the other side. I was pretty shocked. These are very smart students; they've done very well in school; they're very hard-working. I would try to find time to squeeze into the curriculum stories, paint pictures in words, and then try to give them a moment, to just pause in that. I realized it was so nourishing for them. When I began to ask them, virtually none of them could remember having a story told to them in the context of history. It's something we Waldorf teachers simply take for granted. The ability to have an image form was powerful to them. I could see how much they had missed. So another part of the humanities curriculum is nourishment through these very challenging times. The students then leave us and reflect on their history courses, including imaginative/cognitive reasoning.

I've had students say that they have a profound experience with the historical epochs. Just the fact that the historical epoch is in front of them, in some ways, allows something to stir in them, and they don't know why. At this time they are leaning towards the birth of the ego, and this reflection is helpful in that development.

I had known a particular class since kindergarten, and I always felt this group had been together before. I'd felt that for years in the lower school. There were two groups of boys – one group was very literary, expressing a strong interest in poetry. When they were given choices, they almost always chose the poets of the First World War. Another group was not literary but very will oriented, very combative. When they were in the ninth grade, I was teaching them about the rise of Nazism. The second group of the boys challenged me, "You are making this up. This didn't happen." Their response was so unexpected that I found myself feeling very tense. I wasn't sure what to do next. That evening help arrived from an unexpected source. Around dinner time there was a knock at the door. In front of me stood a German Waldorf teacher on sabbatical and his grown son. I'd never met them before, but someone had given them my name. I invited them in for dinner, and I told them I was going to preview a film that evening about the rise of Nazism. The father was of the age when he could have been involved in the Second World War. They said, "Oh, we'd love to see it." So after dinner rather self-consciously, I previewed the film. When it was finished, I asked the father, "Well, what did you think of it?" He replied, "Well, it's extremely accurate."

The next morning, in class I told the students about my guests. After that the second group no longer questioned whether I had exaggerated or whether the events described had really happened. Something seemed put to rest. I don't know what all that was, but I found it interesting to read in Rabbi Yonassan Gershom's book *Beyond the Ashes, Cases of Reincarnation from the Holocaust* (A.R.E.Press 1992) that he had met a number of Americans who were suffering from unexplained events related to the Holocaust which he attributed to past life experiences.

I teach ancient cultures; we read part of the **Egyptian Book of the Dead**, then we read **The Iliad**, and then **The Odyssey**, and then **Beowulf**. The students receive this literary, historical experience, and the question that comes up again and again is, what is moral? Because they are asking this question again and again, I don't have to ask it. And it's on those kinds of issues that I know the teaching is best. They will stop talking to me, and they will start talking to each other. Those are the questions where they begin to form a moral compass, of how they're going to get through the world, and they form it out of this experience of history in a way that people who have not had that experience cannot form it. It's one of the main differences between those students who come from Waldorf schools and those who come from other schools. The Waldorf students have a kind of moral compass that they've gotten from the lower school.

# Teaching Ancient History in the Tenth Grade: Exploring Egypt through Symptoms:

A Vignette by Eric Philpott

I don't know how familiar everybody is with Ancient Egypt. I'm not an Egyptologist, but every time I think about an epoch, I think I was there. Anyway, Egypt is still fascinating, and interestingly, I think was fascinating to everybody at all times, including the contemporaries of Ancient Egypt. Everybody thought the Egyptians were remarkable, and everybody thought them to be the keepers of remarkable knowledge, that there were great things behind the veil in Egypt. Even though today with 200 years of pretty serious Egyptology, we know quite a lot about the Egyptians, we still have a pretty strong experience of foreignness and a profound otherness about them.

It's interesting, the Ancient Greeks, whom we find we can more easily relate to, also experienced that otherness of the Egyptians. Some of you might know the quotes from Plato who described long travels to Egypt to see what the Egyptians knew about Atlantis. Plato said, "When Solon asked the priests, who knew best about such matters, to tell him about ancient peoples and times, it almost seemed to him that he, and indeed all the Greeks, knew nothing at all about these things." And then when Solon asked specifically about Atlantis, and then shared all of his knowledge to kind of encourage them to open up, the Egyptians only said to him, "You are all so young in your souls. You have none of the original knowledge that has been handed down from the most ancient times, not even any aged knowledge."

Now these are always a bit tricky to translate, but the general gist is clear. I think already there you can see an incredible contrast between this sort of youthful energetic Greek, looking and learning, and the Egyptian. The fact was that many Greeks went to Egypt to find things out. The Egyptians seemed to be quite content, quite anchored to the past and had almost no desire at all to change anything, quite the contrary. The period of the Egyptians is what Rudolf Steiner calls the Third Post-Atlantic Epoch. We know that in the various epochs, humanity is building up, stage by stage, an aspect of the human being, the full human being. This Third Post-Atlantean epoch is the epoch of the Sentient Soul. So, I think that this is already a pretty important point, also pedagogically, but frankly just humanly. We have there an opportunity to learn about a part of ourselves, a level, an element of our own, perhaps in some ways, even more clearly than in looking at ourselves because we can see a culture built on it.

Personally, I usually find the grade 10 Ancient History block a little bit tricky at the start. I find the students a little bit hesitant, a certain amount of "How do we know these things for sure anyway?" attitude. But

I'm struck by how really gripped they are by this as we go on. Of all the main lessons, I'm usually the most moved by what they actually write in this one, and I feel they write things that they understand. I've had some very powerful experiences when I read their work, and I wonder how did they know this?

Speaking briefly from the pedagogical aspect, grade 10 is, sort of like a no man's land. Childhood is long gone, and at least from their point of view their experience of adulthood is also never going to arrive. They are sort of stuck in the middle there. And they have this probably very terrifying experience of the realization, or the very dim awareness, of pretty profound existential questions, and practically no vocabulary to articulate it. I think it's a very difficult time when there's just no way that they can know how to express those questions. We've heard Steiner speak about latent questions, these unarticulated questions of the adolescent, and that it's our task, in a sense, to provide a round-about answer to them, so that we are not in their face about it. These are delicate questions, but nevertheless we need to meet those questions. A little bit from here and a little bit from over there.

I think that's what the grade 10 curriculum is about. It's about the story of humanity finding its home on the earth and making its home here. I think without rubbing it in, we don't need to make that explicit to the students, but that is, in a way, really what they're beginning to do themselves. In ancient history we move from the nomadic relationship to the farmer's relationship to the world, working with the environment, and from there to the city dweller. Once that city is there, we've sort of completed the process of separating, and we now have this human world. I've always found it helpful to make the comparison with Mesopotamia. Mesopotamia and Egypt, or the Mesopotamian civilization and the Egyptian, are all theocracies, like all the ancient ones, and yet they have profoundly different character. The Mesopotamian is marked by a certain latent anxiety. One author refers to the cosmic crisis for the Mesopotamian, the cycle of the year is so challenging that they really live and die, they die in the summer by the way, that's when they experience death, because of the heat and the dryness. Then comes the fear of the floods and all that sort of thing. (See **Teaching History**, Christoph Lindenberg, who gives references to several books on the subject which are written in German.)

We know the epic of Gilgamesh is basically a meditation on wrestling with the question of death, and not quite wanting to accept it but having to accept it. It's almost a mood of resignation. And now we have the Egyptians for whom death in a way, paradoxically, doesn't exist. They don't really quite believe in it, although they seem to be very focused on it. Another thing is the difference between a king in Mesopotamia and the Pharaoh. The Sumerian word for king was Lugau, which was "a great man," whereas in Egypt the Pharaoh is a descendent of the gods. In the festivals around the Pharaoh's becoming Pharaoh, it's more like recognizing as opposed to making him into a god. It's more a moment of acknowledgement, perhaps, than some kind of transformation.

A very important aspect about all of these cultures is that the theocrat, what we call a king, is really a high priest, a theocracy is a priest-led society. And the priest-king is the intermediary between the heavens, the eternal, and the earth, which is the temporal. This is beautifully described by Frankfort. "The ancients experienced human life as part of a widely spreading network of connections which reached beyond the local and national communities into the hidden depths of nature and the powers that rule nature. Whatever was significant was embedded in the life of the cosmos, and it was precisely the king's function to maintain the harmony of that integration."

We practically have the image of the pyramid there. We have the human world here coming up to the point, and the king, between everyday life and the divine world. I won't belabor the difference in Mesopotamia, but that mediation is so different in Mesopotamia from the way it is in Egypt. In Mesopotamia, it's really touch and go. It's a touchy process of interpreting dreams, of interpreting the cosmic events, and they're really hoping they get it right. Egypt is marked by an incredible confidence. The cosmos is set, established, and that's it, off it goes. Any disturbance, any revolt is a mere ripple, a temporary ripple on the surface. That, of course, has a great deal to do with the natural environment.

Theocracies by nature are conservative. When people start farming, they become conservative. They always need to keep as much as they can. They need to grow more than they need because they never know what the next year will bring. And even more so when you have the monumental organization of the huge human society with tens of thousands of people in it. In all ancient theocracies, the challenge is in mastering the river. The mass engineering project sets or gives the opportunity for people to learn skills of this theocratic organization, this incredibly organized society.

Now, Egypt is very interesting because the river requires certain skills of organization. These skills of organization in turn make it possible to create the monumental architecture and structures that are still to this day so famous. The whole pyramid is a square, a perfect square. The great pyramid of Kheops, for example, is accurate to within less than the width of a thumb. It's really beyond comprehension.

If the pyramids weren't there, we would never believe that the Egyptians could construct them. The question that I want to understand is, what is the Egyptian consciousness? There's a little window in which we can see good examples of the way that the Egyptians think. There is an astonishing amount of conservatism in the Egyptians which is expressed in that they go for over a thousand years before they have a major change in their art. Maybe their consciousness is simply conservative because they live in an environment that doesn't change, so why change when you don't need to? My favorite example of that is their calendar. Although the Egyptians weren't very careful astronomers compared to the Babylonians who were fanatically worried about it, they nevertheless had a better start to their calendar because they made a solar calendar and the Babylonians made a lunar calen-

dar. Lunar calendars are awfully difficult to read and so the Egyptians got it right. But of course, they didn't notice little things like that quarter day that the year is extended by. They calculated it, they set it very early on, and then, of course, like all calendars through history, their calendar started to shift.

Most calendars then would periodically get nudged back. Not the Egyptians. Once something's made, why change it? And so if I were doing this with the students, I would get them to calculate, after four years the calendar is off by one day, good. 40 years, 10 days, 400 years, wow, 400 years they're still off? Yep, 100 days. And so, on we go. By 730 years, you've got Christmas exactly in the middle of summer. Then by 1,460 years, Christmas has come back to its rightful spot. Now, of course, what other culture in the whole history of the world was actually still around to have their calendar go right? It's amazing. So here we've got that one example of a certain rigidity in their conservatism. And of course they had what they would consider a very lowly calendar, their planting calendar. They weren't so stupid that they would actually plant at the wrong times, but they sure would celebrate their harvest at the absolute wrong time of the year. At least the high festival of it. All that cycle went off, and it stayed off as they stuck to the holy calendar.

Another example is the depiction of divine beings combined with animal forms. Laurens van der Post, you might know, studied the Bushman (San people). He observed the similarity between the Bushman paintings of divine beings, and the Egyptian ones. I'm not an expert in this area, but it seems that the earliest images of divine beings tend to combine human and animal qualities. We do see some examples in Native North American art also, but I've never studied it. But the animal melding with the human quality is a sort of depicting or imagining the divine. The Egyptian gods have this quality. And they're actually strikingly similar to Bushman paintings. I'm not saying they're directly related, but they might be connected.

Another observation is Egyptian writing. Now I know that the Mayans also had a kind of pictographic writing, but it's still very striking. Although the Egyptians developed what they considered shorthand, what we would consider normal writing, normal letters, for all formal purposes, they still used a pictographic writing. Even though the symbol of water — theirs was N, but ours would be W, they have a drawing of water and it means W. They still cling to writing the picture of something, although they've long known what it represents.

The Hebrews and the Phoenicians and the Greeks and the Romans have no problem, maybe they didn't even know what the letter or picture originally came from. It didn't bother them because they knew the symbol now. So the Egyptians did not really make that step into symbol writing.

We could say that these things are really just conservatism, right? That would be what we would expect from a theocracy. But if we go a little bit further we might really have a window into this consciousness. One of the most striking episodes in the Egyptian history is when the Hyksos in-

vaded Egypt. The Hyksos did not have the same numbers as the Egyptians, and the Egyptians were no slouches militarily. Their wars were normally internal between upper and lower Egypt. But the Egyptians were utterly baffled by people who used different techniques, and in this case the chariot.

The Egyptians were exceptional surgeons, and we have examples of them and of Mesopotamians who carried out apparently successful eye surgery and brain surgery as well as that they had anesthetics and all sorts of very sophisticated abilities. But the interesting thing with the invasion of the Hyksos was that the Egyptians were now confronted with wounds inflicted by unfamiliar weapons. And they were absolutely stumped. There was a great trauma, apparently, and they were not able to help their wounded, and a large number of people died who would not normally have died. I'm suggesting that we have a people who are not capable, and here I'm going to use the term just a little bit loosely, what I'm going to call **abstract fraud**. That is, they're not able to take from an example that they know perfectly, absolutely flawlessly how to treat, they can't take the principle and then lift that up and then apply it to something similar. That's just one example of that sort of thing.

Sometimes with students, I'll talk about Jean Piaget and his experiments with young children. He built models of mountains. The children would walk around the model and he could see that they knew that there were houses and fields and a lake, and then on the other side of the mountain he would say, "Okay, now tell me what's on the other side." The younger child doesn't know, it isn't real anymore, because the child can't see it. And this is a similar thing that the Egyptian can't do. And, when I first taught ancient history, I lived in Southern Germany with valleys and rivers and roads and woods and forests. And I just thought to myself, let's say you want to go to the next village, and you did it by foot. You know that if you go down into a valley you'd go along a path, you'd go past the forest, over the fence and, now, how do you remember how to get from A to B? When you're a young child, you'd have to be accompanied, but at some point you're old enough, and you get it, you know the way. At some point you start to get a mental map, a sort of three-dimensional map in a way. And just think, for example, there's nowhere really in Egypt proper that you'd ever have to do that. Their entire world is actually visible at any one point, and travel is pretty simple, you go with the wind to the south, or the river to the north. That's it. You never have to think about it at all. So, they're never even really pushed in a way to think like that.

I don't know how much you know about Egypt, and I don't know that much, but I've been struck by letters complaining when they went to Mesopotamia, they found it really unbearable traveling up and down, for example, and it troubled them that the rivers flowed the wrong way. They're really connected to this fairly straight-forward world.

And, finally, I'll give you a last example of abstract thought. Now, if they built pyramids they had to do math, right? And they had to do fairly complicated calculations. So, if it's true they couldn't do abstract thinking,

how did they do the math? Because, the concrete math is simple, it's subtraction and addition, you can see it, you can easily conceive of it. But once you get to division and multiplication, especially if you want to cook along with it, you start moving into an abstract way of doing, especially to speed it up. Well, the Egyptians never did that. They took the long way of adding numbers rather than multiplying. So they had huge books of tables for every number, or for many numbers anyway, so they could reduce multiplication to basically addition.

## Thoughts by the Participants Following the Presentation on Ancient History

“You can go on enthusiasm for quite a while, and the students will put up with it, but after the five year point it doesn't work. Something else has to happen. And what really needs to happen isn't so much technique as it is a certain kind of inspiration, a certain kind of nourishment that carries you through that point. That's very strong. The need is for you to go back continually to the deepest questions of humanity, to return to the essence – to look at the unfolding of the Being of Man which is there from the origin of things. Think that this Being of Man is lying so deeply in the core of all of these young people in an unspoken way, think that they've all experienced or somewhere seen this Being of Humanity.”

“The longer I've taught, the more interested I've become in what Steiner had to say about the earliest experiences of humanity. We come again and again to an experience that keeps reminding us that they were so utterly different in that they carried within them the dreamlike imaginations which for them bore the stamp of reality. When they turned away from the imaginations, they encountered a kind of sorrow. This world seemed so fallen. This world seemed so devoid of the spirit. And they had a tremendously hard time finding their way in it.”

“One of the major purposes, perhaps the major purpose, of initiation, of the mysteries, was to enable people to find their home in this world through pictures that they were given which allowed them again to see the connection between this fallen world outside and that which is real in spirit. Still, during these times, these pictures they had were so full of light, so full of life by comparison to what they could form of the world outside. How I've wrestled for a long time with what these mysteries were. The loss occurs around the time of Ancient Egypt and that was so profound. I believe that the experience of loss radiates throughout our own time and causes a great deal of the doubt, a great deal of the isolation, a great deal of the sorrow that exists around us.”

Two sources from Rudolf Steiner's work were offered which give a sense of ancient and modern initiation. — **How Can Mankind Find the Christ?** and the **Mystery Dramas**. The fourth and fifth lectures from Rudolf Steiner's **From Symptom to Reality in Modern History** were mentioned because they address the question, Where do we go from here?

Another comment was made that the story of the initiation of Chickpea, a young man, is very accessible to young people. In this book **Her-Bak** by Isha Schwaller de Lubicz, the boy's journey in Ancient Egypt is through learning crafts. In this way he learns the secrets of the spirit. In many ways it is similar to Native American initiation stories.

“As we talked about Egypt I kept flashing over to Gilgamesh and the incredible pain of not knowing what was going to be and what is. The question, If two thirds of me is God and one third of me is Man, must I

die? created an anxiety. The Egyptians had a continuous relation to this paradox, the relationship to death, but not the same anxiety. Then I thought about the Hebrews, the whole idea of putting aside everything that is sentient, that connects you, and then having to extract it into the non-visual experience of the God within. These steps of moving away from this sense of wholeness, this sense of being part of the group into where you almost have to guide yourself as a still small voice, bring about the emotional feeling of loss as it was experienced in history.”

A discussion ensued about the importance of leaving the twelfth grade students with the creative challenge. Who are we now? What is our task? It is important not to leave our students nostalgically longing for the past.

Comments were made about the need to relate all history to the present, of stimulating the students to question how we know about the past, of learning about anthropology and archeology. We can inspire them that perhaps one of them might break a code that no one else has broken and open up a new civilization. We also discussed the difference between teaching history in the lower school and then in the high school where the students explore with their minds. We need to be sure we are not teaching in the way a lower school teacher would present the material.

We need to know why we are teaching aspects of history at a particular grade level and not just do it because Steiner said so. We have to constantly observe whether the students are connecting with the material.

“I start the ancient history block in tenth grade by asking, What are the main questions of our time? The students start to give examples of our times, and ask questions such as, how did we get here? Then they are interested in ancient history.”

“I once went to Eileen Hutchins, one of the early Waldorf high school teachers in England, and asked her how she taught tenth grade. She said, ‘Well, I don’t go back to ancient history. The students don’t seem to have a connection to ancient history.’ I was just amazed at that, and so I was afraid and thought it would be very hard to teach it. I wondered if I shouldn’t do it in tenth grade. However, I found that if they had not had modern history in ninth grade, they would rebel at learning ancient history. The secret is teaching modern history in the ninth grade. They need to at least touch on some of the key events of our time. I also discovered in my talk with Eileen Hutchins that she had never taught twelfth grade. I find if you don’t present the themes out of ancient history in tenth grade, there’s less to work with in twelfth grade. It has to sit in them for a couple of years, and then it can come out in a deeper way. So I thought she had missed an opportunity.”

“I think ancient history confronts us with our modern questions. For example, how do we build cities? What’s the role of water? What’s going on in our own state? You can begin to see parallels. California is just a perfect example about which to discuss issues around drought and water. When we discuss the Persians and their struggles with water, we can gain a deeper understanding of their challenges.”

