

Appendix 8

NATURE CONSCIOUSNESS, SELF CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE FOUR SOUL FACULTIES

This appendix gathers part of the research of the book and renders it visible through diagrams. Some of the conclusions of the work in the book are here taken for granted, though briefly reintroduced. The appendix also presents some aspects that are not explored in the book and in this sense it could be considered as an additional chapter. In all the following verses the version of Ruth and Hans Pusch is used; other versions are quoted in parenthesis.

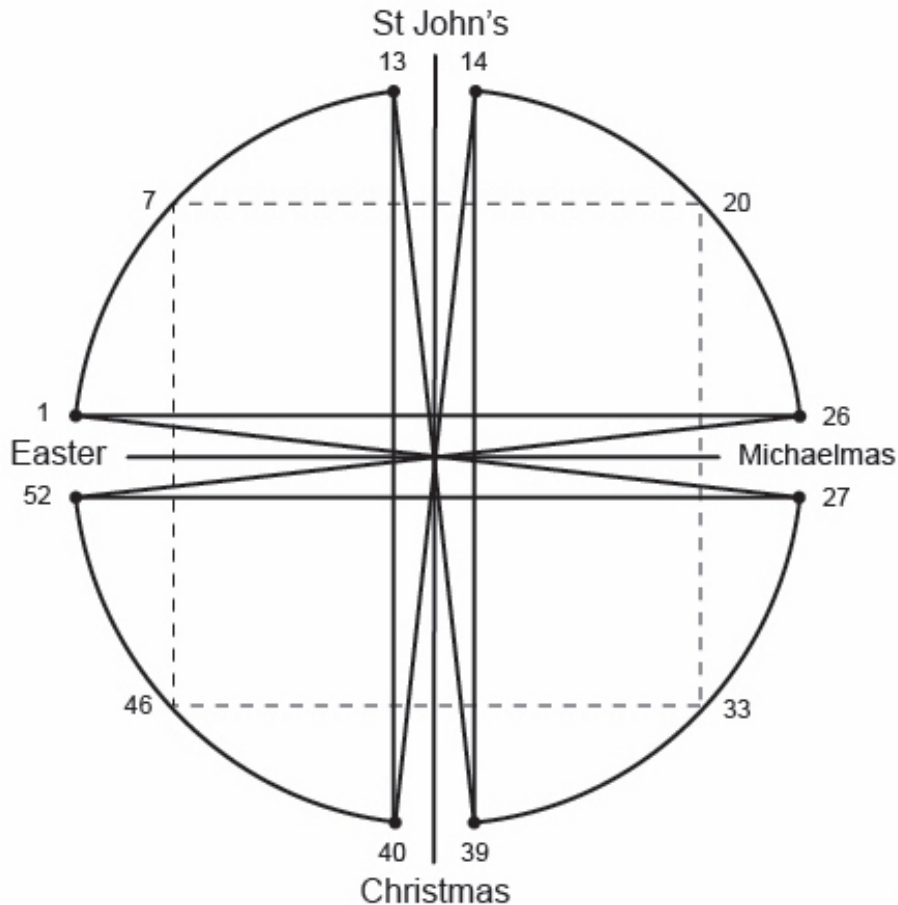


Figure 1: The Two Axes of the Calendar of the Soul

The Calendar of the Soul with its 52 weekly verses unites the course of the year, the activity of nature (macrocosm), with the inner movements of the soul (microcosm); everything that we know of the path outward (senses,

macrocosm) and inward (destiny/karma) is subtly present and subsumed in the calendar.

The cycle of the 52 meditations can be represented as a circle with the beginning at Easter (left side), summit around St. John (top of the circle), Michaelmas opposite to Easter and Christmas and the Holy Nights at the bottom (figure 1). The lemniscate, however, offers a better feel for the dynamic aspect of the calendar, for its variability due to the fact that it starts at Easter. It also highlights more dramatically the two parts of the year (Figure 2).

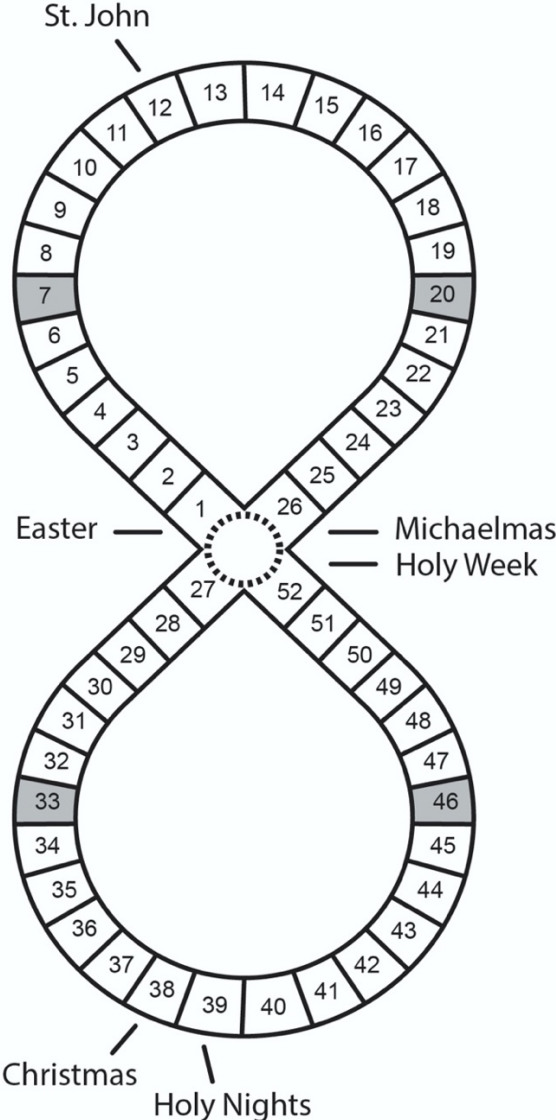


Figure 2: The Calendar as a Lemniscate

Each verse of the calendar has a complementary one along the axis of the equinoxes (spring and Michaelmas). To verse 1 of Easter corresponds verse 52 of the Holy Week; to verse 2 verse 51; to verse 26 of Michaelmas verse 27, and so forth. The four verses closest to the equinoxes (those of Holy Week, Easter, Michaelmas and the following week) form the "cross" or "quartet" 1. The crosses divide the year unevenly. The sum of two intervals between succeeding verses adds up to 26, for example, cross 1 of Easter (52, 1, 26, 27) has intervals of 1 and 25 (1 between verses 52 and 1; 25 between verses 1 and 26). Take cross 4 (4, 23, 30, 49): the intervals are of 7 and 19. Cross 7 is special: verses 7, 20, 33, 46 divide the year in four equal intervals of 13.

The verses of cross 7 have another special quality. They are warning/threshold verses. They announce a danger and/or a universal challenge/possibility, a change of direction, the rising of a new soul quality/faculty, which will be the focus during the next quadrant.

The Mid-Season Quadrants

If we divide the Calendar into four quadrants around cross 7, we have the following intervals:

- 46 to 6 Easter quadrant
- 7 to 19 St. John Quadrant
- 20 to 32 Michaelmas Quadrant
- 33 to 45 Christmas Quadrant

Each of the verses of cross 7 announces the ascent or strengthening of a soul faculty.

Verse 46: end of winter/Spring Equinox (46 to 6):

Verse 46 reads: "Rise memory in all your radiance . . . from spirit depths strengthen my beholding." When the external power of life/senses would overwhelm us, we carry with us the ripened fruits of thinking (apprehending the macrocosm) and the awakening of an activity of will turned inward: exertion of memory, which prepares us to the transition to the spring/summer time of the year.

