

We Are Not Alone in the Universe

From the origins of civilizations
and religions to Humankind's
final destiny

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Wojciech K. Kulczyk PhD

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contact@thenewgenesis.foundation

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Introduction

From my early years I was fascinated by such mysterious events as the origins of the first civilizations and the arising of the main religions. There are many books written on these subjects but none of them presents for me, as a physicist, sufficiently convincing scientific hypotheses or arguments. While the beginnings of the first civilizations are explained in semi scientific but not necessary plausible ways, the descriptions of the origins of the main religions fall into two opposing camps: believers and atheists. Since I could subscribe to neither of them, my questions for many years remained unanswered.

This situation changed drastically when, while working in Portugal in the eighties, I came across baffling events in Fatima where, between 13 May and 13 October 1917, a female figure appeared to three local children. Up to then, as did many other people, I considered them as typical Marian apparitions, being based exclusively on the accounts of a group of visionaries, and therefore there was nothing in them which could interest a rational and scientific mind. Only when I discovered a book written by a Portuguese historian Fina d'Armada (d'Armada, 1980), who in the course of her scientific work studied in detail the Fatima archives, did I become more deeply interested in these events. In particular my attention was focused on the display in the sky on 13 October 1917, known in the religious literature as “the miracle of the sun”. How is it possible in the 20th century that people could believe that the sun whirled, danced and almost fell down to earth? After all there is no doubt that this extraordinary event of unknown origin indeed took place there, because it was witnessed by about 50,000 people and it was

announced by the visionary 3 months earlier. As a physicist specializing in laser applications, I noticed from the descriptions provided by the witnesses that the observed display was similar to present laser shows and could be easily arranged using existing technology.

Consequently I was intrigued by questions: what or who was hidden behind these events and what purpose did they serve? Being convinced about their authenticity, it aroused in me a desire to find a credible and rational answer. The events in Fatima had a very complex character, therefore it would be difficult to include them in a group of natural phenomena. Analysis of the witness descriptions of the display in the sky and other unusual but well substantiated happenings shows that they could not be of divine or human origins. Therefore I reached a conclusion that the only rational explanation of these phenomena could be that they had to be prepared by extraterrestrial beings of much higher than human intelligence. This hypothesis is based on the events which were observed in Fatima by many thousands of people subscribing to different world views, some being impartial witnesses. Further my study showed that the events in Fatima were prepared because the situation at that time in Portugal required intervention.

I consider that if we have at least one incontrovertible piece of evidence of the existence of some unusual happening, we should seriously and responsibly, without any prejudice, subject it to in depth analysis and to try to explain its origins relying on rational arguments. If certain events are scientifically inexplicable, but we are sure that they are not illusions resulting from the psychological processes occurring in the observers' mind, there must therefore exist unknown to us powers responsible for their arising.

Following the above approach and assuming that the situation in Portugal did not merit any extraordinary treatment, I arrived at the logical conclusion that this could possibly not be a one off event. This was a result of the intelligent beings' rules of engagement and most likely they also intervened long before Fatima. This would explain many mystifying events in the history of mankind such as the origins of the first civilizations and the arising of the main religions. Going further, I postulate that since time immemorial the intelligent beings looked after

us, intervening in certain critical periods for mankind, so that the fruits of civilization were not wasted, and the primitive nature of man did not dominate his spiritual values. They also tried to prevent powers based on violence and brutality from taking control of the world.

In this book I try also to find an answer to the question: why have the intelligent beings been looking after mankind, trying to help people achieve spiritual maturity?

While getting acquainted with the Fatima events, a conviction grew that solving their mystery could lead not only to finding a solution to the origins of the first civilizations, but also provide answers to the questions which have concerned mankind for thousands of years: “How did we originate?”, “What is the purpose of human life?”, “What are we on the earth for?”. These issues were already a subject of deep interest to the ancient Greek philosophers. In different historical periods various philosophical doctrines gained popularity, but none of them formulated satisfying replies to these questions.

Only monotheistic religions gave an unequivocal answer: “we are on the earth, because God created us and only he knows what he created us for”. According to the beliefs of their followers, God cares about each man and, after death, decides his fate. So man is in the center of God’s attention and therefore is the most important being in the universe.

However such explanations were not convincing for everyone. The materialistic outlook sums up the entire philosophy of life of man in one word: chance. By “chance” came into existence on earth the first life forms from which by “accident” evolved *Homo sapiens*. Since we are fortuitous beings, our existence has no unique meaning and purpose. According to this world view, for the formation and the development of man, as well as for the origins of the terrestrial civilization, a process called “evolution” is responsible. In fact the hypothesis put by Darwin has not been proven beyond a doubt, and still we do not know all the mechanisms of this process. However, in the world of science, the origins of every difficult to elucidate mystery of nature are explained as the workings of evolution.

Differences of convictions between believers and atheists are the source of one of the deepest divisions found in the contemporary world.

It is difficult to imagine how one side could convince the other and any arguments are worthless, because they are based on subjective opinions, so there is no room for compromise.

For many years I was a believer of neither of these two philosophies. I thought that from the agnostic position the only rational solution is to suspend judgment in this matter because it isn't possible to find an objective confirmation of either the existence of God, or the theory reducing everything to the effect of chance. The events in Fatima exerted such a strong impression on me, because potentially they could lead to a solution of this eternal conflict.

I am aware that the introduction of extraterrestrial beings has non scientific connotations because aliens are automatically linked with UFOs. However the world of science does not reject the possibility of the existence of intelligent civilizations in the universe, which are a subject of intensive searches. A possibility of the interference of extraterrestrial beings in earthly matters is also not rejected, and a scientist of such reputation as Stephen Hawking warns mankind outright against their invasion. So the hypotheses advanced here are not incompatible with the prevailing scientific beliefs, however they go much farther. They assume that the intelligent beings have already established a contact with us, and this is supported by the events in Fatima.

In order to help the reader to absorb the many and various presented issues, information is grouped in five parts, each covers a different topic.

The first part is devoted to the analysis of the events in Fatima. These events are briefly described, especially the display in the sky observed by tens of thousands of spectators. The generation of the observed phenomena is explained using current state of the art technologies. The purpose of this part is to convince the reader that the events in Fatima are genuine, very well substantiated and confirmed by many independent and reliable witnesses.

One chapter deals in more detail with the unique character of the Fatima events, which is supported by the verified predictions. The events are also compared with other, well-known phenomena of this type which took place in La Salette, Lourdes and Medjugorje.

In this part is also included a critical analysis of the UFO phenomena,

because a recently published book (Fernandes, 2007) suggests that in many respects the Fatima events resemble observations of Unidentified Flying Objects. In order to evaluate this hypothesis, a few of the most typical and best substantiated UFO observations which were recorded during the last 70 years are discussed. Issues associated with the searches in the universe for extraterrestrial civilizations are briefly discussed because they are relevant to my hypothesis. The purpose of the Fatima events and who was responsible for them is analyzed and plausible solutions are presented.

The hypothesis concerning the interventions of the intelligent beings in man's affairs is presented and the reader will also find a chapter devoted to the principles and objectives of such intervention.

In the second part the genesis of the first civilizations, which without a doubt, up to now, is the most enigmatic and inexplicable event in the history of humanity, is discussed. The origins of the first civilizations are not satisfactorily explained by contemporary academic studies which in general avoid such a fundamental subject. Two civilizations, Sumerian and Egyptian, are introduced in more detail, with emphasis on their beginnings and the early periods of their development. The immense achievements of the ancient Sumerians and Egyptians, especially their influence on the development of justice, ethics, humanitarianism and many contemporary social institutions are also considered.