“Another example is the problem we have today in the U.S. in trying to control rivers. The more dams, dikes and canals we build often make the problems worse. Look at the great Mississippi flood we had recently. Here we are the most developed country in the world, with all the engineers and expertise, and we still can't stop flooding.”

“We live in the illusion that we can.”

“Let's go back to the question of boundaries. What does it mean that you have boundaries and possessions, that you have to stay in one place and defend it? This means people have to cooperate with other people to defend their territory and their possessions. They feel different from others. The water issues are also connected with boundaries. For example, the Colorado River has more water than any river in America and virtually none of it gets to Mexico.

“What about water between Canada and the U.S.? Huge amounts of water pour down from Hudson Bay, and there's a huge scheme to channel it, but unfortunately they're not doing it yet because it costs too much.”

“Water is a tremendous problem in Mexico. A huge amount of money goes into buying water. Yet what are we doing to our water? These questions lead to ecological issues, responsibility towards the environment. Someone always used to say that ancient history is modern history.”

“If we understand that one of the key issues in the ancient world has to do with the issues around property, the challenge to communal living, and boundaries, then we can use other cultures as the example. I used the Pygmies of Central Africa as my starting point.”

“So many of the great questions we wrestle with nowadays find their antecedents in some of these other cultures.”

“Be aware when we teach about ancient or indigenous cultures that words that were given to African tribes by the English were considered to be insults, such as Kaphir corn, or calling someone a kaphir.”

“I always start this block in a sort of mythological way with the idea of unity—of humanity spreading around the globe and individuating. So I introduce the whole concept of individuation right at the beginning which then becomes central with the Greeks.

For me the first step in ancient history is the transition from the nomadic life to the farming life. To do that I spend a good three days on the whole nomadic relationship to the environment- completely living with nature. They're not environmentalists because to be that, you have to have the other consciousness. They don't waste because it would be pointless to their existence. They're not really communists or communalists because to have that you have to have the other. They haven't stepped out of their consciousness yet. They're still living entirely within nature. So I emphasize very much this transition from where the human being is able to creatively shape himself to work with what the environment provides. Then this huge revolution shifts around to now shaping the environment to himself, which is what the farmer does. I don't really characterize that as a sort of mastering nature and conquering it. The farmers are still at the mercy of nature, but

they have a different relationship. That's where I teach Ancient Persia and the act of piety in relation to the gods. I don't do Ancient India at all. I don't have time. I'd have to have a lot more time to do it. I don't quite understand how I would fit it into those steps – nomad, farmer, city.”

“Oh, but Ancient India provides such a picture of what is real and what is not real. In Ancient India you have an opportunity to discuss the concept of Maya and address the issue of longing to return to the spiritual world.”

“A class was on a camping trip soon after their ancient history block. It was pouring rain and the students were complaining about how uncomfortable they were. One of them called out from his wet sleeping bag, “Don't worry about the rain, it's just Maya.”

“Another reason to speak about India is to talk about castes, segregation, and apartheid.”

“I got very interested in the contrast between Ancient India and Ancient China. Steiner indicates that they both carry an ancient consciousness which he refers to as Atlantean. The Indians take the consciousness into the spoken word, and the Chinese into the written. They're both coming from the same origin but they develop so differently.”

A discussion followed about the relationship between standardization and writing to conservatism in a culture.

Comments were made about ancient memory and its connection to physical monuments that marked the place where something happened. When people came to that spot, the memory was awakened as to what had happened in the particular place. The connection to the earth was so strong. Often young children have a similar kind of place memory.

“The Chinese, Japanese and Koreans are living in a different picture since the Second World War. I didn't realize to what degree MacArthur and the Americanization of Japan changed things. That is when they began to write left to right rather than up to down. Although both are still used, the left to right is very much accepted. It was forbidden to speak of the Emperor because he was considered a Sun God. With the democratization of Japan, emperors had no place. Most Japanese students today hardly know their ancient mythology, the Kojiki, or it is now considered superstition.”

“Another theme in ancient history is the change from blood line to the individual. In some cultures the blood line goes through the mothers, in others, through the fathers.”

This led to comments about Native American consciousness in its relation to the ancient consciousness around property, time, and ancestors. We need our students to understand this without becoming romantic about it.

“These themes that we're talking about are incredible insights into Native North Americans. For example, in Canadian history we have, at least, in the Saint Lawrence, the boundary line between the nomadic Algonquin that fits the bill in every respect, of exactly the sort of themes we would be doing. I mean I personally address this, sort of in a different way, in the

ninth grade, but it's precisely that quality. Then we have the farming Iroquoian people on the south bank of the Saint Lawrence. And, of course, as in most places in the world, they're at war. If you would read an Iroquoian complaint about the Algonquins, the way they are, and what they come and do (they come and smash all our grain jars) you could be reading something from Ancient Persia. . . . This is from right up until the Europeans arrived. And the Europeans, actually, in this case the French and English, ended up getting caught up in this conflict sort of by default."

"There are similar issues in the Mid-West too. The song 'Cowboys and the farmers should be friends!' from the musical *Oklahoma* describes that issue also."

"One of the important things is to make a relationship to our own native, or our own ancient history or pre-history in North America. We have to go down to Central America to get to ancient history, to begin to differentiate. It's interesting because I've met people who study this and ask them about the difference between the nomads and farmers and it apparently has not occurred to them."

"That's hard to believe."

"Our challenge with the students is to illuminate and differentiate the different forms of living so that the question starts to have contours and a landscape. The key is to distinguish between different qualities."

"Not only do we begin to distinguish between qualities, but questions of bias rise up. Rather than thinking, Oh, they're just Indians, the students begin to realize they are a whole different people."

"Another question that is not resolved is the path of migration. It's been traditionally explained that the migration went across Siberia and down North America. This year an article in the *New York Times* quoted the Smithsonian Institution as stating that there is a relationship between some of the Eastern Native Americans and the ancient Spaniards."

"Also the Mayans speak of coming from the land across the sea and use words beginning with *atl* which means 'from the water.' The understanding of history is changing so quickly with new discoveries being made."

"Yes, *Atlantic Monthly* carried an article about the Diffusionists in which the question is raised as to whether or not there were people in North America from the ancient Asian world. The author does say that conservative historians do not even want to look at the evidence."

"An issue that arises is how to approach the rituals in ancient history. How does that get presented so that it's not so much superstition? You know, in the same way that we can say that there's a tribe over in New Guinea that every day goes over and brings up the sun. How do you know it's not true? How can you prove it's not true? How do you present the ritual in a way that makes the students say, 'Ah, there was something to that time?'"

"I definitely have a thought on that, and just for the record, I think it is interesting to compare the idea of Ma-at, which is sort of an internal principle with, for example, Mesopotamian laws. I think there's a relation-

ship to actual laws, old laws, as a different approach, a very human and fallible system to ordering society. On what were the early civilizations going to model themselves? Where are they going from their perspective? Nobody's built a city before. Nobody's done this before. So where are they going to acquire the principles to do that?"

"They were totally oriented to the cosmos where they looked for laws and principles they could use to organize a human society. These are the ways that they created a world that reflects the cosmic order. And that comes down to things like the days of the week, and the calendar, and the hours in the day."

"And the Emperor being the Sun with his people around him the way the earth is around the Sun."

"How do you keep the students from making fun of the ideas of different cultures?"

"I think if you just presented the mystery of it. This is what they found out here. There's a lot of information we're learning now that we didn't know when I was a kid. It's effective when you tell the story of a mystery that gets deciphered. The students love mysteries. What can you theorize about it? I always ask that question first. The same is with the development of language. I ask, What do you think made the different languages? We come up with all kinds of theories."

"One example is from the film, 'The Gods Must Be Crazy.' You know, on one hand, it's such a modern image that just makes the San people look very foolish, and at the same time it presents you with pure phenomenon. They find a bottle, a piece of glass. What is it? They try to figure out what it is, why it is there."

"I find that the students comment after seeing such a film that the people who appear foolish are the Westerners."

"This film is a classic example, though, because here you have a bottle that is taken in with incredible reverence, but then it seemed to be destructive. Because it is destructive it has to be taken off to the end of the world and disposed of. It raises questions as to what is it that holds a society together and what makes a society fragile? To me it leads to endless questions."

"That brings us back to Egypt. How did they hold it together? What kept them from disintegrating? They felt that they could not kill somebody because if you threw the body into the Nile, the Nile might rise up if there was enough killing. Is this simply superstition? What held their society together for all those thousands of years, and what holds ours together?"

"Comparing Egypt and China, we see a difference in how they related to their enemies. There were times enemies attacked, but by and large Egyptians were able to hold their boundaries. In China there were constant attacks, but the Chinese adapted and incorporated their enemies. These are two very different ways societies adapted to change."

"It's phenomenal how issues out of the ancient world are still with us today. I bring the local newspaper and read articles to the class which have to do with ancient history. For example, it's interesting when you real-

ize that Goliath of Gath was from the Gaza strip, and there is still fighting over this area today.”

“Geography is so important. Steiner indicated that geography should permeate the entire curriculum. The rivers are very important in studying ancient history. Map drawing is also an important part of Waldorf education. When drawing a map, indicating the meeting of water and land is a different experience than just making a line. Compare the Nile delta and the Tigris and Euphrates and their influence on the culture. Because of the Gulf War, the two rivers they had associated with ancient history became something real.”

“No longer do I give the students an outlined map to fill out. Now I’m requiring at the end of a main lesson that they must draw the map from memory. I started doing that after one of my colleagues asked us to draw a map of the world about seven years ago in a high school workshop. I decided that my goal for the seniors was going to be that they should be able to draw a map of the entire world and the water systems and mountain ranges. They would really know the earth. So they know now that whenever they have to do map work, I say ‘Pay attention to the map. Don’t just draw it. Think about what it means that the Pyrenees were there when Charles Martel was fighting.’”

“You can do a five minute exercise every morning where students have to draw a map out of memory, then correct it, and draw it again. After a couple of weeks they’ve got a real picture of it. It’s part of them.”

A discussion followed on surveying outside, being exact, “crawling on their hands and knees measuring the physical earth”, and orienteering in relation to tenth graders.

“There’s another quality I think of the tenth graders. They want us to help them to learn to be exact. There’s very little exactness demanded of anybody anymore. Working on the loom in tenth grade is another example of the same thing. One thread at a time. Before you can do your creative work, you’ve got to thread the loom. If you are off in the sequence, you have to go back to it and redo it. It’s just like being in that bush up to your armpit in mud and realizing you’ve made a mistake reading the map and you have to go back and start over. Several students work together threading a loom. It’s very hard to do by yourself. It takes forever. So they work together, measuring, figuring out the arithmetic of how many times the skein has to go around, is there enough length to do the warps for three people, etc. This is really algebra and geometry in a practical application of exactness. They squirm under it, but they love it too. It’s the same with card weaving.”

“The discipline is in the act, rather than in the person.”

“That’s why they like writing poetry. It’s the same thing.”

“The scanning is making a map in the way of a poem.”

“That’s right, the surveying of the poem.”

“Also Grimm’s law. They love Grimm’s law. It’s so interesting. I won

der if they would think it was so interesting in eleventh grade. You'd have to bring it in a whole different way."

"This precision we've been speaking about is sort of mastering something about the physical world. It's going from my intention which is not yet visible and physical into an actual mastering of some part of the physical world."

"It's like combining acids and bases to create salts in certain specific ways if it's going to work. To get the right color, you need exactness. In eleventh grade I can tell if a class has had exactness or not. Especially in science. That kind of exactness starts in sixth grade in geometric drawing. If you divide a circle into 36 parts and you don't have your points in the right place, you have to start over. That fits the eleven-twelve year change of cause and effect. We should be able to find how exactness is used in every grade from sixth grade on. I think of grammar because that's the same issue. It's the structure of the language."

"My opinion is that sixth grade is the crucial time for grammar to be emphasized. It's the year of law in history with the Romans and in science."

"I keep thinking how this exactness in relation to geography of the earth is essential for celestial navigation. Also proofs in geometry."

"The proof comes into history also. It's one of those things I bring to the parents. What does it mean to be able to look at evidence and come up with an idea? The problem always is if you spend too much time on this you don't get to the other juicy issues. Potentially you could have a block on topology connected with field trips. There's so much that could be done, but then we'd have to take away something else."

"It's interesting that sophomore means wise fool. It's important to give them facts that they don't know anything about. Then ask, How do you account for this? I'll give them historical information that they don't know anything about. I tell them to go home and look it up. They come back the next morning and argue with me. It's good for them that they have to go out and find the exact information because otherwise they will get stuck in their wise foolishness. They need to find out there's a whole world that they will never know. They'll often say it's all going by so fast. There's so much more we need to learn. And I say, my darlings you have a whole life to do that. The main lesson is nothing but an appetizer."

"You brought up an important point there. We can meet as humanities teachers and complain how there isn't enough time to spend on archeology or anything else. I think the difference is having the whole high school faculty sit together and discuss the curriculum. One teacher can say, 'I can deal with this in surveying.' Another teacher says, 'I can deal with this other element in poetry.' If you have a clear picture as a faculty what you want to accomplish in tenth grade, you can start building that tapestry of the year. For example, archeology might be touched on in clay class, in surveying, and so on. You can just refer to what you know other teachers have taught. Then you build on it with each other."

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“For example, if you are studying clay, you can bring in a broken pot and show the shards which last for thousands of years. How would you fix the broken pot? Later, in the Greek block, you can explore the dilemma of the archeologist. Should he restore the broken column by putting cement in between, or should he leave it as it was on the ground? Does he try to make it so people can see what that whole pillar was like? These become serious questions in archeology. In ninth grade art history, you might be showing the Venus de Milo. You can ask the students to draw the way the arms would have been before being broken.”

“In the twelfth grade Symptomatology course a student wanted to describe the difference between Eastern thought and Western thought. She worked for weeks creating a large smooth coiled pot. She glazed it with a beautiful Chinese or Japanese ideograph. Everyone admired the simple beauty of its form. Then she stood at the threshold of the classroom, and she said, ‘I’m now going to demonstrate the difference between two different sets of values.’ She showed the pot to us, and then she let go. It took everyone by surprise as the pot fell to the floor and broke into dozens of pieces. Those classmates who weren’t completely paying attention were stunned. It wasn’t as if she could repeat the act. It was gone. I asked her, ‘All the time you were working on this, did you know you were going to destroy it?’ And she said, ‘Yes.’ ‘And you still made it so beautiful.’ ‘Yes.’ And that’s an example of just completely giving it up.”

A discussion followed about initiation, risk taking, and facing danger during the past and present. Various suggestions were given of activities in the high school that helped students face their fears.

# Jan Hus

## A Vignette

Eric Philpott

I am going to talk about Jan Hus. I don't know if anybody has heard of him. We are dealing with his life span from 1370 to 1415. To put that in perspective we have at that time the collapse of the feudal system and the burden of the crusades. The feudal system was not really designed to support that kind of extracurricular activity. We have the plague that has just absolutely shaken the core faith of Europe. People believed that they were preparing for the end of the world where the good would be separated from the wicked. When the plague came along and did not seem to care who was good or wicked, this created all sorts of unease – unease is not a strong enough word – panic. The plague is the greatest single calamity to have happened in Western Europe and in other parts of the world. One in three people died.

Then we also had an extremely destructive war going on – we are more or less in the middle of the Hundred Years War between England and France which is changing the knight and the soldier from the protector to the destroyer of regular people's lives. Economically these shifts mean that because of the plague there were not enough laborers. Now for the first time in Medieval Europe the laborers traveled and they would have a pick of where to work, and all of a sudden the wages went way up – actually even paying a wage as opposed to being a serf. Hot meals became a standard part of pay, for example, around this time. There is a whole shift in people's roles. People are traveling around. The towns are rising in significance.

We have also mentioned the universities that are becoming a very important part of the world then. In the Church in Hus' lifetime a great schism takes place. That very strongly marks people's relationship to the church. The church now descends into a certain amount of squabbling. Each bishop is sort of on the side of one or the other pope, and, of course, for the regular people this is very unsettling and creates a certain amount of uncertainty where you stand in religious matters. This is the world that Jan Hus is born in.

We are looking for the beginning of the consciousness soul in the modern age. We are looking for the beginning of really recognizing good and evil, for example. This is the beginning of meeting the ego through meeting the other and connecting through thought. The intellectual soul is able to grasp the world through thought, and the consciousness soul takes that a step further and in a certain sense makes a personal connection to that world. So these are the themes that we would be looking for in the beginning of the modern age. We also know that Steiner says that the consciousness soul age begins in 1413. Sometimes that seems to be qualified with

approximately 1413. So sometimes I wonder precisely where these dates lie. In the case of Hus we can identify a specific event in 1413.

I often begin the first history block with grade nine with the question “What is modern?” Or perhaps, “What is a modern person?” And then just as they are all ready to launch off I then throw a wrench in the way and I say, “But you can’t mention anything to do with technology.” So now of course they are going to have to consider what human qualities describe something that is modern. That is one of the exercises I might be doing on my first day.

A brief recapitulation of Jan Hus’ biography. He was born in 1370 in a village somewhere in the vicinity of Prague. His father died when he was a child. He is a peasant, but his mother seems to have had the idea that learning was something important and she saw to it that he got into one of these country schools where he learned Latin. She then moved with him to Prague where he got a kind of charity scholarship which allowed him to study at one of the great universities at that time. In the university he seems to have really distinguished himself. It is clear he was a great scholar already, also a very modest man. He is not actually a firebrand despite the impact that he has on the world. He is fairly modest, dedicated, soft-spoken, and in the early 1400’s he became famous in Europe as a great thinker and scholar. He becomes a “magista,” a master, and in fact travels around to other universities in what is today Germany as far as Cologne, we think, visiting them and listening to public disputations that were famous in the universities at that time. For example, you may know the nominalist-realist debate. Jan Hus was a realist, by the way. These debates were very educational for the inquiring mind and he was very interested in those types of things.

The king at this point is a Wenceslas. He has a brother, Sigismund, who will become the emperor. In Prague a chapel had been opened and it was typically as in those days given as a gift of a noble and it was given one interesting pre-condition; that in that chapel all preaching be done in Czech – the national language – so that all people could understand it. Now interestingly, Bohemia previously had, as in many parts of the Catholic world, their church services done in the vernacular. They were not done in Latin, and the first person who changed that was Gregory VII. So that was the original church experience and then it was changed to Latin which, of course, separated it fairly powerfully from the common person. So this Bethlehem Chapel was one impulse.

Another impulse which is very interesting is that quite a considerable number of refugee heretical groups, the Waldensians and Albigensians, had in fact settled in Bohemia, which is now the Czech Republic. They could not and would not practice as open sects, but they nevertheless brought with them a certain vigorous underground of religious influx that was not always orthodox in its interest or expression. Jan Hus, who is now rector of the university about 1402, is asked to be the priest in the Bethlehem Chapel. I had two hours in Prague many years ago and ran into this chapel. I had

no idea they had rebuilt it. There you see the reconstruction of Jan Hus' room. It is this tiny room with a wooden bed and a wooden desk and a wooden bench. Teeny. It is interesting because he was really famous for simplicity in his lifestyle and being unassuming. He did not have any possessions.

The chapel opened out to what is really as attractive as a warehouse could be, but it is a giant hall in which you could fit probably several thousand people, and there is a large platform from which he would have addressed the people. King Wenceslas and the royal family and great numbers of nobles, as well as common citizens of Prague, attended these weekly sermons. Of course, at some point Jan Hus is going to run into conflict with the church. I don't want to go into the whole detail of the story. Suffice it to say it does take the church a while to respond for two reasons. One, he is immensely popular and more importantly perhaps, highly respected. Really there is nobody who is going to fault him at the character level. Secondly, the church in a schism situation is quite weakened in dealing with these types of things.

