

On Dr. König's Plays

Dr. H. H. Engel , Glencairn, 25.5 1966

Dear friends, we will tonight attempt to turn to some of Dr. König's plays, which are so near to the heart of Camphill, which are part of our existence and which also, as Dr. König expressed it once, form shape and increase the spiritual substance of Camphill wherever and whenever they are given in the form of a personal play or a reading or received by those who look on or listen. If one turns to these plays I think one can only do it by treading as tenderly, as carefully as possible. Because one can also destroy more than build up by speaking about those plays and Dr. König himself has been very reluctant to say a great deal about them. He rather let the plays speak for themselves and therefore also tonight I would not want to give you any interpretations or solutions of the riddles; I would be quite unable to do it and also feel one shall not want to do so. Yet I feel it is justified to turn to the plays and to draw perhaps the attention towards the one of the other of the persons, of the figures or of the special features which rise up in those plays. As we are in those ten days between Ascension and Whitsun it might perhaps be quite helpful to turn to those four plays which were written for this time. We all know that Dr. König increasingly so felt that these ten days between Ascension and Whitsun were of the greatest spiritual importance only to be compared with the Holy Nights. For some time he intended to write for each one of these ten days a play, later he felt it should be less and he wrote in point of fact only these four which are known to us as the Emmaus Play, the Cup of Zarathustra which we saw yesterday, Quo Vadis, Domine and the Book of Kells.

If we take these four plays and let them appear in front of our inner vision, we might, for instance, discover the following: the Emmaus Play plays in the late afternoon on Friday, 5, 6 o'clock. The play to be played on Saturday, the Cup of Zarathustra plays two hours later, 8 o'clock, half past seven, 8 o'clock. Quo Vadis, Domine plays still later, goes through depth of the darkest night, reaches through the first morning dawn and the Book of Kells plays at the high hour of noon in midday. If we follow such a line that we go from evening, late evening, through the night to the morning up to midday, we see, and surely it is coincidence that can say such a thing, we see that is a quite clear ductus in this. If we go still a step further, then we find in the Emmaus Play Cleophas and the other disciple and there has just been this stranger, and we must count him in, and there is Mary. Questions, doubt, this questioning mood

we meet and the head says: no, and the heart knows: yes, it is the Lord. Then suddenly out of the depth of the darkness there rises the Goddess Artemis, Erda, Diana, goddess of the Moom and she rises and it is her who must find redemption. And she finds redemption in her mirror picture and who is her mirror picture, it is Mary, because Mary said: is it not myself that has appeared? Then these two, the Goddess and Mary, these who under the guidance of Cleophas through the medium of the bread, bring about redemption, and redemption is called death and death is called redemption. I would not want to say more about this.

When we go to the next play, to the Cup of Zarathustra: what do we find there? It is Salome and Salome mirrors herself in many: Mary Magdalene, Martha, Thomas, the two servants of the Sadducees and then there appears this sheath of the youth, of the Jesus Child, the one who had died at the age of 12 or 13 after the event in the temple when the two Jesus children met, the one being 12 years old. In the course of this new meeting there happens to Salome the same that happened to Artemis. The Goddess is redeemed and she called that death. Salome is redeemed from the powers of intellect and is transformed with the help of bread and wine and the youth becomes the Cup of the Holy Grail. What for Artemis becomes a disappearance from the realms she knew as the world of Olympus, for Salome it means to step down, not to continue to speak, only her heart will continue to do so. You all surely know that the legend continues to tell that Salome, Mary Magdalene and Martha and their great servant women go in a boat to St. Maries de la Mer and carry the Grail there onto the altar.

Drawing

If we again go still one step further and turn to the Quo Vadis Domine play, we meet Peter and in a similar way as Artemis mirrored herself in Mary, Peter looks into the abyss out of which arises the beggar, who has become a servant of death, who has become a demon, a vampire himself. In doing so gradually Peter too finds himself. The hour of death, the midnight hour strikes, the three women, the mother with the two daughters, appear and again they become the helpers to bring about a transformation in the beggar. It is Peter who meets the mirror, but it is the beggar who is transformed and in a similar way as Salome becomes the tool through whom the Lord sanctifies bread and wine so that this transformation into the Holy Cup can come about, so now the body of the beggar becomes sanctified so that even the bread which he carries in his pouch take on the power of becoming the Holy Host

which then is handed to all the others. And all go to meet their certain death, but now they die in Christ.

If we now still go a step further and turn to the Book of Kells, we enter an entirely different sphere, *the high hour of noon*. Colmcille up in the House of Kells is in communion with the Cosmic word itself. There are the heavenly beasts, the Eagle and the Bull, the Lion and the Angelman and out of this Cosmic height there sounds the world word: Ah, Ih, Oh and from below there sounds the Uh and in this atmosphere, contrary to the midnight of despair and distress of the Quo Vadis Play, we suddenly live in this sun-filled atmosphere of the Cosmic Word. Into this enters from below Brendan, he disturbs this hour. He comes and tells what he has to bring from his journey to America: his great despair of what world destiny is going to be if powers and forces that live over there in the West come too early towards Europe and the great worry comes towards them that the posers that have risen up in the East in the form of Mohammed and his Islamites, that they come forth into Europe to destroy. Into this terrible tension of these two dangers, these two men are placed. Then speak the Cosmic beings. Colmcille is acquainted to listening to them and to perceiving them, not so Brendan. So when Brendan hears the words of these beasts and he turns to behold them is overcome and falls to the ground and Colmcille helps him to gradually recover and then appears mother Ita who has died some time ago and she places words of conscience unto these two men and they have to find themselves until they know what they have to do. Only at the end there again it knocks and Imira, the good old servant monk, comes and offers some bread and milk to these two men, speaks the grace and with it, as Colmcille says, leads them back to the earthly world. Colmcille says:

*Imira, we are grateful
for your word,
it has led us back again
on to the right path
into the light of the earthly day.*

So, we have an entirely different way, not a transformation as it happens with the Goddess, with this high, wise Jewish intellect woman, with the simple Peter and the diabolic beggar, they are all transformed. Colmcille not, He, who is at home in the realms of the Cosmic word, who even can take Brendan into this, he is confronted with the experience and the call of conscience and there is no transformation he has to take in fullness and to live with it, to digest it, to transform himself. So we write here, Colmcille and when he

sees this, we discover another trend that goes through these four plays. Here is the Goddess who appears, here in the Cup of Zarathustra, appears the being of Zarathustra, the 12 year old Jesus, to Peter in the Quo Vadis Play, the Christ himself has appeared, to Colmille there have appeared the four beasts of the world Word, the cosmic Word itself, that is: the Cosmic Christ has appeared. So we see what a pathway we are permitted to walk along if we follow these four plays in this manner.

I would like to read to you only a few words from each play, namely those words that accompany always the happening around the giving of the bread. In the Emmaus play it says: - and it is the voice of Goddess that speaks:

*Once I ruled over the encircling sphere,
Now rule thou over me, Oh Son of Man,
Though living in the realm of death
I gain new life. Spheres received me,
Which hitherto I did not know.
Redemption I will find,
I know the homeland of mankind.*

And in the Cup of Zarathustra, Salome speaks these wonderful words which I can only call like this: a prayer:

*Oh Lord, Oh Christ,
Oh Messiah, Thou my God,
Thou speakest in my heart.
All powerful is the Love
That from Thee awakes in me,
And I know
Thou art in me,
Also when I deny Thee,
Thou workest in me.
Also when I betray thee
Thou sendest comfort and healing,
Even to those who evade Thee.*

In the next play, the Quo Vadis Play, there Peter speaks these words:

*Death is the bread of this existence.
As long as we eat food,
We die.
We feed ourselves with bread*

*And so escape from death.
But at ransom
Becomes the farthing
Which opens to us the portal of death.*

And the grace which Imira speaks is:

God Bless the bread
You break, Oh Master.
Mother Earth
Has brought it forth.
The Spirit Father
Has raised it up.
In the name of Christ,
May it be our food.

