Appendix 33

Memory and Conscience in the Calendar of the Soul

The following essay juxtaposes the roles of memory and of conscience during the spring and summer, the time of "Nature consciousness" of the Calendar of the Soul.

Conscience does not appear as such in the Calendar; rather its presence is intimated through the elusive soul quality that in the German original appears as *ahnung* (substantive) or *ahnen* (verb), or other derivate forms. The translations also vary due to the fact that the German terms themselves show different nuances over the course of the year. We will refer to these words most often in terms of a "sensing of the heart," or of "intuition," which is obviously different from the Intuition, as a higher form of knowledge. Together with the *ahnung* forms, spring and summer present us with many voices that speak to the soul. They are another manifestation of conscience, which in common parlance is referred to as the "voice of conscience." These calls issue either from the soul or from the macrocosm. In fact they alternate in a regular, though not predictable, fashion.

Memory and Conscience in the Calendar of the Soul

This exploration will cover the spring and summer intervals and is framed by the threshold verses 46 and 20 of Cross 7, with verse 7 lying mid-way in the interval. The two most relevant for our purpose are verses 46 and 7.

Verse 46

The world is threatening to stun
The inborn forces of my soul;
Now, memory, come forth
From spirit depths, enkindling light;
Invigorate my inward sight

Which only by the strength of will
Is able to sustain itself.

Verse 7

My self is threatening to fly forth,
Lured strongly by the world's enticing light.
Come forth, prophetic feeling,
Take up with strength your rightful task:
Replace in me the power of thought
Which in the senses' glory
Would gladly lose itself.

It is quite indicative that the first threshold verse specifically appeals to memory (46); the following to intuition/sensing of the heart (verse 7). The last verse is less relevant since it closes the series. The two complementary verses are here placed side by side in the Hans and Ruth Pusch translation that we will use from now on (at times terms used in other translations will be placed in brackets):

Verse 46 calls forth the power of memory to counteract the call of the senses and the temptation of the human being in full control of his consciousness to fall into the Ahrimanic temptation to direct the newly acquired higher consciousness—the "spirit birth" of verses 44 and 45—toward the dominion of earthly forces and purely earthly/materialistic pursuits. Memory counters the splitting of the forces of the soul; it reminds us of the place of the Self in holding them together. As the power of thinking starts to wane after Easter, and as the human being expands into the ethers, she faces another temptation, that of the Self losing itself away from the Earth in a movement of expansion leading to ecstasy and a relinquishing of earthly responsibilities.

We will now start from verses 49, 50 and 1 in which we hear the first voices of the sequence we will explore. The voices that speak here carry over what comes from the winter. Their qualities differ from what we will see later on. Below we find side by side verses 49 and 50.

I feel the force of cosmic life:
Thus speaks my clarity of thought,
Recalling its own spirit growth
Through nights of cosmic darkness,
And to the new approach of cosmic day
It turns its inward rays of hope.

Thus to the human ego speaks
In mighty revelation,
Unfolding its inherent powers,
The joy of growth throughout the world:
I carry into you my life
From its enchanted bondage
And so attain my truest goal.

In verse 49 the soul looks backward. The call to memory of verse 46 manifests with the retrospective glance over the whole of the fall and winter, the whole of the time of "cosmic darkness" the soul has just experienced. In addition thinking—which has been growing through the winter and has brought about the birth of the higher Self in the soul—puts us in touch with the sphere of cosmic life, whence spring forth the creative world thoughts. Immediately after, not surprisingly, the stance is as if reversed. The think-

ing which places us in touch with the creative forces of the universe, makes it possible for these very same forces to speak to the human ego. The power of higher forms of cognition, starting with Imagination, renders the human being partaker in the realm of the universal formative forces. The spiritual beings, particularly the elemental beings, are released from their enchantment in matter in order to "attain [their] truest goal", to be freed for further evolutionary tasks in service to the human being, such as acting as sources of "mighty revelation."

The movement is continued and completed in verse 1 of Easter. Here it is the Christ Sun that speaks to the human mind and senses.

When out of world-wide spaces
The sun speaks to the human mind [senses]
And gladness from the depths of soul
Becomes, in seeing, one with light,
Then rising from the sheath of self,
Thoughts soar to distances of space
And dimly bind
The human being to the spirit's life.

