

Good evening and welcome to our meeting in Aquarius. When we think about some of the ancient civilisations of the past – Egyptian, Greek, Roman etc. – we probably have some vague notion of a distinctive type of religious architecture. Perhaps the most famous example of an ancient temple is the Parthenon in Athens, with its noble columns. Strangely, it seems that for the Parthenon, and some other Greek and Roman temples, the actual altar was not inside the temple, but was instead in the open air, in a nearby sacred grove. “Temple” is derived from *templum*, which means “an open space”. It is worth pondering the deep implications of this meaning – as we enter the Aquarian age, the need for openness, for the free circulation of ideas, is ever more pressing.

We are all familiar with one of the main avenues of this freedom of circulation, the Internet. As a technological creation, it can be linked with the energies of Uranus, the orthodox ruler of Aquarius. The Internet has not only opened up the distribution of conventional creative products, made by large companies. It has also opened the way for individuals and small groups to distribute their own creative output, and to actively collaborate with others. Perhaps one of the most significant beneficiaries of this freedom to communicate and collaborate across borders and time-zones is the open source movement. The term originates from discussions arising among software developers in the late 1990s, with the word “source” standing for the source code used to write software. The aim of the movement is to ensure that source code produced by any individual or group always remains openly available to be modified by others. Among the more famous products of this model of working is the Linux operating system, which in turn forms the basis of the popular Android operating system for smartphones and tablets. The idea of keeping the “source code” open has now grown far beyond the software community, with initiatives in computer hardware, medicine, science and engineering, and teaching. Another movement with related goals is the Creative Commons movement, which is devoted to expanding the range of creative works available for others to build upon legally and to share. Within the academic community, there is discussion about expanding what could be called the “intellectual commons”, including such services as Wikipedia, the OpenCourseWare project at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the free educational videos available online from Khan Academy. And open-source governance is a political philosophy which advocates the application of the philosophies of the open source and open content movements to democratic principles, in order to enable any interested citizen to add to the creation of policy, as with a wiki document. The notion is that legislation is democratically opened to the general citizenry, employing their collective wisdom to benefit the decision-making process and improve democracy.

Of course, theories on how to constrain, limit or enable this participation vary, as much as with any other political philosophy or ideology. So there is as yet no one dominant theory of how to go about authoring legislation with this approach. There are a wide array of projects and movements which are working on building open-source governance systems.

Like a powerful wind, this freedom of circulation may sweep away old dogmas and certainties, leaving the altar of human living cleansed and ready for the new forms of life required by the Aquarian civilisation. The field of religion is one area in particular which is ripe for this process. In *Problems of Humanity*, the Tibetan predicted this impact on the Christian churches: “The church will then proclaim that men can draw near to God, not through the mediation, absolution and the intercessory work of any priest or churchman but by right of man's inherent divinity. This it will be the duty of every churchman to evoke by example, by the energy of applied and practical love (not expressed through a soporific paternalism), and by the unified effort of the clergy of all faiths everywhere in the world.

The churches in the West need to realize that basically there is only one church but it is not necessarily only the orthodox Christian institution; God works in many ways, through many faiths and religious agencies; in their union will the fullness of truth be revealed. This is one reason for the elimination of nonessential doctrines.” (POH p.155)

Before we continue, let’s pause for a few moments of silence, and then say together the Affirmation of the Disciple:

I am a point of light within a greater Light.
I am a strand of loving energy within the stream of love divine.
I am a point of sacrificial Fire, focussed within the fiery Will of God.
And thus I stand.

I am a way by which men may achieve.
I am a source of strength, enabling them to stand.
I am a beam of light, shining upon their way.
And thus I stand.

And standing thus revolve
And tread this way the ways of men,
And know the ways of God.
And thus I stand.

In the past, some of the finest examples of architecture were temples, which was in line with their high status within the culture of the time. As well as the Greek and Roman temples, the cathedrals of the Middle Ages still stand as wonderful testimonies to the devotion and skill of their builders. As we know, in the last century or two, it has tended to be commercial buildings such as museums, corporate headquarters, airports and sports arenas which have attracted the greatest expenditure of money and skill. At the same time, the role of architects as creative individuals has become more prominent. So, while we do not know who was the chief architect of Chartres cathedral, nowadays, we have so-called “starchitects”, whose participation in a project is almost certain to increase the fame of the planned building, even before it is created. We can recognise this trend of the increasing importance of the personality, as it becomes mentally focused and integrated. Indeed, intellectual theories have increasingly come into vogue among architects, and may be used to justify the radical departures from traditional techniques, materials, and cultural references that are often found among modern buildings. However, from an esoteric perspective, the lower concrete mind may be a good servant, but can turn quite quickly into a bad master – the dreaded “slayer of the real”. This happens when an intellectual theory is mistaken for the higher spiritual impulse which first produced it. Then, the person finds themselves obsessed by the theory, and intent on defending and further elaborating it, while at the same time its original vitality slowly seeps away, until what remains is a lifeless shell that effectively vampirises the obsessed thinker’s attention, blocking out the higher light and life of the Soul and the Spiritual Triad. There is an interesting analogy here with the Moon, which is where much of Earth humanity originated, and which we ought now to regard as summarising the past, and that which hinders and imprisons the spiritual life.