Verse 7: end of spring/Summer Solstice (7 to 19)

Verse 7 reads: "come forth now intuition. . . replace in me the power of thought." We are called to awaken that power that has been called "boding, intuition, perceptive feeling, tact of the heart." In our time and age we can no longer go out of ourselves in ecstasy; we need to find an inner power, a compass of the soul to navigate the inner journey. Intuition—the term chosen from now on—leans on the power of memory. What is this soul faculty?

Intuition is that force which allows the inner dialogue that establishes goals and boundaries; it asks me to fathom and recognize the nature of what is happening in the macrocosm and what the soul is called to offer in response. It answers two questions:

- Can I understand what is happening in nature and the cosmos? Can I anticipate?
- What do I need to call up from within myself? How can I answer?

And it continuously weaves between the two; it's a call and response. It weaves the response of the soul to the call of the macrocosm.

Examples of what the soul asks for, yearns for:

- Verse 8: human thinking must lay in quiet dream-life
- Verse 9: lose yourself (in light) to find yourself
- Verse 12: take wing from myself

Examples of what comes from without:

- Verse 10: a godly being has approached me
- Verse 11: understand these words of wisdom
- Verse 14: cosmic thinking is drawing nearer
- Verse 15: enchanted weaving has enwrap myself

The whole of the Summer Solstice quadrant enshrines these themes. Intuition is the thread that guides the soul in the summer quadrant and leads it into the fall.

Verse 20: end of summer/Fall Equinox

I express that I feel my being and its need for connection with the world existence. The recognition of selfhood's power is set in motion through a self-engendered will turned toward the world. It appears most clearly in verses 24 to 26, and is expressed as the "will's fiery energy" in the Michaelmas verse.

Verse 33: end of fall/Winter Solstice

The verse speaks of the world's reality and how this is united with the soul's participation and ability to co-create. The macrocosm needs the human being as co-creator. Imagination, reached through the metamorphosis of the power of thinking, is the first concrete step in co-creating, not energetic outer activity. Thinking and its continuous metamorphosis guides us through this time of the year.

Two Halves of the Year

Verses 46 to 20 frame the time of the year of “nature consciousness” in which memory unites us to an echo of our original consciousness. Intuition plays a part starting in warning verse 7. If we only expanded ourselves out with the cosmos, we would lose ourselves and the connection with our ego.

In verses 20 to 46 Michael leads us to Self-consciousness through our self-engendered will, then through our power of thinking.

Self-Engendered Will and Thinking Mutually Enhance Each Other

- Verse 21: “gaining strength to give me to myself”
- Verse 24: “self-engendered will”
- Verse 26: “my will’s fiery energy”
- Verse 28: “the radiance of my thought”
- Verse 43: “man’s soul can bid defiance by its inner fire.” The “will’s fiery energy” of 26 (Michaelmas) becomes “inner fire” of love in 43.
- After 43: warmth and love penetrate thinking.

Memory and Intuition Mutually Enhance Each Other

Memory is called for in verse 46, intuition in verse 7. Memory completes its role in verse 19; intuition in verse 27, though it reappears once as foreboding in the winter (verse 42).

Intuition and boding do not overlap in the course of the year, nor do memory and self-engendered will (See Figure 3). At each gap between one soul faculty and the other, there is an enhancement of a quality of selfhood. To this we turn next.

The Four Gaps between the Overlapping Soul Faculties

A certain geometry pervades the structure of the calendar. Thinking and intuition on one hand, memory and self-engendered will on the other, act as complements to each other. As we have seen above, memory supports intuition and self-engendered will does so with thinking. On the other hand, memory and self-engendered will do not overlap; when one is in sway, the other one recedes. The same is true of thinking and intuition; one makes room for the other in the round of the year.

The complementary soul faculties leave gaps around the time of the four warning verses. This is so with one exception, the time of the Christmas quadrant in which the human being is called to be co-creator with the spirit, the hierarchies. Here the pattern is interrupted around verse 33. Let us look at the patterns, then return to each half of the year.

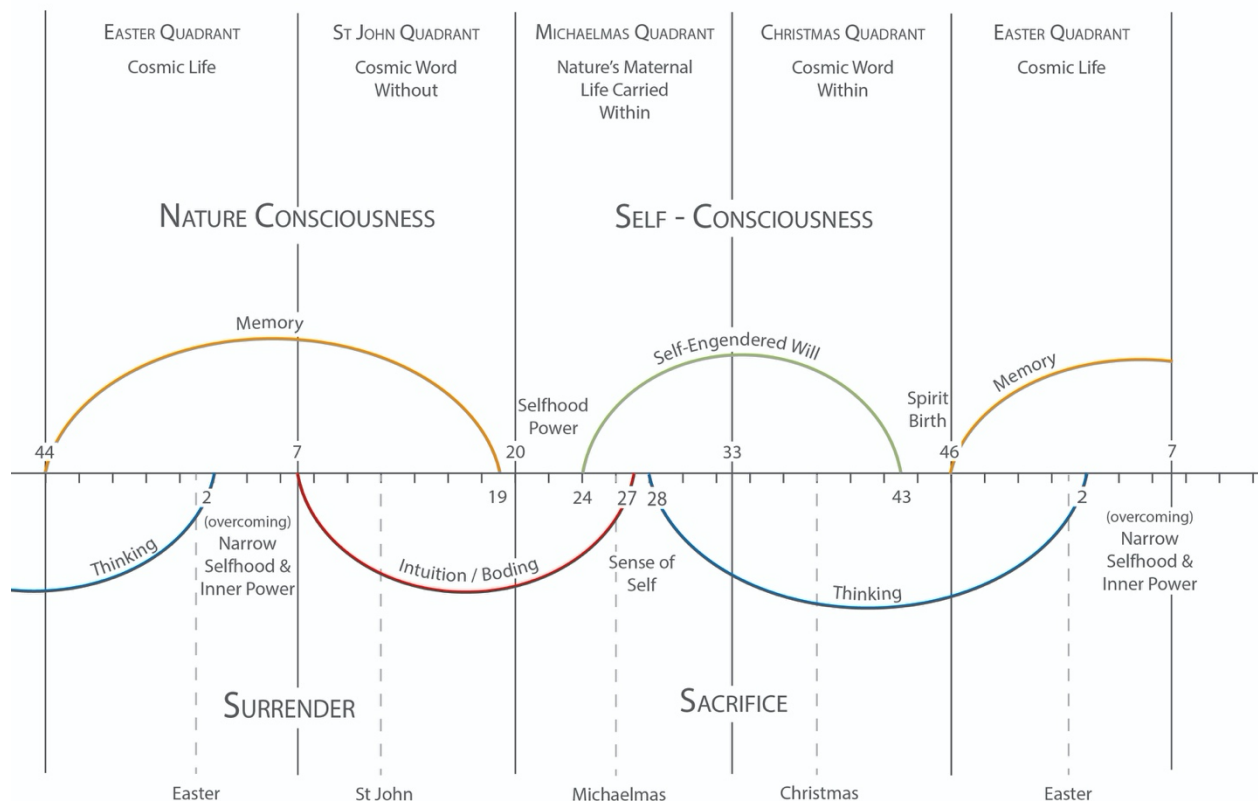


Figure 3: The Four Soul Faculties and the Four Gaps

In the gaps between two soul faculties, it is a quality of selfhood that is emphasized; in fact it is a path that goes from overcoming “narrow selfhood’s inner power” (Easter quadrant) and similar expressions to “selfhood power” and related expressions (St. John to Michaelmas quadrants) to sense of self/Spirit Self (Michaelmas quadrant) and spirit birth (Christmas quadrant). See the gaps in Figure 3: verses 2 to 7, 19 to 24, 27 to 28, 43 to 46.