By the time of Easter the soul impelled by the Christ impulse is immersed to some degree in the sphere of the Risen Christ bringing in His wake the new Tree of Life, in close proximity to the Tree of Knowledge. From this moment on, however, the Tree of Knowledge will recede. The conscious thoughts—that rise from the sheath of self—start their movement of uniting with the cosmic formative forces, and soon after they start losing "their self-confines" [their separate being] in verse 2.

In verse 3 the power of enlivened memory, awakened by the sphere of cosmic life, places us in touch with our cosmic origins, with the point in time in which the human being can "remember" his path on Earth, the time of the Fall.

Thus to the World-All speaks,

In self-forgetfulness

And mindful of its primal state,

The growing human I:

In you, if I can free myself

From fetters of my selfhood,

I fathom my essential being.

Here speaks the self, but in the guise of the lower ego. A reversal has taken place. The self, can operate in "self-forgetfulness" because in the sphere of cosmic life it can "remember" its original, primal state. This harkening back generates the desire to recover a new state of innocence by "free[ing] myself of fetters of my selfhood", which is to say by curbing the lower ego. A new theme is inaugurated, which will follow us some time into spring and summer.

Verse 2 told us that soon after Easter "out in the sense-world's glory the power of thinking gives up its separate being". We could say that a chapter is closed and that another one begins, with the progressive rise of feeling and later of the faculty of sensing of the heart." This expression covers a variety of nuances that we find in summer and spring as translations of *ahnung* and related terms. To start with, it is through feeling that the next voice speaks in verse 4.

I sense a kindred nature to my own:

Thus speaks perceptive feeling

As in the sun-illuminated world

It merges with the floods of light;

To thinking's clarity

My feeling would give warmth

And firmly bind as one

The human being and the world.

After delving into the sphere of cosmic life, the soul expands further into the sphere of cosmic light. The power of thinking is mentioned on the receptive end. And in effect this merging of thinking and feeling can be further followed in the verses of Cross 4, one of which is verse 49 with which we started this essay. There thinking, become active, "feels" the power of cosmic life.

To feeling follows in threshold verse 7 the rising of intuition/sensing of the heart, which in effect "replace[s] in me the power of thought" restating that the latter "in the sense's glory would ever lose itself" (verse 7). Verse 8 indicates that the "god's creative work," manifesting in the exuberance of growth, "weighs my power of thinking down to a dreamlike dullness" and that "human thinking [must] in quiet dream-life rest content."

From now on the voices will speak from the macrocosm and from the soul in alternation. We will witness a crescendo. The next time we hear one of these is in verse 9. It is important to note that this verse follows immedi-

ately after Pentecost in which we are told that "a godly being desires union with my soul". It is this recognition that engenders a motivation for trust and surrender in the soul.

When I forget the narrow will of self,

The cosmic warmth that heralds summer's glory

Fills all my soul and spirit;

To lose myself in light

Is the command of spirit vision

And intuition [sensing of the heart] tells me strongly:

O lose yourself to find yourself.

The dialogue between soul and cosmos continues and grows. As feeling has entrusted itself to the light (verse 4) so now the sphere of cosmic warmth has approached the soul influencing the "narrow will of self" in a gesture denoting expansion. The sensing of our heart invites us to feel the strength we have received, and in trust invites us to lose ourselves in the sphere of cosmic light. Intuition creates the conditions which can lead to a serene surrender. We know we must offer ourselves in order to receive more of the gifts of the cosmos and curb the "fetters of [our] selfhood" (verse 3).

In spring the Calendar asks us to completely reverse the outward going activity conducted primarily through thinking in the summer. The soul is no less active in the spring and summer, but this is an active-receptive stance. To receive we must be willing to a surrender that we cannot control in the same way we would our thinking. And in effect the warm time of the year can be as much of a challenge to many, as the winter can be to others. This is the mystery of the Calendar, asking us to die and become until strong inner activity can rhythmically alternate with active receptivity, and one mode becomes as natural as the other. Notice that in the verse above memory is also active, in its negative form, through "forgetting the narrow will of self" which, stated positively, would be a reminder of its primeval state (as in verse 3).