You see these words spoken are just the content of what I tried to place before you in looking at these four plays which are given to us as this wonderful present and we can see that what it is these plays have in common, these powers of transformation expressed through the bread which is the body of Christ. Trans-substantiation and Communion, Offering and Reading these four parts are suddenly revealed to us in quite a different way.

When we now turn to another group of plays, namely the Easter Plays, we have all turned to them; one we have been able to perform this year, the others we read, though not the Easter Sunday Play. But if we look at those then we have there first the Maundy Thursday and there is the youth and behind him three Archangelic beings, and on his one side there is the speaker, this veiled figure and on the other side there is the angel being and between these the speaking and sounding and listening continues and these three Archangelic beings, Raphael, Uriel, Michael, they speak about the transforming power of breathing and they speak of the wisdom of the stars and between them and the youth there goes on this talk and the youth stands still under the impact of the fact that he has carried bread and fishes in the miraculous feeding of the 5.000. These beings, the Archangels and the youth are only concerned with the healing power, the transforming power of the fishes, of the bread, of the stars and the breathing. And suddenly the youth turns to the speaker and all is about the Word and the speaker is asked:

*Thou speaker, speak,
Has thou lost the Word?
Were the sounds that thou hadst*

*For ears hat never heard?
Thou speaker tell;
Thou speaker say . . .*

And the speaker answers:

*Not my word is lost.
My self is benumbed,
My being expired,
My breathing enshrouded.
I live as one dead,
I speak as one dumb,
And I sounda s one deaf.
Dost thou know it now?*

In this they meet. The intellect is dumb and there rises the angel on the other side of the youth and he is the one who can then give the names of the apostles and he gives the power of the word imbued with the life-giving transformation of the cosmic bread, the cosmic breathing, the Cosmic fishes, the Cosmic wine.

When we turn to Good Friday and its play we find the youth again. Now this time the youth is metamorphosed into a madman. Then there are the Blind, the Deaf, the Dumb, the plague stricken, the Lame, the Idiot, the Epileptic, these seven appear. They stand so to speak on one side. The madman is the one in whom now in this hour there comes about the transformation and the blind man is the one who experiences this. On the other side there appear two other elements. The one is the mother with the little child and the other is the mother with the youth, the Consumptive and the Beggar on either side. These two beings look like John the Baptist and John the Evangelist. There we find, and Dr. König expressed it like that, there we find a further transformation because the mother with the young child, she is not at all inclined towards the Christian side, she stands for the past, for the power of memory. The other already foreshadows or fore-lightens rather to say something which we then meet time and again, namely the Image of the Pieta as we met it in the Holy Grail and with it the conscience arises. It is this old mother with the youth who calls upon the young mother with the child and it is this voice of conscience, that calls forth and which brings together the whole ring of these people so that we have the seven on the one side: the Madman who becomes transformed in the middle. Here have memory and the Pieta as conscience, accompanied by the two John beings. What was cosmic height, is now here on earth. The Word is given back to man, the Madman has spoken it out, the

Blind, the Plague stricken have perceived it, the Epileptic, everyone in this way has experienced it in his heart and says: Not I, my heart was lame, my heart was dumb, my heart was blind, my heart was stupid or deaf. There we find the Word being given back and the carrier of the Word is the mother with the youth, John and John on the other side. The others are the disciples.

If we go again a step further we come to the Easter Saturday Play. What was a temple was transformed into the tomb. What was the Madman now becomes the Woman of Samaria. It is her who has been transformed already before. She has been given the living water, she has drunk of the water of life which the Christ has given to her; she is one transformed: there is Joseph and there is Nicodemus. Joseph is not a Christian and neither is Nicodemus yet. The one is the past and that is Joseph and the other is corresponding to the conscience and that is Nicodemus. Through the woman of Samaria they are brought together and these three alone form an oneness. That is also why it says at the end:

*Through many earthly lives
His light will lead us on.*

After the Samaritan Woman has said:

*Come let us go together unto Jerusalem,
Arimathia, Nicodemus and Samaria
As confessors will we tread upon his path
Through many earthly lives
Nicodemus says, His light will lead us on.
What at the rock-hewn tomb begins
Will lead through widths
Of space and time.*

There we have still the scribe and the soldier; and Dr. König described the soldier as the Parsifal who is groping and looking around and who doesn't say the word yet, not yet. But nevertheless he is the Parsifal who is meant one day to do so and the scribe goes into the world, he corresponds with the speaker who has lost the word and must go and find it.

When we go on we come to the Easter Sunday Play. Perhaps many of you will not know this play. It plays in the west of Ireland in the hills near the sea and it is Easter Sunday morning, the day when the Christ has risen. It is early in the morning, there are two pupils who have just gone through three days of initiation and now this morning

they are meant to be called back by their two chief Druids and now they have experienced what they were meant to experience in the skies, and then suddenly earth tremors, thunder roll and further away in the temple, the holy sacrificial flame which was tended by the three Druidesses, goes out. Out of this thunder that is about, a voice speaks and proclaims in the words of the twelfth chapter of the Revelation, that a man child is to be born, to come here on earth but that the evil powers are to follow it and that the woman clad with the sun, standing on the sickle of the Moon and crowned with the crown of stars, this is the one who bears this child and has to safeguard it from the evil powers. Of course, turmoil, these three Druidesses appear, the two Druides appear and they all experience: the world has changed. That what they have done so far has come to an end. They now have experienced a new becoming and they must now go into the world and the first Druid says at the end:

*It has shown to us the way
That we have been destined to tread,
The way that has led from out of the past.*

And the second Druid speaks.

*Oh friends, it is the Mother for whom we must
search,*

*In the wilderness prepared of God.
If we walk in the light entrusted to us
The way will become the truth –
And the truth will then become the life.
So it is:
The light of the sun, spirit imbued,
Will shine on the earth in the hearts of men.*

What was once outside, what was experienced by the Druids as the Logos, as the word of the worlds, as the cosmic word, now it is not anymore to be found in the sun. Now it is to be found within and it is from there that now they will find the way, the truth and life. When we take these four, we see how the first play, the Maundy Thursday Play, starts in the evening at 6 o'clock or so, and then the next, the Good Friday Play plays on Friday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and then the next in the early morning, 10 or 11 or so, and the last play in the morning at six o'clock. So when we have in the plays of the ten days, afternoon, evening, through the night, morning and noon, we go here the way from evening to afternoon to forenoon to early morning, quite a different way. What was the

bread, which we met here each time, we met now the transformation of the old into the inner experience of the Cosmic Sun that is the Christ in man. Here the Grail vessel, the Grail substance is prepared. There we meet all the figures around, Parsival, Sigune, they are all there around and if you want, you can find them in their respective ways, Garwain, all of them are there.