So it took them some time and there was a time when the city was put under an interdict – like a ban – that sacraments could not be celebrated outside of the church. At a certain point while he was there in Prague there is a famous story of two learned men from England who came to the city and did a certain amount of speaking about religion which would normally draw a crowd in those days. They also went to a place where they drew two large pictures. One of them was Christ on the donkey entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and the other one was the pope riding on a horse with all his entourage and his glory and splendor. And that is all they did. They drew these pictures and left. Now this apparently was something that made a great impression on Jan Hus.

At the very same time the ideas of John Wycliffe in England were starting to filter into Bohemia. A Bohemian princess was the Queen of England, I don't know her name, but this is what led to a certain connection to the spiritual advisors. This led to the ideas of John Wycliffe finding particularly fertile ground in Bohemia. And what were these ideas? Essentially criticizing the church for its wealth and its power. In the simplest terms that is what John Wycliffe did. He also did something else; he translated the Bible into English. He defended his position by referring constantly to the Gospel. Essentially this gave Hus certain tools. Jan Hus did not agree with John Wycliffe on every point but that is not relevant to this discussion. Jan Hus was coming to the conclusion that there were problems with the church. This becomes the material he is preaching about, and he goes back to the Scriptures to study what Christianity was actually about. Of course, this incident with the pictures being put up was a wonderful way for the common persons who were not literate to also have that experience or to have the question put before them.

So in the course of his preaching and writing Jan Hus formulates six specific areas which he argues with the church. One of them is that the church is assembling great wealth; he has a problem with that. Christ is constantly telling people to give up their possessions. Second, simony, the purchase of an office, was a problem. Third, there was the sale of indulgences. He was far from the only person who was offended by that, by the way. Fourth, they had at that time a divided Eucharist which apparently they still have. The bread and wine was part of the church service, only the priests got both bread and wine, while the common people got only bread. The fifth point is the worship of relics. We still have that now; there are quite a lot of objects in a Catholic church besides the main object of worship. These are Hus' ideas. (He was known as John Haas in England.) So these ideas are of course what get him into trouble and they also made him very popular. He is clearly expressing concerns that live to some degree in the wider population and indeed in the nobility. Of course, there are some who say the nobles are just cynically seeing this as a way to weaken the church's position. I doubt that. It seems that many of these nobles were very devoted and went to considerable lengths to protect him later at great personal risk. It seems that they were pretty convinced of his ideas.

By 1410 or so he has for the second time left Prague and he won't return. He is now in the countryside where there is no shortage of people who are offering to put him up. He is one step ahead of the papal soldiers who are trying to arrest him as he goes from council to council preaching in the countryside and becoming increasingly famous and from the church's view, infamous. He is ordered to go to Rome by the Roman Pope. (At this point we have more than one Pope.) He refuses. He is sure that that means nothing. With a small group of followers, he snuck into Prague. He had not been there for about three years so for the citizens of Prague this was quite dramatic. He snuck in, got through the gates somehow, went into the Bethlehem Chapel, and there they painted these six errors of the church on the wall, and then they left. Of course, when people came and discovered this, it sent a thrill through them. That is a little bit of the background.

He was asked to go to the Council in Constance, Switzerland and clear his name. He refuses and now the emperor, the brother of the king, says if you go I'll grant you safe passage. Furthermore, would you please go because the reputation of Bohemia is at risk here, and we would approve if you cleared these things up. The emperor's agenda is primarily to resolve a schism, but there definitely is a political angle there. If an emperor can solve the church's problem again, then we have one-ups-man-ship and the emperor is back in the top dog position. So then Hus goes to Constance and I think he knows that he is probably not going to survive, but he still decides to go. He leaves fairly detailed instructions and messages for people, for example, "My brethren, I am departing with a safe conduct from the king to meet my numerous and mortal enemies. Beware of adorning thy house more than thy soul. And above all give thy care to the spiritual edifice."

When he gets to Switzerland, he is thrown into a dungeon. At first the emperor is angry. However, when the emperor gets there he realizes that if he gets too assertive, the popes will leave and the emperor will not have accomplished his political objective of cleaning up the church's mess. The emperor breaks his word. In fact, at a certain point the emperor could have freed Hus anyway because the guards of one of the popes fled. (Simultaneously there are three popes. Sigismund's first effort to resolve the schism was to appoint a compromise pope and the result was not one but now three.) So this third very compromised pope, I believe, fled first. He left the building where Hus was being kept unguarded. They could have just taken him out, but the emperor had really broken his word completely. Now we have a trial. Hus had very much hoped for a disputation in the medieval model and he had his facts straight but it was utterly a show trial.

There was a bit of a scandal because somebody spotted the verdict on the desk of the judges while they were going through the motions of the trial. This sent up quite an uproar. There was an immense amount of angry and pleading mail coming from Bohemia during this whole time, a process which took more than half a year. Word got back and people came riding in, nobles and all sorts of people, so that at the final sentencing there were probably as many supporters as enemies sitting in that hall where he was actually sentenced and found guilty. His defense was - I'll take anything back if you can prove on the basis of Scripture that I am wrong, and, of course, they could not. So all they did was the typical, boring Catholic Church trick of establishing a link between him and Wycliffe.

Wycliffe had meanwhile posthumously been declared a heretic. All the Church has to do is establish a link in their logic, and that means Hus is a heretic. Wycliffe definitely inspired Hus, but Hus did not take Wycliffe's words verbatim. Wycliffe believed that the Eucharist was totally symbolic, that it did not really transform into the body of Christ. Hus absolutely did not accept that position so he is not a slave of Wycliffe at all. But then comes the more important statement; when he is finally asked to recant a final time he says: **My conscience will not allow me.** Indeed later when he is led out to the field by the lake and is about to be bound to the post, they send out a last minute request which they had actually been working on for weeks trying to get him to recant, and he again said that his conscience would not allow him to do so.

The reason I think that is significant is that in making that statement he has taken a step, and I'm not entirely sure if he realizes it himself, of expressing the conscience of a person at that time. In a way your conscience was what authority told you to think. Now what is Hus' authority? It is what he has arrived at through his own hard work, his own thinking, his own wrestling with these things. When he says "my conscience" he is actually putting a new authority above the outer authority. This is much more complex than merely the outer authority of the church. It is a whole mind set.

Even if you read Hus' writings, you would find his manner is entirely medieval. I've got a long, long piece on the six errors of the church and he presents long discussions in the medieval way where there is a "what about this question or this and the answerer says this" and he goes back and forth. Then as he reaches the conclusion it is defended in this way "For as Augustine writes: and as" and he goes down this massive list of authors he is quoting. That, of course, is the mindset of anchoring it in an outer authority. His manner is still entirely medieval, the writing is totally in a medieval style, pedantic and very logical, boringly logical almost. But actually what he is doing is utterly different, utterly at odds with that world. There is nothing that this church can say to him. Even in burning him they know they are losing, they know they have lost because they sense that he will become a martyr.

They burn him and all of his possessions. All the ashes are dumped into the river. The chain is thrown to the bottom of a lake. Everything is done so there is not one trace of a relic that could then be worshipped. Then, of course, the outcome is, as you may know, one hundred years of Hussite wars. Bohemia goes into rebellion and never really comes out of it. That is the end of the strong presence of the Catholic Church in that part of the world. The story can be considerably embellished.

I want to tell you one other part. Right before Hus died he had a dream: **In the gloom of his dungeon he foresaw the plan of the true faith. Returning in his dreams to the Chapel of Prague where he had preached the Gospel, he saw the pope and his bishops effacing the pictures of Christ which he had painted on the wall. This vision distressed him, but on the next day he saw many painters occupied in restoring these figures in greater number and in brighter colors. As soon as their task was ended the painters were surrounded by an immense crowd. The crowd exclaimed, "Now let the popes and bishops come. They shall never efface them anymore."** And then we have a quote from Hus' himself: **"I maintain this for certain, that the images of Christ will never be effaced. They have wished to destroy but they will be painted afresh in all hearts by better preachers than myself."**

I really compare Hus to Augustine and the City of God. Sure you can wipe the paintings off the wall, but there is somewhere beyond that that nobody can touch. That cannot be broken. For Augustine this is the City of God. The City of God is a great big thing that is bigger than me. I can connect to it. I can be a citizen of it, but the City is bigger than I am. Now it is on an individual's heart that can't be broken, that can't be effaced. So I see here also this powerful imagery in his own words and his own vision for this new role of the individual which will be the only place where truth can be born in this new age. It can't be made secure out there but it can't be effaced when it is within.

There are many descriptions of the execution of Jan Hus, an astonishing number of eyewitness descriptions. One thing I did when I was in Germany was to read these two descriptions without any explanation on my part. One of them is a great supporter of Hus and the other is not –

although not immediately obvious. For the grade nine students we have the opportunity to weigh and compare and as a group we come to a conclusion. The beauty is that it is not instantly obvious that this is actually a detractor who very subtly tries to undermine at all sorts of levels the myth or potential myth. That is one practice for achieving something objective, and of course the next question is, well what do you think it was really like. Out of that, what do you imagine?

Another thing I would do somewhere along the way is perhaps a three-day process, maybe on day two or day three, I would show a picture, a woodcut which may be a forgery from an older time. The woodcut shows three figures which I have the students describe without analyzing. This is very painful for the students. Then after we have really described every single thing which is on the page, we begin analyzing it. What emerges is that this is a sort of a metaphorical picture where we have a figure seated, Wycliffe is striking a tinder and a tinder box striking a light. That is the beauty of putting a question to a group. When they work with it together they will eventually figure out what it is without my having to tell them. The Jan Hus figure is getting a light and he passes it to the next one and you can guess who that is – Luther. Obviously it is a metaphorical illustration of the Reformation. It says 16<sup>th</sup> century, but my colleague thinks it could have been made much later. I'm not going to let that spoil my using it in class.

The next question I ask on day two perhaps is why was Jan Hus modern? I have often thought, why am I teaching about Jan Hus in a main lesson that is mainly going to be about Canadian history? But every time I get these responses I find myself thinking, no, this is too good. I can't throw this out. I have some examples of quotes from students. I go home and I read them and I write out little quotes so I then read back a few selections from the group. When I give them the actual essay assignment at the end of all of this process their journal entries and what they have heard from their fellow students become part of the essay. So the essay begins with what is modern, then goes into the narrative of Jan Hus' life, and then concludes with why Jan Hus is modern. This is one set of activities that helps make it possible that they can really write their own version. I emphasize that I hope there are thirty different essays; there must be at least thirty good ways to write this story and it usually works.

# What is Modern?

Karl Fredrickson

What is unique about the “modern world,” apart from technology? Certainly freedom is a central theme, and nowhere can this be seen more vividly than with our dear Martin Luther, a clear choice for our history lessons. I would like to bring another side to this, however, a side that may sharpen our understanding of just how earth-shattering — and controversial — was the deed of this Augustinian friar.

I had the good fortune to study with the late John Olin, the great Erasmus scholar, an absolutely remarkable teacher who has written the definitive compendiums and commentaries. In short he was completely absorbed in the Erasmian approach to life. And what a remarkable man, this Erasmus. Here is a man whose exuberance, whose humor and artful expression enabled him to poke fun at the foibles of the church while making some very really pointed and profound criticisms. He was the first networker, corresponding with dozens of the leading thinkers across Europe. People copied down his comments and collected his letters, spreading them in crumpled manuscripts throughout the monasteries of Europe, where young monks would gleefully (and secretly) read them in their bunks. Before long his manuscripts became books and he became the toast of Europe. Read his outrageous satire (“Julius Excursus”) on the pope who led his armies against his enemies. Question authority, read the Bible in the original, think for yourself, abolish the entrenched corruptions of the Church! And yet it was all done with such infectious good humor that he was celebrated even when he traveled to Rome. He just had this way about him.

But for all of his criticisms and his frustration with the slow pace of reform, Erasmus was strongly wedded to the one universal Church, the spiritual home of a whole continent of Christians, wealthy and poor, noble and lowborn. And then comes Luther, who with very little humor sharpens the criticisms. All wait to see, What will Erasmus say? At first he comes to Luther’s defense, agreeing that it is time to more forthrightly acknowledge the corruptions and to face the need for serious reforms. He pleads with the Church fathers to not incite the young monk from Wittenberg, but the arguments back and forth reach a crescendo, sending shock waves across Europe.

But when it starts to approach the breaking point, Erasmus stands back. He cannot take the step with Luther. At that final point he has to dissociate himself. I remember John Olin being almost in tears. It was all so unnecessary, so regrettable, this split in the fabric of the church. A modern Catholic such as Olin embraces the humanistic spirit but laments the loss of the Church Universal. Just imagine what security, what comfort it brought to so many millions of people throughout those turbulent centuries, with all their strife, their plagues and famines. Imagine the role played

by the monasteries and the dedication of all those who prayed and worked within them. Imagine the peasants living outside those monastic walls who took such inspiration from them. And now the Lutherans simply closed them down and sent those humble monks and nuns to wander in the cold, dark world.

And such things were not only unnecessary, said Professor Olin, they might well not have happened at all. The Diet of Worms, the Excommunication of Luther, the marshalling of forces by the Emperor — in other times the movement would have been squelched before it could take root. Had it not been for Francis, king of France (and a good Catholic!), who engaged Emperor Charles in six years of bitter war, the revolt might have been nipped in the bud. Without those years to quietly build up their movement in the cold lands of northern Germany, Luther's people might not have had a chance. When the war finally ends (with the sack of Rome by the Spanish troops of the emperor in 1527), it is too late. Europe has been divided and it would continue to divide until the Enlightenment.

It is an interesting experience for a person who has grown up in a Protestant church to live into the experience of someone such as Dr. Olin who even today gets misty-eyed at the thought of what was lost through the Reformation and what “might have been” had a humanist renaissance been able to take root in a Europe still united by the one true Church. Erasmus firmly believed that to actually break up the Church would scatter the seeds of doubt across Europe, leading to endless schisms and, ultimately, to the loss of faith altogether. Now, Luther believes powerfully in God as a direct experience. He could achieve this without outer supports. But, without the church as an anchor, the next generation, or so believed Erasmus, would lose that sense of awe and wonder brought to them by all the rituals and dogmas of the one church. It's fine for intellectuals to question the core of the faith, but what about the common people?

I raise this as an issue because it would be good to come back to what are our modern attitudes. I don't like to leave our students at the Renaissance, reveling in the new ideas, the new forms of self-expression brought by the Reformation, without realizing just how earth-shaking all these changes were — **and the dangers for humanity that arose**. And what are those dangers?

Luther starts to challenge the authority of the church; he is followed by Calvin and then Zwingli. You start getting all these different interpretations. There is no end. And so on and on and on. To me the big moment is the Council of Trent beginning in 1545. There the Catholic Church had an opportunity because they said, yes, the corruption is true, we have to clean it up. They saw that Erasmus was right in his campaign to have people study the scriptures themselves. But then the council members make the fateful decision to try to get those pesky northern Europeans back into the fold. We have to get those Protestants back into the Catholic Church to save their souls. And so they set up the Inquisition again; they set up the index of forbidden books. I might liken it to the way we started our high

school – we did not have a rule book. When things happened we responded. But after a while we started to harden and anticipate and put in more and more codes of behavior and that is what started to happen in this counter-reformation. The Catholic Church hardened what was really quite flexible before. Instead of a Church-led reformation you have a counter-reformation.

And so my dear Professor Olin saw a double tragedy of a dividing church and then a reaction, a counter-reformation, that caused additional divisions, additional tensions. It could have all happened so differently, he felt. And what was the result? Not the Christian humanism of Erasmus but a clash of dogmas and then, after the Enlightenment, a kind of religious exhaustion where nobody much cared anymore. What is left is a kind of secular humanism on weekdays and a church that is there on Sundays but that is about it. The church, whatever form it takes these days, has all-too-often been stripped of its mystery and, in Luther's homeland, largely stripped of its congregants, as well.

How does all this relate to the history curriculum? Well, for one thing it can be too convenient to see Luther purely as the archetypal hero of human individuality and free expression. We run the familiar peril of teaching history as a *fable convenue*. In the first place, it didn't have to happen the way it did; history might have taken a very different course. In the second place, it is important to understand just what was lost in the process of the Reformation. This took me many years to understand and, when I did, I had a much deeper appreciation of what was at stake. A huge amount was lost in this transition to modern ways of thinking: the sense for the connectedness of all things, the natural forms of community that so supported our existence, the sense for the mystery of all things. Luther may not have intended for this to happen, but he certainly set it in motion, as Erasmus predicted and my Erasmian professor lamented.

With Luther we headed more firmly down the path to the individual and toward freedom. That is true. But there now needs to be a new sense of community, rooted in the recognition, in full freedom, of what people all over the world are bringing toward us. It all comes down to the question of freedom or, one might say, the cost of freedom. This Luther-an sense that I must consider things afresh, apart from traditions, apart from what the majority says, and weigh it according to my own sense of the truth, this is something that is wreaking havoc throughout the world. It is a necessary havoc, to be sure, but the dangers are there nevertheless. As you give up the old sense of group and the old natural connection with the world around you, you have to find a new sense of group, a new connectedness, born out of the individual — and that is taking us hundreds of years to find. And how uncomfortable it is. It is an exciting time.

# The Printing Press as Symptom of Change of Relationship between the Individual and Outer Authority

A Vignette

Betty Staley

I am always fascinated by what things have to be in place for a turning point to happen. I will address the printing press as a significant turning point in the Renaissance. The printing press is one invention in a long line of significant inventions relating to communication by print.

First we have to look at what made large scale printing possible. To do that we have to go back to the first century AD in China. So often we have to go back to China when we look for the roots of technological achievement. The Chinese made many of these things as toys or they invented something, but they did not apply it. The same thing happened with firecrackers and gun powder.

Let us now turn to writing. First of all the Chinese had paper. Before 105 AD they made writing surfaces out of bark and bamboo strips or they used silks for priceless kinds of things. But in 105 AD they discovered rag paper by taking cheap cloth scraps that were accumulating, wetting down the cloths and mixing them with plain fiber. So they came up with an easy and cheap source of writing material. At the same time the Chinese came up with innovations in ink. They also developed moveable clay type which allowed them to do block printing. Because they used characters it was very clumsy to try to make this clay type hold a clear impression of the character and so they basically left it alone, but they knew how to do this.

Seven hundred years later the Arabs captured Chinese prisoners and they learned the secret of making paper and of this moveable clay type. They worked with that for about 400 years. It is so amazing the numbers of years in between. Then in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century after the Arabs moved into Spain, they revealed these processes to the Europeans. Some historians feel that the particular linear script of Latin and other European languages lent itself very well to being able to impose the letter into metal – but metal did not come yet.

So the Arabs brought the idea of woodcuts. In the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century the rag paper became very important because what they had been using was sheep and calf skins – vellum and parchment. There was a limit to the available resources. During this time books were hand printed by the monks in the monasteries who beautifully wrote these manuscripts. The process of writing was a meditative, spiritual experience from which they would copy pages from the gospel and decorate them. But basically we know the clergy were the most usual readers while most people were illiterate. Most of the books were written in Latin.

The 1300s was also the time of the humanists who became fascinated with Greek manuscripts. Scholars came from Constantinople in the 1300s to an area outside of Florence where they shared the manuscripts that had been found in the east. Cosimo de Medici sponsored a gathering of the scholars who called each other by Greek names and brought the missing pages of manuscripts to share with each other. Some years later, the Saracens invaded Constantinople and the scholars had to leave. They remembered the hospitality of Cosimo de Medici and so they returned to Florence and, together with the humanists, spawned the reawakening of study of the classics. To study the classics at that time you had to read Greek and Latin. Since some of these manuscripts had not been seen for two thousand years, imagine the joy of these European humanists when they were able to meet with the Eastern scholars and have access to these documents.

What was the content of the manuscripts? Yes, there were the tragedies and so on but there were also scientific matters that the Greeks had written about as well as rhetoric and philosophy. The scholars were deeply involved in thinking about these things. We can imagine them as a kind of think tank.

