

## Reflections on the Foundation Stone Meditation

*Throughout the past year, in the many celebratory events marking the centenary of the Christmas Conference, we returned ever and again to the structure and content of the Foundation Stone Meditation.*

*During the North America Festival of Initiate, each day began with reflections on one of the panels of the meditation. Each contribution helped set the tone and focus for the day. Many found these reflections deeply insightful and helpful for our individual work with this meditation.*

*In the spirit of bringing more of what was built up over this unique year, we are now sharing these contribution with you. Beginning with this first panel, over the coming months we will bring what came at the beginning of each day. We hope these thoughts will contribute to your own contemplation on this central meditation for Anthroposophy's realization.*

### Human Soul, You Live Within the Limbs

*Reflections by Catarina Burisch*

*Radiant light, formidable shadows  
Seek inner peace and find your orientation*

*a Manichean maxim*

The Foundation Stone and specifically the first panel, is an orientation in space. The space we discover on earth, held by gravity and within our physical body.

With our body we discover polarities; we descend from wide fields of light into earth's denser darkness and with ever more narrowing into the vessel of our physical body. A vertical gesture is being created.

We are born of the Word. The Word speaks: *Human Soul!*

Such an important polarity from *human/temporal* and *soul/eternal*. This is a call, the call of the Word. A sound, a word when spoken seeks to be heard, by ourselves, others, the world. This call echoes through the wide spaces right into our individual soul. The Foundation Stone calls out to the individual soul from the wide spaces, seeking to be heard, discerned, understood. It speaks to you, to me. Each one of us is being addressed, how to orient our life.

This is a call to each of us to experience our own personal incarnation as a soul into a physical human body, in this life. An experience of great contraction – consolidation.

### *Practice*

Each one of us is called to engage and participate in this special and important task - to practice; an activity of will, necessitating ongoing repetition.

### *Spirit remembering*

The word *remembering* itself is revealing. I pondered it in 3 languages: in the original German, in French and in English. In each language, the phrase *spirit remembering* refers to a dimension in space, though with different qualities.

In German *er innern* evokes the image to go within. Which could suggest that you were first outside; in a different space

In French *sou venir* evokes the image to come to, from under, from underneath. Which could suggest that you were first above; in a different space

In English *re member* evokes the image to put parts together. Which could suggest that there is a whole; a different spatial relationship

Some English translation use the word *re calling* which evokes the image of returning within from afar. Which could suggest that there is an outside.

### *Practice spirit remembering*

It is as a spiritual being, as a soul, that has now come to live within a human physical body, that we are asked to remember, to remember our birth:

*Where in the reigning*

*World-creator-being*

*Your own I*

*Comes into being*

*In the I of God.*

*And you will truly live*

*In human-world-being.*

The experience of space for a soul is foreign and requires HUGE adjustment, experienced through myriads of polarities. These juxtapositions of polarities are there for a good reason: to awaken us. From outside to inside, from the wide echoing spaces into our own intimate soul experience, from speaking to hearing, from inner to outer, from the eurythmy gesture of "A" to "I".

Our soul experience of coming from the heights into the depths, from the *spirit's ocean-being* into earth's space and then into our own human body's space.

The image of a sleeping child comes to mind. The baby with the upwards facing rounded arms above the head– is still very much connected to the *spirit-ocean-being* – and these arms, these

limbs appear to still be infused with more life compared to the radial legs hanging below the trunk of the body towards the earth. As a new born we are carried until our legs do so and bear witness to this great individual incarnating process of creative will.

This first panel of the Foundation Stone could be seen to describe the first foundational 3 years of life as the child lives into his or her physical body, discovering the monumental process of mastering life – namely the will through the limbs- moving from the fluid womb into the earthly and human space, learning to walk, then to speak, and later to think.

So much strength, courage and determination are summoned to learn and master all these parts, to re-member all these parts that are so beautifully assembled into our physical body. Our limbs, legs, arms, hands, feet, fingers, toes, eyes, ears, mouth, some of the many wondrous parts that we need to live, all perfectly assembled for our use. We have all that we will ever need.

*You live within the limbs,  
Which, through the world of space,  
Bear you into the spirit's-ocean-being*

The second half of the first panel leads us forward through other signature shifts of life and metamorphosis. As we incarnate as soul into our physical body and enter the dimension of space, we sound out with our first cry. We incarnate with great courage and do so in the company and with the help of the first hierarchy

*Spirits of Strength!  
Let from the heights ring forth  
What in the depths is echoed,*

We remember and recognize sounds as words that speak to us. The metamorphosis of the ear into our limbs is nothing short of wondrous and alludes to the creative will of the Word; the will as the creative force asleep in our limbs. This fills one with great wonder. This sound that echoes like a far-off dream, and that we are asked through practice to hear with clarity; to remember the creative deed that brought us to live in this space. This sound goes from ringing, to echoes, to speech

*Speaking:  
Out of the divine, humanity comes into being.*

Our soul, we, belong to this greater divine whole

The Foundation Stone begins with an exclamation mark – a creative call  
*Human Soul!*

And closes with an exclamation mark - a strong plea

*May human beings hear it!*

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*Human Soul!*

*You live within the limbs,  
Which, through the world of space,  
Bear you into the spirit's-ocean-being:  
Practice spirit-remembering  
In depths of soul,  
Where in the reigning  
World-creator-being  
Your own I  
Comes into being  
In the I of God.  
And you will truly live  
In human-world-being.*

*For there reigns the Father-spirit of the heights  
In the world-depths, begetting being:  
Spirits of Strength!  
Let from the heights ring forth  
What in the depths is echoed,  
Let from the heights ring forth  
What in the depths is echoed;  
Speaking:  
Out of the divine, humanity comes into being.*

*The spirits hear this in East, West, North, South:  
May human beings hear it!*

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To experience space and the great corresponding gift of human individual uprightness, I invite you to stand

Experience the feeling of your limbs, legs and feet firmly holding you in space, supported by the earth.

Experience how your arms are free to move, to create

Experience the rounded shape of your head, an echo of the cosmic space from which you came. The creative force of the Father principle, embodied in the sun, reigns in this space above and shines down on us.

Experience behind you a beam of golden sun light. When you are ready - Take a step backward and step into your own golden beam of sunlight, into your own space on earth. Experience your uprightness - your integrity as an incarnated soul standing on earth within a golden beam of sun.

This light beam streams from above illuminating, descending through your head, your heart, down your spine, into your legs and into the center of the earth.

*You live*

*May each one of you hear it!*