Drawing

Now there are still four other plays which Dr. König has written. There is the Michaelmas Play, the Advent Play, the Christmas Community Play and the St. John's Play. I think it is far too much to speak about those also in detail tonight. What I would like to say only is in these four plays it is the Word that on the one hand in St. John's Play and the Christmas Play becomes the word of conscience and in the Advent Play and in the Michaelmas Play and it is not the Word of Conscience but it is the word of Cognition. *Tell me the word which unseals* the Prince is asked, the Knight is asked and the man is asked and only when the answer is given: *Revelation of heaven upon earth, redemption of mankind in heaven*, only then we find the word is again living among men. It is this true cognition between heart and head which leads the man towards the spirit world across the threshold. In the Advent Play, which we have seen so beautifully performed last Advent time, it is the apple of the sorrows of the earth and the bread which enables the five wakeful virgins to cross the threshold. In the St. John's Play and the Christmas Play the bearer of Conscience and the voice of conscience bring back the word. In the St. John's Play the word is lost, St. John is dead and he is reawakened. In the Christmas Play the word becomes flesh, incarnates in man. So we have this great circle of these Plays in their magnificent simplicity. The bread of transformation, this is the bread of breathing, the bread of the Logos, of the word. In the other plays, the remaining four plays, it is the bread of cognition and the bread of Conscience. I believe in this way one might be permitted to look at these plays only as an indication to see that they are truly substance of and for Camphill. This I think I should say tonight, perhaps on some other occasion something different. Thank you very much.

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Eight Essays on Dr. König's Plays

(Mourne Grange booklet)

The Maundy Thursday Play (Mary Poole)

The Maundy Thursday Play has a heavenly setting, opening with the figures of the three Archangels, Michael, Raphael, and Uriel and a mysterious speaker, with covered head, who is reminiscent of the old Greek chorus, yet as the play proceeds, impressing us as a voice which begins to lose its relevance and in need of renewal. He calls to mankind to awaken to the cosmic nature of the events which begin to lead to the forthcoming Mystery of Golgatha and its profound significance for all creation. The words of the play, not easily accessible call for an awakened imagination; one feels that the Universe holds its breath and in this silence an entirely new order already begins to stir. Again and again, images of the spiritual feeding and renewal of mankind arise, speaking of this strange alchemy which continually transforms substance, whether pictured in the sharing of loaves and fishes in the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the transubstantiation of bread and wine in the Last Supper or the transforming deeds of the Archangels in heaven.

As a kind of earthly memory, the mysterious figure of a youth appears, one who has been described as the *lad who hath five barley loaves and two small fishes* (St. John's Gospel). The youth still bears the imprint in his hands of the wondrous feeding and from the other side of the threshold he recalls the mystery of this earthly multiplication of the bread, an event soon to reach cosmic fulfilment. We may ask ourselves, who is he?

It will be the task of the Archangels to receive and transform the coming earthly events into new substance for mankind – a heavenly counterpart of the act of offering which is to take place at *the table of the earth . . . the altar of mankind*.

With this conversation between Archangels and the Youth, the Speaker is as though dumb – *my self is benumbed, my being expired . . .* His role is somewhere unequal to the dimensions of their pronouncements. As a kind of seal of all that has been said, a white-gold angel appears, who describes the scene of the Last Supper, now taking place on earth, the Twelve singing with one voice around the table, sharing one pain in their leave-taking of the Christ. As the scene unfolds the Speaker asks for the individual names of the disciples *I seek the I, and not the All*, as though he glimpses something of the coming Ego-experience emanating from Golgatha which will enlighten each of the Twelve, individually, in a newfound community and capacity.

As each disciple is named and the Supper ends, Speaker, Archangels and Youth bring the play to a conclusion with prophetic words – *the night is approaching, now is fulfilled what mankind began . . .* They look towards the banner of Resurrection, shining towards the coming Day when, in the words of Uriel *the Lamb arises to become the Master of the Sheep.*

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The Good Friday Play (Mary Poole)

Very different in setting and action is the Good Friday Play, which is more immediately accessible to our understanding. Here the suffering and sorrows of the earth, and their possibility of transformation in the inner experience of the human being, is the central theme. This takes place around the actual time of Christ's death.

The scene is outside the Temple of Zeus in Athens. A group of afflicted people, blind, dumb, deaf, mad, plague stricken, etc. come seeking asylum from the Roman soldiers who hunt them down as *mangy dogs, pariahs*, and have orders to deport them to a distant island, far from the so-called decency and order of Caesar's world.

A blind man is the first to enter: around him, gradually, the other afflicted beings gather. His blindness initially attracts their sympathy, though it becomes a kind of focussing point for much misunderstanding and quarrel, - as tough from a world aspect one sees a universe of suffering stemming from the blindness of mankind. Throughout the play one feels the all too familiar clash between the rigidity of law and that of compassion, which can only be learned through the human experience of one's brother and his needs.

Relationships gradually begin to develop between these *brothers in sickness*, beginning in fear and aversion, but soon to be transformed into something one could imagine existing in a future enlightened society. Into these developing relationships comes the figure of a mother, with her hydrocephalic child, fleeing from the soldiers, full of aversion for the sick people – her attitude brings a feeling of *retardus* amongst a brotherhood that is beginning to grow. She belongs to an older order of experience.

As the moment of Christ's death approaches, all gradually becomes dark: the first glimmer of light we see shines from the torch of the madman, who comes from the Temple. He is the first to

speaking; at first he does so out of the dead world of his hallucination, but gradually, as the light begins to return, it is as if he experiences a kind of resurrection. Slowly too, fresh understanding begins to dawn in the hearts of the small company – this grows with the appearance on the steps of the Temple of another mother, carrying a paralysed youth on her arm, a beggar on her right, a consumptive on her left. As she sits, we know it is a picture of the Pieta we see, Mary with the dead Christ on her lap, John the Baptist and John the Evangelist on either side. In this moment, the destiny of each of the sick people becomes inwardly illuminated, in that they experience their individual responsibility for their own affliction and their community of suffering.

When finally the soldiers appear and herd the group brutally together, they form a noble *procession of suffering*, carrying the knowledge of its meaning for the earth, with fresh courage and hope.

The last words are spoken by one of the soldiers – *strange, it is as if I would follow them, not as a master, but as some poor wretch who serves them*. No doubt these words echo our belief that in future times the persecuted and afflicted of today will become the leaders of mankind.

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The Easter Saturday Play (Mary Poole)

The stillness which surrounds the Saturday Play is not an empty silence. What began to stir in the hushed waiting of Maundy Thursday is now living within this stillness as accomplished fact. In the quietness something intangible fills the Jewish elders and scribes with fear and the Roman guard with bewildered questioning.

The scene in the heavens on Maundy Thursday moved to that of the Temple of Zeus on Good Friday, and now, on Easter Saturday, has come to the Tomb at the foot of the Hill of Golgatha. The heavens, through Christ, have truly entered into the depth of the earth and from now on the Christian element will slowly start to spread its wings.

Jewish Scribes and High Priests appear to seal the Tomb against any who might seek to remove the Body and in spite their reiterated assurance that *at last he is silent*, their word betrays underlying fear. The silence is so pregnant that eventually the First Scribe is overcome and rending his garment rushes away, seeking to put

physical distance between himself and his fearful intuitions, which he can no longer bear. Even the Roman Soldier, guarding the Tomb, is similarly filled with disturbed memories and questions.

Into this scene the figures of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea enter. They are both men of standing and influence in Judea, and although neither were actual disciples of Christ during his lifetime, each in his own way perceived the truth of his Messiahship and inwardly acknowledge their destiny in relation to Him – Nicodemus through the power of the intellect, Arimathea through that of the heart.

As they speak of their experiences, a woman enters – the woman of Samaria – described in her meeting with the Christ at the Well of Sichar, in the St. John's Gospel. She too, has recognised the Messiah and her loving intuition, her *heart-bird* has led her to the Tomb. In the converse between the three is shown how the treasures of Jewish wisdom, in Nicodemus, the nobility and strength of heart in Arimathea – that of intuitive love and devotion of will, the *heart-bird*, which inspired this Samaritan Woman to follow its inward song, ever since her experience of Christ at the well.