The presented hypothesis of the origins of the first civilizations is based on archaeological, linguistic and genetic research findings. It proposes the existence of the protocivilization which preceded the first civilizations on earth. Significant circumstantial evidence points to the fact that intelligent beings had participated in its creation.

The third part is concerned with a special type of intervention, namely the coming into existence of the main religions, such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. In this part local social conditions and beliefs existing before their formation are presented, and the necessity of their arising is emphasized. The main purpose of new religions was the introduction of new commandments and interdictions controlling the lives of the faithful. Special emphasis is placed on the formation and development of Christianity – the most

innovative and revolutionary religion. The birth and consolidation of Christianity as a result of the activity of Jesus, St Paul and the emperor Constantine the Great is discussed in detail.

The fourth part concentrates on two interventions which took place in the 20th century in Europe. The quitting by the Germans at the beginning of the Second World War the development of the atom bomb is one of the most mysterious events. Without a doubt this decision was extremely significant, because it contributed to the defeat of Hitler. Recently revealed documents from this period help us to formulate a new hypothesis explaining why it was made.

The fall of communism in the Soviet Union was an equally inexplicable event. The “Conversion” of Russia was foretold many years earlier in one of the Fatima secrets, but explanation of this event goes beyond the framework of rational analysis. Even Gorbachev, who presided over the collapse of the Soviet Union, is not able to explain it in a convincing way. In this part a new interpretation of the extraordinary career of this politician is provided, and the unusual circumstances of his rise to power and his activities as the first secretary of the Communist Party are explained.

The need for further development of man is presented in the fifth part. At present the situation of man in the world, especially in the Western civilization, is not satisfactory because pseudo-scientific principles replace the dominating role of religions. However, the new guidelines do not embrace the complicated psychological and spiritual needs of man but concentrate mainly on his material needs. Therefore a part of mankind is facing a moral and social crisis and to overcome this requires a new direction for the advance of man. This new direction is the development of the consciousness of man. Two outstanding 19th and 20th century thinkers, Friedrich Nietzsche and George I. Gurdjieff, are the main precursors of this way of development. Two chapters are devoted to the outline of their philosophy and their teachings which set the new way for mankind.

Interventions of the intelligent beings in human affairs cannot be explained exclusively by humanitarian or scientific motives. Therefore in this part I advance a new hypothesis concerning the purpose of their

interference and the new role for which mankind is being prepared. Development of man's consciousness is necessary to enable him to perform tasks which are assigned to him by the intelligent beings. Mankind has a special mission in the Universe to fulfill and from the beginning has been prepared for the realization of this purpose.

This book is an intellectual journey which begins in Fatima, where unusual events took place, and finishes up with the development of man's consciousness. At first glance one is not able to see any connections between these two phenomena, because the road is convoluted and often invisible to the untrained eye – hidden in the camouflage of religious beliefs and pseudo-scientific theories. It is my task to lead the reader on this road and to serve as a guide and adviser, helping him to discover unexpected relationships between different, often inexplicable events in the history of humanity. As a result of this work seemingly not related events started gradually merging into one logical and rational solution.

All presented analyses and conclusions are based on the accessible scientific research findings and on the reports of reliable witnesses. My proposed hypotheses and presented considerations, with the aim of explaining the occurrences discussed in the book, are based on materialistic and scientific foundations. The reader will not find in this book attempts to explain unusual events by invoking the interference of supernatural powers. If I came across information or arguments which seem not to support the hypotheses proposed by me, they are also mentioned and discussed.

Certainly some readers will not share my views on some issues brought up in this work. I would like to once more strongly emphasize that, although my proposed hypotheses could stir up controversy, all the arguments presented by me are based on the rational analysis of well known events and on the proven facts. The reader does not have to, and what is more should not, blindly believe in all the proposed solutions. He can, however, in an unbiased way consider the presented evidence and arguments in order to reach his own conclusions.

Part One

Analysis and significance of the events in Fatima

CHAPTER 1

What happened in Fatima?

The most important apparitions in the 20th century took place between 13 May and 13 October 1917 in Fatima, Portugal, in a place called Cova da Iria, located about 85 miles (135 km) north of Lisbon. During this period a figure of a Lady appeared six times to three children: Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco and passed to them certain information which later became known as the secrets of Fatima. At the end of the apparitions about 50,000 people witnessed a very unusual display in the sky which made a lasting impression not only on the believers but also on the skeptics. It was the first ever public manifestation of an inexplicable phenomenon.

The events in Fatima played a very important role in the genesis of hypotheses and conclusions presented in this book, and therefore require more detailed examination. It is important to emphasize that this analysis is based on scientific principles and rejects any supernatural explanations. While a hundred years ago our scientific knowledge was very inadequate, at present we are able to find a more plausible elucidation of these events, avoiding any association with religious interpretations.

Apparitions

May 13, 1917 was like every other Sunday in Fatima: after mass at the local church, Lucia – 10, and her cousins, Francisco – 9 and Jacinta – 7 years old, took provisions and went to graze the sheep. Lucia decided that they would go to Cova da Iria. Sheep grazed calmly between rocks and oak trees, and the children played, when suddenly they saw a flash of light. Lucia decided that a thunderstorm was approaching and it was better to get back home. When the children started to gather the sheep, another flash of lightning struck and they saw a Lady on top of a small holm oak tree, which of course frightened them greatly. Then the Lady started to speak: “Do not be afraid, I will do you no harm.” However Lucia was not as terrified as the others, since she asked: “Where are you from?”, and she heard the reply:

- My place is in heaven.
- What are you doing in this world?
- I have come to ask you to come here every month for six months, and at the end of this period I will tell you what I want.
- Can you tell me if the war will go on for a long time or will it end soon?
- I cannot tell you that now, just as I cannot tell you what I want (d’Armada, 1980, p. 179).

This apparition was followed by another 5 events on the 13th of each month, during which the exchanges between the Lady and Lucia were similar to the above pattern.

On August 13 the meeting did not take place because on the morning of the apparition Artur de Oliveira Santos, the mayor of Vila Nova de Ourem, the county in which Fatima belonged, took the children under false pretenses to his house where, with threats and bribery tried to force them to reveal the communicated earlier secret. However the terrorized children did not give in and emerged victorious from this terrifying confrontation, even though they were alone throughout, without their parents. They had experienced horrifying moments, but their faith gave them strength. These events, although very unpleasant for the three

visionaries, assure us that the apparitions could not have been a product of the children's imagination. Being subjected to such great stress and expecting to die any time, the children did not reveal the Fatima secrets and did not change their earlier testimonies.

Instead of in Cova da Iria, the next apparition took place on August 19 in Valinhos, a village not far from Fatima, where on that day the children were staying with their relatives.

What the visionaries noticed

According to Lucia's description, the figure which appeared to her in Cova da Iria looked like a beautiful doll, had black eyes and a pretty face, that was incomparable to the faces of the local belles. Also Jacinta and Francisco mentioned the heavenly beauty of the Lady, whose age was at first estimated to be about 15, and later 12 years, and measuring 3 ft 8 in (1.1 m) in height.

The visionaries were not only dazzled by the beauty of the Lady, but they were literally blinded by the light radiating from her. Lucia said that the brilliance of the figure had sometimes been so strong that she had to rub her eyes. Jacinta confirmed that on October 13 she could not look at the Lady, because she was so bright. The children recalled that very often during the apparitions they had had to lower their eyes, on account of the strongly radiating light.

