

## LETTER X

# The Wheel of Fortune, Arcanum of Cosmic Drama

### Quotations for Reflection

Are the passengers on a boat who have tickets for the voyage mistaken in considering the boat and its crew together as their means of navigation—transporting them following a determined route to the place of destination? For the travellers, the sea voyage is a “natural process”, something which happens by itself, provided that the ticket for the passage is paid.

But can the captain, officers and other members of the crew consider the passage over the sea in the same way as the passengers? Evidently not. For those who are responsible for the voyage, the passage signifies work, watches, manoeuvring and orientation in order to follow the route and bear the load of responsibility for everything. For the crew, therefore, the voyage is in no way a kind of “natural process”, something which happens quite by itself. On the contrary, for them it is effort, struggle and risk.

It is the same with evolution. One sees it as a “natural process” when one looks at it through the eyes of the passengers, and one sees it as a “tragedy and drama” when one looks at it through the eyes of members of the crew. All determinism and fatalism—including naturalism and pantheism—places the responsibility somewhere beyond the moral human being: in Nature, in God, in the stars... This is because all determinism or fatalism is a manifestation of the mentality and psychology of a passenger. (page 237)

Esotericism is therefore not a life and activity which seeks secrecy. It is based on the mentality and psychology of the crew, and its “secrets” are secrets only in so far as the mentality and psychology of the passengers is such as to refuse to participate in responsibility. (page 238)

This is the cosmic myth, the esoteric drama which underlies the exoteric “process of evolution”. It sets forth, in the first place, the idea of the *open circle* and the *closed circle*. The open circle—or the spiral—is the world before the Fall of the six days of creation crowned by the seventh day, the cosmic sabbath, which corresponds to what one designates in mathematics as the “step of the spiral”. It suggests the idea of unlimited growth and advancement, being through its form only the introduction or antechamber to eternity. It promises unlimited progress. The closed circle, in contrast, is in principle only a prison, whatever its extent may be. It is a wheel which turns on itself and therefore suggests no advancement beyond its circle. The idea that the closed circle—or wheel—suggests, is that of *eternal repetition*. (pages 240-241)

In a world which is a closed circle, whose matter and energy are a constant quantity, there are no miracles. Because the cosmic notion of a “miracle” entails inconstancy of the quantity of matter and energy in the world. A miracle takes place when the energy of the world undergoes either an increase or a diminution. This presupposes an *opening* in the circle of the world. For a miracle to be possible, the world must be an open circle, the

world must be a spiral, i.e. it must have an “uncreated” sphere or a “sabbath”, according to the cosmic myth narrated above.

Now religion—all advanced religion—teaches that the world is an open circle. For this reason it insists upon the reality of miracles. Miracles (“the supernatural”) are a reality of action from beyond the circle of Nature, which appears to be closed. This is the reality of the cosmic sabbath.

The “good news” of religion is that the world is not a closed circle, that it is not an eternal prison, that it has an exit and an entrance. There is an entrance, which is why Christmas is a joyous festival. There is an exit, which is why Ascension is a festival. And that the world can be transformed, such as it is, into such as it was before the Fall—this is the “good news” of the festival of festivals, the festival of the Resurrection or Easter. (page 243)

The infinite “revelationability” and “knowability” of God: this is the essence of the eternal sabbath, the seventh day of creation. The seventh day of creation is that of eternal life and the source of miracles. (pages 243-4)

For “the Fall” is a cosmic event, a whirlwind set in motion by the closed circle of the serpent “biting” his tail and “sweeping down part of the created world” ... “redemption”, to say it directly, is the cosmic act of the Reintegration of the fallen world, first in creating an *opening* in its closed circle (religion, initiation, prophecy), then in instituting a *path* of exit (Buddhas) and entrance (Avatars) through this door, and lastly in transforming the fallen world from within by the radiation of the incarnated Word (Jesus Christ). (page 244)

The heart says to us: the cosmos, this marvel of wisdom, beauty and goodness, suffers. It is ailing. This great organism which *cannot* have been born out of sickness, whose birth *must* have been due to perfect health, i.e. to perfect wisdom, beauty and goodness, the totality of which was its cradle—this great organism is ailing. ...

But sick as it is, the world still retains—everywhere and always—characteristics of its primordial health, and shows the working of forces of its new health, its convalescence. Because alongside the struggle for existence there is cooperation in order to live, and alongside the mineral petrification, there is the succulent and breathing cover of the plant kingdom. The world can therefore be lauded and wept for at the same time. (page 245)

Is not the atom an entity produced by enfoldment, which is autonomous and independent? But atoms *associate* themselves with one another in molecules! Is the molecule, therefore, not an autonomous entity? Well, molecules associate themselves into mysterious fraternities of life that we name “organic cells”. Then there are the innumerable associations of molecules in the organism...the history of the evolution of living organisms is that of the triumph of the principle of association and cooperation over that of dissociation and isolation. (page 247)

Man has the most developed brain. Now the brain is—as Henri Bergson has shown—an organ which plays the role of a sieve with respect to consciousness: it is an instrument of knowledge and ignorance at one and the same time. Its function is to admit on behalf of consciousness what is appropriate to it and not to admit—“to forget”—what is not appropriate to it from the point of view of action, or the will aspiring to action.

The brain is therefore an organ of *selection*—the epitome of the process of evolution! For what the brain does is essentially what took place during millions of years of biological evolution. The whole of evolution is the process of the sequence “creation-selection-rejection-forget”, repeated incessantly. The “proper” forms are chosen, the others are rejected. (page 248)

In other words, providence sees to it that the circles formed by the serpent are not entirely closed, and that the series of its circles is changed into a series of as many *spirals*. But the benefits of this gradual metamorphosis of the work of the serpent are not due to the serpent, but rather to the other principle—the contrary principle—that of the “*light which shines in the darkness.*” (page 251)

If you were to ask me, dear Unknown Friend, if one has to choose and take the side of either the serpent or the dove, my reply would be in the framework of the Master’s counsel:

Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves (Matthew x, 16),  
i.e. that one should try to unite cerebral intellectuality with spiritual spontaneity. (page 251)

It is in the light of the ideal that one should think. (page 251)

Every monastery and convent is, moreover, a direct contradiction to the thesis that mankind is only the product of biological evolution. (pages 251-2)

Thus, the thesis that we are advancing here is that the work of salvation leading to actual redemption is *universal* concerning both *time* and *space*. For it has acted since the cradle of mankind’s history and it extends to all groups and all religions of mankind. (page 252)

There is therefore only a single work of salvation, which includes all human endeavour truly aiming at transcending the brain and cerebral intellectuality, and which includes all true revelations from above, throughout all the ages of the history of mankind. (page 252)

For “holy animality” means nothing other than “spontaneous obedience to God” or “divine instinct.” (page 257)

Every garden therefore preserves something of the garden of Eden, and can serve as a living library for someone aspiring to salvation. (page 258)

Certainly the mystical practice of religion transcends cerebral intellectuality. But it does so in order to attain *heaven*, and not the intermediary zone between heaven and earth, where the primordial revelation of the “mysteries of heaven” are found deposited. Saints *live* the light, warmth and life of heaven. Celestial gold, blue and white radiate into their lives and through their lives. (page 263)

Saints do not aspire to cosmic *thought*, to a comprehension of the totality of things, but rather to divine *life*. (page 263)