This picture cannot fail to remind us of the Three Kings, whose *heart-bird* was a Star, and whose universal gifts were united as an offering to the Christ Child at His Birth: here now, they are offered again in renewed form by three figures at His Tomb. It is the loving impulse of this Samaritan woman, bringing renewed life, which allows the past elements to pour their fructifying strength into future striving, when all three must walk *Through many lives on earth . . . into width of space and time*, surely an early glimpse of the eternal search, in the Mysteries of the Holy Grail.

As they leave, the Soldier guarding the Tomb speaks: as if in a dream he looks back with nostalgia to his old home in Gaul and yet his soul is no longer satisfied with this longing. He has entered a Norman's Land, between the old and the new – *We are all sleeping here, god knows what is yet to happen*. He and the legionary in the Good Friday Play are both groping for a new understanding, which in time should awaken to the true nature of what has come to pass in the last days: as seekers, their words are prophetic.

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The Easter Sunday Play (Mary Poole)

The Easter Sunday Play moves from East to West. A fresh wind from early Celtic times blows through the new setting where the atmosphere has a certain transparency and the whole ether sphere is apparent in its pristine freshness. Even so, all this is about to experience a mighty upheaval.

The Easter Sun is rising over a wooded plateau in Western Ireland, with the sea in the background, where two young Druids, priests/pupils of a nearby sanctuary, are talking of their inner experiences – their preoccupation is with the phenomena of Nature and of the spiritual tasks in which they are schooled by their masters, the Druid Priests. They speak of *a waiting, a vague divining* engendered by what they encounter in their spiritual imaginations, which lately have been disturbed by sudden elemental forces, breaking up the old pattern within their souls.

As they speak it grows dark and they are enveloped by a terrifying strength of an upheaval in the whole elemental world. Breaking into violent storm through which a Voice speaks of the sundering of God's Temple whereby the Art of His Covenant is laid bare. We can imagine this as both inner and outer experience, the physical and spiritual tumult inextricably intertwined. When the clamour dies down, two old Druid Priests come down from the cliffs and awaken the young men who lie stunned beneath the trees. This evokes memories of descriptions of the old mysteries, in which the novice must undergo a three-day Temple sleep, from which he is awakened from the Hierophant. The spiritual experiences undergone during this *sleep* will be remembered and will imprint themselves into the souls of the two young men as a new spiritual dimension.

The two are now led by the Druid priests to experience the radiance of the Rainbow, which *charms spirit substance into earthly matter* and which leads them over again to a further chastening experience by the wind of the spirit, rushing through their souls as well as through outer nature. This time the voice sounds through the mighty rushing words from the Revelation of St. John: *And there appeared a great sign (wonder) in heaven: a woman clothed with the Sun . . . and she was with child . . .* words which describe the travail of the Soul of the World, soon to give birth to a New Order. The Voice follows with ominous words of warning: *And there appeared another sign in heaven, a great red dragon . . .*

This opposing force which challenges man's new-found freedom and power of Ego, bestowed through the Deeds on Golgatha, is now

sent to earth and is the devil with which all future spirituality will have to reckon.

After the storm dies, Priestesses hurry down from the inner sanctuary of the Temple: they too have experienced the violent upheaval, in the midst of their celebration, which penetrated to the inner core of their cult and extinguished the altar flame. In the words of the Druid priest all these happenings show that *we are standing at the abyss of all times . . . the Christ has appeared . . . Master of the elements and Spirit of the Earth*. The old light must be rekindled by the fire of the new.

The seven Druid characters resolve to wander the earth, making known to mankind what has been revealed to them as a new experience of the Logos.

This external wandering is one of the recurring motifs in the symphony of these plays. (as indeed in others of Dr. König's plays) which perhaps from one aspect could be seen here as a unity, like a service of offering with its four steps: On Maundy Thursday the Twelve are the future wanderers through the world as living gospel: On Good Friday the Twelve afflicted outcasts carry their suffering as meaning for the earth, to a far distant island, as Offering: On Easter Sunday the inner substance behind the outer lives of the Three at the Tomb transforms itself by uniting into renewed soul elements for the future, a kind of Transubstantiation; and in the Sunday Play, the whole world of the elements into which mankind is embedded, receives new life to resurrect throughout the whole of creation as a kind of cosmic Communion.

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Dr. König's St. John's Play (Udo Steuck)

Dr. König's play of St. John the Baptist is also a play of the future. When communities will be built and maintained in accordance with the constellations of stars.

St. John who speaks the words *The Hammer of conscience strikes* is surely a representative on conscience himself. When he is struck down by *evil* Scorpio it is as if conscience itself has died. When John is raised again conscience will have returned. But as John is to begin with dumb, this conscience seems to be a dumb and ineffective one, too. Only after meeting Hunter, Shepherd, Ploughman and Citizen,

will John be able to speak again, has conscience gained its full (higher) consciousness.

The players representing the twelve signs of the Zodiac take position in the circle. St. John the Baptist steps into the Centre and appeals to our conscience.

Afterwards the figure of Ram (Aries) comes forward looking behind her and pointing to the past. What will this mean to us and our community? Shall we, when starting a new life, as a community leave our past with all its hereditary influences behind?

Now it is the Bull's turn. As Ram can make out the past, so Bull (Taurus) can divine the future from the unique movements of the planets. Similarly the singular gifts of all people belonging to a community must flow together unanimously.

The next ones to step forward are the Twins (Gemini). They represent the male-female element in us. These Twins are also brother and sister standing for man's spirit and soul. They have to find each other, because spirit and soul belong together. Clasp hands they can face the tasks, even awesome ones – in this earthly world.

The children, the Twins are followed by the mother, the Crab (Cancer). Is this order correct: first the children and then the mother? – Yes, if we think of unborn children in the realm of heaven looking out for their mother who will give birth to them on earth. It is surely in the spiritual world where brother and sister work into the width, the mother (already on earth) from heights into depths or from depths into heights.

Now the colourful dance of the seven planetary metal children can take place. Lion (Leo) mixes the seven metal substances of the planets to create a bell. What has only been visible before – the seven colours – becomes also audible – the seven tones.

At this moment a threshold is crossed. The Virgin (Virgo) receives the substances from Lion and casts the bell. Finally the Scales (Libra) holding the banner teaches the bell to resound.

In short: Cancer prepares a shell (of the bell)
Leo fills the shell
Virgo casts the bell and
Libra makes the bell resound.

But Scorpio will now try to destroy the bell (of conscience!) by striking John into the heart. However, Scorpio does not succeed in silencing the bell altogether, because Scales brings about a renewed ringing of it. This resounding resurrects John who to begin with is dumb. Conscience has not died for good, but it is now dumb.

Now four figure: Archer (Sagittarius), Capricorn, Waterman (Aquarius) and Fishes (Pisces) step forward and make it possible for John to regain his speech.

Archer is a Hunter. At the end of the evolution when mankind is supposed to be vegetarian all hunting will come to an end. Any pain inflicted on a wild beast by man would be consciously experienced by him as his pain.

The conscience ***stirs***.

Capricorn, the Sea-goat is representing goats as well as sheep. Man appears in this sign as a Shepherd. While keeping watch over his flock he at times will meet misfortune and sorrow. Keeping watch over his sheep will lead man to keep watch over his own deeds. Some of our deeds bring sorrow to our fellow-men.

The conscience ***strikes***.

Waterman (Aquarius), the water carrier, carries water for the plants he grows. In our play he is a ploughman who is experiencing what he does to the earth. When he ploughs, he cuts a furrow into the earth. When he cuts the ripening grass, this is for him like cutting himself open and sore. Man feels responsible for the earth.

The conscience ***lies bare***.

The figure representing Fishes is not a fisherman, but a Citizen who stands firmly on the earth. He is a guardian keeping watch over his own self. He lives behind walls in fear of what might befall him. Yet he also lives in hope of what comes from St. John, a conscience that has become fully conscious. The Citizen holds the key that unseals the word coming from St. John's mouth.