Meanwhile the Church was very strong at that time and Florence was in transition from being a little village to the richest city in Europe. One could consider cochineal dye another symptom because it was responsible for the transformation of Florence which had been a sleepy little village with shepherders. A trader brought cochineal, a purple dye which holds the color fast – it does not wash out – from the eastern Mediterranean. At that time Flanders was the center of textile development and cloth dyed with strong purple color was very expensive. Only the wealthy could afford the purple. Because of finding a source of purple dye which could be brought in great quantities, bit by bit Florence became an incredible trading center. In order to manufacture the cloth, weavers of wool were needed, dyers would dye the cloth in beautiful colors which attracted traders from other parts of Europe. In order to purchase the cloth, people had to carry money over long unsafe distances, so someone got the idea of credit. The Medici family put out a bench, **el banco**, in the square and that was the beginning of a bank. It is interesting to see how a city develops – you have the dyers who form guilds. You have the furriers to put fur collars on. You have the leather. All of these trades concentrated in Florence allowing it to become a bustling center of craft and trade. The merchant class that develops uses its money to decorate the churches. At the same time some of the merchants and princes become interested in the manuscripts, as well as in mythology, which had been previously forbidden by the Catholic church.

Now let us return to the question of printing. In addition to the humanists and scholars who gathered outside of Florence, others wanted to read these materials but they didn't have the original. The only recourse they had was to have the books hand copied. This reminded me of my early Waldorf training when there were half a dozen books which I copied by hand because they weren't readily accessible. That is what these people had

to do. They had to copy a book. A bound manuscript cost as much as a court official's monthly salary, the equivalent of \$2,000 today.

An intellectual ferment was occurring in the 1400s, a group of people who had a tremendous need to read and discuss and think. In northern Europe the discussion was focused on religious questions as with Jan Hus, Wycliffe and Martin Luther. In Italy the interest was more focused on the pagan classics. Thus there were two different areas of interest in which a need existed to have important papers accessible for personal use. In addition this was a time in which scholars enjoyed arguing, disputing – in the Church as well as in the universities. Readers were becoming sophisticated. The class of people who were reading was becoming interested in travel and wanted travel books and almanacs. Mapmakers started making maps but they had not figured out how to mass-produce them. Other people wanted romance novels and poetry. A hunger grew in an emerging class of people, mostly urban, who wanted to have their own copies. Another interest was in the printing of music. Before 1500 there were 8 to 20 thousand books. So even before the printing press a significant number of books were being made. You could get a job anywhere if you could copy a book. So travel books, as well as guides to the inquisition, were made in larger and larger numbers. Meanwhile the monks were still making their beautiful manuscripts.

Gutenberg, originally named Johannes Gensfleisch, was born between 1397 and 1400. He was making and selling things to pilgrims who were still going on crusades and traveling to different holy sites. He realized that he couldn't make things fast enough for them and there would be a big profit if he could mass produce the maps and guides then he could really make a fortune. So he spent about twenty years adapting the technology. He used the wine press, the textile press and the hand presses used by the papermakers. He adapted these three presses to make the first printing press. He wanted to be able to print out thousands of copies from this type. He was a goldsmith, very familiar with working with different metals. Instead of using clay he found he could get a very precise edge on the letter using metal. European letters lent themselves to straight lines – most of them could become ninety degree angles, whereas it would be very hard to do so with Hebrew or Aramaic. He worked it out and made the molds and at the same time he improved the ink. He used oil paint and copper and lead to get the high glossy finish which is still used today. By 1450 Gutenberg had brought together his business skill and his skill with metals to make a significant technology which has lasted at least five hundred years.

The first book he chose to print was the Bible in 1455. By 1600 there were 200,000 different books or editions being printed in runs of 1,000 each. By 1600 the idea of the printing press had spread not only all over Europe but to all the colonies. Wherever explorers went, wherever traders went, wherever colonists went they took the printing press and they also took it to China and India.

He printed two hundred copies of the Gutenberg Bible, some were on vellum, some on paper. He arranged the text in double columns. At first

printers tried to make the books look just like the hand copied manuscripts. Over time they started to put spaces in between words, add a table of contents, and organize the book differently. The big demand was not for bibles because this was before Luther's time. The big demand was for trade and the need for documentation when people traded and also for the documents used by governments. Bureaucracy was growing and cities were growing all over Europe and every city had its own bureaucracy. Guttenberg went on to print over 200,000 indulgences at one time. Because of the printing press the number of indulgences that could be sold by the Church was greatly expanded.

Across Europe **scriptoria** – writing shops – were set up in different cities, and people were in great demand to work in them. The Church was rebuilding and it needed money to finance its programs. Indulgence selling became a profitable way for the Church to increase its income. Of course, this is what Luther objected to so vociferously. (The ranks of purgatory were depleted enormously.)

The printing press was serving all three realms of society – political, economic, and cultural – as well as many theological texts including copies of the Bible. The problem was that the Church could not control the printing shops, theological texts or any other kind of texts that were being printed. We know what happened with Luther's 95 theses, how they were disseminated into different universities and so on. The fact that the Bible was translated into the vernacular and printed creates a significant effect in Europe. So the Church, which has been the sole custodian of spiritual truth now was being questioned. Luther's contribution is, of course, very, very great here, but questioning had started already in the atmosphere of the early 1400's when people began to doubt whether in fact they had to live a life that would bring them reward in heaven or enjoy earthly life as the Greeks and Romans had expressed.

The word I use with the students is the “big D” – doubt. We look at situations where the students went from trust in their parents to beginning to question whether their parents really were gods or at least perfect human beings. In the eleventh grade the issue of doubt of authority, whether parents or other significant individuals or the government, awakens great interest. Doubt does not mean to give up a relationship– because you still live at home with your parents, you still do most of the things they want, but you have a little doubt, you realize that they make mistakes. Something similar happened in history. We should not imagine that these people of the early Renaissance threw over the church because they didn't.

You have the wonderful scene of Michelangelo (whether it is true or whether Irving Stone made it up) when he is up on the scaffold, and the pope demands to know when he will finish painting the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo says it will be done when it is done. But the pope pressed him to have it completed for Easter Sunday. After several more attempts of trying to keep from making a promise to the pope, Michelangelo says “It will be done when it is done, your holiness.” After the pope presses further,

Michelangelo gets down on his knees, kisses the pope's ring and says "It will be done as you say." That dialogue is really interesting for the students because even though they question their parents and they don't like what their parents may say or do, their parents still have the authority.

The printing press brings into the privacy of one's own home a copy of the Bible. Just think about what that means – that up until this time you learned about the Bible through the church. You went into churches or cathedrals and looked at the frescos and you were in awe. You had to listen to the priest to understand what the words of the Bible meant. Now if you could read, you could question what the priest said, you could come to your own interpretation. The combination of literacy and thinking, doubting and thinking were coming together.

Luther, of course, challenges the church as an individual, and this has a major effect on European and American history. However, it is with the advent of the printing press and the ability of people to read the Bible themselves that their individual relationship to God becomes personal and individual. A different kind of consciousness awakens.



**Karl Frederickson speaks about symptomatology**

# A Conversation about the Consciousness Soul and the History of Reading

The following conversation includes comments made in an informal manner. I have tried to keep the flow of conversation, and therefore the structure is casual.

I gave some talks about the year 1,000 and the year 2,000 in the fall so I was thinking about this topic. Around the year 1,000 we have several interesting events. I wonder whether they should have continued and yet they don't. One is the interaction between Christians, Jews, and Muslims in Spain at that point could be considered one of the world's great cultural moments. Another significant event is that Leif Eriksson the Viking and his men reach North America and they settle there. They don't just sort of show up and then leave. They really try to establish themselves there. The Vikings are partly marauders, but they are probably even more so traders and international connectors – traders with the Arabs and absolutely everywhere. For example, the people in Moscow or the Rus, they were so fed up with fighting amongst themselves that they actually asked the Vikings to come back and rule them. What I am saying is that there is an event, a theme of intermingling and meeting happening, but it's not the moment itself because the effect of the event is felt later. In 1066 William is in England and then there is the separation from France, and the building of the monarchies ensues. This sense of cultural identity really has to occur before the consciousness soul can arise.

It is so interesting because it is 1066 also that we have William in England and then there is the separation, and then we have the building of the monarchies. That sense of cultural identity really has to occur before the consciousness soul can arise.

Before the monarchies come the towns.

That's right. That is essential.

Then we have what is characteristic in German and French areas. They are not just small kingdoms anymore. They begin to join to a larger kind of force. In some cases they just intermarry and larger groups get formed.

But isn't that what is happening today with mergers – international mergers.

You mean takeovers.

And these big companies merging, it is like these kings and queens marrying their kids to make a bigger empire.

But it is not the critical moment because maybe something had to happen before that moment could happen, before we had developed a certain kind of intellectual independence, especially in England where the consciousness soul is supposed to be born in the language itself.

But that is the place where it actually does work, where it does begin to flourish. I was just thinking of how ripe they were for a change and the fact that that mingling occurred for the next three or four hundred years in order for the consciousness soul to emerge.

It is almost as though there is a seeding of this mixing and intermingling and then there is a pulling back where something more individual is established. There was a different character forming in the intellectual soul, especially between 1,000 and 1,300.

The cathedrals were built, for one thing.

Then you have the whole high middle ages that comes along with alchemy which is the father of medicine.

Can I make a mixing and mingling comment? Mixing and mingling happens all the time in history. But the thing that could have been different at this particular point is mixing where you actually

meet and acknowledge the other. That was happening in Spain. You went into Spain because you knew that was where people could teach you and there was this recognition of the other and the quality of the other. This was the case for a few hundred years which were preceded by periods of intolerance and harshness and followed by a strong period of fundamentalism and brutality. Now that is a new kind of meeting. Of course that is the challenge that is the central theme of our age. But that is different, let's say, from the mixing and mingling which was very profound at the end of the Roman empire, or any other great migration. That is happening throughout history. So mixing and mingling is not a new theme, but meeting and recognizing something of the other – that is a new thing.

There is Arab knowledge coming into Europe particularly from the south of Spain particularly. Coming up with it and actually slightly preceding it is the troubadour impulse from Spain. And if either one came without the other there would be a real imbalance. But they are both coming and more and more scholars are recognizing that – that there is a direct line from Spain that leads up to the troubadours and that leads up to Parzival.

You asked the question what is it that singularized it. What about the power of the church? It would not tolerate the loss of Christians and so the inquisition was set.

You mean faith – not by death – but by changing faith.

Right. And so who was it who was stimulating the re-conquest for 700 years? The church was going to get Spain back. There was no way they could afford to lose, and was that a retarding element? To me it seems like it.

But remember this is 1200 when that starts because the real key period for that mingling when the door seems to be open is from about 1050 to 1200, the so-called 12<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance. And then comes this reaction to say, wait a minute there are too many crazy streams going here. We have to regulate how this comes in. We've got these Cathars who have very much to do with that and then we have this Arab thinking and we'd better regulate that – we better establish a university – these schools have run amok.

That is the first inquisition – 1200.

1200, virtually the same year they founded the universities in Paris and London.

Because then with the counter-reformation the Church reignites the Inquisition. But it already had been very well established. In fact some of the early books that were published were manuals for the inquisitors.

You mean printed manuals?

Printed manuals for the inquisitors.

It is funny that this comes up because this is one of the little projects I want to explore further. I think that it's a sign of new varieties of religious ideas emerging because they have been emerging all along and primarily have taken the shape of monastic movements which were very much strengthened and reinvigorated. Actually what it really is also is a sign that the Church as an institution is growing powerful. And it has not been powerful before that. So, for example, the earlier conflicts between Spain and Europe were led by kings like Charlemagne, not by the church. These were kings who understood themselves to be representing the Christian faith, in a certain sense more leaders of the faith than the Pope was at that point. But later on in the 1200s we have the Church bit by bit having gained such power that it starts to actually impose it. It is interesting that prior to that it was considered the territory of the bishop to deal with these heretical movements. But they had a poor track record and really did not feel the need to use force. Sometimes the bishops would get converted anyway and join the movement itself and you see just a touch of this looser freer Christianity that it had once been. It is because the bishops were not dealing with it effectively that at a certain point the Church felt that it had the power and organization to send in an actual representative and that was the inquisitor. At first these people went in only persuading in much more the

medieval style of debate. And then slowly as it was clear that that was not really going to do anything, out came the instruments of suppression, force, and ultimately even the use of terror to intimidate. It is a very profound shift.

I recently heard on an ideas program one of my favorite scholarly guys, Ivan Illich, who seems to pop up again with something interesting to say. He is a medievalist actually. I heard an incredible series on the history of reading where reading shifts in consciousness and that there is in fact an underlying link to this very shift of the inquisition and that is that in the 12<sup>th</sup> century books begin to change. They have already begun to change by putting spaces between the words. In that time a book about animals – a bestiary – was written and the animals in the book were put in alphabetical order. Have you heard that?

I have actually seen this book

And the writer who I think was a king of some kind apologized because he was putting them in what he considered random order but he said it may be useful because you can find the information this way. Of course the animals were supposed to be distributed according to some cosmic order and in that case I believe according to the virtue they represented. This began a shift from reading as a meditative experience where you enter in and you speak aloud (almost nobody read without speaking aloud) to the use of indexes and tables of contents and organizing material in a different way. What is reading at that point? Reading is recreating the words on the page. Bringing them back to life and entering into them; it was a prayerful type of activity. And now the shift is happening – the book is becoming a kind of a storehouse of information.

Illich points out that right around this time the book starts to appear all over the place in representations of art such as sculptures. At what time is this? The 1200's – around 1200 – a little before and after. **The Book of Judgments** – God has a book with all the names of those who will be saved – is on the sculptures and above the doors of churches. Now also comes in for the first time the use of torture to extract information. Why? Because this metaphor now exists, the book has created a new metaphor, that there is information hidden underneath. In the past you would ask the person, “Are you a heretic?” If the person said, “No.” that was the end of the story. Of course, I am simplifying. But what they said would be taken at face value, but now people want to know what you really think. What does it say inside the book in your soul and they want to force that information out of you. When that shift comes. . . .

The spoken word is not sufficient. I mean not initially – in terms of your metaphor.

That is right. There is the idea that there is something hidden away, closed inside a book.

Architecture. The sub-structure is no longer apparent which in the cathedrals you can see but in the Renaissance you cannot see the sub-structure.

That's right. And around that time they began the more vicious type of inquisition when they intended to rip out, force out of a person what he or she really thinks.

At what point does the silent reading start to come in? Around then?

That's right.

Up until then it was always referred to as “*lexio de . . .*” – divine reading. You enter into a divine space and do it out loud. It was considered strange not to read out loud.

That's right.

There is an anecdote I think it's about Cicero – he is singing and his lips are moving but no sound is issuing forth.

I've read that one – they think he is possessed actually.

There was also a friend of Augustine – and he could read without moving his lips. People were scared because they didn't know what he is thinking.

The word becomes divorced from the sound. As you read you actually hear sounds.

You do.

When you teach reading you have to continue the process of learning to read as a tool by making sure they no longer sound the words.

There is something that happens developmentally at a certain point when the child can divorce the word from the sound. A natural separation happens in the child, and if it does not happen then there is something wrong. Part of it can be seen in children who simply cannot get away from reading out loud or even moving the lips or something. In the Middle Ages this was OK.

There are leaning disabled students who can't get the sound out because they are still writing what they hear in various interesting ways. Shakespeare himself had many different spellings of the same word. As you read you actually hear sounds. In the reading process when you teach reading what you have to do to continue the process of learning to read as a tool is to make sure they no longer sound the words.

There is another picture that comes up in the Middle Ages and that is the map. In one of the prevalent maps the earth is the body of Christ. It is a T inside of an O. The T is the arms of Christ and then the heart is Jerusalem. Africa is indicated with the words "wild beasts eat you up down there." This T and O map depicts the medieval idea that the earth is the body of Christ. Within a few hundred years a new kind of map emerges – showing the earth as a depiction of a mathematical relationship of degrees, longitude, and latitude. That is a tremendous change in consciousness. I often use those two symptoms next to each other in a Renaissance block because we eliminated the cartography block years ago when we put in courses on Africa, Asia and Latin-America.



**Eric Philpot listening to Betty Staley**

## A Conversation on the Teacher's Role Concerning Contemporary Issues

Contemporary events come up at the beginning of discussions, and I think it is very helpful for the students to be aware of what is going on in the world. In terms of content I take for my 20<sup>th</sup> century course the background of the Nazis and the Nazi regime and Adolf Hitler and then the Civil Rights movement. I do it always with the following theme — what are you going to do when something like this meets you? Will you recognize it and how are you going to act? I'm not interested in answering the question, I am interested in putting the question really strongly.

How would you answer it for yourself? How do you know which event is the event you must face or all hell is going to break loose? How do you know? You don't know. That is the situation. Nobody can tell you from the outside – you will only discover it on the inside – that is our age – there is no answer out there that is true anymore. The answer is the one that you work HARD – it may be that you work hard for one moment in your life.

I don't tell the story of Owen Meany (*A Prayer for Owen Meany*) by John Irving, but I love it because it depicts an artistic representation of an entire life preparing for one moment. Each of us can probably relate a point at which we did step out and do something. Then there is always this situation that when you get busy and you have mortgages to pay, it is a different situation to risk and make decisions to go into protest or get yourself thrown in jail. This decision changes as you get more and more established.

That is a real question because you know there was one of the men in the White Rose, the German resistance group against the Nazis in Munich. He was a soldier in a medical battalion and he was sent to Russia. What did it mean when he took his water can and walked across the train station to the group of Jewish refugees, directly defying an order not to give aid, and he shared it with them. The officers could see him doing it, all his comrades could see him doing it, and then he walked back. Nothing happened. Those kinds of moments can be so key in the larger scheme.

There is a wonderful quote by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Protestant Minister who died resisting the Nazis. The one attributed to Bonhoeffer is “When the Nazis came and arrested all of the Jewish Rabbis we said nothing. When they came to arrest all of the Roman Catholic priests, we said nothing. When they came to arrest all of us { Protestant clergy}, there was no one left to say anything.” (Note: It is not completely clear whether Bonhoeffer or Martin Niemoller said this. There are two similar quotes, sometimes attributed to one or the other, both of whom were Protestant clergy active in the Resistance. Bonhoeffer was hanged, Niemoller survived the war and traveled to countries speaking the following words: “First, they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak for me.” )

You can have great discussions with students about these quotations. You can also look at it from another perspective. What are you going to do when your children come to you and say “Why didn't you say something?” What will you do? Whatever issue it is that you feel strongly about, abortion or whatever, what did you do? Your children may ask, “Did you think it was wrong?” “Yah I did. “ . . . but what did you do?” How far will you go when you feel strongly about something? How much will you inconvenience yourself? Would it be embarrassing to stand outside with a placard because people might recognize you? What if it affects your job? What if it affects your relationship? What will people think about you and where will you go with that?

I think it is so important from the ninth grade through the twelfth to again and again give them examples of simple things that people have done for other people. This helps the students build examples, so they don't always think, well maybe I will go through my life and it will never happen, so I never have to do it. But that is not true. All kinds of little things are happening in your community that you could become aware of if you chose to – you could respond.

I just want to ask, is there a temptation on the part of the school to support certain kinds of political activism?

What do you mean by support?

Well, we have had an interesting situation in the last year where a couple of our colleagues are fairly prime movers of the Green Party locally.

Last fall when the whole West Nile virus was becoming a major topic of discussion and it looked as if there was going to be spraying going on in our environs here, one of our teachers actually took some students to a demonstration during school time.

No, students went and he later met them over there, but they went on their own.

During school with the tacit support of the school?

When he ran for the Green Party we had something in our school newsletter about his running for it and some parents wrote and asked, Is this really right? Is the school really taking an active position? Is there something on the other political candidates – one of whom I tend to think is an extremely worthy person?