The entire figure was dressed in white. She had a skirt which was narrow and short just below her knees, and a white blouse which had two or three cords on the sleeves at the wrists. Over the blouse she had a coat fixed under the neck. On her head she had a white veil falling to the hem of her skirt. The veil covered her hair and ears. The skirt and the veil were embroidered with squared golden stitches.

Descriptions of the figure changed with time. For example, in the notes of Father Ferreira, published only in 1992, it was stated that the figure was dressed in a skirt which was only knee-length. In the course of the examination conducted by Canon Formigão Jacinta confirmed Lucia's version, that the skirt was only knee-length. Since at that time no woman in Portugal would wear such an indecent dress, Lucia's original

statements were kept secret and official descriptions only mentioned the skirt falling to the feet.

The Lady did not smile or look sad, she was always serious. She never looked at other people present. She did not pray, did not move the beads of the rosary, and never made the sign of the cross. Without a doubt the fact that she did not move her lips while speaking is a most important observation. During several apparitions the figure did not move her hands and never moved her feet. When she was departing, she did not walk but glided through the air, with her back turned to the people observing her.

Phenomena observed during the apparitions

Before the first apparition, Lucia noticed a flash in the sky. She thought that it was lightning and said to Jacinta and Francisco that a thunderstorm was coming, although the sky was cloudless. However the children did not hear any thunder claps that normally accompany lightning. Similar flashes of light preceded all the meetings in Cova da Iria and in Valinhos.

In her memoirs Lucia describes it this way: “The flashes of lightning were not actually lightning, but a reflection of a light getting closer. When we could see that light, we said that Our Lady is coming, but more accurately we could only see her when the light was already directly above the oak tree” (Fernandes, 2007, p. 31). One of the witnesses described that when he was in Cova da Iria standing close to the children, he could see a kind of a luminous track or a ramp of light extending downwards from the sky to the oak. He could also see that the children stood in the luminous-transparent-colorful circle of light which was about two to three meters in diameter. The colors were not in stripes as in a rainbow, but in a mixture of spots of different colors.

Flashes of light had usually been invisible to the gathered onlookers, but only once, on August 13 when the children were kidnapped, did the people waiting in Cova da Iria for the apparition notice a flash of light and heard noise. The witnesses confirmed that near the tree a strong rumbling could be heard, something like an explosion. Others mentioned

tremors of the earth which caused such panic amongst those present, that many of them fell down on their knees from terror.

Lucia and other witnesses noticed, just before the apparitions, certain atmospheric changes. They had the feeling that the air had cooled off, and the sun was slightly dimmed, although it was not obscured by clouds. Since the visions took place about noon, it was very hot and any fluctuation in temperature was easily noticed. After the apparitions the intensity of the sun light returned to normal.

In the statements of many witnesses, apart from the seers, one can find a description of a cloud which was observed above the tree, where the Lady appeared. The cloud was faint and resembled fog or smoke. It seemed that it surrounded and covered the appearing figure. After the apparition finished, the cloud rose and disappeared. It appeared each time, from June to October. In May only the children were present, but they do not mention it in their statements. Some witnesses noticed that the cloud had appeared shortly after they heard thunder. Lucia confirmed in 1978, that on October 13 she had seen a small cloud.

Among the most interesting phenomena, noticed by many witnesses during the apparitions, were the acoustic effects. During all the apparitions from June 13 onwards, strange sounds, similar to the buzzing of insects, were heard. Normally witnesses standing near the seers could hear when Lucia talked to the Lady, then followed silence, and in this silence a faint sound was heard which occurred at the same time as Lucia was listening to the reply to her questions. It was not possible to distinguish words, and the voice was similar to the sound made by a bee. One witness compared it to the buzzing of a big fly in an empty barrel, others to the sounds produced by cicadas. The majority of the witnesses stated that the sound was definitely coming from one, rather than from many bees. In their opinion the source of the sound was in the vicinity of the oak tree.

Display in the sky

If it had not been for the display in the sky, the events in Fatima would have passed without much renown and would be ranked among the

group of Marian apparitions similar to those which took place in La Salette and in Lourdes. In practically all Marian apparitions acknowledged by the Church, children were the only witnesses. People formed their opinion about their authenticity, based on the statements of the visionaries. So there always were, and still are, questions asked as to whether it is possible to trust children's testimonies. However, thanks to the intelligence and the presence of mind of Lucia, who, during the meeting on July 13, asked the Lady for a "miracle" for people to believe in the authenticity of the apparitions, the entire character, the scope and the impact of these events has been changed. The Lady promised that she would perform a "miracle" on October 13, so that everyone would be able to see it. This information was widely circulated in Portugal. Thanks to that fact, the display could be witnessed by many thousands of people who received 3 months notice prior to the event.

The day of the display started with rain. A cold north-westerly wind blew, and the temperature dropped to 62 degrees F (13 C). In spite of continuous rain, by noon large crowds gathered in Cova da Iria. The majority of witnesses estimated that 40 to 50 thousand people arrived. The curious onlookers came from various regions of Portugal. Newspapers later reported that on one road alone up to 240 carriages and 100 cars were counted returning from Fatima, and in contemporary Portugal only the very rich drove cars. We know that not only churchgoers took part in the events, but also many atheists, skeptics and anticlerical. There were local farmers and residents of Lisbon and Porto, among them many doctors, teachers, lawyers and other persons with higher education. Daily newspapers reported that a carnival atmosphere prevailed in some intellectual groups and people made jokes about Father Christmas arriving. The most important fact of all was that all the popular newspapers and periodicals in Portugal were represented.

The display in the sky commenced straight after the apparition was finished. All the witnesses stated that they could watch it directly, without the need to squint. So why did this phenomenon pass into history, as "the miracle of the sun"? Probably this was caused by the fact that the disc appeared in the sky at the position where the sun was, at a height of 42°45' above the horizon. The diameter of the disc was also presumably

close to the diameter of the Sun, which is about 30 angular minutes.

The description of the display is based on eyewitness accounts of many people. In order to avoid repetition, we will give here a summary of the most important observations, with an indication of the differences in the descriptions. It is clear that not everyone saw it exactly the same way. Individual descriptions depend on the intellectual level of the witnesses, their education, their observation skills and their ability to describe completely unknown events.

The luminous disc did not shine brightly and did not blind the eyes. It was possible to look at it even without squinting. The disc had a distinct edge and was of silver-blue color but not like the moon. The color was clear and rich, having the opalescence of a pearl. Witnesses with a technical background described it as a disc of opaque or frosted glass, illuminated from behind, with a rainbow of iridescence on its periphery. Some of the witnesses claimed that the colors of the disc were lively and strong, and changing from white, red and blue to orange, yellow or green. Some compared it to stained glass in the church. It looked as though the periphery of the disc was more colorful and iridescent than the center and changed cyclically, according to some repeating pattern. The color changes were not random and rapid, but slow and regular. The disc sometimes looked as if it was surrounded with an aureole of flames, at other times by yellow or purple rays. At one moment the flames disappeared and the disc became dull silver-blue again. One of the witnesses noticed that the clouds, moving at that time from the west to the east, were not obstructed from view by the disc but looked as if they passed behind it.

The disc did not stay in one place, but moved in the sky. All witnesses agreed – it revolved on its axis. Some people noticed that it had whirled very quickly. Goncalo Almeida Garrett, a professor of mathematics, directed his attention to the edges of the disc. In his opinion only the peripheries of the disc carried out this rotary motion. The movements were not uniform, but repeated three times after intervals. There are descriptions comparing the disc to a turning wheel of fireworks, with flashes of sparks of light on its border, similar to a Catherine wheel. Apart from the whirling, witnesses noticed other

movements. They describe that the disc ‘danced’, ‘jumped’ or ‘trembled’ through the almost diaphanous clouds. These irregular and arrhythmic movements caused sudden and rather accidental changes of the disc position.