At last St. John can speak again and the play ends with the joyful ringing of the bell (of conscience).

Dr. König's play clearly conveys a message to our or any community: conscience alone is not enough in our time. It has to be

lifted into full consciousness. Then only will it stir and strike within us. And when our conscience lies open it will speak to us prompting us **to do the good**. Only communities working for the good of mankind are worthy to carry the banner of humanity.

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Dr. König's Michaelmas Play (Udo Steuck)

Dr. König's Michaelmas Play leads us into the right mood for a worthy Michaelmas celebration.

The main part is played by the Guardian and we may think of St. Michael who himself is a guardian. This mighty Archangel, after having thrown the dragon and its brood out of heaven, is keeping now guard at the threshold of the Kingdom of God to prevent a return of the evil forces.

The Guardian in the play is standing in front of the entrance to a temple. Two groups of People, the Mother, the Prince, the knight and the man want him to open the door leading to the sanctuary's interior. The Guardian wears garments of the Egyptian era and we can think that the closed temple is hiding secrets kept out of sight from any uninitiated human being. But we no longer live in the old Egyptian epoch and the people are ordinary people of our present Michaelic age to whom legitimately the secrets of the temple, *the spiritual world* ought to be revealed.

However, to attempt a revelation by force is the wrong way to go about. The guardian points to the proper procedure: Nothing is hidden from him who properly observes, who truly seeks.

At this stage the Mother appears who gradually succeeds in softening the Guardian's rigidity and also in changing the People's attitude towards him. They will finally experience that their first impression of him as a dragon-like figure will be transformed into that of a father-figure.

The Mother wears Greek garments which indicate that we are no longer in the Egyptian, but in the Greco-Roman time which followed. But who is this mother who comes to help the People?

In fairy tales the figure of a woman stands often for the human soul, the figure of a man for the human spirit. What part of soul does this Woman represent? We might think of the mind or

intellectual soul which came to fruition during the Greco-Roman epoch. This soul incidentally freed our soul from a bond too close to our emotional will.

The Guardian calls this woman Mother, but she calls him *rigid rock*. The Egyptian people's strength lay in their attentiveness to the physical, the earthly realm. We only have to think of them building massive pyramids. The guardian tells the Mother that he had been longing and waiting for her, and indeed, she is the being who can bring life to what is rigid and at the point of dying.

At last the Guardian changes his seemingly immovable stance. He lights a candle and holds it in his hands. A new candle is a sign for a new start in life. Light is also the image of consciousness, a higher consciousness when things can be seen in a new light, in a spiritual way. The Guardian declares that the People's song of light has made his hearts rejoice, bursting his fetters and shackles and that he now can fulfil his task.

At this moment three figures appear: the Prince, the Knight and the Man. The Prince is holding a sceptre in his hand, the Knight will raise his sword, but the Man carrying nothing will only speak of his work and pain.

The Prince - in Indian dress - steps forward and holding up his sceptre demands that the door of the temple be opened in order that he might enter. A sceptre was once a *kind of magic wand* enhancing the spoken word. But today not only the sceptre, but also our words have lost their strength and the magic of old.

Hereupon the Mother veils her face and beckons the Guardian to be full of courage. He then asks the Prince for the password which will open the gate for him. The Prince, sceptre trembling, heart glowing and eyes shining proclaims: *The Heaven upon Earth*.

These words would be ahrimanic if one does not take in account the deeds of Christ. To instantly make a new heaven on earth would mean to forget soon afterwards the world of spirit. This must not be and so it shows that the Guardian is not satisfied with the answer and the temple gates remain closed.

The Knight then steps forward with his sword. Also he is asked by the Guardian for the password and his answer is: *In Heaven the Earth*. Again if the working of Christ were not included, this statement would be quite luciferic. To lift our earth in its present state immediately into heaven would deny it any further

improvement, development or metamorphosis through an additional process of Christianisation.

The Knight's words do not satisfy the Guardian either. Finally the man steps forward. Acknowledging the Guardian's strength and courage, he says that he can only offer hands marked by heavy work and eyes filled with pain. The people are full of admiration for the Man who comes without knowledge, without power, without strength and without bravery, but instead is offering his experience of work and pain, of suffering and need. The Mother then tells the Guardian that he has now to soften and realise that his task as Guardian is at last fulfilled.

Suffering and pain are necessary for man in order that his soul and spirit will unfold and reach out. The Man has learned to be silent. Only he who has learned to keep silent is entrusted with spiritual treasures. He acquired faith, a new faith, coming about through inner activity. Work, suffering, silence and faith appear here as a Michaelic path. The Man perceives the right words and after speaking them the gates of the temple open to him. Asked for the password he answered: *The Revelation of the Heaven upon Earth, the Redemption of Man in Heaven.*

These words include the working of Christ. Through Him the Heavenly was revealed on Earth. He redeems mankind on earth. But what does *the redemption of man in Heaven signify?* A redemption of man in Heaven can only mean that our earth must first again have become part of Heaven before mankind's redemption finally find its completion.

Now the Guardian descends and kneels down giving thanks for the Man's correct answer. The temple doors open and the virgin appears. She calls the Guardian *Father* and he calls her *Child* as if he and the Mother were the virgin's spiritual parents. Indeed the Dragon has become the *Father* because what had been hardened has now become creative. The Virgin is full of youthful strength, an image of the newly found spirit – an image of the consciousness soul to be gained by man of the present time, the Age of Michael. With its help creation will become the altar where man will offer himself up to receive in true communion his Higher Ego.

In conclusion the four: the Guardian, the Mother, the Virgin and the Man form a ring. They speak in turn: I have guarded, I have suffered, I kept silence and I have striven hard. This union brings together in man – and so in each one of us, the People – what

formerly had been lying in fragments: Strength – from the Guardian – the image of the redeemed, cleansed and freed etheric body; Sorrow from the Mother . the astral body, man’s soul; *Faith* – from the Man – the developed Ego: Courage – from the Virgin – man’s virginal seed to unfold into the consciousness soul.

The Knight hands his sword to the Virgin who transforms it into a cross and speak of awakening from death. The Prince gives his sceptre to the Man who turns it into the stem of life – the beginning of a new tree. Need becomes love: he who goes through need develops love to help others in their need. The Father becomes a lamb: instead of the untamed Lion forces of the heart we receive the purity of the life forces from the Lamb of Christ.

In fourfoldness united, man – this also means us, the People – is fully incarnated and can face and live through the long winter’s night. The being of Christ has brought us the consciousness soul and through Him and His Light mankind is no longer alone on her wanderings on earth. No Guardian will any longer block the entrance to the spiritual world, to spiritual experiences, if we accept Christ as the Door through which we shall enter.

Dr. König once said that he who wants to celebrate Christmas in a full and proper way has to prepare himself for it from Michaelmas onwards.

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Dr. Königs Advent Play and the Parabel of the Ten Virgins

Dr. König’s Advent Play is a wonderful help towards the understanding of the parable of the ten virgins. Certainly the number of virgins in the parable corresponds to the number of girls in the play: ten. In both cases five of them are wise but the others five are foolish. What makes the five in the play foolish is not that they lack cleverness but rather that certain forces of soul are not developed far enough to have spiritual experiences which can shed light on confounding events in their life.

The whole play shows that the missing, or rather underdeveloped, soul qualities are faith, love and hope and with this it provides the key for an understanding of the parable of The Ten Virgins.