Thinking and Intuition: Verses 2 to 7; Overcoming “Fetters of Selfhood” or “Narrow Selfhood Inner Power”

- Verse 2: “thinking loses self-confines”
- Verse 3: first mention of “fetters of selfhood” in relation to cosmic memory (memory of our Edenic state)
- Verse 5: “narrow selfhood’s inner power”
- Verse 6: “Self emerging from its narrow bounds”
- Other mentions of narrow bounds in verses 9 and 15

When in verse 2 the power of thinking loses self-confines, it is also said that the human being must “find the fruit of soul within.” When thinking decreases,

we find an immediate inner orientation. Compare this with verse 28 at the opposite time of the year. Enlivened memory awakens us to the knowledge of our eternal heritage through cosmic life drawing near in the sphere of Christ before Easter. Through this we realize the need to overcome the limitations of our lower self, helped by our surrender to cosmic light, cosmic warmth, and cosmic Word.

Memory and Self-Engendered Will: Verses 19–24; Selfhood Power

- Notice, already in verse 16, the mention of “fruits of selfhood”
- Verse 19: “selfhood forces” and “give myself to me.”
- Verse 21: “selfhood’s power”
- Verse 22: “out of the Self of worlds the human Self”
- Verses 23–24: light and darkness, self-engendered will

Through the gifts of cosmic light, cosmic warmth, and cosmic Word maturing within, we awaken to the power of our selfhood, after we have previously sacrificed our lower self in the St. John mood of “He must increase, I must decrease.”

Intuition and Thinking: Verses 27–28; Self/Sense of Self

- Verse 26: from earlier on “give me to” to “hold me in myself” and “Sense of Self” are announced
- Verse 27: “to find myself Self contemplating”

In verse 27 intuition helps me contemplate with new force the Self that it has been stewarding in “my being’s depths.” The light of thought emerges immediately afterwards and from the beginning it is outwardly directed: “solve the mysteries of life and grant fulfilment to wishes” (28). From verses 27 to 28 we have an immediate turnaround from inward to outward.

Once we awaken to the stirrings of the Self within us, our Michaelic self-engendered will frees in us a relationship to our Spirit Self, which is what “sense of self” points to.

Self-Engendered Will and Memory: Verses 43 to 46; Spirit Birth

Already in verse 43 the will has become “inner fire” permeated with warmth and love.

- Verses 44–45 speak of the “spirit birth”. The “creative will of my own thinking” (44) becomes “light of thinking” in 45. In the latter verse the light dimension of thinking, matured in the will, will usher in “cosmic day.”

- In verse 46 the light becomes inward sight and will sustain the emergence of the faculty of memory.

Our relationship to the Spirit Self grows, and it will become the soul's ability to consciously carry the cosmic Word as the spirit child within, which is prepared in verses 36 and 37 and first reached in verse 38 of Christmas. The theme reappears in verse 40.

The fire of self-engendered will becomes conscious inner fire in verse 43 and brings to an end the outer orientation of the will (43 to 46). Through will-imbued (44) and light-imbued (45) thinking, the soul consummates the spirit birth, first felt in the soul at Christmas (38). This renders possible a return to the primeval innocence of cosmic life in the sphere of Christ. Fully armed with the highest level of awareness that thinking can generate, we can return to an echo of our original consciousness, but now without loss of self-consciousness.

Nature Consciousness and Self-Consciousness

The human being carries nature in himself in such a way that natural impulses neutralize each other and allow the individual to be both part of nature and above its laws of pure necessity. This is why the individual is endowed with the gift of freedom. What is present at different times in nature is present simultaneously in the human being. This can be seen in the daily cycle as well as in the cycle of the year.

At night the ego and astral body leave the physical and etheric bodies behind. During sleep the two lower bodies come to expression unhindered; they express a condition of summer. "Spiritual vision sees them as soil, as mineral matter, out of which plant life is sprouting. It is a different form of plant life, of course, from the one we see around us, but recognizable as such by spiritual sight. Above gleam the Ego and astral body like a flame, unable to approach the physical and etheric. Sleeping man therefore is a sort of budding, sprouting plot of ground, with a gleaming Ego and astral body belonging to it, but detached."¹ For ego and astral bodies the reverse is true: they are in a condition of winter. They are unable to come to full expression and to rise to consciousness.

During daytime consciousness, the ego and astral body penetrate into the body through which they can open to sense impressions and the perceptions and thoughts that accompany them. They are then in their summer state, open to the surrounding spheres, whereas physical and etheric bodies enter

¹ Rudolf Steiner, Lecture, "Spiritual Knowledge Is a True Communion, the Beginning of a Cosmic Cult Suitable for Men of the Present Age," New Year's Eve, 1922-3.

their winter state. "The mineral element of man crumbles during his waking hours. There is a sort of plant-like activity which, although quite different in appearance, gives a general and universal impression of autumn foliage, of drooping, withering leaves which are dying and vanishing; and all through this fading substance, big and little flames are gleaming and glowing. These big and little flames are the astral body and the Ego which are now living in the physical and etheric bodies."² This second situation is thus similar to the winter state of the Earth.

Thus we can see from the above that, whereas winter and summer happen consecutively on Earth, they happen simultaneously in the human being during day and night and at all times of the year. This is so in spite of the fact that the spring/summer time of the year awakens our senses but dulls our awareness, and the fall/winter time brings sense activity to a standstill but awakens our consciousness.

The power that lives in the human being as budding, springing life is one that belongs to the past. In the human being this comes from the "reverberating life before birth, whose pulsations beat upon our physical and etheric bodies during sleep."³

When one looks at the Earth and its sheaths with spiritual vision, one can see that the Earth's ego and its astral body surround the planet but don't penetrate the etheric and physical sheaths, the activities of mineral and plants. At most they touch lightly the plant in the upper regions, where astrality manifests in the flower. Left to itself, the Earth cannot bring forth forces of renewal. It is only led to decay and death.

The human being can do what nature is unable to accomplish. However, she has to raise herself above normal, daily consciousness in order to bring about the evolutionary future of Earth. "If therefore external Nature is not to perish, she must be given that which man has through his astral body and his Ego. ... If he brings these independent thoughts to a real existence, he confers a future on the Earth. But he must first have them. ... thoughts we receive from spiritual research are quickened in Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition. If we accept them they become forms having independent existence in the life of the Earth." These are the living thought forces that can bring renewal into the Earth itself.

² Steiner, "Spiritual Knowledge Is a True Communion."

³ Steiner, "Spiritual Knowledge Is a True Communion."

When we return from these considerations to the Calendar of the Soul, we see that the spring/summer part of the year (Easter to Michaelmas) places us in a state of dream; the overabundance of forces in physical and etheric overwhelm the astral and ego. The summer time of the year, especially around midsummer, is like a magnified state of sleep. In spring and summer nature expands; matter rises into spirit, and we acquire what Steiner calls "nature consciousness," which comes at the risk of losing ourselves in the dream. This is countered by intuition/boding, which draws our attention inward to the cultivation of selfhood's power, through conscious, not a naturally unconscious, surrender. Nature moves us out of ourselves as in a protracted state of sleep. Intuition pulls us back in. We don't purely live in the movement of the spring and summer with an overpowering of our physical and etheric forces; we strengthen the winter forces within our ego and astral body through intuition. We bring the activity of astral and ego more consciously into our physical and etheric.

In the winter part of the year, spirit is drawn back into matter. The external manifestations of nature call us to a retreat, that of the sleep of nature that is apparent to the external senses. The calendar does not tire to emphasize the need to remain awake and sensitive to the needs of the world. It is through the summer light of thinking that we can devote this time of the year to let the gifts received in the spring and summer become gifts for the world and our fellow human beings. While nature retreats and contracts, calling us to do likewise, we counter this movement with the light-filled expansion invoked by the full power of thinking (See Figure 4). We don't live just in the contraction of fall and winter with the dry qualities of our present astral and ego forces. We enliven our ego and our thinking through the forces of summer within our physical and etheric bodies, the summer within that the Calendar speaks about in many instances. This is what awakens and gives levity to our power of thinking, transforming it into Imagination first, then Inspiration and Intuition. We bring some of the forces of sleep to enliven a state of otherwise sterile wakefulness. These forces that we can then pour into the world to help bring about the evolutionary future of Earth.