To the first intimation of our heart follows a second one immediately after in verse 10—one we can feel most strongly if are able to follow the injunctions of the previous verse, to "forget the narrow will of self" and to "lose [ourselves] in light".

To summer's radiant heights

The sun in shining majesty ascends;

It takes my human feeling

Into its own wide realms of space.

Within my inner being stirs

Presentiment which heralds dimly,

You shall in future know:

A godly being now has touched you.

Feeling works in unison with presentiment (a variant of our sensing of the heart, corresponding to the German "erahnend," itself a variation of "ahnen"). The object of this expansion has been announced in verse 8 of Pentecost from which we know that "godly being desires union with my soul."

To the effort of the soul carried out in verses 9 and 10 the cosmos replies encouragingly in verses 11 and 13:

In this the sun's high hour it rests
With you to understand these words of wisdom:
Surrendered to the beauty of the world,
Be stirred with new-enlivened feeling;
The human I can lose itself
And find itself within the cosmic I.

And when I live in senses' heights,
There flames up deep within my soul
Out of the spirit's fiery worlds
The gods' own word of truth:
In spirit sources seek expectantly
To find your spirit kinship.

The trust in sensing the presence of the being in verse 10 is followed by a cosmic response and a confirmation in verse 11. The spheres of cosmic life and cosmic light awaken us to the "beauty of the world". This is not a given; rather it is something earned by a soul filled with devotion. The world of appearances appears transformed to the human soul, and the soul can approach and live in the cosmic I, the Christ I. This is the gesture of the coming time of St. John: "I must decrease that He may increase."

It is through the strength of Christ that we can take the next step of completely trusting a new environment, as it were. In verse 13 we seek ourselves in our true home of the spirit, seeing beyond the world of appearances, which so far has led us beyond ourselves in order that "in spirit sources [we] seek expectantly to find [our] spirit kinship."

We will not hear soul or macrocosmic voices speaking clearly until verse 17. However, something akin to these is expressed in the words of verses 16 and 18. In both of these appears once more the voice of *ahnen*. The

soul speaks through earnest injunctions in verses 16 and 18, while in between them speaks the cosmic Word.

In verse 16 the voice is not expressed as such, rather as "stern command of my prophetic feeling."

To bear in inward keeping spirit bounty

Is stern command of my prophetic feeling (*mein ahnen*),

That ripened gifts divine

Maturing in the depths of soul

To selfhood bring their fruits.

The soul looks backward to what it has received from the cosmos from spring and up to the first month of summer. It asks itself to treasure these "gifts divine maturing in the depths of soul" in light of the future yearning that to "selfhood [they] may bring their fruits." After the time of St. John (roughly verses 12-14) the soul has in effect started to interiorize these gifts, as appears in verse 15 where it feels the "enchanted weaving of spirit within outer glory … bestow the strength which in its narrow bounds my I is powerless to give itself." This still belongs to the mood of surrender, the trust to let cosmic forces act upon the soul. Now in verse 16 a conscious step is taken to "bear in inward keeping" what we have received so far, which is the "spirit bounty."

To the voice of the soul responds in verse 17 cosmic Word, in which we can sense the response to its complementary, verse 10. The earlier verse announced a godly being of which it is said "you shall in future know [that it] has perceived you now." Cosmic Word, now perceived, sets goals for the future:

Thus speaks the cosmic Word

That I by grace through senses' portals

Have led into my innermost soul:

Imbue your spirit depths

With my wide world horizons

To find in future time myself in you.

The command which comes from our soul in verse 16 is now conveyed to us by cosmic Word: "let what still lives unconsciously in your soul—in spirit depths—continue to grow so that you will express yourself through my presence." This first call resounds later in the year in verse 36, announcing

the approach of Christmas (third of Advent): “Imbue your labor's aims with my bright spirit light [of cosmic Word] to sacrifice yourself through me.”

We are already familiar with the back and forth dialogue between soul and macrocosm. It now continues in verse 18. To the call of the soul in 16 followed the voice of cosmic Word in 17, and now the soul challenges itself to grow from the gift of cosmic Word:

Can I expand my soul

That it unites itself

With cosmic Word received as seed?

I sense (*ich ahne*) that I must find the strength

To fashion worthily my soul

As fitting raiment for the spirit.