The most dramatic scene happened when “the sun fell down to the earth”. The whirling disc appeared to approach the earth, and its movement was very elaborate. It looked as though the disc was spinning, descending in slow zigzags, or moving down in a spiral. The movement reminded some witnesses of the fall of a dry leaf from a tree in Autumn. When the disc descended so low that it looked as if was touching the tips of pine trees, a panic seized some people. Terrified, some started screaming “Miracle!” and begged for mercy. Next, the disc started climbing back up at a very slow, snail-like pace, all the way to its initial position. The entire display lasted about 10 minutes.

Witnesses noticed not only extraordinary colors of the disc and the clouds. They also claimed that the people, the trees, the fields and the entire neighborhood looked colorful. Some said that everything around them turned yellow, others gold, purple, blue, orange, green or metallic. Some witnesses noticed that the color of the surroundings changed with the color of the disc. The illumination was patchy and the witnesses mentioned seeing stains of various colors. The light lit the faces and bodies unevenly, and its intensity varied, namely some areas more strongly, while other less irradiated in such a way that the various elements of the landscape were covered with colorful patches or spots. The intensity and the shapes of these colorful patches varied with time, as if under the influence of air movement.

Some witnesses stated that the disc radiated heat, because their clothes, drenched by the rain which had fallen before the apparition, were completely dry after the “show”. However the majority of witnesses did not notice this phenomenon, and they stated that they were soaked to the skin the whole time.

CHAPTER 2

How the apparitions could have been prepared

In order to carry out a scientific analysis of the apparitions in Fatima, we have to assume that they did not have a supernatural character, but they were the work of some unknown organizers. Considering the present state of knowledge, let us give some thought to what technical solutions could be used in order to achieve the effects described by the witnesses. The main purpose of these considerations is not to prove that the proposed methods were indeed applied, but to show that the events in Fatima can be explained by known phenomena which obey the universal laws of physics.

We have to admit that some aspects of these events cannot be explained by contemporary science, but this results rather from the limitation of our knowledge, than from the supernatural character of the observed events. We still do not know all the laws of nature, especially relating to biological systems, and very little is known about the functioning of the human mind. For the purpose of this analysis, I have assumed that whatever happened there had to be subjected to the laws of nature.

During the apparitions very complicated interactions occurred between the visionaries and the instigators of these events. From the information obtained from Lucia and Jacinta, we can infer that the seers could see the appearing figure, could hear her, and that the Lucia's questions were correctly received by the organizers, because the visionaries obtained logical responses.

How might the image of the figure have been generated?

From the information provided by the seers it is possible to conclude that the image of the figure could be produced using an optical projection, rather than being generated in the seers' minds as a result of hypnosis or hallucinations. This confirms the fact that the children were not in a state of ecstasy, on the contrary, they were fully conscious of what was happening around them. The optical projection hypothesis supports the observation that the children, during the apparitions, had to lower their eyes and to rub them, since the light radiating from the figure was blinding them.

In order to produce an optical image a source of light and the source of the image are needed. We know from Lucia's memoirs that every apparition was preceded by the coming light beam. She noticed that the Lady was always arriving from the east and leaving in the same direction, therefore the beam of light did not come down vertically, but was at a certain angle to the ground.

The figure appeared only when the light stopped directly above the tree. An independent witness saw a bright column, like a path of light, coming from the east. Many witnesses noticed that during the apparitions the intensity of sunlight was decreasing, even though the sun was not hidden from view by clouds. The lowering of the intensity of solar radiation supports the hypotheses that the optical method was used, because bright sunlight would reduce the visibility and the quality of the projection of visual images, the same as in cinemas, where the lights are dimmed during a film projection.

The fact that the appearing Lady always stood high on the top of the tree also supports the optical projection hypothesis. If she stood on the

ground, for example under the tree, the leaves and the branches would obscure the optical beam coming from above. To prevent the beam from being obstructed by other people or tall objects, the image must have been placed high above them.

I have not found information concerning generation of the image, but it is plausible to assume that it was prepared using a digital device such as a computer. This device could also control the animation and the transfer of images to the appropriate converter which would modulate the light beam. Such converters are at present universally used for the optical projection of images from computer monitors to big screens.

In order for the optical projection to produce a visible image, besides the source of image and the source of light, a screen is also needed. In a cinema, light from the projector falls on a white screen which scatters light back creating an image on our retina. So let us consider what could have been used as a screen in Cova da Iria.

The statements of the visionaries and many witnesses often feature a description of a cloud which was visible above the tree where the figure was appearing. The cloud was fine and looked more like a fog and it seems that it surrounded and covered the appearing figure. After the apparition was finished it rose and disappeared. It was described by the witnesses as a cloud of smoke and was observed each time from June till October.

This small cloud probably functioned as a screen for the image projection. At present it is possible to project optical images on natural or artificial clouds using strong laser light. Without the cloud the clarity of the image would be very poor¹, and what is worse the figure could become transparent. In such a case it could be possible to see other objects, such as clouds or flying birds, through the figure, which would have perplexed the children.

To make a cloud, water and a source of heat is needed. Since the apparitions took place on a semi desert-like area, a tree was the only substantial source of water. The cloud could be generated as a result of heating the tree with infrared radiation, invisible to the eye.

It appears from the description of the witnesses that before the apparition young shoots of the oak tree were firm and they climbed

straight upwards, but after the event they became flabby and bent. If the shoots were heated from the eastern direction, this side lost more water, softened and under its own weight tilted towards the east. One witness, Maria Carreira, describes that in June the tree was in blossom and after the apparition she noticed a round area, about 16 in (40 cm) in diameter, at the crown of the tree, where the shoots were tilted to the east.

Lucia says in her memoirs that she could see the light beam, which at initially she regarded as lightning, coming near. We can draw a conclusion that the ray of light was not sent directly to the tree, but came gradually closer to it. So the beam moved on the surface of earth and, when it came across the tree, stopped and stayed in this position. In practice it would be very difficult to aim the optical beam from a long distance directly at the tree, not knowing how it could be affected by weather conditions. A similar method is commonly used by the air force to aim laser bombs at targets².

Examining the information provided by the witnesses, it is possible to put forward a hypothesis that lasers were used as the source of light. Laser light being monochromatic and coherent, can easily be modulated to generate an image, or to change direction of the beam. It is possible to transmit a laser light over great distances as a narrow beam. At present lasers emitting white light which consists of a large number of monochromatic waves are well established.

Assuming that for the optical projection lasers were used, a question arises: how far away were they placed? The results of calculations provided in Appendix I show that the source of the light could be located at a distance of 60 miles (100 km) up to 600 miles (1000 km) from Fatima. So the lasers did not have to be in the vicinity of the apparition, but could also not be installed on other planets. So it is probable that they were placed on a low orbit around the Earth, therefore the apparitions were possible only at specific times of the day, and their duration was limited. This is confirmed by the fact that they usually began about noon and lasted not more than 15 to 20 minutes.

Light from lasers placed high above the earth's atmosphere could be obstructed by clouds and then an optical projection would become impossible. So clouds could potentially be a considerable obstacle. It

appears from the witnesses' statements that during the apparitions the sun was shining. Even on 13 October, when there were heavy clouds until 1:00 p.m., before the appearance of the figure the sun came through. It is difficult to imagine that, just a few minutes before the start, the clouds disappeared by chance, so probably they were dispersed by some sort of heating such as infrared radiation. Some witnesses stated that they were drenched to the skin, but their clothes were dry after the event. This observation also supports the hypothesis of the optical projection.