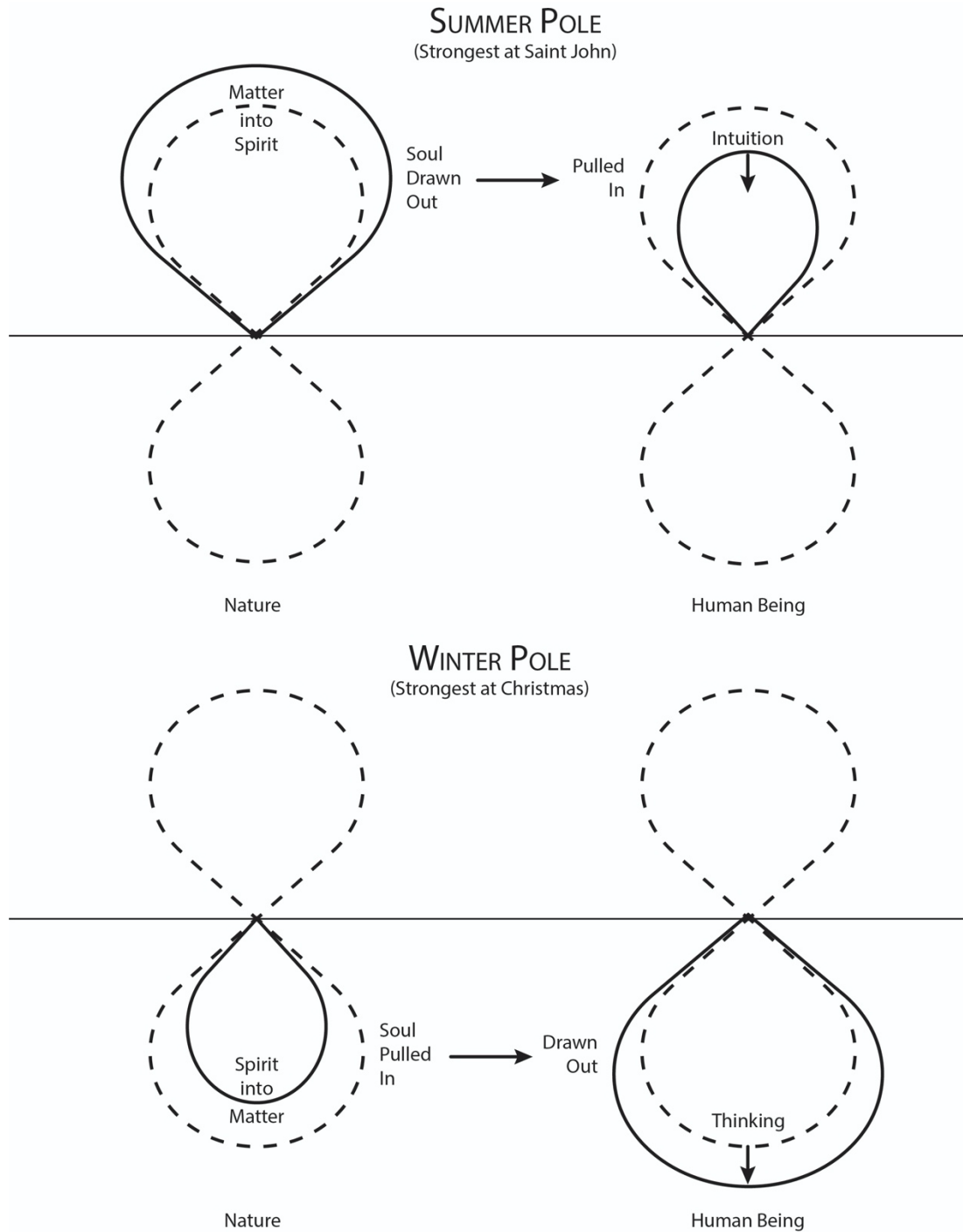


Figure 4: Summer and Winter Poles

Nature Consciousness: A Closer Look at Verses 46 to 20; from Cosmic Life to Radiant Beauty

We will now look at the role the ethers play in so-called nature-consciousness and at the evolution of the faculty of intuition. Cosmic life and shining beauty

(otherwise called "radiant beauty," "senses' glory," etc.) bear at first no seeming immediate relationship. Some of Steiner's indications, however, put us on the way to at least inquire as to why we find cosmic life permeating the essence of the calendar in the early spring and shining beauty in the summer after a journey through the ethers. These are called cosmic life (life and chemical ethers), cosmic light (light ether), and cosmic warmth (warmth ether) in the calendar (Figure 5).

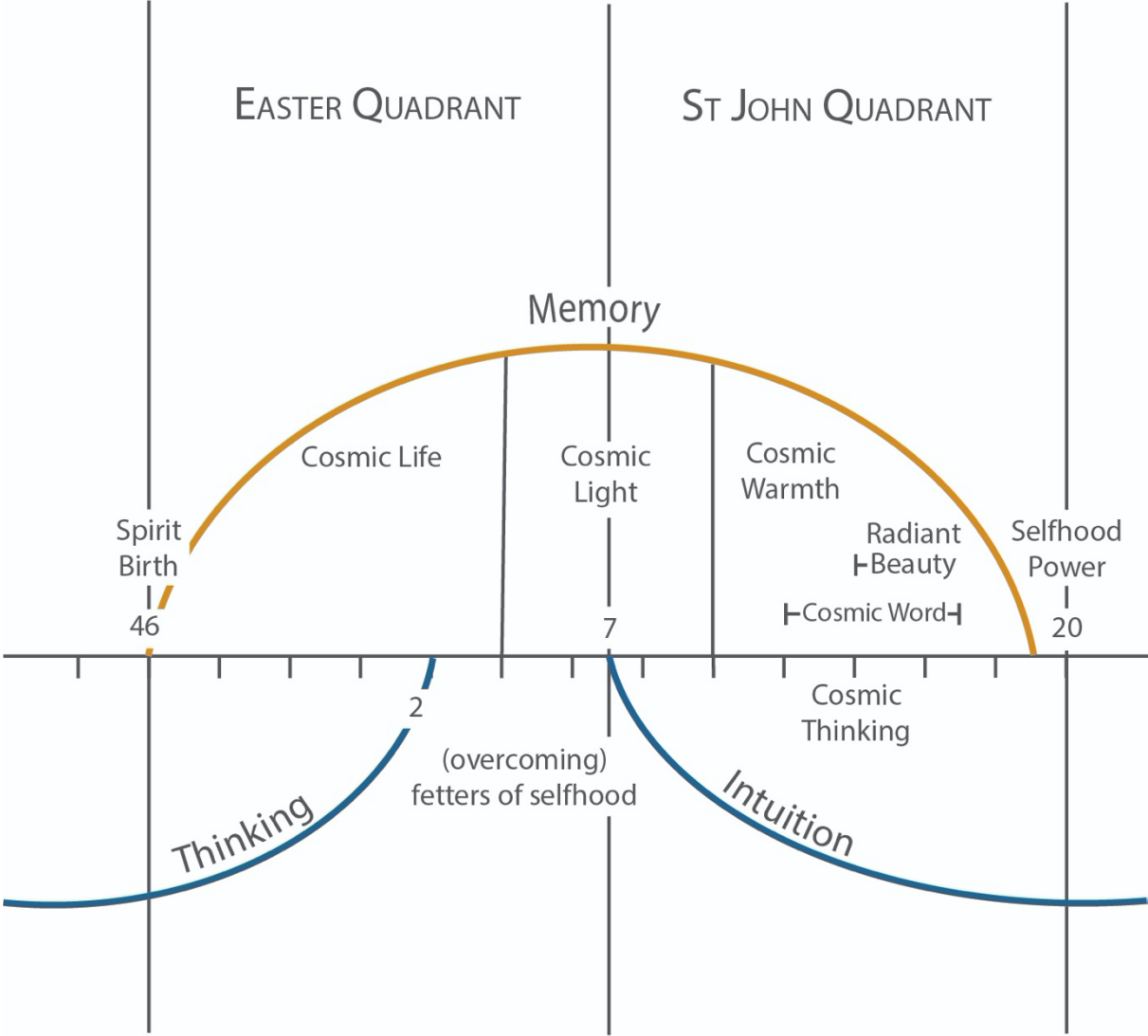


Figure 5: The Ethers, Easter and St. John Quadrants

In *The Four Seasons and the Archangels* Steiner speaks of “radiant beauty which appears spiritually out of the cosmic weaving at the height of summer.”⁴ He also associates it with “the form-giving beauty of the light above.”