It seems like a pretty slippery slope.

The Gulf War — the bombing of Baghdad — was a traumatic event in my life. I had to make a decision about what to do when the students said, “What should we do?” “How can we protest?” I said “I will meet you down there, I will accompany you.” But I did not take a stand on it. I never took a stand on it. Yes, it is painful. Yes, people are dying. Yes, there is a cold war. Let's look at it. I think what we have to do is be in balance. They asked me to talk at the morning circle about what I had done in Seattle and share what I had observed.

Again, it is bringing them the phenomena – what can be done about this. Will you stand up at the right moment? But I always say to them – timing is everything. How many mistakes have I made in my own life because the timing was not right? Look at the great men who try to bring something and that impulse dies and then another tries to bring it and the moment is right and it comes.

I think bringing this balance where their own thinking can be activated and they can then make a free choice. But what is really right? It is not just the courageous deed which every active person wants to do – it is doing it in a way that is going to be effective for the future. You have to have a larger consciousness. It is not just to do it because the other guys are bad.

I am thinking about a eurythmist in California named Gabriella Rondazo who has been very aware of the child prisoners in Uganda. Well she has done something – she has created a citizens project. She is working with the U.N. and is getting funding for her project. They finally have captured back some of these child soldiers who are not yet fourteen or fifteen years old. These children have killed, they have been harlots in the army. They are very, very damaged. Many therapists went over as volunteers and worked with the children helping them to relive the memories and trying to heal them, but they were getting worse and worse and worse. Gabriella talks to them on the internet and on the phone and says they need art and starts sending them leftover materials. Right now I am working with a group of people to get her the funding to go over there because the minute they start the artistic work the children begin to heal.

I wanted to add to that. My mother's history teacher in Holland was the sole communist member of Parliament in the Dutch parliament. He never taught anything from a Marxist point of view and I have always respected that so much. I feel that as a history teacher I am called upon to be an active contempo-

rary. But what I believe or what I want to take action on – that is not why I am staying in the classroom. The other thing about wondering will you be ready for the moment— I study these topics with the students– the point I am trying to make is that the challenge is the challenge of trying to be awake. The trick the Nazis counted on was enough people willing to be asleep. It was the same thing with the southern US with desegregation and all of that.

I am always inspired by Christopher Frye’s poem from his play, *A Sleep of Prisoners*, and I say those lines with the students as well as other poems like it.

### A Sleep of Prisoners

The human heart can go the lengths of God.

Dark and cold we may be....., but this

Is no winter now.

The frozen misery of centuries, cracks, begins to move.

The thunder is the thunder of the floes, the thaw, the flood, the upstart Spring.

Thank God our time is now when wrong

Comes up to face us everywhere, never to leave us. Till we take

The longest stride of soul men ever took.

Affairs are now soul size, the enterprise is exploration into God.

But what are you making for?

It takes so many thousand years to wake.

But will you wake? For pity’s sake?

— Christopher Frye

This awakesness is a quality that we are called upon to tend. And I leave it to the students to discover for themselves what it means. They may discover much greater things than I can. And there may be something they will see that none of us will see. I have my own blinders so what I can do is give them everything I can know, and then they will go home and look all this stuff up and come in with a whole new picture. That has to shift what I bring to them.

On the other hand I think that in tenth and eleventh grade students need to know what happened between the Hutus and the Tutsees in Rwanda because the holocaust isn’t something removed. It is here in a different form.

When one asks where is fascism today in America, it is alive in education and in the testing process.

Do we call that fascism?

Do you actually say to them – recognize the fascism in the current situation?

You can recognize the fascism in the current situation without calling it fascist. The word fascism is so laden with the word holocaust ... people doing these things believe in what they are doing as opposed to people who set out to systematically take away the identity of another human being.

They believe all this testing is to free children from the inner city, from being caught forever in the gutter of society.

You can look at the pros and you can look at the cons. The students are always asking me what I think about it. More and more I tell them that what I think is important is for them to believe that when they walk into the classroom I am really interested in what they think about it. I want them to be grounded in something so I push them by saying, “Well, on what do you base your opinion? What information have

you brought with you in order to take that point of view?” And I have them challenge me again and again. “How much do you really know about that before you form an opinion?” And then they are really wide awake. They want to know if I am a Republican or Democrat and I ask them to take a vote – which am I? And if they vote about half and half, it is fine. It has been half and half for years and years. I am not a Republican – that’s what they think. They are so far on the liberal side that they think someone in the middle is on the right. Never mind, anyway. The whole thing is do they really believe there is space for them to think and reason through an issue? The one thing I want to put before them again and again is that where my bias comes in is that I fundamentally believe the key here is to always be evaluating what we are doing based on is it for the good of other people. And is the other person being seen as a human being regardless of race and color. I have a really hard time when something comes into the classroom as it occasionally does that would dispel other people’s rights for convenience.

Like what?

Well if it is an unborn child – well, they know how I feel about abortion. And maybe they can reason on behalf of pro-choice and I will accept that, but if it is based on the feeling that someone feels it is inconvenient to be pregnant, then I think they have to think it through a little bit more. Then students are free – free to say anything in the classroom.



**Douglas Gerwin expressing a point of view**

# The Middle Ages and the Advent of the New Mysteries: Medieval English

John Wulsin

First of all I have to say on behalf of us non-historians that we feel privileged to be included in on this work. I don't know if we are sort of like minstrels sitting at the fire with the warrior because I don't know quite what their relationship was but it is a pleasure. I had been assuming that Jim Staley would be offering as well, so I thought I would just try to do something very distilled. However, in Jim's absence I thought maybe I'd have to bring much more context, but this has been so rich that I may just be able to go back to the distilled offering.

Yesterday you historians spoke about the feeling that you especially worked with the thinking of the students. Then you spoke about working with the imagination of the students. As I wonder about the difference in the two disciplines of history and literature, what first comes to mind is that if the historian tries to think about what happened in the past, literature people work more with the stories of what happens in kind of an eternal presence. We certainly do work with the imagination, but I see how you do as well – you certainly do work with thinking but perhaps more out of the imaginative material. We do pay attention to the language of the literature in a way that in some degree the historians do, but we pay closer attention than the historians are normally called to. However, even so, we literature lovers often can be more attentive to the story being told than to the way it is being told, and we have to work to be more conscious of the language itself.

One of the weaknesses you might say of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum from the language point of view is that the great Parzival and the great Dante are not fashioned out of the English language itself so that they are likely to be more a content experience for the students than an experience in which the language is working directly on the student. So how do we as English teachers perhaps offer a few indicative potent clues to you history teachers in terms of what our English language may reveal about the time and also about how the students might be affected by working with it?

You all know that the old Anglo-Saxon is fashioned over almost a thousand years. So if you consider Julius Caesar's Roman-Latin as a first invasion of the Celtic speaking peoples of the islands, then you have some more Latin later with the Christians coming in the 500 to 600s to Canterbury. And you have the Danes and the Angles and the Saxons and the Jews, and you have some of the Christians coming in from Ireland. And then you have some of the Norse coming further from the north. On the one hand, you have this whole sentient soul culture that Eric described so vividly yesterday having sustained a kind of stable enduring consciousness for an in-

credibly long time. On the other hand, you have a completely non- image oriented culture, much less a writing oriented culture. I don't even know how far back in fact some of those interwoven Mosque designs go – I don't know that a lot of them do go back much further than 800 or 1000 years or so. So it is a culture which lives orally much later than most cultures in the West and lives very mobily and very much on the elements and in relation to the elements and has a very expansive gesture in virtually all directions.

So in the 800s or so on the British island we have King Alfred (871-899) uniting Saxons with some of these blends of Danish and Jute lingo and yet holding the Danes at an agreed upon frontier. Some time during this time of the 800s, 900s or perhaps 1000s there is this story told of Beowulf and it sounds something like this. So, just listen:

[John speaks a passage from **Beowulf**]

So everyone probably recognizes the line - but it is a very simple description of Grendel coming over the moors. Just listen some more, or you can look as well if your eye works more than your ear, and you will hear on one line.

[He speaks another line from **Beowulf**]

Duh do duh do – DUH do. So you have four strong beats or stresses. (John speaks) and you are probably noticing and you may know already a couple of things. One is in between that **Com More Mist** we have these recurring “m” sounds in three of the four stresses. The next line you have **Grendle Goman Gorus ur a bear**. We have these recurring “g” sounds in three of the four stresses. **Um ta la mans sca among ta cunins**. And this pattern continues and it continues and it continues and within these four strong stresses is any possible variable of unpredictable combinations of unstressed syllables ebbing and flowing as they need to or do.

I think you also will not have noticed any rhyme at the ends of the lines. So we have on the one hand a line which is strongly anchored or shackled and you can almost imagine these warriors banging their shields strongly anchored and shackled to the consonantal sound which we are helped through Steiner to experience ourselves as being especially relating to the physical world around us. Yet the end of one line in relation to the end of the next line is completely open in terms of what sounds may come. The sounds could lead us anywhere apart from this very regular four beat line with the recurring consonantal sound.

You also know in one of your great moments you historians would be able to talk about that summer in 1066 when it took three months for the winds to get right somehow even though the predominant winds are from the southwest in that southern English town. But when William finally does defeat the exhausted Harold at the Battle of Hastings, he then went up north and defeated the Vikings and came right back again. We know this as the Norman Conquest.

Things change and you know that the language experience on the island is a three-fold strand for three centuries with the Norman-French for the rulers, the Latin for the clerk and the clergy, the law and the church, and the Anglo-Saxon for the people working the land, for the peasants.

Then we come to a language in the 1300s which is a new blend. (Participant question: Which is the blend?). Here is a line - a **kineek me pase me sous fe sanse**. So you have **kineek** which is a good Anglo-Saxon word and you have **pase** which is a purely French word which replaced the old Anglo-Saxon equivalent and you have **sous fe sanse** which was a Frenchized Latin word co-existing in one line. Then you have the tissue of the **Canterbury Tales**, which you all know by heart so you can hear it this way:

[John speaks a line from **Canterbury Tales**]

I am sure you could all do that as part of a speech chorus by heart. It is so full of breath in comparison and you can ask yourself in terms of this little indicative contrast what has happened in the line itself – so you hear that sort of gripping or possessing of the line by consonants that we had in the old Anglo-Saxon. (He speaks a line). The consonants do not seem to control the line anymore with Chaucer. There is a kind of a lightning and a liberating, an opening up instead of that four beat intense sequence with the old Anglo-Saxon.

What do you hear now? From across the water, from the south, the whole Greco-Roman stream has come to meet this northern four-beat stream, something which has invited, allowed, made possible, most mysteriously, an expanding of the length of what one can say in a breath. There is an extension, an expansion. The consonantal domination has retreated. The breath, the vowel sounds, have their place and their way and there is a very regulated breathing with what Anne Greer identified as this rhythm – short long, short long, short long, short long – generally, not always. (speaks a line) If I were to sing this in the shower completely out of my own personal inclination I actually would hear this differently and what I hear is (speaks the line again) – Can you hear what is happening? What I am bringing to it or hearing in it is in fact that good old four-beat line. With the caesura, the pause, in the middle.

This expanded pentameter, this expanded five-beat line, which somehow becomes part of the English speaking people's experience through the meeting of the north and the south, has under it a pulsing echo of which probably we're mostly unconscious - this four beat experience - yet there is this five syllable, this five-beat expanded experience.

There is also something absolutely new which you all are hearing and which Anne is mouthing and which is absolutely new at least to the English speaking consciousness and in fact, and this is always a bit of a shock for anybody to realize because we assume that nursery rhymes and good old rhyme are characteristic of the origins of poetry and they are not at all characteristic of any early literature – Greek or Anglo-Saxon. So we have

a line which ends with **zoltus** so here we are – we opened up (speaks line) and then there is this kind of pause and that rings in us and as we continue with that next line wherever the content may lead us (speaks) and we know with absolute certainty at least after this first pair that somehow the sense of that line will return to that home sound with as few variations as possible (speaks line). And we know – there is knowing certainty ad infinitum throughout the whole. (Participant: They have a new certainty in their lives.) That's right.

I want to point out one more characteristic of the English of the 1400s and then I want to point out what happens next which most of us don't know about. If we ever studied or learned it, we probably have forgotten it because it is never anything we experienced. But most of these sounds we English-speaking people of the 1300s shared with the German-speaking and the French-speaking peoples of the 1300s.

What follows in the coming century is one of those (pralayas) – it is as though English literature goes to sleep. Chaucer died in 1400 and with the exception of Mallory up in his tower writing a relatively prosaic version of the Arthurian story we could say the muse of the language is dormant, and yet in this dormancy is occurring the most dramatic change in any language that is known. There is a kind of culmination and an astonishing shift and the alteration starts to become experiential in the literature which emerges in the later 1500's and it is essentially vowel sounds that change.

What happens is that ah, nam, becomes, just say ah – becomes a. What is the difference between the sound “ah” and the sound “a”? Where do you sound it? “Ah” is back and deeper and the “a” comes forward and reaches out. “Sweat” was a Chaucerian sound – the “eh” it becomes “sweet” go from “eh” to “ee”. What is the movement – it is similar, isn't it? It is from deeper in back to out and forward. “Ston” - say “ston” – “ston” becomes “stone”. That is way out there. “Rout” becomes “root” – (Participant question: how would you even write “rout”?) Well, it is still root. That also goes forward and out. What also happens which is in a way more dramatic is that the sound which was there for “hooose”. That sound “hooose” reaches not only forward as these others that we just been doing but it becomes “h-o-u-s-e”. Listen “a – o – u”.

“Hooose” becomes “H-a-o-u-s-e” and that is your diphthong which is in a fact kind of a three-fold blend of sounds. If you try to picture a prism breaking up the sound of “a-o-u” I think you can hear all three of those. Can you? I think you can hear an “o” in between them. And, I married my “bryd”, my “bryd” has been feeding you. And “bryd” which is “b-r-y-d” becomes “bride”, “i-a-e-d”. You say “i-e” and in fact you can lead to your “i” and “e” but I can also hear an “a” between those “i-a-e”. So this is the 1500's and remember what the explorers are doing out in the globe and you picture these vowel sounds and these several are a reaching up and out and then these diphthongs – it is almost like a seventh with the intervals. There is a way in which they stretch out and expand almost unbearably in a way and create these absolutely new sounds. These new experiences.

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[ed. A fuller treatment of this topic can be found in John Wulsin's research project, entitled **The Language of English Literature** and is available from AWSNA Publication.]



**Betty Staley and Ann Greer following John Wulsin's presentation**

# Thoughts about Symptoms and Examples

Karl Fredrickson

I've been wrestling with the distinction between a symptom and a cause. Which is the printing press, for instance? In some ways it is both. Someone once wrote that without Gutenberg we wouldn't have had the industrial revolution, etc. Nonsense, of course. How long would it have taken someone else to have invented it? The real issue seems to be just how rapidly it was taken up — 200 more presses in the next fifty years — that is clearly a symptom of something profound at work in human consciousness. And that led to Luther, whose ninety-five theses might again be seen as a cause or a symptom. After all, he was less of a radical than Jan Hus, at least in the beginning. But there was no printing press to spread the message and fan the flames. And of course some things can be a symptom in more than one way. The Mongolian invasion may not have been a symptom of a change in consciousness but it may well have been a symptom of something at work in spiritual spheres.

## Examples of symptoms

1. **The rapid ending of witchcraft trials in Europe around 1648.** How do we explain the decline from over 100,000 trials in the decades before to almost none within a decade or two (except in America)?
2. **Kepler's search for the harmonies hidden in the solar system,** which led to his three laws. He lived amidst religious persecution, brutal invasions and witchcraft trials which almost claimed the life of his own mother. In his laboratory, however, he steeped himself in an Egyptian-style wonder for the heavens, a longing for discovering Pythagorean harmonies, and a very modern concern for just how the planets really moved.
3. **Comenius' School of Infancy.** A giant step toward making childhood a significant stage in human life.
4. **John Locke's tabula rasa** and its profound influence on the generation that followed.
5. **Prince Henry the Navigator's determination to send men around Cape Bojador.** His connections with the Knights Templar and his goal to reach the realm of Prester John are well-established, another example of people whose inspiration for modern deeds arose from what might be considered a medieval frame of mind.

# Thoughts and Symptoms

Anne Greer

I'm still not entirely sure that I understand what a "symptom" is - and, predictably enough, four of the five 'events' (or people) I've chosen are all related to literature. I think they are certainly indicative of the shift between one way of being and another.

## 1. Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales

As I listened to the descriptions of the Middle Ages at our colloquium it became very evident to me that the feeling of the time was one of great movement. That might seem obvious to everybody else but I had never felt it so clearly. I could hardly sit still! Throughout, I kept thinking of the life of Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of English poetry, and his *Canterbury Tales*, both clear examples of this peripatetic quality as I think we mentioned at the time.

Chaucer's life is an excellent example of the excitement of the times, particularly in the upward mobility so recently possible. He was the son of a London vintner who placed him in the household of Edward III's son. He seems to have been important enough for the king to pay a ransom after he was captured by the French. He traveled on royal commissions extensively in France, Spain, and Italy. His son Thomas married into the nobility and became one of the richest men in England and his grandson was heir designate to the throne of Richard III.

We can be sure that he was busily engaged in gathering stories everywhere he went. He wrote in the East Midland dialect and later came to be recognized as having a founding role in the establishment of a literary tradition in vernacular English, itself a relatively new blend of Anglo-Saxon and French.

Chaucer follows a well-established format of bringing together tales that he had heard and read from all over Europe and giving them a plausible connection: he intended that the twenty-nine or thirty or thirty-two pilgrims beguile their journey from London to Canterbury and back by telling two tales on the way out and two on the way back. He finished only twenty of the tales.

But the real genius of Chaucer is in the creation of the individual pilgrims and in the detailed capturing of a time when the well-ordered medieval world was slipping into the Renaissance. The usages and practices of the Church of Rome are everywhere, but Chaucer makes abundantly clear the corruption that is to lead to the Reformation. The feudal system is still hanging on but the rise of the middle class is clearly coming. He died in 1400 and was buried in Westminster Abbey, the first poet in what later became "Poet's Corner."

— Source: Brewer, D.S.ed. *Geoffrey Chaucer* (1974)

## 2. Publication of Robinson Crusoe 1719

Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) was certainly familiar with the true story of Alexander Selkirk who had run away to sea and joined a privateering expedition in 1704. Apparently at his own request, Selkirk was put ashore on an uninhabited island for about four years. Defoe, then nearly sixty, knowing a good story when he heard one, added greatly from his own imagination and presented *The Life and Strange and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* as a true story with immediate and long lasting success. He called it a “swindle”. Although read as a true tale when first published, it is now generally accepted as the first English novel. Defoe’s avowed purpose was to “lie like the truth.”

Defoe made his living as a pamphleteer and contributor to the brand new daily papers, the journals, read each morning in the also new coffee houses where men gathered for their morning bowl of coffee, their pipe of tobacco or pinch of snuff, and their daily dose of news - the early beginnings of the public hunger for regular immediate and vicarious stimulation of at least three kinds. There is a strange contradiction in the beginnings of mass culture and the realization that Crusoe is a symbol of the alienated human: “The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual.”

(Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 1969). In fact, in the second and third sequels, Defoe paints Crusoe as even more lonely when he returns to London than he was as a self-sufficient inhabitant of his island kingdom.

To read *Robinson Crusoe* is to understand eighteenth century rationalism and where it has led. It marks the beginning of a fictional “secular inwardness” (Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*). It exalts entrepreneurial virtues, rational thought, and the building of an orderly world by controlling nature through independent activity. The description focuses on the particular and John Locke’s “primary qualities” and the archetypal. Obviously, it is a strongly male story and the “taming” and servitude of the “savage” Friday speaks volumes about the role of European imperialism over the next five hundred years.

