

The Usefulness of Our Time

Cornelia Völksen

The time of our earthly era has to be utilized well so that a maximum of that which is Transitory is changed into the Intransitory. Transitoriness becomes conscious to the Transitory only if they (transitory beings) look in the eyes of Transitoriness itself. The Transitory live within the sphere of the Transitory and can rise above Transitoriness and into Intransitoriness only through belief in the Intransitory. This leads to wisdom “within time”, via knowledge and love.

The most difficult thing to understand within the time of the Transitory is called the state of Endlessness. Endlessness—a state without beginning, without end—in the eternal Now. Eternity utilizes time, that is, the Beginning and the Path to get to the End and thus to the Whole. The Whole, however, is not realized as the Whole “within time” but only as a part of the Whole, which considers itself to be the Whole. The Whole contains beginning and end and the path that leads to it. Time does not utilize Eternity; time utilizes itself, the beginning, the path and the end. Eternity realizes itself through Non-Eternity. Self-consciousness searches for methods to escape from Transitoriness, in order to be part of Eternity. Non-Eternity, or

the Transitory, has to generate itself in the Eternal, so that it may exist without time.

Time is the tool of Eternity. If time lingers at the crossing to Eternity, it may, at this point, utilize time (that is, itself), to transfer, within time, self-consciousness into Eternity. Eternity is eternally in itself. Time is eternally transitory. Time eternally leads to Eternity. Eternity uses the eternally transitory time eternally, to generate itself eternally in Eternity. In this way, Eternity realizes itself through time. All transitoriness becomes a parable for the path. For the path that does not live solely in the parable, but begins to live in the reality of truth and love in the Eternal. Eternity and time, the Immortal and the Transitory, are inseparably connected with each other; thus the Transitory may believe in Intransitoriness and may rise in light and love to freedom in Eternity.

About the Author

Dr. Cornelia Völksen is an esoteric student searching for the spiritual truth that integrates past, present and future. She lives in Germany.

The Gentle Voice

Kathy Newburn

Behind all the harshness and suffering in our world there exists a quiet stirring within the human heart that provides the seed for the profound changes that are on the horizon. All around us and within us, on the

most fundamental level, something far deeper than we have ever known or experienced is attempting to come to birth. As we begin to awaken to what is occurring, our direction changes and we find ourselves following a

new way, a new path. We begin to take our cues from an inner compass and no longer from the many strident voices that too often seek to pull us in a myriad of directions. We move in concert with the gentle voice that penetrates our consciousness at odd moments—leaving impressions, fleeting indications, of a profundity that we can't fully capture and still less comprehend.

But sometimes, because of its very fragility, this voice fails to penetrate into the coarseness of our daily lives. Too often the outer things, with their immediacy and fleeting pleasures, command our attention in ways that leave us encased within the walls of ourselves and the veils of this world—forgetting our true “master.” A call if not responded to, a knock if ignored, cause the doors of inner perception to close, at least for a time. So in order to travel this way, we are asked to pay attention and awaken to the opportunities that are seeking to reveal themselves.

All that we find so beautiful in this world of ours—its people and the love that we can

share, the subtleties of nature, the delicacies of fine art and the sweet and august power of music—pale in comparison with the beauty that exists within. Many people today understand this and are cultivating and nurturing a deep well of silence within themselves, a well that sustains them amidst the surface fragmentation. These moments, the interludes, provides the seeds that will come to fruition at another time, in a gentler time. We are laying this foundation now, both within ourselves and within the world at large, for a great flowering of consciousness and spirit. These periods, in their collective, provide the seeds of *samadhi*, the seeds of something far greater, vaster and nobler than we, and the world, have ever known.

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Kathy Newburn is a long-time student of the Ageless Wisdom. She works for the Seven Ray Institute and lives in New York City

Book Reviews

Hidden Riches: Traditional Symbolism from the Renaissance to Blake, by Désirée Hirst. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964, 348 pages.

Book reviews normally focus on recently published books, providing information to guide readers' decisions to purchase or pass on new titles. This book was published more than 40 years ago, and has long been out of print. Nevertheless, used copies are still readily available, and it is a little-known gem for anyone studying the western esoteric tradition. The fact that this reviewer, who has a habit of reading the first few chapters of a book and then casting it aside to read the next one to ar-

rive on the doorstep, read *Hidden Riches* cover-to-cover attests to its compelling interest.

Most books on the Qabalah describe the golden age of 13th-century Spain and southern France that saw publication of the *Bahir*, the *Sepher Yetzirah*, and the *Zohar*. Some describe the work of Moses Cordovero and Isaac Luria in 16th-century Palestine. Then the tendency is to skip to the Society of the Golden Dawn in the 1880s. Students come away with the notion that European occultists and scholars showed no interest in the Qabalah for 500 years. *Hidden Riches* shows that, on the contrary, a great deal was going on during that

time, and it had significant influence, not only on the literature and art of the 18th and 19th centuries, but on the development of Protestant theology.

Désirée Hirst, who held an academic post at Oxford University, had a special interest in William Blake (1757–1827); and she uses the Qabalistic influence on Blake as a unifying theme throughout the book. Blake was an evocative figure whose art and writings express deep esoteric meaning.

The story she tells runs from the time of the Florentine Renaissance onward. Cosimo de Medici founded the Platonic Academy in Florence for the study of classical Greek and Neoplatonic thought. In this environment, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Marcelino Ficini, and others translated and studied Qabalistic texts and created what came to be known as the Christian, or “Hermetic,” Qabalah. Their work, like that of other Renaissance scholars, soon spread outside Italy, finding a particularly strong response, far from the Inquisition’s reach, in the relatively free intellectual climate of northern and western Europe.

From 15th-century Florence to Blake’s England, the Qabalah came to interest a who’s who of European esotericists, including Albrecht Dürer, Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and Robert Fludd. It also became a topic of much discussion among the Cambridge Platonists who included John Milton, Henry Moore, and Viscountess Ann Conway. More surprising is the influence the Qabalah had on the theological discourses of leading churchmen. Jakob

Böhme and Emanuel Swedenborg might be dismissed as lying outside the mainstream, but, through Böhme, prominent Anglican priest William Law absorbed many Qabalistic concepts. In turn, through Law, even the brothers John and Charles Wesley came under its influence, although they severed their contacts with Law as Methodism became a religion of the heart rather than the mind.

Désirée Hirst’s scholarship is meticulous. Over a period of many years she researched books, articles and letters written by the key players in her story. For these alone the book would be a worthwhile addition to serious students’ libraries. But she also provides penetrating sketches of her key players and traces the elaborate web of connections among them, showing how ideas propagated from one to another.

Not surprisingly, for an academic of her time, Hirst’s knowledge of Qabalah was somewhat limited; and to preserve her scholarly stance she refers to it simply as a system of symbolism, rather than as the rich philosophical, theological and psychological system familiar to esotericists. Nevertheless, it is easy to overlay the author’s work with the kind of knowledge and understanding that most students of Qabalah now have. Hirst’s major contribution is to fill in the parts of the story that many of us did not know.

If you can track down a copy of Désirée Hirst’s *Hidden Riches* on the used-book market, buy it.

Editorial Staff