In German the word for *beautiful* is related to *shine*; the beautiful carries its essence in outer configuration. Beauty reveals itself through outer form: “It is the spiritual that shines, radiating into the sensory, proclaiming its being even in the sensory.”⁵ Let us see how we transition from cosmic life to shining/radiant beauty in spring and summer, from verses 49 to 15.

The sphere of cosmic life (life and chemical ethers) is the one the human being has relinquished through the Fall. The cosmic Christ approaching the human being at the time of Easter draws it closer to the human soul.

In verse 49 the *force* of such sphere is first *felt*. In verse 50 we are told that it wants to pour itself within the human being, armed by a power of thought so strong that it can fathom its essence. The climax is reached in verse 52 in which cosmic life pours its strength into the human body. Henceforth the power of thinking wanes in the human soul.

From verses 4 to 7 we enter the sphere of cosmic light (light ether), which cosmic life encompasses—the lower ethers encompass the higher ones. We first do so with the help of “perceptive feeling” (“sentience”) in verse 4. Gradually the light gives us a sense of new freedom, but also overwhelms us and induces us to flight, as becomes apparent in verse 6 and in threshold verse 7. The Self, just merely felt in the soul, threatens to fly forth in pursuit of the light. Intuition is called forth as that faculty which will draw the soul inwards.

From verse 9 we enter the sphere of cosmic warmth (warmth ether). With its help, and with that of intuition we can now lose ourselves in, or rather surrender to, the light and warmth in trust. The ethers now welcome the soul to the realm of cosmic Word, though this is only very dimly felt at first. In verse 10 we fathom that a higher being has perceived us; in verse 11 its voice speaks and points to the importance of surrendering to the beauty of the world. Here beauty is pointed out at first as something merely external. The theme reappears and deepens in verse 12, where we properly enter the realm of “shining beauty” (“radiant beauty,” “shining glory”); this beauty leads the way for the soul to seek itself further in cosmic light and cosmic warmth.

⁴ Rudolf Steiner, “The St. John Imagination,” lecture of October 12, 1923.

⁵ Rudolf Steiner, *The Arts and Their Mission*, lecture of June 9, 1923.

What has perceived the soul in verse 10 now asks the meditant in verse 13 to seek and find its spirit kinship. And the following verse points to the cosmic activity weaving behind the surface of sense perception. It calls it "cosmic thinking"—corresponding to the cosmic intelligence, or cooperative activity of the hierarchies—that comes in "sense appearance" ("senses' shining," "senses' glory"). To close this review we come to verse 15 in which the "enchanted weaving" ("spirit weaving") of the "spirit within outer matter" ("world's glory" or "cosmic glory") bestows us strength ("gives me/grants me the strength") that my I is not presently able to give itself.

Verse 15 marks a completion; the cosmic life that unconsciously flowed in the body as strength before Easter is now something that is repeated in verse 15, but with a call for the human being to awaken from the summer dream of the time of St. John. It is not surprising therefore that cosmic Word speaks triumphantly in verse 17, the cosmic Word that the soul has "let in through senses' portals" by perceiving the senses' glory.

In the lessons of the First Class we are told that if we strengthen true feeling, we can perceive the world of appearance through which the being of the world is shining. In this way feeling becomes the seed for awakening cosmic life in our thinking and in our will. Trust and surrender that the soul is called forth to achieve toward the time of St. John can only be reached if we acquire complete inner peace. Through the peace of our hearts, human feeling can be transformed into universal feeling, and in this transformation cosmic life becomes active in us as the power of our own true being. What we have lost through the Fall we can newly make our own through the Christ impulse. In this state of being, our feeling weaves between macrocosm and microcosm, between the human being and the cosmic life.

It is the task of the summer to live in trust and peace of heart so that cosmic life becomes active within. The sphere that the cosmic Christ has brought closer to the human being can now take permanent residence in the human soul. The cosmic life that flowed into our bodies from the beginning of spring to Easter can now be fully internalized and made more conscious so that the human being can let cosmic Word speak in the soul.

The Accompanying Movement of Intuition

There are clearly marked transitions in the role of intuition through the arc of the summer: in verses 8 to 12 the soul offers itself in surrender, in verses 13 to 17 it receives from the cosmos; from 18 to 20 is announced the soul's striving; in 21 and 27 intuition is that force that confirms the sought-for results.

Verses 9 to 12: Surrendering

Intuition appears specifically in verse 9; in verse 10 it is its close relative "presentiment" (*empfindung*). The soul continuously offers itself in trust to the cosmos by: laying thinking "in quiet dream life" (8); "losing myself to find myself." (9); sensing that "there has perceived you now a godly being" (10); trusting that "the human I can lose itself and find itself within the cosmic I" (11) and "trustingly seeking myself in cosmic light and cosmic warmth" (12).

Verses 13 to 17: Receiving from the Cosmos

The godly being that has been felt in verse 10 will speak in 17 as the cosmic Word at the end of this interval. The shift starts on verse 13 from a passive seeking to an active "find your spirit kinship . . . in spirit grounds." In verse 14, as a result of our active entrusting, cosmic thinking approaches us in radiant beauty. The enchanted weaving of the radiant beauty envelops us in verse 15. In verse 16 we turn inward to cultivate the gifts of the spirit, knowing that "fruits of soul" are maturing in the "depths of soul." And finally cosmic Word speaks in verse 17 enjoining us to "imbue your spirit depths with my wide-world horizon."

Verses 18 to 20: Striving

Verse 17 already indicates a movement of striving, one that is requested from outside of us. In verse 18 it is the human being who wants to "fashion worthily my soul as fitting raiment for the spirit" (19). And it is from within that she knows its own responsibility to "encompass with memory what I've newly got." (20).

Verses 21 and 27: Confirmation

Intuition still plays a role, first in witnessing "the seed maturing" of "selfhood's power" (21), then contemplating the Self as "germinating force of soul" (27). The seed of verse 21 is now unfolding in 27. And soon after, intuition's role comes to an end and thinking ushers in a completely new orientation of soul.

Uniting Nature Consciousness and Self-Consciousness: Memory, Will, Cosmic Light, and Cosmic Darkness

Before turning to the time of the Michaelmas and Christmas quadrants, let us explore what makes possible the transition from nature consciousness to self-consciousness.

Because cosmic life has been internalized through cosmic light, cosmic warmth, and cosmic Word in the summer, it can now reemerge in verse 26 of Michaelmas as "nature's maternal life" and express itself in the "will's fiery energy." Let us look at other factors in this transition from verses 19 to 26.