How the visionaries could have received the voice

During the apparitions Lucia and Jacinta could not only see the figure, but could also hear her and Lucia was able to communicate with her. The children noticed at once that during the conversations the Lady did not move her lips, which looked very odd. From this observation one could conclude that the sound was generated and transmitted independently of the image. It is relatively easy to generate the sound of a voice using a synthesizer, however the synchronization between the optical image projection and the voice system is much more difficult. It cannot be ruled out that those who contacted the visionaries did not have sufficient knowledge about the way spoken words are generated. An ill-matched synchronization would only make a bad impression on the seers, because it would be immediately noticeable, like a badly dubbed film.

The technique of the acoustic communication used during the apparitions is not known to us, but the voice was probably generated directly in the ears or even in the brains of the visionaries, without the use of sound waves, which could have been audible to the people standing close to the seers. There is a possibility that modulated light waves could be used as a carrier of the acoustic waves. Witnesses standing near the children claimed that when the Lady answered Lucia's questions, they could hear a sound similar to the buzzing of a bee or a fly. So it is possible that these people heard some distorted high frequency sound waves, which could be produced as a result of a process similar to modulation (Appendix I).

How Lucia's voice was transmitted

Questions asked by Lucia had to be passed on immediately, because the Lady answered them without any delay. Recipients were probably beyond the Earth's atmosphere, therefore they could not pick up the sound waves directly. One should also rule out the possibility of the propagation of sound waves in the atmosphere over a greater distance, because this would result in a noticeable delay in voice transmission.

One of the possible solutions is a laser microphone widely used by spy services. The microphone operates on the principle that sound waves emitted by a person cause vibrations of objects, such as window panes, which are in the vicinity of the source of the voice. The laser light sent to such an object measures its amplitude of vibrations and in this way recovers the original sound wave which caused these vibrations. So the sound waves emitted by Lucia could, for example, cause vibrations of the tree leaves, or vibrations of droplets of water in the cloud above the tree. These vibrations modulated the laser beam which, after reflection from these objects, was received and processed by special devices.

Because only a very small fraction of the originally sent light would reach the recipients, in order to get good reception, it was necessary to use very strong lasers. It is possible that the lasers used for the transmission of Lucia's voice were also used for the optical projection and therefore the light radiating from the figure during the apparitions was so strong that it was blinding the children.

Inexplicable phenomena

On the basis of the visionaries' statements, we could conclude that for the transmission of images during the apparitions, not only were optical projection methods used, but also direct transmission of images to the seers' minds. Probably two Fatima secrets were delivered in this way. The first secret contained elaborate images of hell and the third secret included the vision of angels and of apocalyptic annihilation of the Church and the death of the Pope.

We know that the human brain can produce visions during dreaming, often even colorful visions. Such phenomena are reported by people

under the influence of drugs or hallucinogenic substances (Castaneda, 2004). These visions can be so rich and realistic that it is often impossible to distinguish them from reality. Knowledge on this subject is very limited, however there is no doubt that the mind has the ability to produce images which were observed during mystic rites and holotropic sessions (Grof, 1993). Unfortunately we do not know how the images described by the children were produced in their brains during the visions of the secrets . We also do not know if the visions received by Lucia and Jacinta were identical.

During the apparitions many other occurrences happened which we are not able to explain because our knowledge is still insufficient. These inexplicable phenomena include the selective control of the transmitted vision and sound to the children, which was blocked in such a way so that it could not reach other people standing near the seers. Because of this control, the witnesses standing nearby could not see the light radiating from the figure and could not hear her voice. We already know that there was a cloud working as a screen for the projection of images. Normally the light from such a screen would be dispersed in all directions, however only one witness, apart from the children, mentioned any radiating light. It is also an inexplicable phenomenon that Francisco, like the other pilgrims, could not hear the voice of the Lady, although he stood beside Jacinta and Lucia.

We could assume that there was a selective control of vision and sound which acted upon the minds of the visionaries. It is possible to put a hypothesis that the senses of other witnesses were blocked so that they could not see the light. This hypothesis can support the fact that during the preparations for the apparition which should have taken place on 13 August, but did not, pilgrims at Cova da Iria for the first time, and only then, saw flashes of the light seen normally only by the seers. Perhaps in this case the control was not applied and the onlookers' senses were not blocked.

Comments

The above scientific analysis of the events in Fatima does not give an answer to the question of how these apparitions were really prepared. It will not be possible to establish true events and we will most probably never learn what specific technical solutions were used in Fatima. The purpose of this analysis is to establish that everything the visionaries saw and heard is possible to explain and would be possible to stage, applying techniques based on the known laws of physics. Perhaps we are still unable to reproduce the Fatima apparitions, but we know the technical solutions which could be applied to design similar displays. Certain issues, for example, selective reception of the information and personal visions associated with the secrets, are still incomprehensible to us, which confirms that the organizers of the apparitions had a level of knowledge superior to the achievements of our contemporary sciences.

CHAPTER 3

How the display in the sky could have been achieved

After examining the witnesses' statements, there is not the slightest doubt that it was not the sun which moved in the sky, but it was a kind of optical illusion.

To make a whirling and dancing disc visible at the same time to thousands of people, an image visible in a large area had to be produced. One could assume that for generating such an image an optical projection method was applied. Suppose that the image was projected on a screen positioned at a distance of 0.6 miles (1 km) from Cova da Iria at a height of 0.6 miles (1 km), the diameter of the disc should be about 30 ft (10 m). To generate such an image it is possible that several lasers were used, generating strong, colorful, monochromatic light beams which were projected on special clouds, acting as a screen.

Observations confirming the optical projection

All witnesses confirmed that the disc was colorful, but surface colors were not uniform – silvery in the middle and glittering in all sorts of

colors at its periphery. The colors were changing in a certain repetitive pattern.

During the whirling, the rotary disc motion could be seen not at its center, but mainly at the rim. Assuming that the image was created by the superposition of several laser beams of different colors, it is very difficult outside laboratory conditions to obtain perfect overlap of all beams. Where the overlap was precise, observers could see a uniform, silver color, but on the periphery, where the superposition was not accurate, they saw various colors. To generate a rotational movement of the disc image, the optical beams had to be specially modulated.

When superimposed on each other, optical monochromatic beams of various colors travelling through the earth's atmosphere are differently deflected as a result of the diversified air temperature and associated uneven air densities. As a result of this process rays of different colors, after passage through the air, are shifted with reference to each other resulting in their inaccurate overlapping (Appendix).

The witnesses also observed shaking or, as some of them described it, “dancing” of the disc which can be explained by similar atmospheric influences. As a result of moving hot air, the optical beam passing through layers of air, having different and varying temperatures, is subjected to varying diffraction, and as a result changes its position. This caused the image of the disc to also change its position and that looked like shaking. It is possible to observe a similar phenomenon at night, such as twinkling stars. This observation confirms that the optical beams used for display traveled a long way through the atmosphere.

As during the apparitions, a screen was essential for projecting the image of the disc. This function in this case was also performed by clouds, however they were not natural clouds. These special, small clouds had to be continuously produced, because when one disappeared, in its place appeared a new one. During the display the disc came close to the ground, so we could conclude that the screen created from these peculiar clouds stretched from the surface of the earth, all the way to the height of at least 0.6 miles (1 km).