The play opens on the Saturday Evening before the first Advent Sunday. I takes place in the sitting-room of a large but not well-off

family, headed by the father, who is a woods-cutter, his wife, who earns extra income by selling haberdashery, two sons and ten daughters. The eldest of the two sons, William is 28 and works as a blacksmith, his younger brother, Rudolf is 17 and a joiner. Of these two brothers only the eldest appears as alive, the youngest shows himself as part of a vision behind a screen – as does the mother. The ten daughters range in age from 14 to 27; we are not told whether the older girls have a profession or whether the younger ones go to school. In the play they are only portrayed as being in the house. Three of the girls begin the play by being busy in the sitting room, the others appear later and five leave the room altogether before the play ends.

What makes this play so precious is that it depicts every day life. Nothing is *set up* to create an artificial life situation. Everything could happen today, at any time, our generation might raise the same questions and give the same answers, act as wisely or as foolishly as any of these ten girls. The play can be seen as a test for the girls to discover whether they have developed inner wisdom or lack this wisdom and are consequently *foolish*. What pretends to be wise on earth is likely to look foolish in heaven. Man's foolishness here is that he does not include the world of spirit in his daily life. The five *wise* girls are indeed open to the spirit whereas the five *foolish* girls seem to be detached from it. For them only what directly happens on earth is considered and that looks dreadful to them.

The play begins with three of the foolish girls singing a very, very sad song in which the world is described as dark and human hearts as cold. We all at times have felt like singing such a song:

*Darkness hovers over all,
Human hearts are growing older,
Growing cold and ever colder,
No longer open to a call.*

*In the stillness void of breath,
Birds are flutt'ring poor and lost;
All the ways are hard with frost
Lead to everlasting death.*

The father is the first to enter the room and with this song and the mood of cold and tiredness it conveys, the girls seem not prepared to help him as he comes in frozen, tired and covered with snow. He has been unable to do his work because the trees were frozen hard

and axe could not cut through the wood. The three foolish girls just carry on with their work and fail the first test as they give their father no comfort.

Then appear three more daughters who are glad to see their father back. They at once ask after their mother and are deeply concerned for the well-being of both their parents. These are the wise girls and have certainly passed this test.

The second test is introduced with the return of the brother William, weary as he could get no fire started in his smithy. He says that the kindling and wood were wet and frozen. This raises the question – why were they not put in a dry place? Here we meet for the first time not preparation for possible future events. The foolish girls concern themselves with the problem as to why William did not, or could not light the fire, but not for one moment do they seem to think of his suffering. Here they also fail.

Meanwhile, all the wise girls are together on the stage: Francisca, Pauline, Agatha, Anna and Natalie. Anna and Agatha help their father out of his boots, Francisca and Natalie speak words of concern:

Francisca: Say, William,
 Have you seen Rudolf?
 He wanted to take a cradle
 To Farmer Gimmond
 Whose wife is expecting her first child.

Natalie: Where can Mother be?
 I feel so frightened this miserable
evening!
 Should not some of us
 Run down to the village and see
 If Mother is coming?

Their loving, warm hearts are burning with selfless love. Is it not like a lamp burning with a bright light?

A third test follows when all sit down for their supper and grace is spoken. The father complains that the grace is wrong. We do not owe any thanks to sun and earth for our food. Food is provided by man through the work of his hands. To this William still adds: the sweat and toil of man.

All the foolish girls have their say and in their words appear a lot of pride and vanity. There is no trace of gratefulness towards the true providence of our food. One feels their inner lamps are running out of fuel and the light begins to flicker. This test they fail miserably.

Soon a howling wind makes itself felt – frightening and disturbing. Three times it comes and goes and through it a loud knocking can be heard at the door. The father's attempt to send William to the door to find out who may be there fails - he is more frightened than some of his sisters. He who lacked awe for the divine is now filled with fear for the unknown.

Overwhelming fear also seizes the three foolish girls who are also asked by their father to go to the door: Aurelia, Victoria, Lucia are the first ones to fall asleep and therefore will not experience the *coming* – the appearance of their dead mother and brother. Of the good girls, Agatha, Anna and Francisca go voluntarily to the door but experience only quiet peace behind it. This outer peace mirrors their inner peace, peace of mind, good conscience. They are prepared – the others are just not prepared for what will now happen.

Hermoine and Johanna keep wake the longest. At the appearance of Rudolf they fall on their knees, cover their faces, but then also fall asleep. They will later speak of this experience as a dream. Pauline and Natalie, two wise girls, express that they are ready for that what is to come. While the father and William are looking out for the Mother and Rudolf, they undergo in the presence of the five sleeping foolish sisters a kind of initiation of the appearance of their *dead* mother and brother. They each receive from the mother an apple and piece and bread: *The apples of earth's sorrow, the transmuting power of the bread.*

Perhaps the apple heals the rift between our earthly world and the spiritual world, as the plucked apple in Paradise brought about the separation between them. The bread stands here for the spiritual food. They receive it because they enter the world of the spirit fully prepared and the bread, as the gift from the earth, points to their loving concern for the earth. Equipped with the apple and bread and with their warm hearts kindled with love, they are ready to meet the *bridegroom*, the Christ-being. We may say – perhaps they have met him already.

The five foolish sisters, however, are in no way *punished*. They still have to learn to acquire a life that includes spiritual values. William and his father meanwhile return to those who have woken up, there is talk how they will possibly manage their work on earth without the mother and without Rudolf. The father speaks to them of hope and patience. The daughters express their wish to be courageous. Here are the words:

Father: Let us but hope
And bear our need and sorrow

The five remaining daughters (Hermoine, Johanna, Victoria, Aurelia and Lucia):

Through the darkness of this earth
And in the earthly night,
Shall we maintain our courage
And set alight our hope.
We too await
That we shall not be lost.

The play ends on a note of hope. Faith, love and hope are its three motifs. Either the characters are in it are filled with faith, love and hope or they lack any of these qualities.

This is also the key to the parable of the Ten Virgins, where the prudent ones possess faith, love and hope which the foolish ones are lacking.

The three virtues show a threefold development. First there is their natural gift and possession. Secondly there appears a kind of loss, a transition of them, to be finally followed by the acquisition of a new faith, a new love, and a new hope.

The journey of a man's life may be imagined as the passing of a single day: the morning standing for his birth and midnight for the time of his death or *initiation* into the spirit world. Only at the time of our death can we unite with our true spirit, our higher Self or Ego.

This could well be the moment when we are ready to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, where we should find mankind's bridegroom, the Christ whom we had been longing to meet all our life. Prepared for this *coming* we ourselves could then become one of the prudent virgins who went in with Him to be present at the Wedding.

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Dr. König's Christmas Communiy Play (Udo Steuck)

Dr. König's plays are a new way to celebrate and experience the Christian festivals. They are not plays intellectually constructed with a logical sequence or to appeal to our feeling as with the Oberufer Plays but are truly mysteries plays which can work upon our will if we are open to their message. No longer are we meant to let it happen, but rather to make it happen.

At Christmas, in order to make it happen the words of Angelus Silesius come to mind:

*Were the Christ born a thousand times in Bethlehem
And not in thee, thou art lost eternally.*

Angelus Silesius was a mystic who lived in the 17th century. His message was that the Christ should be born in each of us – this would then be the true Christmas event in our time.

Rudolf Steiner says something similar in his Christmas verse of the Calendar of the Soul:

*Freed from enchantment now I feel
The spirit child within my soul.
In radiant brightness of the heart
The holy cosmic word has now engendered
The heavenly fruit of hope
Which grows rejoicing into width of space
Out of my being's ground of God.*

The spirit child must be born within my soul. The spirit child here is the true Ego, the Higher Ego which is selfless - which comes from Christ.