Verses 19 to 26

Verse 19 has called for memory's last effort in order to awaken selfhood forces. And verse 20 speaks of the need to integrate the inner and outer dimensions for the self to emerge in the world. The power of the self emerges in the inner darkness and is nurtured by the light of intuition (21).

The light of summer has been transformed to light of soul, and it shines into spirit depths (22). The outer light and the stimulation of the senses are dimmed (23), and that signals that intuition is nearing its goal. It will only appear in verse 27 to pass on the baton to the power of thinking. Verse 24 is central to our exploration. The Self becomes itself the inner light through which Self-engendered will is created from the darkness of the soul. These verses speak most of the inner darkness.

Verse 25 now refers to the "dark of space and time." The Self cannot find anything of its nature in the vast expanses of space, nor in the flow of time. This is another dimension of darkness; this is what is felt as the inner darkness of the approach to the abyss of existence. The Self must seek itself not in time or space but in eternity, through the awakened will and the power of thinking. This is confirmed in verse 26 in which cosmic life received from nature—fertilized by cosmic light and cosmic warmth—nourishes our sense of Self and expresses itself in the will's fiery energy. This new state of being allows thinking to emerge and shed new light on the reality of our being. Thinking connects us to eternity in which we have our being, our true Self.

Self-Consciousness: A Closer Look at Verses 24 to 46

We can now look more closely to the exception of the Michaelmas quadrant, where the second gap does not occur in coincidence with the warning verse 33, but before it (27–28). That of Michaelmas is in a sense the most dramatic of the quadrants, and for good reason; it calls the human being to start taking responsibility in the order of creation; it calls to the realization of her full potential upon which the macrocosm depends for its furtherance. Here we find not only the overlapping functions of intuition, self-engendered will, and thinking but also feeling as we will see shortly (Figure 6).

Verse 33 calls us to co-creation. It is only when we have awakened to our Spirit Self—though not necessarily realized it!—that we can hear the call that otherwise passes by unheard by most human beings. Through vigorous awakening of the self-directed will and through the assertion of our thinking faculties, we are readying to sacrifice ourselves through the cosmic Word—first heard of in verse 36. The awakening in the spirit, the spirit birth of initiation, is what enables us to co-create.

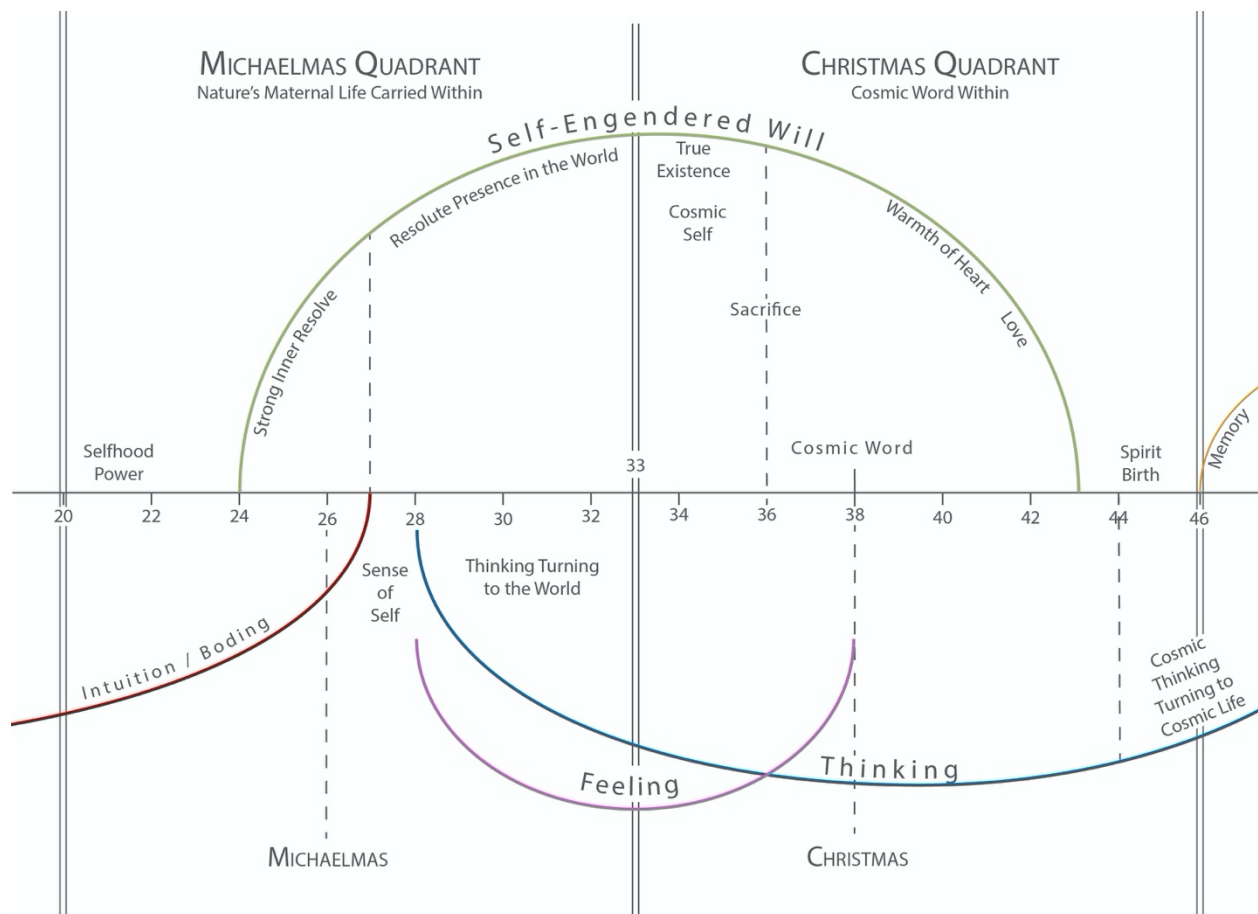


Figure 6: Michaelmas and Christmas Quadrants

Self-Engendered Will: Verses 24 to 43

Verses 24 to 32

We cannot reach the turning point of 33—unlike the other three of cross 7 (7, 20, 46)—unless we have already started our inner transformation. From 24 to 27 the soul summons the energy and readiness to recognize the seed of selfhood power; its desire to be awake is itself a dictate of intuition (27).

Verses 25 and 26 confirm a quality of steely resolve. Thinking finds its energy and impulse from the emerging self, the activated will, and the affirmation of intuition in verse 27. Verses 28 to 32 impel a distinct quality upon our thinking and striving. When thinking emerges, it comes to the fore with this quality of resolve in verses 28 and 29: “solve the mysteries of life . . . grant fulfillment to wishes” (28); “fan the spark of thinking into flame . . . read life’s inner meaning” (29). In verse 30 the soul, deeply rooted in itself, looks with confidence and certainty at the future. The quality of determined resolve is deepened in 31 and 32: “forceful will of life . . . creative powers soul impelled

to ripen into human deeds" (31); "gaining strength to give me to the world . . . turn with clearer insight towards the weaving of life's destiny" (32).

Verse 33

This is a warning verse; here sounds the call to co-creation. The world needs to connect to our soul, and to be re-created in our soul for the future of Earth evolution.

Verses 34 to 43

Verses 34 and 35 consecrate the reality of stepping consciously into the spirit: "true life . . . newly risen sense of Self . . . pour forth cosmic forces into the outer actions in my life" (34); "Self at home within the cosmic Self" (35). The desire for true life (34) is echoed by the certainty of true existence (35).

Cosmic Word becomes a reality in our soul in verses 36 to 38. From 38 to 43 the will is progressively imbued with forces of the heart, warmth, love, inner fire. At the spirit birth of Christmas (38), the heart is mentioned for the first time. By verse 43 the soul and will are completely permeated by forces of the heart. We are now initiated: our will and our thinking meet in our heart. We can be co-creators. This is the spirit birth that resounds immediately after in verses 44–45.