As we move further into the Aquarian age, we should expect to see a shift away from the celebration of the creativity of individuals, towards the creativity of groups. This has already begun, with one of the major art forms of the twentieth and twenty first century being the motion picture, which is inherently a group endeavour. And in architecture, another indicator of this trend is the fact that architects often

work in partnerships, and these firms may themselves cooperate with other firms on major projects. Such partnerships may protect against the danger of any one individual becoming obsessed with a particular idea. However, the ongoing climate of human thought is still predominantly intellectual, and it may be some time before architects, among others, can begin to penetrate the thick crust of crystallised theories which blocks the way to the higher mind. It is only then that we can expect to see the emergence on any widespread scale of a new sacred architecture, which responds intelligently and intuitively to Humanity's renewed sense of the sacred. The incoming of the seventh ray should facilitate this process, as this ray is strongly connected with the building of the Temple.

The Tibetan does give us some hints on how civilisation will change in the transition from the sixth to the seventh ray in *Destiny of the Nations*. He refers to this as a civilization of synthesis, fusion, and increased soul expression. Changes are also to be expected in the other kingdoms of nature, and in the type of souls that will come into incarnation, with an increasing number of seventh ray souls coming in. The passing Piscean Age has led to a significant divide between science and religion, and one of the tasks of Aquarian workers will be to "bring these two apparent opposites together, to demonstrate that spirit and matter are not antagonistic to each other and that throughout the universe there is only spiritual substance, working on and producing the outer tangible forms." (*op.cit.* p.127) One of the ways in which this will be achieved is through a deepened understanding of the etheric body. The Tibetan predicts that, "...once the etheric body becomes an established scientific fact and the centres — major and minor — are recognised as the foci of all energy as it expresses itself through the human body upon the physical plane, we shall see a great revolution take place in medicine, in diet and in the handling of daily life activity. This will produce great changes in the mode of work and labour and above everything else in the leisure activities of the race.

This thought brings to our attention the three methods of activity as employed by all the ray workers and which differ for each ray. Those which will eventually control the seventh ray types will gradually bring about changed attitudes to life and very different methods of daily living. These three are:

1. Group activity for the scientific relation of substance and energy.
2. The stimulation of etheric forms through rightly directed force.
3. The correct distribution, through scientific study, of vital energy." (*Ibid.* p.134)

In another passage, the Tibetan expands a little on the connection between the seventh ray and science: "This ray Lord has a peculiar power on earth and on the physical plane of divine manifestation. His usefulness to His six Brothers is therefore apparent. He makes Their work appear. He is the most active of all the rays in this world period, and is never out of manifestation for more than fifteen hundred years. It is almost as if He whirled in and out of active work under a very rapid cycle, and His closest relation, symbolically, is to His Brethren of the second and fifth rays *in this world period*."

He builds (using second ray cooperation) through the power of thought (thus cooperating with the Lord of the fifth ray and on the physical plane, which is His own essential and peculiar sphere). In another world period His relation with the other ray Lords may undergo change, but at this time His work will be more easily understood when He is recognised as aiding the building Lord of the second ray and utilising the energies of the Lord of concrete thought." (*Esoteric Psychology* Vol.II, p.86)

To close our reflections, here is a beautiful symbolic passage describing the activity of the seventh ray as the builder of the Temple:

“Let the Temple of the Lord be built’, the seventh great Angel cried. Then to their places in the north, the south, the west and east, seven great sons of God moved with measured pace and took their seats. The work of building thus began.

The doors were closed. The light shone dim. The temple walls could not be seen. The seven were silent and their forms were veiled. The time had not arrived for the breaking forth of light. The Word could not be uttered. Only between the seven Forms the work went on. A silent call went forth from each to each. Yet still the temple door stayed shut.

As time went on, the sounds of life were heard. The door was opened, and the door was shut. Each time it opened, the power within the temple grew; each time the light waxed stronger, for one by one the sons of men entered the temple, passed from north to south, from west to east and in the centre of the heart found light, found understanding and the power to work. They entered through the door; they passed before the Seven; they raised the temple's veil and entered into life.

The temple grew in beauty. Its lines, its walls, its decorations, and its height and depth and breadth slowly emerged and entered into light.

Out from the east, the Word went forth: Open the door to all the sons of men who come from all the darkened valleys of the land and seek the temple of the Lord. Give them the light. Unveil the inner shrine, and through the work of all the craftsmen of the Lord extend the temple's walls and thus irradiate the world. Sound forth the Word creative and raise the dead to life.

Thus shall the temple of the light be carried from heaven to earth. Thus shall its walls be reared upon the great plains of the world of men. Thus shall the light reveal and nurture all the dreams of men.

Then shall the Master in the east awaken those who are asleep. Then shall the warden in the west test and try all the true seekers after light. Then shall the warden in the south instruct and aid the blind. Then shall the gate into the north remain wide open, for there the unseen Master stands with welcoming hand and understanding heart, to lead the pilgrims to the east where the true light shines forth.

‘Why this opening of the temple?’ demand the greater Seven. ‘Because the work is ready; the craftsmen are prepared. God has created in the light. His sons can now create. What can else be done?’

‘Naught!’ came the answer from the greater Seven. ‘Let the work proceed. Let the sons of God create.’
(*Esoteric Psychology* Vol.II pp.83-4)

So let us now turn to our creative work in meditation, helping to lay a foundation stone for the incoming Aquarian civilisation. Our seed thought is, “Water of life am I, poured forth for thirsty men”.