Here again is a command similar to that of 16. Whereas the first one was directed to a general “spirit bounty,” this one results from the awakening, however dim, to the presence of cosmic Word in the depths of our being. It’s a moral call to expand and to “fashion worthily my soul” reminding us of the call to curb the “fetters of my selfhood” of verse 3, which traverses the arc of spring and summer. The call of 18 continues in verse 19 in which is expressed for the last time the faculty of memory:

In secret to encompass now

With memory what I've newly got

Shall be my striving's further aim:

Thus, ever strengthening, selfhood's forces

Shall be awakened from within

And growing, give me to myself.

This further call to take action on what the soul has received is the last one before warning verse 20. The inner voice has asked us to treasure what the soul has received (verse 16) then to make itself a worthy receptacle for cosmic Word. Now, it seems, we need to awaken to our consciousness what we received in a state of not fully self-conscious surrender. Verse 19 prepares this reversal, which is made more definite at threshold verses 20.

I feel at last my life's reality

Which, severed from the world's existence,

Would in itself obliterate itself,

And building only on its own foundation,

Would in itself bring death upon itself.

If we want to awaken to our full selfhood, we must now emerge from the dream of summer, so that we can soon enter the time of Self-consciousness, starting from the call of Michael (verse 26). To this end we must embrace the "world's existence" and "build on its foundation" to avoid the death of the soul of world materialism:

I feel at last my life's reality
Which, severed from the world's existence,
Would in itself obliterate itself,
And building only on its own foundation,
Would in itself bring death upon itself.

We can now try to deepen our understanding of how memory and conscience mutually reinforce each other.

The Nature of Memory and Conscience

Rudolf Steiner presents memory and conscience in a vivid contrast in his *Leading Thoughts*. In addressing the power of memory he has this to say: "With the physical and life-processes that take place in the nerves-and-senses system, the soul-and-spirit of man combines in waking life, so that they work together unitedly. In this united action, sense-perception, the forming of memory-pictures and the play of fancy are contained. All these activities are bound to the physical body." And further: "… it is in the unfolding of memory that the divine spiritual lives in the waking state of man."[1]

Memory taking place during the waking activity is contrasted with the rising of conscience through the human being living in in his sleep among spiritual beings and among world processes of a moral nature, whose after-effects echo in waking life. Through conscience the human being wants to awaken to awareness what he has experienced among spiritual beings during the night.

Looking at the two soul faculties we can distinguish the foremost contrast, summarized by Rudolf Steiner thus: "In memory the divine-spiritual being works *directly* within waking man. In conscience the same divine spiritual being works *indirectly*, as an after-effect."[2] (emphasis added)

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[1] Rudolf Steiner, *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, 26, Memory and Conscience.
[2] Ibid.

If the human being is more oriented toward the influence of memory, he will also have more propensity to the life of imaginations ["play of fancy"] and these appear in the waking state like dreams. Those who live out of the voice of conscience tend to have a more pronounced life of the will as a result of what they carry from the moral content of previous lifetimes. They are predisposed to inner hearing and the voice of inspiration.

Those more predisposed to memory and imagination are more easily tempted by Ahriman, who wants to cut them off from the heritage of the past, particularly the importance of the Christ impulse and the memory of the event of Golgotha. On the other hand, Ahriman tends to keep people grounded on a voice of conscience bound to codified, rigidified impulses of the past, e.g. those tied to dogma, opposing a truly ethical individualism.

The above contrast also appears in the threshold verses. The need for memory emerges in response to the human temptation of turning the fruits of the spiritual birth to earthly, selfish, ultimately Ahrimanic pursuits in verse 46 of late winter/early spring. The call for intuition/sensing of the heart comes in verse 7, soon after Ascension, when the human being risks losing connection with the needs of Earth, when egotism assumes the Luciferic coloring of wanting to dissolve our sense of self in the cosmic expanses through ecstasy.

Primordial human memory lived in the Nathan soul, the primeval, pure sister soul of Adam. His ego had been preserved from the Fall and his memory harkened back to its celestial origin, countering the danger that humanity completely forget its connection to the spiritual world, such as it was at the time before the Fall.