In summing up, the steely inner resolve (24 to 27) becomes resolute presence in the world (28 to 32). After the warning verse 33, this becomes the human/cosmic presence of true existence. Through the cosmic Word, strength of will becomes warmth of heart, inner fire, loving presence, and action leading to the spirit birth.

We can now look at how thinking supports, is strengthened by, and itself strengthens the movement of the will, before turning to the movement of feeling.

Thinking: Intervals 28 to 32 and 44 to 49.

In verses 28 to 32, thinking emerges as the fruit of cosmic light: "radiance of my thought coming from souls sun power" (28), "ripened fruits of thinking . . . within the sunlight of my soul" (30). It emerges as that which can allow us to meet the external world: "solve the mysteries of life" and "grant fulfillment to wishes" (28) or "acquire clear insight into the weaving of life's destiny" (32). This must be done with conscious effort as in 29: "to fan the spark of thinking into flame by my own strong endeavor."

Both through energetic stirring of will and exertion of thinking, the human being readies himself to the challenge of co-creation set in motion in verse 33. The other major transformation of thinking occurs in verses 43 to 49, after

the working of cosmic Word in verses 36 to 38 and together with the achievement of spirit birth in verses 44 to 45.

The will aspect and the light aspect of thinking join in the spirit birth. Thinking has made its own the whole effort of self-engendered will, its fiery energy announced at Michaelmas (26). From verse 46 the will is internalized through the inner sight/light of memory. Verses 47 to 49 form a systematic enhancement. In verse 47 thinking turns to the powers divine within the soul. In verse 48 through these powers divine, human thinking becomes cosmic thinking that awakens love. Through cosmic thinking, the human being can recognize that what lives in the soul's faculty of thought has the same source as cosmic life in the macrocosmos. Thus equipped, and immersed in the emerging sphere of cosmic life, thinking unites us with the Christ impulse which sets us on the path of "not I, but Christ in me," leading to Easter.

Feeling: Interval 28 to 38

It is in this time of the year that feeling appears in full strength, from Michaelmas to Christmas, as it hardly does in any other part of the calendar. It also evolves from a subjective to an objective quality, and this evolution is centered on the pivotal role of warning verse 33. Let us see how feeling expresses itself before verse 33, in the verse, and after it.

Verses 28 to 32

In verse 28 feeling immediately appears to accompany thinking as it emerges in the soul. It says "I feel my being vivified anew" and in other translations "I feel the vastness of my being." Feeling gives us assurance of our own strength.

In verses 29–30 thinking ascends to its role as "fruit of summer's heritage," basking "in the sunlight of the soul"; its sun-like qualities emerge. In verse 30 the "flow of feeling" (or "all feelings") supports the certainty of self-awareness, a step further than individual strength. Immediately after, the soul starts looking outward with the desire to affirm its own strength: "I feel my own force [or "forces"] gaining strength to give me to [or "turn me to"] the world." Self-awareness and world awareness prepare us for the transition.

Verse 33

In verse 33 I affirm that I'm now ready to find strength to turn to the world: "I feel at last the world's reality" (or simply "the world"). The transition is marked in the realization that the self needs to be strengthened in dialogue with the macrocosm, and vice-versa: the macrocosm depends on human willingness and attainment of higher knowledge.

Verses 34 to 38

Notice the qualitative shift of the expression of feeling already in verse 34: "I feel new risen sense of Self ("selfhood," "resurrected Self"). As König points out, the soul feels inspired by the Spirit Self. In the following verse, Self and sense of Self are connected through the cosmic Self in Christ. The soul feels it can be a humble part of this reality. It is not surprising therefore that in verses 36 to 38 the cosmic Word—which the soul has let within itself in the summer—now resounds clearly through the power of thinking turned to the larger riddles of the universe, to the question of its very own origin.

In verse 38 we see the birth of the spirit child in the soul's core. This is the spirit birth, at first just felt, then comprehended, by the human being in his transformed thinking in verses 44 and 45, just before the transition of threshold verse 46.

In essence feeling is first directed to the growing strength of the human being. At the turning point the soul feels the reality of the world, and after this makes room for the cosmic Self and the cosmic Word. Feeling thus forms a wonderful complement and support to the will and to thinking. Before we express ourselves as the tenth hierarchy, we truly need to integrate and harmonize these three soul forces.

In the Michaelmas and Christmas quadrants, self-engendered will in verse 24 to 43 goes through a metamorphosis, through the rising of thinking and feeling (from verse 28). The will becomes light in thinking (28 to 33) and capacity to love in warmth of heart and inner fire (36 to 43), through the strengthening of feeling (28 to 38). This leads to the spirit birth. The above corresponds to the inner transformation of the spheres of cosmic life, cosmic light, and cosmic warmth, which first approached us externally from the time of Easter and St. John.

From Self-Consciousness to Nature Consciousness: Memory, Will, Cosmic Light, and Cosmic Darkness

To close the circle of the year, let us look at the time that leads us into the Easter quadrant.

Verses 43 to 49

Already in verse 42 we speak of the "gloom of winter" and the "outer darknesses," and "warmth of heart anticipating the sense-world's revelation." Verse 43 speaks of the "cold world." Verses 44 and 45 contrast these external realities of darkness and cold with the will and light power of thinking when it has allowed the Self to render conscious the spirit birth of Christmas.

Verse 46 calls for memory as that power which enkindles light and strengthens inward sight, and which must be strengthened through the will. The above verses speak mostly of the outer darkness. This is followed by the rise of the inner light of thinking. Thinking has already turned the human being toward the world; now it turns her to the deeper Mysteries of Self and macrocosm. The outer darkness is now recognized as nights of cosmic darkness (49), and through clarity of thought the force of cosmic life leads us to cosmic day. Through the power of metamorphosed thinking, what was "human loving" (41) or "glowing warmth and inner fire" (43) now becomes universal love in verse 48.

From winter to spring, thinking forms the link to the sphere of cosmic life. Thinking, metamorphosed through the self-engendered will into cosmic thinking, attains to the fountainhead of the cosmic formative forces and recognizes the strength of cosmic life, thereby allowing it to flow into the human body. At the other end of the year, through the work of intuition and memory, cosmic life exudes from radiant beauty. At the time of Michaelmas it is internalized as "nature's maternal life" in the will's fiery energy.

The Christ impulse makes itself felt as an elemental force of nature throughout the round of the years. From this inexhaustible reserve the human being can draw during the spring. He can let it ripen and take root inwardly in the summer, and metamorphose in the fall and winter, so that from the human being it becomes a gift to the world and to the cosmos. At the completion of the cycle and the beginning of a new one, the individual can recognize that it has drawn and transformed as much as he could and was ready for, and now needs to draw from another draught of life, at the fountainhead of the Christ impulse, to renew the cycle and continue to spiral upward.

Cosmic Thinking, Cosmic Word, and Cosmic Self

We will now follow another movement across the two halves of the year, that of "cosmic thinking," "cosmic Self," and "cosmic Word." Part of this has already been explored in chapters 2 and 4 (Figure 7).

It is remarkable that these beings appear in the two halves of the year, but of course in very different ways. We now will place these themes in relation to the faculties of intuition and of thinking: the first in relation to the St. John and Michaelmas quadrants, the second in relation to the Christmas and Easter quadrants.

In the St. John/Michaelmas quadrants we will look at verses 14 (cosmic thinking), 17 (cosmic Word), and 22 (cosmic Self). In the Christmas/Easter quadrants we will see verses 35 (cosmic Self), 36 to 40 (cosmic Word), and

48 (cosmic thinking). Notice here that the two movements are completed in two of the light verses (cross 5): 22 and 48.