Since the disc was in the same place in the sky where the sun was, it was necessary to limit considerably the intensity of the sun's rays. And

for this purpose artificially made clouds were used. The blockage of the sun's rays had to be very effective, because none of the observers looking in the direction of the sun were blinded by them. The artificial clouds were probably generated by heating an area of the earth using infrared radiation. This is supported by the statements of some witnesses who testified that their soaked through clothing, after the show, was completely dry. The weather conditions before the show helped the formation of clouds, because abundant rain fell before the display and the entire area was soaked with water.

Many persons noticed that both the people and the landscape in their neighborhood had changed color, as if illuminated by colored lights. The colors changed non-stop through all the colors of the rainbow. What is interesting is that the witnesses observed that certain areas were more strongly and others less illuminated, and that looked like colored patches. Such a phenomenon can only exist when monochromatic lighting is used as the source of light, and this observation confirms the application of lasers for the optical projection of the disc (Appendix I).

All the described observations attest that the disc was not a material object, but only a visual phenomenon, therefore it could not be a spaceship.

Arguments contradicting the optical projection

Statements of witnesses who watched the display in the sky in other towns, and especially in Alburitel, over 8 miles (13 km) to the east of Cova da Iria contradict the application of the optical projection. It appears from their descriptions that the event looked very similar, not to say precisely the same, as that seen by the pilgrims in Fatima.

If in Alburitel the same image of the disc was visible as in Fatima, then it should have been seen at a height of 8.5 degrees above the horizon, and its angular diameter would be about one sixth of the diameter of the disc seen in Fatima³. From the perspective of the observer who was seeing the object in Alburitel, it would be positioned in the west, rather than in the south, as in Fatima, and therefore it could not be regarded as the sun, and hence the entire event would not have made

such a strong impression on the witnesses. However, according to the description of some witnesses, the position, the size and the movements of the disc observed in Alburitel were exactly the same as in Fatima. If this is the case, to produce an impression of the disc in people's minds it would have been necessary to use a different method.

However it should be taken into consideration that the reports of the witnesses from other towns are not substantiated nor as credible as the ones collected in Fatima, because they were revealed for the first time many years after the events. The witnesses from Alburitel were small children during the display and could not remember these events well. Also it is not possible to rule out that many years after the events, their own memories may have been corrupted by reports of the display by the witnesses from Cova da Iria.

The best proof of the optical projection would be photographic evidence, unfortunately no photographs of this phenomenon exist. We know that Judah Bento Ruah, a photographer who arrived in Fatima with Avelin de Almeida, a journalist from the daily newspaper "O Seculo", took pictures of the people on the fields of Cova da Iria. Photographs taken by Ruah during the display show numerous witnesses of the event, but there is no disc shining in the sky on them. Perhaps Ruah did not want to photograph "the sun" in order not to over expose the negatives, but it is also possible that these negatives were not sensitive enough in order to record the light from the disc.

From the analysis of the photographs taken during the display it appears that almost everybody is looking at one point in the sky, but from the extrapolation of the direction of their viewing, and the knowledge that the sun was 43 degrees above the horizon, one could assume that the disc was not in the view of the camera and it looks as though it was excluded on purpose. One cannot see any distinct shadows on the pictures, therefore one can conclude that the spectators were illuminated by diffused sun light, so it could not have originated from the disc. This attests to the fact that the light emitted by the disc was very faint. Perhaps it was weak to ensure the safety of the spectators. Using the safe level of laser light intensity (Appendix I), a film having sensitivity ISO 0.5 would have to be exposed for over 2 seconds, while in order to

take a good photograph on a cloudy day the shutter could be set to about $1/4$ seconds, with aperture $f=4$.

If the arguments contradicting the optical projection are true, it would mean that for the generation of the image of the observed disc another method would have had to be used. However the purpose of this analysis is not proving that during the display the specific, laser technique presented above was used, but that it would be possible to prepare such a show using contemporary technical solutions.

Some researchers of the events in Fatima put forward the hypothesis of collective hypnosis resulting in mass hallucination of persons in Cova da Iria. However hypnotizing so many thousands of people, on such a gigantic scale, seems very improbable. The fact that some witnesses observed the disc through binoculars proves that they could not have been hypnotized.

CHAPTER 4

Uniqueness of the Fatima events

Today, in the age of computers and the media, we are overwhelmed by a flood of descriptions of many incredible phenomena. Television, cinema and the Internet are surpassing each other in showing fantastic pictures of time travel, manifestation of magic powers and other incredible events. It is quite common nowadays that the main characters in many films, television productions and computer games possess supernatural abilities. Of course we do not believe in the authenticity of the shown events, and we are already so accustomed to them that they do not make any impression on us. This in turn is forcing the authors and the scriptwriters to invent more and more improbable and fantastic stories in order to interest the audience. This involvement with the supernatural includes frequent reporting in the press and television about meetings with aliens from other galaxies, about the observations of UFOs, about kidnappings of people by green humanoid creatures. Besides these stories vying for the attention of people, are reports about various religious apparitions which happen regularly to hundreds of visionaries around the world. Such a flood of information about paranormal events causes saturation and such a loss of interest in them that we tend to ignore them.

It is easy in such conditions to ignore the Fatima events, which should be recognized as very exceptional.

Predictions of the events in Fatima

The fact that the apparitions in Fatima were predicted a few months earlier distinguishes them from all other supernatural events. This fact is omitted by both the Catholic Church and skeptical authors. We can separate the predictions in to two groups: the ones which appeared in the Portuguese national press before or on May 13, 1917, and the ones which

were handed over by the central figure of the events, Lucia dos Santos.

The first prediction was published in Lisbon on March 10, 1917, in one of the most important newspapers in Portugal, still in print, *Diario de Noticias*. It was in the form of an announcement with the title printed in bold letters: **135917** which, it would be easy to decipher, refers to the date – 13.05.1917 – the day of the first apparition in Fatima (Figure 1).

The text is a little mysterious and looks like an encrypted message, and in a cursory translation it reads: “*Do not forget the happy day in which our suffering will end. The war in which we participate will end.*



Figure 1

A. and C.”

Do we know who this announcement originated? On February 7, 1917 a group of spiritualists in Lisbon had one of its regular meetings. One of them, Carlos Calderon, a famous Lisbon trance medium, created a message by method of “automatic writing”. It read as follows:

“Do not judge. The one who would judge you would not be pleased with your prejudice. Have faith and patience. It is not normal for us to predict the future. Secrets of the future are not penetrable, although sometimes God lets lift slightly a corner of the veil

which covers them. Have confidence in our prophecy. The day May 13 will be one of happy days for the good souls of the world. Have faith and be good. Ego Sum Charitas (I am Love). By yourself you should always have your friends, who will guide you and will help you in your work. Ego Sum Charitas. The bright light of the Morning Star will illuminate your road. Morning Star”

Furtado de Mendonca (Mendonca, 1974), who was present at the séance in Lisbon, published a photocopy of the original received text in his book. Most of the text was written backwards in the same handwriting, from right to left in such a way that in order to read it was necessary to use a mirror. The last sentence and the signature were not reversed. In spite of the mystery and unclear meaning of the received message, spiritualists decided to place an advertisement in the newspaper.

There is no other evidence that the spiritualists received such a message, but it is certain that they placed the advertisement. It is worth noticing that in the received message there is nothing about the war. Since the war was the most important event then in Portugal, perhaps mentioning it was supposed to enhance the attraction of the announcement, so the readers would pay more attention to it. It is also worth noticing that in the signature under the announcement the letter “C” probably refers to Carlos Calderon. Regardless of who placed this announcement and what his reason was, it is certain that the prophecy giving the date of May 13, 1917 was published on March 10, 1917.