It is this memory that we can recover in the life between death and rebirth in apprehending "the fruit of past-earthly lives," the thread of our previous incarnations. This unbroken thread of the individualized cosmic memory constitutes the continuity and essence of our self-conscious ego in time. In earthly life this memory only survives in the child before the advent of the first stages of self-consciousness around age three, in what Steiner called the "Son of God," the consciousness which cannot survive after the third year of life. With the Christ impulse we can awaken it again on the path to initiation.

In the Calendar of the Soul memory awakens us first to our higher Self (e.g. verses 44 to 46) then to the sphere of cosmic life (verse 49) finally to the cosmic dimension of our being, such as it was before the Fall (verse 3).

On the other hand we can trace the role that intuition/sensing of the heart plays in relation to the voice of conscience. In König's terms "Boding [sens-

ing of the heart] is not an unconscious experience, nor is it conscious either, nor is it similar to dreaming."[3] It is through the qualities of the heart that the human being resists the tendency to dream and opens up to the spheres of beauty, and self-surrender. It is through the trust thus generated that the heart becomes the organ of destiny. We can experience destiny through our higher self and the angelic realm, which leads us from one incarnation to the next one. In conclusion König expresses the role of the sensing of the heart in relation to the voice of conscience thus "Conscience and boding [sensing of the heart] are the two experiences of the soul which can become a gateway and a window into the land of spiritual existence. Through the gateway of conscience, man hears the voice of warning; through the window of boding, he beholds his higher being."[4]

Although the voice of conscience is not mentioned per se in the Calendar, it speaks most during spring and summer when we can move into a soul space which is "not an unconscious experience, nor is it conscious either, nor is it similar to dreaming." The sensing of the heart decodes the dictates of our conscience and presents them as the voices that speak in spring and summer—voices which have an eminently moral quality.

Memory, Conscience, the Festivals and the New Christ Event

We can now see how memory and sensing of the heart metamorphose into new faculties in apprehending the new Christ event, the reappearance of Christ in the etheric.

The progressive separation of the etheric body from the physical body in the modern human being who is only nourished by the materialistic worldview comes with the risk of a progressive drying up. At Holy Week and Easter the Christ leads us to the rejuvenating forces that act through His presence in our etheric body (e.g., "Then out of heaven's distances Streams life-strength into human bodies" of verse 52). This is the first expansion that the Calendar of the soul highlights in verses 49 to 52. Immediately after the soul also expands into the sphere of cosmic light (e.g., verses 1, 4, 5, 7, 9).

The Luciferic temptation is expressed in two forms in verses 6 and 7. The expanding etheric body is yearning for its home in the Sun sphere, but this alone would lead to a Luciferic loss of individuality. At Ascension the Christ raised His spiritualized human form into the macrocosm. He ascended to

[3] Karl König, *The Calendar of the Soul, a Commentary*, Chapter "The word 'boding' (ahnung).
[4] Ibid.

the realm of the Father by returning the earthly elements of the human body to the cosmic archetypes from which they originated. The danger of expanding the soul and losing one's grounding of self is sensed but also prevented by the individual who has strongly united with the Christ impulse.

From Easter to Ascension the disciples lived in mighty imaginations the memories of what they had experienced of the Christ ministry in company of the resurrected Christ. But only at Whitsun (verse 8) did the memories receive the light of a higher awareness. Thus was the Luciferic temptation completely overcome. On the other hand, those who remain tied to the materialistic outlook run the risk of the so-called "second death," a spiritual death.

Continuing the path after Whitsun to St. John, the soul humbles itself in carrying out the task that "I must decrease so that He might increase." In verse 9 the heart calls thus: "intuition tells me strongly: o lose yourself to find yourself." In the prelude to St. John time, the soul that has followed this call hears in reply the "words of wisdom" that "the human I can lose itself and find itself in the cosmic I." (verse 11)