The influence of *Robinson Crusoe* has been very great. Rousseau in *Emile* recommended it as the first book that should be studied by a growing boy. Coleridge praised its evocation of the universal man, and Marx in *Das Kapital* used it to illustrate economic theory in action. In *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt provides one of the most controversial modern interpretations, relating Crusoe’s predicament to the rise of bourgeois individualism, division of labour, and social and spiritual alienation.

— (Margaret Drabble; *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*)

I have used the shipwreck scene from the novel as a comparison with the wrecking of Odysseus’s raft in *The Odyssey* in Grade 9 in a block called “The Story of the Story,” really an introduction to changing consciousness from one age to another. The block compares the consciousness of the early Greek culture to that of 18th century Europe. This exercise allows the students to see very clearly how humanity has been “abandoned

by the gods” and has come to rely on reason. It is easy for them, working in groups, to come up with 15 or 20 points of comparison.

### 3. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 - 97)

Her life is a remarkable study in romanticism and feminism. In her early twenties, she ran a school for girls in London with her sister and published a pamphlet on her educational views when she was 28. In the next year, her novel *Mary*, based in part on her own experiences as a governess, exposed her satirical perspective on the aristocracy and the exploitation of women. Four years later, she published her most famous work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* in which she attacked “the cult of the sentimental.” She argued that women were not naturally submissive but were taught to be so. She thought that marriage was oppression for women unless based on firm friendship.

Her own life mirrored her strongly held views. She entered into a free relationship with Gilbert Imlay, giving birth to an illegitimate daughter. Imlay left her in France where she remained during the Revolution, keeping a remarkable journal of daily events in Paris, later published in large part in her *View of the French Revolution*. It seems that she was the only English person who consistently remained in France during the Revolution, making her perspective unique. She returned to London and began an affair with William Godwin and when she found herself pregnant again, agreed to marry him. She died of septicemia shortly after the birth of Mary Godwin, later Mary Shelley who was given her mother’s journals as an adolescent and her mother’s remarkable legacy of romantic freedom.

### 4. A comparison of the poetry of Rupert Brooke and Wilfred Owen as example of the shattering of sensibility caused by the Great War (1914 - 1918)

Brooke (1887-1915) was born at Rugby where his father was a master and where he was educated. He was a golden boy, loved by all who knew him. He won a scholarship to Cambridge where he spent five years as a leader of the literary world and published a collection of poems in 1911. He traveled in Germany, North America, and Tahiti, publishing poetry in journals all the while.

In 1914, he joined the Royal Navy and took part in the Antwerp expedition. His five “War Sonnets,” including “If I should die, think only this of me/There is some corner of a foreign field /That is forever England,” were published in journals and widely distributed. He spoke for a generation of young men who “daunted by the sordidness and pettiness of common life, found release, as swimmers into cleanness leaping. . . , in the thrill of war.” (E.K. Broadus, *The Story of English Literature*) His poems received an ecstatic reception and made him England’s poet of the war. He died in 1915 of blood poisoning.

Wilfred Owen (1893 - 1918) was born in Shropshire where his father was a railway worker. He was educated in Shrewsbury Technical College and taught school briefly. He was strongly influenced by Keats and, as

a young man, wrote sensuous late Romantic poetry. At 22, he joined the army and was soon commissioned. After concussion and trench fever on the Somme he was invalided to Edinburgh where he was encouraged in his writing by Siegfried Sassoon. It was impossible to get his poems published since they gave a picture of the stark reality of trench warfare, an absolute contrast to Rupert Brooke in every way. He was able to capture the shock and violence and the intensity of the suffering, deliberately introducing elements of discordance and harshness into his style.

He returned to France in 1918 and was killed one week before the armistice. His poems were published posthumously and his reputation steadily grew. Benjamin Britten chose Owen's poems for the War Requiem.

Poetic diction was changed radically.

#### **5. WTO meeting in Seattle, Washington on December 3, 1999.**

I'm not quite able yet to articulate what I find so significant about this event and I haven't had much time to read a lot about it since – I'm sure the internet is full of stuff. But I have no doubt that it is a dramatic turning point. I'm not sure how many of you saw the piece written by Nicanor Perlas of the Philippines this spring.

Perlas writes, in part, "global civil society took a gigantic stride towards strengthening its role as a third global force, a countervailing power against the totalitarian tendencies of the two other forces of global society, the state and the market, as expressed in the WTO." He calls the confrontation "a symptomatological expression of spiritual realities."

His paper is a very clear analysis.

# Symptoms

David Sloan

1) **The first mention of monotheism**, either Biblical Abraham's experience or Akhenaton's anomalous worship of Aton; I'm not certain which appeared first. But what's interesting is how the Israelites embrace the concept wholeheartedly (give or take a few golden calves), while Akhenaton's monotheism vanishes within a generation, supplanted once again by the animal-headed pantheon of Egyptian favorites.

2) **The publication of Wordsworth's and Coleridge's Lyrical Ballads in 1798**

Yes, the Romantic movement had started earlier in Germany, but the Preface to **Lyrical Ballads** was such a consciously crafted and almost systematic attempt to alter the whole course of poetry, both in terms of subject matter and form. It is hard to imagine the poetry of Whitman or Frost or, indeed, any of the confessional voices of the twentieth century without Wordsworth's and Coleridge's in the English Language. Their attempts to heal the rift between "I" and "world" confirms the consciousness-soul experience as few others do.

3) **Rachel Carson's Silent Spring**

Rachel Carson's efforts to bring to light, and then to oppose, the widespread use of pesticides, which led to the publication of **Silent Spring** in 1962. Can't the whole environmental movement trace its origins back to this groundbreaking work?

4) **Elizabeth I's decision to behead her cousin Mary in 1587**

I don't know if this is a symptom or not, but I am fascinated by the stakes that were involved. Elizabeth delayed for years before being convinced by the Babington letter that implicated Mary in some plot to overthrow the throne. There must have been a whole host of reasons for Elizabeth's foot-dragging, several of which put the various tensions of the time into sharp relief, e.g., jostling for influence in the court, the effect on European rival powers such as France and Spain, Elizabeth's wrestling with her own conscience over spilling her own kin's blood. I'm not certain if it was the first time a legitimate monarch was executed (Ann Boleyn's execution—Elizabeth's own mother—forty-some years earlier certainly doesn't count; she probably didn't have an ounce of royal blood in her). But it must have given Elizabeth pause to realize that if one queen's head could roll, so could hers in a slightly different circumstance.

5) **Emerson's "American Scholar" address at Harvard in 1837**

This could really be understood, as Oliver Wendell Holmes put it, as America's cultural Declaration of Independence. In it he urges the audi-

ence to stop slavishly imitating continental trends, to wake up to the richness of the creative forces in their own land, in their own minds. Within a decade and a half America had begun its own Golden Age, with Thoreau, Whitman, Hawthorne, and Melville, all of whom had been directly or indirectly inspired by Emerson's words.



**A pensive David Sloan**

# Symptoms

John Wulsin

## 1. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Emerson

I might just add a footnote to David Sloan's comments on Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Emerson. They both deliberately turned their ears to the living speech of (all kinds) of people around them, as a source for poetry. They both turned their eyes (and other senses) to nature in a way that both drew on the life-forces of nature for the shaping forces of their poetry, and, as David said, in the process, worked to heal the rift between subject and object. For the first time ever, the author of an epic poem, "The Prelude," chooses as his subject, not some distant, royal hero in a journey or battle in vast lands, but himself, the active subject writing the poem, the journey of the becoming poet in the man. The subject turns from outer to inner, from external to reflexive.

## 2. Thespis

When he stepped forth from the fifty-member dithyramb-chorus and spoke the first monologue, it became possible for audience and actor/novitiates to experience an individual, then with Aeschylus two individuals, then with Sophocles three individuals, speaking and exploring riddles of destiny. What a profound effect on the members of the polis, of all levels of society, to become in time more able to do the equivalent themselves.

## 3. The Destruction of the Knights Templar, 1307-1314

Rudolf Steiner spoke of how the Templars were the last to bear the experience of the spiritual sun-nature of gold, so that their extinction left humanity with the elementally materialistic relationship to the materials of the earth. The destruction of the Templars seems to be a symptom of a general driving underground of esoteric streams and impulses, perhaps largely over the ensuing 600 years, through the Kali Yuga. How have some of those influenced exoteric events during the seven hundred years? What seeds of the "destroyed" plant have surfaced this past century in various forms?

## 4. Martin Luther, and company

What has it meant, for almost 500 years, for so many "protestants" to feel the freedom to read the Bible themselves and experience their own relationship to God, without being dependent on the priest? Let us remember that only since Vatican II (1962), have Catholics been allowed to read the Bible themselves. That's in our lifetime.

## 5. Newton

Without any of the detail of the scene Douglas Gerwin described, regardless of the many dimensions of Newton's interests and "discoveries," he

was certainly one of the primary influences because of his ability to calculate mathematically the paths of the planets. People could begin to live in a clock-work universe. If the Templars' destruction can be seen as a turning point toward the materialization of the earth, so Newton's influence could be seen as a turning point in the rationalization of the heavens. Hence, the paradigm of the universe as a machine becomes possible.

## 6. Einstein

I fear I'm going to make a fool of myself on this one. But maybe I'm especially qualified to, through my general ignorance of physics. Is there any accuracy to this? It seems to me that, in spite of the predominantly positivist scientific picture most of us grew up with in the twentieth century, Einstein's Theory of Relativity had two influences on most of us, either unconsciously or half-consciously, as ignorant as we may have been about the actual thinking behind the theory. Many people have assumed a kind of moral relativism—"It's all relative"—no absolutes. The other influence is almost as though most of us digested the theory unconsciously as a Theory of Relationship. Somehow, although implicitly there is no absolute, since context is crucial, what becomes underlyingly important are both the fact that we are all somehow related to each other, and how we are related. My apologies, Mr. Einstein.

# Symptoms

Betty Staley

## **1. Printing press-see earlier section of these proceedings**

## **2. Carl Jung's letter to Freud in which he disagreed with Freud's emphasis on the libido**

Behind this symptom lies Freud's conscious exploration of human consciousness and his attempt to penetrate it in a scientific way. His emphasis on sexuality has influenced modern psychology and advertising until today. Yet Jung disagreed with this emphasis. Freud had selected Jung as his successor, called him the "crown prince." Jung knew that when his letter reached Freud, the mentor-relationship would cease. He became paralyzed whenever he took his pen in hand. After several months of struggling with this dilemma, he wrote the letter. Freud broke the relationship, and Jung went on to have a creative period in which he explored the collective unconscious. On the archetypal level, this letter represents the fragile relationship that exists whenever a student challenges his or her mentor.

## **3. Rudolf Steiner's lecture at the Giordano Bruno Society**

Up until this time Rudolf Steiner had not openly stated the existence of the spiritual world. He had just returned from London where he had met with the Theosophical Society. He was now going to be able to speak of his spiritual research to the Society. When he came "out of the closet" at the Bruno Society two events followed. He was no longer regarded as the up-and-coming philosopher of the period, not asked to lecture to scientific or materialist groups. On the other hand, those who understood what he was saying connected with him and became students. It was a turning point leading to the development of Anthroposophy. Yet Steiner risked everything in doing it.

## **4. The T and O map of the Middle Ages contrasted with mathematical maps of the Enlightenment period**

The T and O maps showed the earth as the body of Christ. This is a symptom of the human being's relationship to the earth at that time. It was a picture of Christ's task in coming to the earth, uniting himself with it, and redeeming it. Jerusalem was seen as the heart of the earth (and as Christ's heart.) This contrasts with the mathematical map of the 17th century based on a grid of longitude and latitude by degrees.

## **5. The Hebrew commandment "Thou shalt make no graven images."**

This is a symptom of the beginning of the change from image thinking to concept thinking. The process of wiping out picture thinking was a significant step in the human being's ability to worship an idea instead of an

idol. The commandment was a formal expression of a process that had already begun with the covenant between Abram (who then became Abraham) and Jahweh.

## **6. The computer**

In 1985 one of my twelfth grade students at the Sacramento Waldorf School told me he could not hand in his assignment because the computer had erased it. I told him, “I’ve heard every excuse possible about why students could not hand in their work; ‘It was in my jean’s pocket that was put in the washing machine.’ ‘My cat urinated on it.’ And so on. But this is the first time I’m hearing an excuse based on the computer. This is a watershed.”

The advent of the computer has affected life on every level – on science, research, communication, social relationships, political communication, as well as influencing thinking itself.

# Symptoms

Douglas Gerwin

The following five symptomatic moments in history are offered as examples of material that could be used in the teaching of history in the eleventh and twelfth grades of a Waldorf high school.

## I. Setting the scene for Descartes “Cogito ergo sum”

At the start of his second “Discourse on the Method of Properly Conducting One’s Reason and of Seeking the Truth in the Sciences,” composed in 1628, Rene Descartes (31 March 1596 – 11 February 1650) describes the scene in which he arrived at his most famous conclusion — namely, that to think proves that one exists. His description opens up a rich field of symptoms.

Descartes writes:

“I was, at that time, in Germany, whither the wars, which have not yet finished there, had called me, and as I was returning from the coronation of the Emperor to join the army, the onset of winter held me up in quarters in which, finding no company to distract me, and having, fortunately, no cares or passions to disturb me, I spent the whole day shut up in a room heated by an enclosed stove, where I had complete leisure to meditate on my own thoughts.”

Several symptoms leap from this description:

a) Descartes is surrounded by war and by the bitter cold of winter – and yet he is able to create for himself an island of calm and warmth. In this way he sets up an environment that is quite distinct (indeed the very opposite) of his surroundings, both temporal and spatial. This is no Rousseau discoursing with nature or Thoreau seeking solitude in nature or Einstein dancing on a moonbeam. Here a man creating a sort of vacuum chamber.

b) Descartes proceeds on this voyage of enquiry alone. He escapes the distractions of company and friends. Far from seeking conversation or communion with others to stir his thoughts, he seeks to shut out the world of his fellow human beings.

c) Descartes reports, further, that he has “no cares or passions to disturb” him either — even though war rages about him and he’s on his way to sign up for military duty. Somehow he is able to dislodge his mind from his emotional life. He is about to embark on a voyage of mind alone. His life of feeling and desire he will leave behind at the shoreline.

d) The room in which Descartes is shut up is heated by an unusual device for his time. No raging or glowing fireplace keeps him warm here but rather “an enclosed stove.” There is no color or movement or flamboyancy in this source of heat: rather it is efficient and invisible. This is the kind of heat which a century or two later will drive huge machinery.

In this setting the “Cartesian world view” (as Fritjof Capra calls it) is born. And the world that will result from this view already cradles the man who first gives it clear voice.

## II. Treading the earth in a new way

According to Bernard Grun’s *The Timetables of History* (a goldmine for symptomatographers!), an entry for 1595 says:

“First appearance of heels on shoes.”

I have not taken the time to check out this remark (though one other source describes this advent as taking place a little earlier, in Florence, I believe). However, it invites one to imagine how people walked the earth before they took to wearing heels. And why would one be moved to start wearing heels in the first place? How does one walk differently on the face of the earth in sandals? in stilettos? in cowboy boots? in sneakers? In pumps? How is our experience of our relationship to the ground altered by a change of shoe? How is it that in some cold climates people still wear slight shoes, while in some hot climates (e.g. Texas) they wear heavy boots in all seasons? Can we see in the development of a child’s walking (from tip-toe to heel-and-toe) a miniature recapping of humanity’s evolution of walking upon the earth?

## III Shattering the indivisible: Freud and Planck in 1900

At the turn of the century (1899-1900) Freud publishes a book intended to have a very limited readership and Max Planck publishes an obscure paper intended to be read only by fellow physicists. Freud’s book quickly sells out and goes on to become his best seller (called *Die Traumdeutung*, usually translated as *The Interpretation of Dreams*, though “The Meaning of Dreams” might be a more exact translation); Planck’s paper sets in motion the field of quantum physics.

Both of these documents have shattering effects: up until this time it was universally assumed that the atom was indivisible and the human ego was a single whole. Indeed “a-tom” is a Greek word meaning “not-dividable;” likewise “in-dividual” derives from a Latin word meaning the same. Now Planck in Berlin sets the scene for the fissioning of the indivisible; Freud, in Vienna, describes the human ego as a collection of images and memories — what T.S. Eliot some decades later will describe as “a heap of broken images.”

In physics the basis of matter is split; in psychology the basis of spirit is split also.

#### IV. Watching Newton observe the light

In an article entitled “Looking at the Light: Reflections of the Mutable Body” (in the journal *Dragonflies: Studies in Imaginal Psychology*, Winter 1980), Robert Romanyshyn offers the following symptomatic description of Isaac Newton’s *experimentum crucis* in the year 1666:

In that year, Isaac Newton crosses the threshold of his room. Darkening the room by pulling the shade, he cuts a small, round hole in the shade to admit a ray of daylight sun. Placing a prism between the entering light and the opposite wall of the room, Newton turns his back upon the light and turns toward the spectacle now displayed upon the wall. There he sees the spectrum. . . . The experiment convinces him that colors do not belong to things but to the light. And so persuaded, Newton claims near the end of his essay to have “unweaved the rainbow” . . . . What we take to be the rainbow in a lighted sky is a spectrum in a darkened room.

This scene (which could be further elaborated) stands out as an almost archetypal scene capturing the perspective and the posture of empirical science as it describes the world of phenomena:

- a) To study a phenomenon of nature (outside) Newton goes into his house (inside).
- b) To see the light, he turns his back on the light. To study light, Newton shuts out the light. Newton studies light in the dark.
- c) To focus his attention on light, he narrows the aperture through which it can be seen. He isolates the light from the field in which it usually appears.
- d) Newton places between the light and its reflection a prosthesis for the lens of the eye — namely the prism, which breaks apart that which in nature appears as a whole.

## V. War in Heaven: Tracking the birth of modern composers

Rudolf Steiner speaks of the pivotal nature of the year 1879. One can sense something of this if one lines up those famous composers of music born before this watershed year and compares them with those born after:

1858—Puccini  
1860—Mahler  
1862—Debussy  
1864—Richard Strauss  
1873—Rachmaninoff  
1875—Ravel  
1881—Bartok  
1882—Stravinsky  
1883—Webern  
1885—Berg  
1891—Prokofiev  
1989—Gershwin

The sharp break between the neo-romantic styles (still evident up through Ravel) and the radical fissioning of musical line, harmonic form, and rhythmic patterns (starting with Bartok and Stravinsky) speaks for itself —and perhaps for the supersensible events attributed to the years in between.

An interesting case is presented by Schoenberg (born in 1874). He starts out as an unremarkable neo-romantic composer, then goes through a period of complete silence as a composer, then re-appears on the musical scene in a totally different style with his first 12-tone piece (1909).

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During our colloquium, I offered the name of J.H. van den Berg as a source for symptomatic studies of history. Van den Berg calls his approach to history “metabletics.” His best known book is entitled **The Changing Nature of Man** (New York: Dell, 1975).

## Summation and Planning of Next Steps

Let us look at our last task of the colloquium. What do we take from here and where we go with what we have, including assignments we give ourselves? Would each person be willing to put down five or six gem symptoms? We had that question the other night. What actually is a symptom? Can anything be a symptom? I think one could say, well, yes, anything can be a symptom provided you bring the attention to it. That is what a physician does. He or she can look at anything – some look at your eyes and see all the symptoms in your iris and that is where they go with it because they can attend to that. For other physicians the iris is not symptomatic. Are there symptoms that each of us could bring?

I am always guided here by a little essay by Barbara Tuchman, an essay called “History by the Ounce” (*Practicing History*, Selected Essays, Ballantine Books, New York, 1981) — the point being that as often as not you can find a real world in a grain of sand if you focus on some specific event or person or little quirk. I have to say the examples she has supplied are very unrevealing. They are kind of cute but it would be like a doctor focusing on some part of your body which is not really significant for health – a wart. Maybe there are examples we can share in the room here – we have had a few already.