The next prediction was published in Porto, where three leading Portuguese daily newspapers: *Jornal de Noticias*, *O Primeiro de Janeiro* and *Libertade* placed on May 13, 1917 information under the title: “The war and the spiritualism. Sensational revelations”. The text of the note read as follows:

“Yesterday we received a message, which we print below:

Porto, 11 May 1917.

Dear editors,

It was communicated by the Spirits and different groups of spiritualists, that on the 13th of this month there will occur an event with respect to the war which will astonish

all the people. I have the honor of signing. The spiritualist and the dedicated promoter of the truth. Antonio”.

Jornal de Noticias printed only the letter with a brief explanation, but *O Primeiro de Janeiro*, apart from the note, placed a malicious and ironic commentary written by the very well known journalist Guedes de Oliveira, who had the reputation of an anticlerical Republican, like the majority of contemporary Portuguese journalists. Oliveira, among others, wrote:

“Today is the 13th [...] the predicted event will have taken place and everyone will be so deeply shaken, as if an abyss had opened under our feet. The intervention by those who exist beyond the physical world [...] cannot be without consequence to us, and I am highly alarmed by this information, that I received from an eager promoter of the truth. It would never come to my mind, that we could be in such a close contact with beings from another world. [...] But now with the letter from Mr. Antonio I confess that all I lack, is the predicted event. [...] What mysterious powers could work upon terrestrial things with their inexplicable influences? How are they able, for example, to cause levitation of a cast iron table, without any physical contact?”

It is worth noticing that rational and atheistic journalists, who were working at these three leading Portuguese newspapers and normally treated with contempt spiritualists and people dealing in paranormal phenomena, suddenly devoted so much attention in order to comment on such unimportant news.

Information originating from a visionary herself belongs to the second group of predictions. During the apparition on July 13, Lucia asked the Lady for a miracle so people would believe in the authenticity of the apparitions. The Lady promised that a miracle would happen in three months time, so that everyone could see it. Thanks to this prediction, on October 13 in Cova da Iria, thousands of curious people gathered and most importantly many journalists arrived from the leading Portuguese newspapers. In spite of being anticlerical, these journalists provided an accurate and credible description of the events which took place in Fatima on that day and greatly contributed to the spread of information about the apparitions.

Significance of prediction

Let us consider why the existence of the predictions is so important in establishing the authenticity of these events. In everyday life, very often we find ourselves in situations which look very extraordinary, but they do not evoke great amazement. Let's assume that we were standing at a bus stop by the road and we noticed a yellow Rolls Royce passing by. Since we have never seen such a car, perhaps only on film, we would probably be very surprised, but it would not make a great impression on us. However, if somebody tried to estimate the probability of the meeting of such a car in the predicted place and time, it would turn out that he could have one chance in a billion perhaps.

Let us consider a different event. We are strolling in a woodland and every now and then we notice rubbish left there by other people. When we see a chocolate wrapper under the bush, this view could spoil the entire pleasure of the walk, but certainly will not cause even the smallest surprise. However if somebody were to predict that at such and such hour, in a specific place we would find a piece of chocolate wrapper, for example, red foil with yellow stripes, the fact that such a prophecy came true makes the entire situation very extraordinary. It is hard to estimate the probability of such an event, but the odds certainly would be infinitesimal. Following these examples we could say that since predicting the place and time of some even very ordinary events is very difficult, prediction of such an improbable phenomenon as an apparition is completely impossible. Therefore we could conclude that the events in Fatima could only be predicted by the organizers of these apparitions.

Uniqueness of the events in Fatima

Why should we treat the events in Fatima as the most exceptional phenomenon in history? The most important consideration is the fact that they were predicted several months in advance and, even more significantly, apart from the visionaries, the display in the sky was observed by about 50,000 people, while in many other cases of paranormal events it was hard to find credible and independent witnesses.

Many people compare the Fatima events with other unusual, inexplicable or paranormal phenomena. And thus Catholics regard them as belonging to the same category of Marian apparitions as those which took place in La Salette or in Lourdes. Atheists who accept the verity of the events in Fatima consider that they were one of thousands of UFO type observations. We act this way because we do not feel comfortable and secure when we deal with completely unknown and inexplicable phenomena. One of the objectives of this work is to show that the events in Fatima had a unique character in the entire history of human civilization. In order to convince the reader of it, in the next chapters we will analyze some inexplicable events reported during the last two centuries and we will check whether they are comparable with the events in Fatima. This analysis will include a few well-known religious apparitions and some reports of UFOs.

CHAPTER 5

Religious apparitions

Religious apparitions belong almost exclusively to the domain of the Roman Catholic Church. In the Protestant Churches, Judaism, as well as in Islam, nobody is worshipped apart from God, and there are no intermediaries between the believers and the Creator. In Judaism and Islam, prophets enjoy great respect, however no divine features are attributed to them, although it is assumed that the prophets passed on information received from God. The Roman Catholic Church, with the extensive pantheon of saints, and most of all with the figure of the Virgin Mary, continues pre-Christian traditions and therefore fulfils the subconscious needs of the human psyche. The Mother of God is an important psychological phenomenon, referring to goddesses such as Isis, Iris, Aphrodite and Astarte, worshipped thousands of years ago. For many of the faithful in their everyday life, the Virgin Mary is more important than Jesus Christ and her image is instantly recognized by every believer. Therefore the large majority of religious apparitions had a connection with the Mother of God.

Religious apparitions belong to very frequent phenomena and some sources quote that in the years 1960-1969 there were 376 cases of Marian apparitions recorded. Special Church Commissions investigate only a small fraction of reported cases, the majority of them are ignored, and only a few are officially recognized as genuine. Because many people compare the events in Fatima to other religious apparitions, it is

worthwhile to look more closely at a few of them. The most important apparitions in the 19th century took place in La Salette and in Lourdes.

Apparition in La Salette

The village La Salette is situated in the French Alps not far from Grenoble. It was there on September 19, 1846 where the Virgin Mary appeared to two illiterate shepherds: Mélanie Calvat and Maximin Giraud. At that time Mélanie was 14, and Maximin 11 years old. As the majority of children there they earned a living herding cows. That day they took the cows high on the slopes of the nearby mountain, above La Salette. Sometime later they ate their lunch, and then dozed off. After waking up at about 3 p.m., they saw that the cows were missing. While searching for them, they noticed a light more blinding than the sun, which came from a big globe of fire, about 5 meters in diameter, suspended above the earth. Even though they were terrified, they noticed that inside the globe a woman was sitting with her face resting in her hands. The figure slowly got up and then the children noticed that tears flowed down her cheeks. According to the visionaries she was a tall, very beautiful lady. She was wearing a long, white, pearl studded, sleeved dress, and a yellow pinafore, with some sort of tiara or crown on her head. Hanging from her neck was a large crucifix adorned with a small hammer and pincers, with a brilliantly shining figure of Christ on it. She had white shoes decorated with colorful roses. The Lady turned to the children and said “do not be afraid, I came here to tell you great news”. At first she spoke to them in French, but because they did not understand, she spoke to them in their own local dialect.

After passing the message to the children she went through the stream, and then moved about thirty steps in the direction of a small hill. When she walked her feet hardly touched the grass. Maximin tried to touch a rose decorating her shoes, but his hand hit an empty space. The children followed her until she rose to the height of about 3 feet (0.9 m), and then she started slowly disappearing. First her head and shoulders disappeared, and then the rest of her body.