After the realms of life and light we also expand into the realms of cosmic warmth, approaching the cosmic Word. The latter expresses itself mutely in verse 10 as a simple "godly being," then lets us perceive "cosmic thinking," the web of the mutual interworking of the hierarchies, or the part of it which the human being can recognize or intuit in sense appearance (verse 14). This is how Rudolf Steiner refers to cosmic thinking or cosmic intelligence: "Intelligence' means the mutual relationships of conduct among the higher Hierarchies. What they do, how they relate themselves to one another, what they are to one another—this is the Cosmic Intelligence. And since as human beings we must first consider the kingdom that is nearest to us, concretely speaking the Cosmic Intelligence will be for us the sum-total of the Beings of the Hierarchy of Angeloi.[5] And how this web of relationships is perceived by the soul is poetically expressed in verse 15: "I feel enchanted weaving of spirit within outer glory…"

As we penetrate the extended St. John time the soul continues to humbly entrust itself to the forces of the cosmos in recognition that "in its narrow bounds [its] I is powerless to give itself" the strength it needs (verse 15).

Before the turning point of verse 20, which brings this whole cycle to an end, the soul is equally spurred by conscience and memory. On one hand it is called to treasure and thus foster the growth of "ripened gifts divine"

[5] Rudolf Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, Volume III, lecture of 8 August 1924, "Evolution of the Michael Principle Throughout the Ages—The Split in the Cosmic Intelligence."

so that they "may bring their fruits of selfhood" (verse 16). With even stronger moral will, after cosmic Word speaks in the soul (17) it is then called to "find the strength to fashion worthily [the] soul." (verse 18). The whole comes to a close with the power of memory. Echoing verse 16, the effort of memory serves to the end that "ever strengthening selfhood forces shall be awakened from within." Having thus played synergistic roles memory and conscience lead us to the transition of the change that ushers in the Michaelmas time. Though we now turn to a fading world of the senses, we still have time to ground ourselves in that reality of Earth existence which forms the foundation for Self-consciousness. Come autumn we will start living more and more out of our inner resources. Thus verses 20 to 26 form a transition. We shortly build our strength while still anchored in the world of the senses to create a foundation from which to look inwardly while still carrying within us the "needs of Earth."

We can now follow the work of S. Prokofieff in summarizing Steiner's indications about the roles of memory and conscience in waking us to the sphere of the Second Coming of Christ.[6] In our time through the influence of this event the faculties of memory and conscience can become the organs for the perception of the reappearance of His presence. In the sixth greater period of human evolution, now being prepared, "… a time will arrive … when people will look upon what they have experienced, which lives in them as memory, and will be able to see that Christ lives with them in the power of memory. Christ will be able to speak through every memory picture."[7] Memory will be transformed into true imaginative life. The whole of history will acquire meaning and be experienced in relation to the turning point of time. In those who will not take up this opportunity, memory may likely descend into a state of chaos and generate insanity. On the other hand, if memory can be completely permeated by Christ, history will be felt as belonging to one's own extensive biography.

On its side conscience will develop into an organ for the new karmic vision. When a person will accomplish a deed a need will arise to review it, to discern its effects more closely. From it will emerge an imagination, at first rather dreamy. Once the individual is able to shine the light of consciousness on it and deepen the imagination meditatively, she will acquire a concrete sense of what she must do in the future. In Steiner's words the person who has reached this understanding will be able to say to himself "Now I have done this, and I am being shown what I shall have to do by way of

[6] Sergei O. Prokofieff, *The Appearance of Christ in the Etheric: Spiritual-Scientific Aspects of the Second Coming*, Chapter 4: "Memory and Conscience in the Light of the Second Coming."
[7] Rudolf Steiner, *Precursors of the Mystery of Golgotha*, lecture of March 7, 1914.

compensation and what I shall lack in perfection until the compensation has been made."[8] This will lead the human being to the perception of Christ as the Lord of Karma. Thus, through the voice of conscience the human being will be much more responsible and impactful, in collaboration with Christ, in the realm of karma.

Our listening to the dictates of memory and conscience during spring and summer forms the prelude for the possibility to meet the Christ in the etheric, confirming that living deeply in the cycle of the year renders us able to come closer to the new Christ experience.[9]

[8] Rudolf Steiner, *The Christ Impulse and the Development of Self-Awareness*, lecture of 8 May 1910.

[9] "To my question about what could be done to prepare oneself for the Christ experience of St. Paul on the Road to Damascus [Steiner] replied, 'This becomes possible when one experiences Christ in the cycle of the year.'" Friedrich Rittelmeyer, published commentaries.