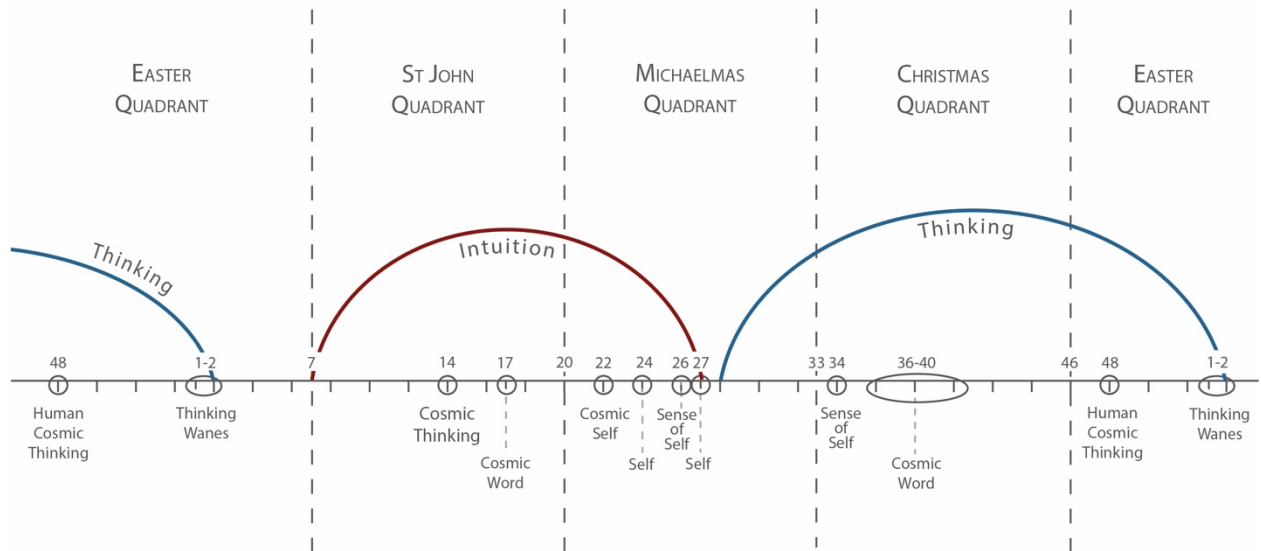


Figure 7: Cosmic Thinking, Cosmic Word, Cosmic Self

Intuition: Cosmic Thinking, Cosmic Word, and Cosmic Self

The first movement from cosmic thinking to cosmic Self is completed under the wing of the force of intuition. Cosmic thinking appears in verse 14 in “world appearance” (“shining beauty” or “senses’ glory”). The combined power of the ethers (cosmic life, cosmic light, and cosmic warmth) shining in the world of appearance call forth the combined activities of the hierarchies, or what we could call the “cosmic intelligence.” To the receptive human being, these fashion a strong call of the spirit, which can materialize in a change of direction.

Before St. John the soul has given itself in surrender and trust to the spirit world. Through strengthening its intuition it has not relinquished its ego. Soon after it is the Logos, the power of cosmic Word to speak warmly within the soul, “O human being know thyself.” The call to the Self is what puts us in touch with the higher Self, cosmic Self, in verse 22. Here it is mostly fathomed, aspired to. The lower self has diminished so that the Christ could rise at the time of St. John. Now we fathom that the human Self shall ripen out of the Self of worlds (cosmic Self).

Thinking: Cosmic Self, Cosmic Word and Cosmic Thinking (Figure 7)

In a way similar to all that precedes in this essay, we will better understand the preceding stage once we integrate it in this one that follows. We notice right away that cosmic thinking and cosmic Self exchange places, and this

explains how the two soul forces—intuition and thinking—complement each other.

In verse 22, the cosmic Self has been announced and the period immediately before Michaelmas exalts selfhood power. Now there is an intensification of the theme from verses 24 to 27. In verse 24 “soul life becomes aware of Self” and in 25 it rests within the certainty of Self (“I can belong now to myself”). With Michaelic resolve, the Spirit Self is now announced for the immediate future: “that *sense of Self* spring forth from my [will’s fiery energy].” Verse 27 completes the movement with the Self living in my being’s depths as “germinating force of soul” and “gift of summer sun.”

When we look at this natural progression, it is not therefore surprising that it is then in verse 35 that the cosmic Self is no longer just aspired to (as in verse 22) but something that we “can feel at home as humble part [of].” All the more so since the preceding verse announces with quiet assurance the “new risen *sense of Self*.” We can see then why at the time of Michaelmas it is cosmic Self that emerges first, not cosmic thinking.

When the Self has rooted itself in the cosmic Self, cosmic Word can now speak forcefully in the world through the human soul in the verses immediately following, 36 and 37. Whereas in verse 17 the cosmic Word speaks quietly within (“imbue your spirit depths with my wide world horizons”), here it announces itself in an outward orientation. It first asks us that we “sacrifice [ourselves] through [him]” to “imbue [our] labor’s aims with [its] bright spirit light” (36) and then triumphantly “resounds through senses’ darkness, transfiguring all life” (verse 37). The theme of cosmic Word continues until verse 40. In verse 38 it is the first stage of the spirit birth felt within the heart as the “spirit child” and the “heavenly fruit of hope.” In verse 39 this is the confirmation of the spirit revelation that leads to the Spirit Self (sense of Self) and in verse 40 the cosmic Word acquires a fiery cleansing power that “fills the vain delusion of my Self.”

Verses 44 and 45 speak of the spirit birth, which was first felt at Christmas (38) but is now consciously recognized through the light and will of thinking. After warning verse 46 calls forth the power of memory to take hold of our soul, thinking can complete its trajectory. The co-creative human being is one whose thinking is as mobile and living as the thinking of the hierarchies. It has become cosmic thinking. It is no longer the cosmic thinking meeting us without (verse 17); it is human/cosmic thinking that has taken root in our souls. From this kind of thinking the human being reaches freedom and the capacity to sacrifice—first called for in verse 36—that is, true love.

We can now close the circle to where we started. All we need to do is follow the recognition of the power of thinking after verse 48. In verse 49 cosmic thinking directs us to the sphere of cosmic life to which it is akin. This union is completed in verse 1 in which, while the Sun directs its gaze downward, thinking soars to the periphery, to the Spirit's life, the sphere of the cosmic formative forces. Here it both binds us to the cosmic life but also starts to dissolve itself ("loses self-confines" of verse 2). It is not surprising therefore that when thinking returns, it is no longer human thinking but cosmic thinking. And it does not meet us within, but without.

In concluding we can look again at the two halves of the year. In spring and summer, thinking that has united us to the sphere of cosmic life in the approaching Christ event of Easter wanes. Memory and intuition rise, placing us in closer connection to the spiritual world to which nature and the human being rise in the heat of summer. Now it is the cosmic thinking of the hierarchies that first approaches us, so that soon after, the cosmic Word can speak quietly within. When summer is over and Michaelmas approaches, the human being feels the power of the Self grow and announce its kinship to the cosmic Self of Christ.

When Michaelmas is in full sway, the Self grows in the soul, giving it strength and resolve. It shows the attainable reality of the Spirit Self and then guides us to it and to the cosmic Self from which it has its origin. When that is achieved, the cosmic Word can speak from within, having taken conscious residence in our soul. It calls us to transform the world through our power and strength of sacrifice. All of the above is completed under the wing of the ascending power of thinking, which seeks to transform itself and the human being. The metamorphosed thinking is the cosmic thinking within, which continues the outward orientation of the soul in the winter time. The completion of the movement is that of the cosmic thinking of the human hierarchy, the new hierarchy that enters the order of creation as equal to the gods. From it can flow the creative power of love. The apparent ebb of the power of thinking is only due to the rise of the power of cosmic life. Thinking is that power that can consciously unite us with it, sacrificing itself in the act.