Looking at Dr. König's Christmas Play – if we compare it to other Christmas plays such as the Oberufer Play – it might seem very strange. We wonder what has the figure of the *human conscience* to do with the actual Christmas event? There are many angels – plausible as we imagine that there were hosts of angels around Mary, Joseph and the Jesus Child and especially at the after the birth. But here the angels come long before Mary, Joseph and the Child appear. As the play proceeds we realise that it is all about the child coming into being. In the *patriarchs* we meet the ancestors of the whole mankind.

This then is not only a play about the Holy Night when the child is born, but also about of the coming of the Child to the earth – through millennia. Both kings and shepherds come to this child who is not only a child of Christmas past, but also of Christmas present and of Christmas to come. No evil forces appear in this play, only goodness is portrayed.

The first word in the play is *dusk* or *twilight* which leads on to dawn. Mankind's path is from dusk to dawn – out of darkness will appear light, out of coldness comes warmth. When will this take place? At the moment when we bring about within ourselves the new Christmas experience, the birth of the spirit child in the lap of our soul

Before the angels appear the play begins with words of human conscience who brings the inner word – the initial means by which we experience a higher world, the beginnings of our clairvoyant perception. Then the angels speak of mankind begging for the heavenly bread. We must first face our complete spiritual helplessness and poverty and out of this experience beg for spiritual nourishment. Christ said: *Knock and the door will be opened* if we wish spiritual nourishment. Today we may say: If we can no longer celebrate Christmas in the old way, we – our conscience – must knock at the heavenly gate to ask for help in celebrating Christmas in a new way. The three angels speak of bringing the message, the joy and the light of God.

The star-bearer, bearing the star that shone for the coming of the Child (it may also stand for the star of man's higher Ego) proclaims that all is prepared for the birth of the Logos – the divine word. But it is not the birth of Jesus which he proclaims but the later incarnation of the Christ being which takes place during the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. This event points more to Epiphany than to Christmas. It can only mean we here celebrate the *birth* of Christ in each one of us.

Now the human conscience goes in search of the torches of humanity. Why are they called torches? We could think of the burning bush which appears to Moses; he heard the words: *I AM the I AM*. Perhaps the torches represent the *I AM*. Are these the people in whom the Ego consciousness burned before it lit up in the rest of mankind?

As torches of humanity six groups of people appear:

Adam and Eve
The three Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
Elias and Moses
Joseph and Mary
The three Kings
The Shepherds

First Adam and Eva step forward. Their heads are bowed, their hands hidden in the sleeves of their garments; they have closed themselves off. We can experience from their stance that the Fall has been. They are asked to look up again and be no longer afraid. They shall become guardians of the heavenly gate. This can lead up to the appearance of the Christ after his death when he freed those who had died before the event of Golgatha (Christ frees mankind from the original sin committed by Adam and Eve). What seemed a human catastrophe turns out to be a blessing; we might even say the events in the garden of Paradise were planned by God – why else should he have created Lucifer and let him slip into the garden?

Adam and Eve look out for the men of yesterday, the brothers of today – and indeed the men of yesterday are here as our brothers of today. The three Patriarchs are called and thereby we may guess who they are.

Abraham says: *I hosted you*. By Jewish tradition he hosted the three Archangels: Raphael who wore a green Garment, Michael a white garment and Gabriel a red garment. In the play, instead of red we have a yellow angel. Listen to what they say.

Isaac is next in line: He was saved by an angel from being sacrificed. By Jewish tradition this angel was none other than the Archangel Michael.

Jacob wrestled with an angel; again by Jewish tradition this was the Archangel Michael.

The angels speak: *Do you know us?*

The Patriarchs answer:

Abraham: *I was your host in Mamre's grove*. (You have given me hope.)

Isaac: *I was bound to the altar in terror of death*. (You have given me heart's courage. From the heart comes love.)

Jacob: *You wrenched my hip out of its joint.* (You have given me faith.)

The three angels: *Now comes to fulfilment what you have done. In the night there shines the sun.* (Seeing the sun at midnight)

The patriarchs go to the tree (Could this symbolise for them the family-tree?)

Moses and Elias appear and the three angels speak that through mankind's toil, effort, need and pain her existence is renewed again.

Moses speaks that the tree (tree of Jesse) has sprung from the soil during the earth's night. It will redeem Eve's guilt. Eve answers that she nursed Moses at her breast. (Perhaps an indication of hereditary forces flowing from Eve to Moses.)

Elias speaks that the light-filled form is now prepared. (Perhaps connected to the light-filled bodies of man in Paradise.) Adam asks for peace to fill his heart: Rise into the light that which comes from my hands work.

The human conscience asks to free the way – the human being has to transform himself so that inner obstacles vanish.

More angels and angel children are called to descend from on high. The night is fast fading, the morning is nigh. If this is meant to depict the Holy Night then it rather points to the dawn than the traditional birth at midnight. It can also point to an inner dawn when the reality of the spirit is born in man.

Moses and Elias light the candles of the tree. Whereas the old, family tree had to do with the blood relationships, the new tree can represent an image of the new brotherhood of man living in the realm of the heart and led by the spirit of Christ. If we remember the scene of the Transfiguration we can see that Moses represents the forces of the Father-God and Elias the forces of the Holy Spirit.

Moses calls Joseph: *My son* and we have the image of the Father-God standing behind the earthly father. Elias representing the working of the Holy Spirit, *stands* behind Mary, the Mother and speaks of himself as *Your son*. We may wish to find out what are the Joseph and Mary forces within us which want to come together so that our spirit child can be born. Mary, our female element

represents our soul-life; Joseph our male element, the spirituality of mankind. The child striving to incarnate is our Higher Ego.

Now we listen to the words of the star-bearer:

Bearer of Light
Son of the Stars
Your time has come –
Your grace will heal us all,
Our guilt will from us fall,
Son of Light.

These words could be spoken at the birth of the Jesus child in the Christmas night, but we may also speak them each Christmas to enhance the selflessness of our true Ego, the spirit child in each of us wishing to be born.

The Christ is the guardian of mankind's true Egohood. Where our true, the Higher Ego is, there is also the Christ. Those who can experience their true Ego have also found the Christ. They will no longer have any doubt as to His existence. They come either as shepherds or as kings to venerate Him and stand at the crib of their newborn conviction of the eternal existence of Christ Himself. This is the true Christmas experience of our time.

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Zum Gemeinschaftsspiel von Karl König

(Wilfried Zimmermann)

An den Anfang stelle ich einige Gedanken, die zu einem Verständnis des Gemeinschaftsspiels führen sollen. Einer der Inhalte zur Vorbereitung unserer Weihnachtsarbeit ist der Vortrag von Rudolf Steiner vom 23. Dezember 1920, der das Weihnachtsmysterium, den Weihnachtsbaum als Symbol des Paradiesbaumes, die Nachfolgeschaft der Hirtenfrommheit und die uraltheilige Sternenweisheit der Magier zum Inhalt hat. Zu Beginn dieses Vortrages weist Rudolf Steiner darauf hin, dass von den drei Festen Weihnachten, Ostern Pfingsten, in denen die Christenheit desjenigen Wesens gedenkt, das dem Erdenleben des Menschen seinen Sinn gibt, das Weihnachtsfest die größten Anforderungen an unser Empfinden stellt.

Und im Grunde genommen begreift man, das was im Weihnachtsmysterium liegen soll, nur durch die

Verinnerlichung, die Vertiefung, das uns unsere ganze menschliche Wesenheit, unseren Wert und unsere Würde als Menschen vergegenwärtigt. (Rudolf Steiner)

Wer sich ein Vertiefen des Empfindens für den Wert des Menschen und die Würde des Menschen errungen hat, begreift, was das Weihnachtsmysterium ausmacht.