I was very struck by whoever it was who spoke about the skyscraper of an insurance company. And you could almost imagine this was an elevated pyramid. Concerning this image, I was reminded by the gesture that Eric brought the first night of the rigid conservatism of the Egyptian and how that is translated into the mentality of insurance as a way of protecting yourself through thick and thin. There are all kinds of analogues to that gesture in our culture.

We have not talked about my favorite topic which is the history of science — in particular, in the last century, but especially in this century, the almost obsessive drive to find what is called the GUT – the general universal theory. That is to say there is one theory that explains everything forever and we would never have to figure out anything else again. Or the genome project, let’s map out the whole of this once and for all and we’ve got the law of life straight. I think many examples of these exist in the history of science, especially post-Newton where scientists were almost obsessing to find one statement that could be enshrined in stone forever. And of course it’s got to be one – one statement. That’s what makes it universal. That for me is almost a kind of re-emergence of the Egyptian desire to set in stone something that will be unchanging forever. It helps me to make sense of modern science if I think about what the two of you brought in terms of the symptoms of Egypt and their modern analogs.

Deconstructionism in a certain sense is a picture of the taking apart of the body. There is some wonderful correspondence between Pablo Picasso and Jacques Lipshitz. Lipshitz, a great sculptor, writes to Picasso after Picasso starts to paint human beings with pipes and other mechanical elements: You cannot destroy the human form the way you have. You can move it, you can turn it around, but you cannot destroy it. The cubist movement leads to Picasso’s changing form of the human being, although in Duchamp’s “Nude Descending a Staircase” you still have the human form even though it is seen from the point of view of many cubes. Picasso goes from looking at the human form from different sides to really destroying the form. Lipshitz was also looking at it from a lot of sides – but he said what Picasso was doing was a breaking point. I don’t know if this is true, but I have heard that when Picasso painted a human form, he looked into a mirror and with a physical mallet he smashed the mirror and painted then what he saw in that sharded surface. Then he took another mallet and smashed that surface and painted that, so it was a series of paintings in which you see a progressive complexity of shards. These are on display in the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth. To see the sequence of smashing the smash where it almost becomes unrecognizable is like atoms getting smashed. I don’t know if it is true but I would love to know if that was really the process by which he arrived at the paintings.

A symptom would be the origin of the revulsion against slavery. Why did it arise? How did the British anti-slavery movement end up sending the British navy out on the task of stopping the slavery? There was not that much revulsion against it even among the blacks in Africa. It was just a way of life. It went on for thousands of years. The biography of John Newton, the man who wrote "Amazing Grace", is so important. He was a slave trader and he went through a critical change. In fact there is a wonderful video called "Amazing Grace" made by Bill Moyer which has been shown on public television many times. It traces the song from the moment of that man's experience, how the song has become loved world wide. That song is really the heart song for the American people.

Note: The biography of John Newton (1725- 1807) is very dramatic. He traveled with his father, a commander of a merchant ship, and at 19 was impressed into serving on the H.M.S. Harwich. He was so shocked at the conditions on the ship that he deserted. Upon being recaptured, he was beaten and lost his position. His journey to becoming captain of a slave trading ship included being the servant of a slave trader who beat him. It was only because a sea captain had known the senior Newton, that John was rescued and eventually ruled over his own ship. The spiritual experience which led to his change of heart occurred in 1748 as he was steering his ship through a violent storm. In despair that his ship would go down, he turned to God and asked for mercy. As the storm abated and the ship was saved, Newton felt God had reached out to him and bestowed grace upon him.

Although he had come to the belief that the slave trade was wrong, he continued to buy and sell slaves, although he made sure they were treated in a humane way. When Newton gave up commanding his ship, he turned his energies to self-education. After several requests he was eventually ordained a minister and became very successful at his new calling. He wrote several hymns. "Amazing Grace" was probably written in the 1760s. Although the origin of the melody is unknown, it seems to have been inspired by an American folk tune. Bill Moyers in his special for television program proposed it may have originated on the slave ship sung by slaves.

I can't believe we are discussing this because yesterday I was thinking I want to put a song in my grade 12 block and I just decided to do "Amazing Grace."

Another example of a symptom is how we are expected to deal with people whom we used to ignore. You don't have to go very far back to a time when people with disabilities were kept away from the general society. Now you can walk into the grocery store where a handicapped person is working at the checkout counter, bagging groceries, dropping stuff, maybe even getting in your way. Most people's reaction now is, "Isn't that great that these people are being hired." What is new about that reaction? Now the situation goes even further to the demanding of rights. Every group is demanding its rights and we now have the National Disabilities Act. In other words we not only went through this period of changing the way we look at people with disabilities but now we have become advocates for them. I had a student do a report on the rights of the handicapped. His father deals with construction and he has all kinds of ideas where this advocacy has gone to the extreme.

Or the reconciliation in South Africa.

Another symptom in our young people's attitude is the nostalgia for the tribal people rather than an acceptance of contemporary religion. There is almost a repulsion when you talk about any sort of religion or spiritual path except aboriginal. It is an extension of deep ecology. They say if we can remove human beings from life except for those indigenous human beings who are a part of nature, then everything would be better.

I find a real cynicism toward America and toward modern life, and at the same time students are using resources and affecting life — so there is a real paradox in many of our young people. Perhaps in a different kind of school you would have patriotism to an extreme point. What I am finding is no — they see everything wrong, and our task is to put it in balance. They have lost the idealism of what America is. There is a lot of anti-American sentiment abroad and yet I believe I read this in Germany — a commen-

tator observed that virtually all of the cynicism has its origin in the United States. That is to say critics within the United States promote much of this anti-American sentiment.

We can see how important it is to give the students a balanced picture of this nation which is a representation of the modern age in many ways. We need to mention that although some of these criticisms are valid, the fact is that these criticisms were able to arise within American life. It is a very interesting dynamic.

There so many views of America. When I was lecturing in Latvia and Poland in 1993, the people just wanted their country to be like America. I was watching so much junk pouring into the former Soviet bloc and said, "Be careful, slow down, we have many problems." They said, "We want those problems. You don't know what it is to be under a dictatorship."

We have not mentioned, though it is so obvious, that in many cases drug use is a longing for initiation. And when you think back to when the drug issue first arose with Timothy Leary – that was the new communion. That was an almost conscious initiation and now it has deteriorated. That is not what it is. A lot of kids are using drugs to explore what is going on. They do not understand that pain itself is an initiation.

We really haven't talked about where in the history and literature curriculum we embrace the rest of the world. We had the excellent example of China but we have not dealt with this whole issue of the non-European world and I know from the student point of view there is a longing. When we expand the curriculum and include the non-European world, they feel we are waking up. Our young people today care about their brothers and sisters in the world. They want to know what is happening across the globe at each period of time we study.

Are we clear about where geography comes into the curriculum? It seems it comes in at different times in each school. The history teacher needs to be aware of geography and fill in where possible if it is not present in the curriculum. Also I can be aware of the literature curriculum. For example, if the students are reading *Cry the Beloved Country* it means that I can do more to give the background of the situation so the students understand we are not giving a bit here and a bit there, but they see that it is related to our interest in Africa or China.

Another question in the history curriculum is where are the women?

Another symptom we could speak about is the consumption of refined sugar. The consumption of refined sugar seems to have a relationship to the advent of the consciousness soul. A recent example that I have come across is the almost meteoric rise in the consumption of refined cane sugar, not beet sugar, in the Soviet Union in the 1980s coincident with the advent of Glasnost. Cane sugar goes directly into your system whereas you have to work on digesting beet sugar. You can also use examples of coffee and chocolate. It is helpful to do what Wolfgang Schad calls a when/then thinking – not an if/then thinking, but it is a when/then kind of thinking.

We can look at the subject of high heels. In the 1400s you find the people thought to wearing shoes with heels on them – that is to say their relationship to walking on the earth changes. What is the difference in walking on earth in sandals or something with a heel and now walking on the earth with a heel interposed between you – the ultimate example is a Texas boot. If you want a source of this stuff – Bernard Grun's – *The Timetables of History* is laid out visually. We have now spin-offs of this book – *The Timetables of Science* – it is a good compact source.

Another symptom I will offer you. Walt Whitman's use of free verse coinciding with finally an American art seventy or eighty years after America carried out political independence. It is a reflection of a voice – something of an American voice, an American spirit finally finding voice in what you could recognize in an American way which altered the possibilities for consciousness for anybody working in the English language.

Thoreau's writing **Civil Disobedience** after being in jail for one night was a reflection of the issue of taking responsibility for your actions. I see **Civil Disobedience** as the pre-cursor of the Nuremberg trials in a certain way. You are responsible for your actions whether you are ordered by a superior officer or whether you carry them out by yourself. You may not be in the majority, but you state your view and you take responsibility for what happens because of it. Just that – I state my individual view but I must be responsible. It's not "Do whatever you want," but taking of responsibility. Then, of course, it is fascinating how **Civil Disobedience** was read by Tolstoy and Gandhi and then by Martin Luther King, and so it goes full circle around the world until it becomes part of the Civil Rights Movement. Tolstoy was really affected by reading it. Gandhi was given it in South Africa by Smuts. Gandhi had it in his pocket, I think, in that scene in the film where he is thrown off the train. I remember reading Martin Luther King's description when he is in graduate school and hears his professor who has just returned from India describing Gandhi's work and he refers to Gandhi's interest in **Civil Disobedience**.

I wanted to give examples of several events that happen at the same time – the one I have already alluded to – 529 AD when Benedict founded his monastery and the whole monastic order – the hours of the day – and the incredible number of things that can be traced back to that. In that very same year, 529 AD, Justinian closes the academy in Athens. Here is another one – 1776 – three different things are published in that year. **The Declaration of Independence**, Adam Smith's **The Wealth of Nations** and Edward Gibbons' **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**. I am bowled over by that – all of those three things in the same year. **The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire** becomes briefly a powerful image for a social process, cultural process, and sort of lives on for I would say more than a century in people's imaginations about the way things go. And his prejudices we have today.

Coffee and tobacco begin to pour into England shortly after the colonies are formed after 1611, and by 1620 they are beginning to get the tobacco in and by 1640's there are coffee shops where people are drinking coffee instead of tea. I think that is connected also with the sugar.

A Dutch historian, social psychologist named J.H. van den Berg, has done this kind of work where you can relate dates and he developed a name for this activity – this kind of history-making – it called it metabletics. I have no idea of what the Greek of that is, but the idea is that you translate one thought over to another or one idea is reflected through another thought – or one event is reflected and understood through another event – a kind of juxtaposing of events.

We also need to trace the criticism of these things and see how they have been responded to. Especially if you are going to conferences on history one of the most devastating things that can happen is that you talk about someone's theory and then somebody points out that three other people completely debunked it. The classic example is the one who wrote the book **Dunny Derougement**, a fascinating book, or the origins of love in the age of the troubadours as a brand new concept. I have been told by more than one person that there has been a series of real rebuttals to much of what he says. I have never managed to find it but it is good to know. It's also good to know where the criticism is coming from, because people with different philosophical approaches will criticize from one particular viewpoint.

Well, just on the simplest level of all from the first night through to now, it has been a profound privilege and pleasure to be able to work together as colleagues. There is something especially beautiful about most of us having known each other to some degree over quite a period of time now. It comes as a kind of special grace in a way to do this kind of work together – this really does make collegueship have a vital reality. Special thanks to Jane and John Wulsin for providing us with the nest in which we could explore these things. It has been very very helpful to have that. Thank you.

# APPENDIX

# HISTORY

by

Dr. Eugen Kolisko

History has to do with the past; and that tends to make us feel that it does not particularly concern us. How can all the events that have happened long ago and the people who lived long ago, have any real interest for us? This attitude towards history is intensified by the way in which it is taught.

But this is only the attitude assumed by the intellect. In teaching children, or quite simple people, about history for the first time, I have always found that quite another feeling's very strongly in evidence; and that is the great interest that is evinced in this or that individuality or hero—or even in quite seemingly trivial events in one or another period of culture. Some people immediately feel their interest and sympathy aroused in hearing about the Greeks, for instance, or perhaps the Egyptians, or some other civilization. There are numbers who seriously study some period or historical characters just as a “hobby.” Others perhaps do not share this interest, or have even a kind of violent antipathy to certain periods or events.

This approach to history, although a fact, seems to be a very unscientific one, or a merely personal one, sympathetic or antipathetic. But our “true” and “objective” historical research is precisely what has brought us to the position of entirely disregarding this more personal approach. It has collected the “history of the past”; its documents are before us—sometimes dry, but certainly “objective.” But the human mind cannot quite come to terms with such a way of historical research, although it cannot but recognize its extreme scientific rectitude. If history is really to interest us, we must have so much enthusiasm and curiosity for some particular person or period or event, that we identify ourselves with them; especially with the human beings concerned. Such enthusiasm lifts history out of the past into the present. It is here and now; it is ourselves.

But whence do we obtain this kind of instinctive approach to history? What awakens these feelings in us? What are their psychological foundations?

The Greek culture, for instance, has always attracted people, both now and in the past; but from time to time the interest disappears, only to recur again later. I have already mentioned this in connection with the Renaissance. The same thing occurred in the classical time of German literature in the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries. Goethe, Holderlin, Schelling, Winkelmann, and many others, not only write about the Greeks, but even behave like them; they travel to Italy, seeking the great Grecian works of art; it is as though they crave for their whole development—this contact with Greece, as strongly as one may feel hunger and thirst. How can it be explained?

Historians would say that “history repeats itself” again and again. But how? and why? Why should this repetition affect people so personally and urgently. I cannot have any truck with trite “laws” rigidly applied to history as though through some inescapable necessity. For it is just this which makes us so dislike history. To me the most simple explanation is that those who are so interested let us say in Greece, have been Greeks: those who hunger after Egyptian things have been Egyptians.

The idea of repetition in history, seen from this point of view, assumes an entirely different character. It can be shown that in the last hundred years, more or less, interest in the Egyptian epoch of culture has revived most strongly. We now know every detail of Egyptian life and civilisation; our museums are full of their relics. It may be said that this interest first began through Napoleon’s Egyptian expedition, when the secrets of Egyptian hieroglyphs were first disclosed. But how is it that Champollion, who found and deciphered the Rosetta Stone, even as a boy was always longing to decipher the hieroglyphs. I should we not rather say that it was because he was so keenly interested in “Egyptology” (before it really existed) that he alone was able to decipher this stone. Had he not been an Egyptian himself? And Napoleon, did he not create a Pharaonic empire for the second time? Certainly, he got the impulse to do so from his presence in the land of the Pyramids.

And more recently, why did Howard Carter penetrate to the secrets of Tut-ankh-amen, the only grave left undisturbed by robbers for over three thousand years? What gave him this intuition? Why do we find, in every museum, crowds standing enthralled before the relics from Egyptian excavations? Moreover, we find that even fashions, cosmetics, and last but not least the architectural styles, are influenced by the fascination that is felt for Egypt. When I walked recently through the Cairo Museum it seemed as if I was surrounded by living portraits of people in London society. Besides this, a certain trend in modern medicine is quite clearly a kind of repetition of the Egyptian. One is amazed at the immense knowledge of medicine, chemistry, and anatomy possessed by the Egyptians. They applied it more especially to the art of mummification. When I heard how the famous Berlin scientist Schleich had discovered how to anaesthetise special parts of the human organism—an invention which had such far-reaching effects—It reminded me of mummification. And I could not help thinking that what he had done before, in Egyptian times, with corpses, he had now rediscovered and applied to the separate parts of the living body.

And what can I say of the famous experiments of Alexis Carrel? He preserved a living chicken’s heart in a bottle for several years—he obtained the Nobel prize for it—and now we are told that his great ideal is to preserve human organs, or even the whole human body, in the same way. Is that not the reincarnation of mummification? The Egyptians had a specific cult of the dead in which all the different organs were preserved in different jars. But what was their religion has now become our science.

This may sound rather like a joke. But it could be very well proved that our whole pathological and anatomical science is a quite exact repetition of the Egyptian cult of the dead. Even our surgery is not unrelated to it; only fortunately for us it is directed to the preservation of the living. An operation in a modern operating theater has all the character of a religious rite.

One can even understand something that is really a weakness of our modern pathology, namely that it tries to explain the living body, and its diseases, from the changes which can be observed in the dead body. That also is a repetition of the science of mummification. Now let us look at another cultural repetition. I once studied that most interesting coincidence that all Darwin's philosophical ideas had already been in existence in the Arabian philosophy of the Middle Ages.

Dieterici, a well-known Professor of oriental history in Berlin, has written a very striking book called *Darwinism in the Eleventh Century*. He shows there that all the main ideas—natural selection, the struggle for existence, evolution from the simpler to the more complex animals, the evolution from the anthropoids and other animals up to man—can all be found among the Arabian philosophers. The same thing may be discovered—if one is sufficiently observant—in respect of nearly all modern scientific theories about physics, chemistry, and so on, for instance that sound, light, etc., consist of waves; certain definite atomistic ideas (the Greek atomists only developed a faint general idea of it; all our principal chemical processes such as distillation, extraction, and scientific isolations of substances, and how to understand all these things theoretically are found in Arabian experimental science. One should really investigate to what an extent Lord Bacon of Verulam, who is considered the father of natural science, develops this repetition in his natural philosophy. In the case of Arabism it is more the theories of scientific research which are repeated in our modern time, in the case of the Egyptians, it is more their actual practices that reappear.

We could explain this fact by saying that large groups of persons incarnate together, and that what they have acquired in earlier times is carried on again under later and changed conditions.

Perhaps it may be permitted to bring forward another example, but this time of a more personal character. Everybody knows about Lawrence of Arabia. As a boy (he was born in Carnarvon in Wales) he had only one special hobby, which was to study the medieval fortifications of a certain epoch. He found them in Wales. As a student he traveled to France; and then made a trip to Syria and Arabia in order to study them more closely. It was the fortifications of the Crusaders of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that interested him most. On this trip it became evident that he was perfectly well able to live among the Bedouins as one of themselves. Later, his whole work was based on these studies; and he even said that his plan for taking Palestine and Syria with the help of the Arabs was based entirely on the lines which had been followed by the Crusaders. He was, of course, helped enormously by his earlier studies.

Is this not best explained by assuming that he had acquired this knowledge and interest by having been actually once present, at the time of the Crusades, in these countries—on one side or the other?

At this point some readers will certainly think that I am going too far. But at least they will admit that such things make history far more alive and fascinating, for it then touches us personally. Only then does the saying that “history is made by individuals” ring really true.

It is a very interesting fact that in history one often finds two entirely opposite cultures existing side by side. For instance, the Egyptian and the Babylonian, the Greek and the Roman.

In Egypt everything was built to endure. Buildings and statuary are of granite and basaltic rock. The sand covers them, but they still remain, colossal, and weighty. Their history is carved upon the stones. Their statues are bound in rigidity of poise, as though gazing upon eternal space. The dead are mummified, and after thousands of years, we find them again. Geometry, law, balance, silence—these rule in Egypt.

In Babylon all is mobile. The towns disappear under floods. Their history is written upon tablets of clay. Only recently have the buried remains of Nineveh been found—a town as big as a modern city. Babylon was destroyed, and revived, again and again. The figures of the kings and gods are never seated, but moving with outstretched wings. The great carven hunting scenes are an apotheosis of movement. It is not by chance that all the measurements of time are introduced in Babylon. We still—even today—count our time as they did, on the ever-recurring “sixties.” Blood flowed in Babylon as never in Egypt—everywhere was destruction and impermanence . . . together with exuberance of growth. Semiramis with her lovely hanging gardens; Nimrod (who is Gilgamesh) is the “mighty hunter:” and in his spiritual nature is the seeker after immortality; he travels to the West in search of it. And at the end—the writing on the wall: MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN.<sup>1</sup> But all this destruction leads to revival.