Die zentralen Bilder des Weihnachtsgeschehens:

- Die Geburt des Christkinds findet in ärmsten Verhältnissen in einem Stall statt.
- Die ersten Menschen, die von der Geburt des Messias erfahren, sind arme und ungebildete Hirten, die im Traum, also im Bereich des Unbewussten, eine Vision erleben und geführt von ihrem Herzen zum Stall ziehen.
- Dann kommen die drei Könige zur Krippe, geführt von der bewussten und wachen Wahrnehmung einer besonderen astronomischen Konstellation.

Zwei Gesichtspunkte zu den Bildern des Weihnachtsgeschehens:

Mit einer Geburt verbinden wir ja nicht nur das *ins Leben treten* eines neuen Lebewesens. So sagen wir ja zum Beispiel, dass eine Idee geboren wird. Mit dem Begriff *Geburt* können wir durchaus eine Qualität wie *Erneuerung* verbinden.

Dasjenige, was diese beiden so unterschiedlichen Gruppen, die Hirten und die Könige, an der Krippe vereint, ist nicht die äußere Macht oder ein Gesetz, es ist ein Kind. Die Geburt eines besonderen Kindes, des Christus Jesus, führt Hirten wie auch Könige zu der Krippe. Rufen wir uns für einen Augenblick die Eigenschaften des Kindes, die seinen besonderen Zauber ausmachen, in unser Bewusstsein: Unschuld, Wahrhaftigkeit, Hilflosigkeit.

Wir alle haben mit unserer Geburt zunächst einmal einen Leib bekommen, der auch Erbmerkmale unserer Eltern trägt. Der eine oder andere von uns hat vielleicht schon erfahren, dass er dadurch an Grenzen kommt, dass er eben *so ist, wie er ist* und auch *schuldig* geworden ist. Vielleicht entstand der starke Wunsch, sich ändern zu wollen, sich zu erneuern. Gelingt eine solche innere Erneuerung, ist dies durchaus mit einer Geburt vergleichbar. Es ist eine innere

geistige Geburt. Jedes Mal, wenn wir einen inneren Schritt tun, indem wir zum Beispiel ein Vorurteil einem Menschen gegenüber überwinden, wird unser *Höheres Ich*, der Christus in uns geboren, denn wir lassen die Kräfte der Wahrhaftigkeit, Unschuld und der Erneuerung in unsere Seele. Was uns dabei hilft, einen inneren Schritt zu tun, ist unser Gewissen.

Und unser Empfinden vertieft sich, wenn wir das Wort im rechten Sinne und mit der rechten Liebe verstehen: Zweimal geboren müssen wir sein, das eine Mal durch die Kräfte der Natur, das andere Mal wiedergeboren durch die Kräfte des Christus Jesus. (Rudolf Steiner)

Die Geburt des Christus Jesus vor rund 2000 Jahren, bedeutet, dass die Kräfte der Erneuerung für die ganze Menschheit verfügbar geworden sind.

So wie der individuelle Mensch durch eine physische Geburt ins Leben tritt, ist die ganze Menschheit durch eine *physische Geburt* ins Dasein getreten. Im Alten Testament ist dies in bildhafter Weise dargestellt in der Geschichte von Adam und Eva und der Vertreibung der Menschheit aus dem Paradies. Durch Adam und Eva hat die Menschheit vom *Baum der Erkenntnis*, dem Paradiesesbaum gegessen und damit auch ihre Kindheit und Unschuld verloren. Der 24. Dezember ist nicht nur der Heilige Abend vor dem eigentlichen Weihnachtstag, er ist nach alter Tradition auch der Tag des Adam-Eva Festes. Der Christbaum, wie wir ihn aus recht neuer Tradition kennen, ist auch der alte Paradiesesbaum.

Das Gemeinschaftsspiel

Das Gemeinschaftsspiel von Dr. König am Heiligen Abend umfasst gewissermaßen den gesamten Werdegang der Menschheit, von den Ureltern des Menschengeschlechtes, Adam und Eva, über die Erzväter des Alten Testaments, Abraham, Isaak und Jacob, die durch viele Nöte, Leiden und Prüfungen gegangen sind, und ihre Gotteskindschaft bewahrt haben, bis zum Ereignis der Geburt und der Anbetung des Kindes durch die Hirten und Könige. Das Spiel möchte als ein großes Bild, an dem alle Anwesenden teilnehmen, den Weg der Menschheit, bis hin zum Weihnachtsmysterium, zum Erlebnis bringen.

Zunächst versammeln sich die Zuschauer, die durch das Mitsingen der Lieder des Spieles auch Akteure sind, vor dem dunklen Weihnachtsbaum in dem fast ganz dunklen Saal. Die Erfahrung

dieser physischen Dunkelheit will uns, gleichsam sinnbildlich, die uns umgebende *Geistesfinsternis* zum Bewusstsein bringen. Beim Weihnachtsbaum steht eine leere Krippe. Eine Gestalt, die Stimme des Gewissens, entzündet ein kleines Licht und ruft die Menschen auf, darauf zu achten, *was hier werden will*.

Ein Sternenträger erscheint und die *Stimme des Gewissens* fordert ihn auf, Engelboten in das Erdenland zu senden, um nach Menschen zu suchen, die als *Leuchter der Menschlichkeit* auf Erden wirken. Adam und Eva folgen zögernd und gehen zur Krippe, bei der sie sich als Hüter niederlassen. Sie sind nicht mehr aktiv und warten auf das Weihnachtsgeschehen, denn sie haben ihre Aufgabe für die Menschheit bereits erfüllt.

Die *Stimme des Gewissens* erscheint als der Mittler zwischen der irdischen und der geistigen Welt. Sie vermittelt das Sehnen der Menschen *nach oben*, nach dem Geistigen, nach Erlösung und das Sehnen der Geistwelt *nach unten*, zu den Menschen, denn die Geistwelt will wirken, kann dies aber nur, wenn Menschen die Geisteswelt erkennen.

Damit sich das Mysterium der Weihenacht vollziehen kann, erscheinen drei Engel, gleichsam als Brücke von der geistigen zur irdischen Welt. Sie offenbaren sich zunächst den Erzvätern als Hoffnungsbringer und begleiten sie auf dem schmerzlichen Erdenweg

Die Geistesführer des Volkes Israel, Moses und Elias, vernehmen und verkünden die Botschaft der Engel. Das Verkünden der Engelsbotschaft wird von den Erzvätern auch symbolisch zum Ausdruck gebracht, indem sie nun Kerzen anzünden, mit denen von den hinzukommenden Egelkindern, die Lichter am Weihnachtsbaum entzündet werden. Der *Paradiesesbaum* oder *Baum der Erkenntnis* ist zum *Baum des Lebens* geworden.

In den nun warm und festlich erleuchtenden Saal ergeht der Ruf nach demjenigen, der des Lichts Träger sein wird. Das ist im Grunde genommen ein Aufruf an jeden Einzelnen von uns. Zwei Engel und zwei Engelkinder machen sich auf die Suche und finden Joseph und Maria, die sich zwischen den Anwesenden befinden. Maria und Joseph folgen den Engeln zur Krippe, an Adam und Eva vorbei. Der Sternenträger ist nun zur Krippe gekommen und wird zum Kändler der Christgeburt. Wenn nun die Hirten und Könige zur Krippe kommen, hat sich die Prophezeiung erfüllt und wir werden erneut zu Zeugen des Weihnachtsmysteriums, der Weltenweihenacht. Aber das

Erleben dieses Mysteriums der Geburt ist letztlich nur durch die Seele des einzelnen Menschen möglich.

Zum Schluss dieser Betrachtung scheint ein Spruch von Angelus Silesius sehr passend:

Und wäre Christus tausendmal in Bethlehem geboren und nicht in Dir, Du wärest doch verloren.

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