In Egypt, Duration. In Babylon, Metamorphosis. And what of Greece and Rome? The culture of Greece is the culture of human being—their Gods represent human perfection and imperfection, and the god-like forms appear as in human guise in their Art. The statue of the head of Zeus is the model representation of the Caucasian race.

And so it could be described with the other Gods; and also in respect of the later statues, busts, and portraits of individuals—which, though created in god-like proportion, impress us with their humanity. Mobility, metamorphosis, is also obviously a feature of the Greek civilization. Moreover, it has the tendency, like Proteus, to reappear in different forms through the ages.

Rome remains established upon the Earth; it is “founded upon the rock.” As a city it represented and ruled over the whole world. Like Egypt, it has the quality of duration. It is often said the Romans had no culture of their own, but took it over from Greece. But the truth is that they incorporated it in their own being. Steiner once said of the Romans that it is as if the statues

of the Greek gods have stepped down from their pedestals and walked about as Roman citizens, enveloped in the folds of their togas. The gods became men! It is no wonder that in this empire a god could incarnate in human form. Do we not find the same kind of cultural polarity in our modern age?

The history of Germany is mobile. Again and again Germany has changed. Its culture, blossoming in one age, decays in another. The Thirty Years War for instance destroyed it entirely. The great classical epoch of Goethe's time was certainly followed by a decline. Mobility and metamorphosis have ruled its history.

And is there not a quite evident repetition of Egyptian and Roman rule? It is the British Empire! Only, what in Egypt was more spiritual in Rome was political, and became in England, economic. The British Empire rules also in silence, and builds for duration.

Is there a possibility of explaining such repetitions? Are they only lifeless necessities, imposed upon us by historical fate?

They may best be explained by the law of reincarnation. If reincarnation brings about the return of great groups of human beings, then this problem in history is solved. We can imagine, for instance, that a great mass of Egyptians reappear first in Rome, and then among the British. And the same would apply to the Babylonian, Greek, and German peoples.

There can, of course, be many exceptions to this general rule. But the main character of history is only explainable on the general hypothesis.

In this case, one can really speak of a "reincarnation of empires." Then it is we ourselves who are making history—not only in the present, but also in the past. But this past is then the present. And, to understand this, leads us to a right comprehension of the future.

This whole historical aspect gives us the possibility of realizing the fact of reincarnation in a general way. But it may be made clear and precise when we study it from the point of view of separate individualities and their biographies.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Daniel verse 25: MENE, God hath numbered (thy kingdom) and finished it: TEKEL, thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting. PERES, thy Kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

# What Is History About?

by

A.C. Harwood

History is in a great muddle today. No one knows exactly what it is about, whether it is a science or an art, whether it is a study of people or of processes, or what is its relation to other fields of enquiry.

The trouble began —like so many other troubles—in the nineteenth century. Until then historians had told a story covering a smaller or greater series of events from some accepted point of view, after preliminary enquiry into the facts. (We should bear in mind that history originally meant an enquiry but evolves into the word story.) The great Greek historians, Herodotus and Thucydides, were interested in illuminating from their own periods the favorite Greek contention that success begets Nemesis (roughly a fall) and that hubris begets Nemesis (roughly a Fall). The Roman Levy told the tale of the glorious mission of Rome. Christian historians such as the Venerable Bede were concerned with God's purpose in the fall and the Redemption, and the not too far distant separation of the righteous from the wicked at the last judgment.

Even after the Renaissance, the historian's task was simple and his materials were not too hard to assemble. Samuel Johnson took a dim view of the historian's trade. "Great abilities (said he) are not requisite for an historian, for in historical composition all the greatest powers of the human mind are quiescent. He has his facts ready to his hand; so there is no exercise of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree, only about as much as is used in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy and coloring will fit a man for the task, if he can give the application which is necessary." <sup>1</sup>

This placid view, which was based on the picture of more or less static man living in a static nature, was shaken even before the end of Johnson's century. Rousseau made his contemporaries take the society of primitive man seriously for the first time. A contrast arose in which the idea of social evolution was inherent. German philosophers sought for a unifying principle in history. Kant said that we cannot prove, but we must assume, that there is a plan in history, just as we assume. Though we cannot prove, that there are laws in nature: and the plan in history is the education of the human race through rationality to freedom.

Kant held that it was the evil element in man—greed, selfishness, etc., which led him to abandon the harmony and happiness of his original state of Nature and set him on the long path to freedom. Hegel, who believed that all history was thought, advanced his dialectical process of thesis, an-

1. Boswell. Year 1763.

tithesis and synthesis as the moving power in history. For he held that history was concerned with acts not events—and acts are intelligible only as the outward expression of thought. (Later his disciple Marx was to invert Hegel's dialectical process by applying it to history considered as events and above all economic events.)

Meanwhile in England the new geology arose, with its view of the evolution of earth and nature, which Hegel denied. The success of the scientific method in other fields produced a new type of scientific history, just at the time when science itself was becoming historical. Evolutionary man was now set against evolutionary nature. At the same time the field of history was enormously enlarged by new discoveries and excavations. Carlyle extended Johnson's preference for biography over history into the theory that history is the story of **Great Men**. In reaction to this view, Buckle held that Carlyle's great men were merely the product of the forces of their age, and that the primary causes in history were to be found in Climate, Soil, Food, and Nature.

Buckle appealed to the science of statistics to prove that human actions seen in the large are governed by fixed and regular rules. By the discovery of these rules history could become a science. The new textual criticism seemed also to admit the scientific method into the study of history. But Buckle was almost alone among English historians of the nineteenth century in trying to create a rationale of universal history. Nor did the dialectical materialism of Marx commend itself to the English. Especially as the century proceeded, the multiplicity of facts seemed to elude the general rule. The monograph became the staple of the historian. The eleventh edition of the **Encyclopedia Britannica** (1910) thinks it impossible for anyone again to attempt a universal history.

Through all the nineteenth century there blows the comfortable wind of progress, and the historians are no exception. Whether it is Macaulay glorifying the great principles of the English Revolution, or Buckle deciding that Europe is the place where nature allows man to become more and more rational, or the many minor historians who saw the culmination of history in the new industrial techniques. There was a kind of general belief that the ascending line of progress could be observed in the course of recorded history, just as it could be seen in the ascent of the human species from the ape. The catastrophic events of the First World War shattered this complacent optimism, and it is significant that the new attempt in Germany to establish a universal view of history was an account not of progress but of decline—the **Decline of the West**.

Spengler's book at once raised again the question whether a universal theory of history is possible. Some weapons had been placed in the hands of twentieth-century historians which seemed to strengthen this possibility. The rise of anthroposophy had given birth to the conception of cultures as well as of civilizations, and there were now a real number of such cultures investigated and available for comparative study. Accordingly, it has become the hope of some anthropologists that the general basis of development observ-

able in cultures will also be found valid for civilizations. They believe that the enormous mass of material now available for many civilizations will be reduced to manageable proportions by the process of scientific sampling, which they claim has been proved valid by modern usage. At the same time the flight from the belief in cause and effect to the general belief that all we can know is that events form themselves into patterns would seem to point to the possibility of finding such patterns in recorded history.

It must be admitted, however, that as soon as any historian claims to have found any such pattern, the whole fraternity rises up to destroy him. Spengler's organic pattern has been universally attacked—not least by his successor Toynbee—as an arbitrary Procrustean bed on which Spengler has stretched and amputated his facts to fit his theory. After the first hush of astonished admiration, Toynbee has been treated no better. It is true that Toynbee does not regard the collapse of any civilization as inevitable. As long as it produces creative individuals to respond to the new challenges, it may go on forever. But if the challenges are not met, a certain pattern of events will follow, because up to now it has been followed. It is this pattern—the theory of the Universal State and the Universal Church, etc.—which is assailed by other historians as being just as arbitrary as Spengler's organic processes, even if it is admitted that Toynbee has produced some new and fruitful ways of thinking about history.

In general, there are four main classes of historians today. If we exclude the special contribution of Toynbee. Those who are anthropologically minded, especially Americans such as Philip Bagby, still hope that something of a pattern will emerge from the study of cultures and civilizations, but only when we have collected sufficient data and are able to see those data from a sufficient distance. What we need, they say, is a **macroscope**, which will enable us to see the wood and not the trees. They are not concerned with the philosophical questions that the postulate of historical patterns raises. Like modern scientists, they are content if they can say this is how it works in practice.

The second group, among whom I would place Sir Isaiah Berlin, Professor Butterfield, and Mr. A. L. Rowse, are much concerned with the freedom of the individual. If history works in patterns, if one condition is followed inevitably by another, is there any use in the individual making any effort? Kant solved this problem—the ancient problem of reconciling free-will and necessity—by the distinction between **noumena** and freedom. Hegel, who believed that all history was thought, advanced his dialectical process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis as the moving power in history. For he held that history was concerned with **acts** not **events**—and acts are intelligible only as the outward expression of thought. (Later his disciple Marx was to invert Hegel's dialectical process by applying it to history considered as **events** and above all economic events.)

Kant solved this problem—the ancient problem of reconciling free-will and necessity—by the distinction between **noumena** and **phenomena**. The historical action as experienced by the actor is **noumenon**, and therefore free.

The same action seen by the historian is **phenomenon**, and takes its place as a necessity in the great scheme of things. The English historians make less philosophical distinctions. While admitting that certain broad developments of history are inevitable and predictable, they insist that the more you turn your attention from the mass to the individual, the stronger you find the impact of freedom.

Butterfield argues that the present chaos of opinions, which is reflected in all departments of life and not least in religion, is something that ought to be welcomed by Christians, because it is a proof of the emergence of the individual principle for which Christianity stands. We should “first praise God for freedom of mind, and then pray for some degree of unison.” Butterfield also shares with some other historians the interesting point of view that the scientific outlook has served religion well, because it has brought material things under the rule of necessity, and left religion free and unencumbered in the spiritual field. He claims that the more history deals with material things, the more it discovers the law of necessity; but as it advances to the spiritual, freedom increasingly operates.

Virtually all historians who deal with universal issues point, as do Spengler and Toynbee, to sequences of events or chains of development common to civilizations widely different in space and time. To an essentially materialistic historian such as Professor Gordon Childe, who may be said to represent a third view of history, there is one thing which makes nonsense of all cyclic or repetitive views of history—the story of man’s inventions in the conquest of nature. You may properly compare Egyptian, Byzantine, and Victorian portrait painting, but you cannot compare the Shaduf, the Persian water wheel, and the electric pump. In the last you have “three species in evolution measurable by efficiency in mathematical terms.” Gordon Childe probably comes closest of all English historians to accepting the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engels, whom he quotes freely. Motives (which belong to individuals) are for him an unprofitable study. The laws of history are just “short-hand descriptions of the way in which historical changes do come about.”

In tremendous contrast to this practical and common sense view is the almost mystical approach to history of R. G. Collingwood and the Cambridge writer, whom he quotes with immense approval, Michael B. Oakeshott, who form the fourth school of thought. The Oxford philosopher Bradley had held that there is an absolute division between knowledge and experience. As soon as we raise experience to the level of knowledge, it becomes objective to us and is therefore no longer experience. Fundamentally, we can write history only as object, not the real history, which was experienced.

This is of course the same distinction that Kant had made between history as **noumenon** and as **phenomenon** seen from another angle. Now Collingwood and Oakeshott deny this absolute division between the thought and the experienced. Between subject and object, they say, there is not absolute division between two separate things, but a **distinction** within one

total experience. Experience contains thought within itself. The real is not divided into the knower (who cannot be known) and the known (which cannot know). Mind has the right to know itself.

For history, this means that “the distinction between history as it happened, and history as it is thought must go: it is not merely false, it is meaningless.” Because history is experience it is present, but because it is history—i.e., the formulation of experience as a whole *sub specie praeteritorum*—it is the continuous assertion of a past, which is not past, and of a present which is not present. History is not a series but a world, its various parts “bear upon one another, criticize one another, make one another intelligible.” Past thought lives in every present thought. Thus the phenomena of history bear to historical consciousness something of the relation which concepts bear to concepts in the **Philosophy of Spiritual Activity**: they awaken an inner experience from without. In Kant’s expression, the phenomena become **noumenon**.

In a variety of ways the anthroposophical view of history complements these divergent views of history, and by complementing may even be said to unify them. There is, however, one fundamental postulate which is not shared, as far as I know, by any other view of history. All historians, materialists and idealists alike, assume that the process of human history has been one of the expansion of consciousness. We have come to know more and more about more and more. It is only anthroposophy which speaks of the historical process as a contraction of consciousness. For it takes as historical fact the traditions to be found in all ancient peoples that they were given their social laws and taught the arts of life by the Gods. Moses received the law from God on the mountain. Before Menes, said the Egyptians, their country was ruled over by the gods. The nymph Egeria taught Numa the laws of Rome. Athene gave Attica the olive; Ahura Mazdao taught the Persians the cultivation of wheat. It is useless to multiply examples of the universal belief that at one time men saw and spoke with the gods. With the historical contraction of consciousness, human experience became limited to the sense-world. Through gazing on Helios, said Plutarch, men have forgotten Apollo.

This belief in the reality of the ancient Gods creates a new historical field. The ordinary historian is interested in ancient beliefs as they affect social, economic and political life; the anthropologist is interested in them as marking stages of culture; the anthroposophist is interested in what they actually mean. This is a concrete way of saying that the anthroposophist believes in a real spiritual world inhabited by real spiritual beings who at one time actually directed, either by advancing or impeding, the course of events. There is thus often a spiritual bridge between events which are regarded in ordinary history as entirely discrete. The Sumerian-Babylonian civilization which externally is quite unconnected with the Egyptian is seen as its twin-sister, with the difference that the former sought for the direction of the gods in studying the world of the stars, while the latter did the same with the world of the dead. But both represent the stage of soul development when the Gods have withdrawn from immediate perception, or at

most reveal themselves through the medium of the dream. Or events in the Celtic West and even in the civilization of Central America are brought into relation to the central moment of history when the Christ entered the sphere of the earth.

One of the most fruitful ideas which Toynbee introduces into world history is that of the changing nature of the challenges with which a civilization is presented, a change from outer challenges to inner challenges. Anthroposophy applies this direction of development from outer to inner to consciousness itself, and in doing so finds the Ariadne thread which links together apparently unconnected cultures and civilizations.

It also approaches in a new way the story of man's mastery of the forces of nature: Toynbee challenges the position of those historians who measure historical progress by man's practical inventions with the flat assertion that superior technique has nothing to do with advance in culture or civilization. He even calls antiquity to his side by pointing out that the Palaeolithic peoples had worse tools than the neolithic, but were better painters! Now the anthroposophist is interested in the development of technique not so much for its practical results as for the evidence it gives of a change of consciousness. To smelt iron requires different powers of the soul from mixing copper and tin, or chipping stones. To work machines driven by the elements is in the reach of the Intellectual Soul: harnessing the mechanical forces of sub-nature could be only attained by the Consciousness Soul. What is cyclical in anthroposophical history is the succession of states of soul: and the same state of soul takes varied forms in different parts of the world. When the Sentient Soul was expressing itself in the necrology of Egypt and the astrology of Mesopotamia, the same soul was giving birth in the West to what later became the Arthurian legends, with their Sun King and Moon Queen and the twenty-four knights of the table round. It is always the leading civilization which brings the new type of consciousness to its full expression, but echoes of it appear in all parts of the world.

The successive stages of mind reflected in the sequence of civilization are steps in the contraction of consciousness. It is here that we see the larger meaning of the development of individuality, which Professor Butterfield regards as essentially Christian, in relation to the problem of freedom and necessity. The anthroposophical view of the great purpose of history is foreshadowed in the historical theory of Kant. The plan of history, said Kant, is the education of the human race towards freedom, and a necessary stage of this process is the appearance of man as a rational being. Man could not have foreseen this stage when he was still in a state of nature, which Kant, following Rousseau, seems to have seen as a state of harmony, though of a low kind. What drove man to leave the state of nature and embark on the stormy voyage towards reason, was not the virtuous but the evil elements in his being, selfishness, greed, the lust for power, etc.

This is none other than the disturbance of the state of Yin (harmony) by Yang (disharmony) which Toynbee sees at the root of all civilizations. The anthroposophist sees it as the Luciferic temptation which set going the whole

necessary process of history as a flight from the divine, the object of which is human freedom. But human freedom could not be willed out of human freedom. It is willed out of what for man is necessity. It is only when necessity estranges man from the divine that individual freedom can arise. The necessary in history is not the enemy, but the condition of freedom.

Kant saw freedom as the end of history: the anthroposophist sees it not as the end but as a new beginning, the setting out on the long road which leads again to the divine. The first stage on that road is the overcoming of the rational, which gave man his freedom, by Imagination, which transcends the barrier that Kant raised between the knower and the thing-in-itself which is to be known.

This transcendence in history is the immediate experience of the past as present which Collingwood and Oakeshott are seeking for. Here again, however, anthroposophy has a concrete view of the past-in-the-present in its understanding of reincarnation. It is undoubtedly true that in every word we speak, every thought we think, every deed we do, we are always unconsciously evoking the forces of the past and allowing them to live again in us. Dr. Johnson observed that if the simplest book could be written out of the unaided powers of one individual, it would be a stupendous achievement. But the stream of consciousness which descends down the generations, and makes the writing of a book possible, is met by another stream of which we are usually equally unaware. This is the stream of our own experiences in former earth lives, without which we should not have the forces to take hold of the inheritance on which we enter when we are born.

This conception of reincarnation also reverses what is still the unconscious assumption of historians. They study the process of history, and even if they believe (and all do not) that the individual has a vital contribution to make to that process, or at least that some individuals have made such a contribution, still fundamentally they see the individual as serving the process of history, not the process of history the individual. Now when some people say that the individual exists to serve the State, we call this view totalitarian, and are proud of our western view that the State exists to serve the individual. All history, however, which denies reincarnation is totalitarian. It is only through the fact of repeated earth lives that the process of history can serve the individual. The humblest biography then takes a new significance from its historical setting. In the past we have all shared in the preparation of the present: in the present we are all preparers of what is to come. We serve the Muse of History. But equally Clio serves us.

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**17th Century Background.** Penguin.
- Wyatt, Isabel.  
 Various books, suitable and helpful for nearly every elementary grade.
- Yourcenar, Marguerite.  
**The Journals of Hadrian.**  
 More of her works are being translated.  
**L'Oeuvre au Noir** is a very fetching story of evolution of one soul in the world of alchemy and esoteric Christianity at the turn of the Middle Ages. Available in English.
- LeRoy-Ladurie, E.  
**Montailhou.** Schocken, 1979. (Huge, in some ways unmanageable chronicle of one town in the south of France through the Middle Ages: family histories, disease, religious change in individuals and in the community, the rise of Catharism, the coming of the Reformation—probably worth looking into for quick glimpses.)

Sullivan, Navin

**Pioneer Astronomers.** Published by JHS publishing company, for school use.  
Excellent stories of lives of Galileo, Kepler, Tycho Brahe.

Hull, Edward

**The World of Walls,** (Middle Ages)

Luckhardt, Mildred Madeleine

**The World Awake,** (Renaissance) Fine biographies—with historical information woven in.

Henry, Madeline Mary

**Aspasia** (a series about Athens)

Dzielska, Maria

**Hypatia** (antiquities revealed)

Forbes, Esther

**Johnny Tremain.** Dell Books. A young boy in the American Revolution, for children

Teichmann, Frank

**Der Mensch und Sein Tempel:**

**Aegypten,** (Vol. 1)

**Griechenlandke,** (Vol 2) Urachhaus, understood to be quite good, with insights out of Anthroposophy.

Harrer, Dorothy J.

**Roman Lives,** fine descriptions and stories.