The Bishop of Grenoble commenced examinations of the seers in

1847 and he reached the conclusion that the children did not lie and did not have hallucinations. His report was presented to a church commission, which at the end of 1847 recognized the authenticity of the apparition. The short description of the events was written by Mélanie in a monastery in England in 1858. This version was disclosed to the public in the same year. The secrets were revealed gradually, but were published for the first time in April 1873. Maximin died in 1875, and Mélanie who led a monastic life in England, France and Italy, died in 1904.

One could admit that there is a certain resemblance of the apparition in La Salette to the events which took place in Fatima. In both apparitions the Lady appeared to illiterate children, living in poor, backward villages. The meetings were held in secluded spots, hidden from any witnesses. The Lady in La Salette, as in Fatima, radiated a strong blinding light and she disappeared in a similar way, starting with her head, then her shoulders. We can be sure that she was not a material person, because when she was walking the grass under her feet did not bend.

However the events in La Salette were not predicted, and there were no independent witnesses who could confirm the vision. The only seemingly unusual phenomenon which was linked to the apparition was the flow of water from the previously dry spring, but this is not unusual in the mountains. Therefore, although we do not undermine the authenticity of this apparition, from a scientific point of view, there are no grounds to carry out any further investigation.

Apparition in Lourdes

In 1858, in the grotto of Massabielle, near Lourdes in southern France, Our Lady appeared 18 times to Bernadette Soubirous, a young peasant girl. Bernadette, then 14 years old, saw in the grotto, for the first time on 11 February, a figure of a beautiful young girl, 4 ft 8 in (140 cm) tall. The figure had a white dress on with a blue sash around her waist, and a yellow rose on each foot. Bernadette started saying the rosary and noticed that Our Lady had moved the rosary beads in her hand and was saying it without moving her lips. This vision lasted about 15 minutes.

Other children who were in the grotto with Bernadette could see nothing.

The next apparition took place on 14 February. There was no conversation then, however the witnesses observed that Bernadette had fallen into an ecstasy. Only during the apparition on 18 February, did the Lady tell the seer to come for 15 days. From then on the visions took place every day, and more and more onlookers came to the grotto. It is interesting to notice, that when on 22 February police officers turned up at the grotto, in order to check what happened, the figure did not appear. During the ninth apparition the Lady told the seer to drink water from a small spring. Water in the grotto was muddy, so Bernadette dug deeper, until clean water gushed. During the apparition on 25 March, Bernadette asked the Lady what she was called and then received a reply: "I am the Immaculate Conception". The girl did not understand this expression, since the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was approved by the church only on 8 December 1854 and was not widely known.

Bernadette received from the mayor of a local town a large candle, as a votive offering, and she took it to the grotto. On 7 April people present in the grotto witnessed "the miracle of the candle". During the ecstasy which lasted almost an hour, Bernadette held the burning candle. When the candle burnt itself out, its flame touched Bernadette's hand, but she did not feel it. The doctor after examining the hand stated she had no traces of the burn. The last apparition in Lourdes took place on 16 July.

The Catholic Church in November 1858 commenced interrogations of the witnesses and in January 1862 the local bishop announced approval of the apparitions. Bernadette after the events started attending convent school. There she learnt how to read and write, and at the age of 22 entered a convent in Nevers, where she died in 1878.

The apparitions in Lourdes have a completely different character than the events in Fatima. In Lourdes there was only one visionary and the Lady appearing in the grotto was dressed as the nuns from the nearby monastery, while in Fatima the Lady's clothes were very distinct and unusual. During the apparitions Bernadette was in a state of ecstasy or hypnosis and ignored the outside world, whereas Lucia retained full awareness. The apparitions in Lourdes were quite long, sometimes even

up to an hour, but Bernadette's accounts of what happened are very brief and quite vague. In contrast, Lucia was able on the same day to repeat exactly the dialogue with the Lady. The apparitions in Lourdes took place "on demand" at different times of the day, soon after Bernadette's arrival at the grotto, while in Fatima the hour of the majority of the apparitions was the same and sometimes the seers had to wait quite a long time. The Lady told Bernadette to come every day, but she did not appear on 22 and 26 February. The most significant difference is that in Lourdes the witnesses in the grotto were not able to observe anything unusual and could not hear anything. The only unusual event in Lourdes was the flow of clear water out of a spring which was dug out by the seer in the place where water already barely trickled. Considering the above differences it is not possible to include the apparitions in Lourdes and Fatima in the same category.

Apparitions in Medjugorje

The apparitions in Medjugorje have not been recognized by the Roman Catholic Church, but since they are well known in Europe, and according to the visionaries still take place, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at them.

Medjugorje is a small village in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, being a part of former Yugoslavia. Apparitions in Medjugorje started on 24 June 1981, when six young persons between the ages of 15 and 17 saw, on the hill Crnica, above the village, a young woman with a child in her arms who gave them a sign to come closer. Being surprised and frightened they ran away. The next day four of them came back to the same place and again saw a figure of a woman but without a child. They were joined by two new people but two other children left the original group and never again had any apparitions. The members of the new six-person group, from that day had apparitions every day, individually and collectively, in various places. On the third day the appearing figure told the visionaries that she was the Blessed Virgin Mary. On the fourth day the Lady spoke to the visionaries three times and gave them a message for the priests: "**May the priests firmly believe (in the apparition)!**" On

the fifth day 15,000 people appeared on the Hill of Apparitions. On the sixth day the visionaries were sent to the nearby town of Mostar for medical examinations, but no psychological disorders were diagnosed. The Lady appeared on the hill every day until 15 January 1982, when the visionaries, on account of large crowds of pilgrims, moved to the parish church, and then in 1985 to the parish house. At the beginning reports about the apparitions were provided every week, but from 1987 they have been made available once a month.

The apparitions continue until now in 2012 and three of the visionaries have daily visions, although one of them lives in the USA, and the other in Italy. The three remaining seers have visions once a year.

The events in Medjugorje have a different character than the earlier described apparitions. Although the visionaries, as in the other events, came from a small village and were young, unlike the others, they were literate since in communist Yugoslavia they had full access to education, television and books. In this part of the world sixteen or seventeen year old girls are more like young women than small children, but they were so called by the believers. It is difficult to understand why these educated young people got so scared by the sight of a woman with a child that they ran away, while in other apparitions, considerably younger and inexperienced visionaries, showed no fear in truly unusual situations. It is also puzzling why two young people left the group and rejected the chance of experiencing divine apparitions, unless from the very beginning they did not believe in it. On the other hand, two new young people who joined the group started having visions similar to their friends. It looks as though the visionaries established a club. Those who left it lost the ability to experience apparitions, however new members received this gift.

The apparitions still take place, however the contents of received messages becomes more and more trivial. It is interesting that such numerous visions did not have any significant influence on the life of the visionaries and the long term contact with the Mother of God did not affect their psychological and spiritual development in the least. None of them took a religious path by entering a religious order or devoting themselves to charity work, as was the case with many other visionaries.

The fact that they benefit financially from the apparitions also does not reflect well on their intentions and on the authenticity of the events described by them.

Comparing the apparitions in Fatima with the events in Medjugorje one could say that they do not have much in common. The visions in Medjugorje were not predicted, and what the seers said that they saw was not checked by independent investigators and was not substantiated and therefore is not very credible. Even though the visionaries are still active, the amount of accessible, checked and credible information is much smaller than it is in the case of the events in Fatima.

Conclusions

Analysis of the three most popular and typical apparitions shows that none of the described visions had been predicted beforehand, and there were no independent witnesses besides the seers. On this basis we can conclude that the events in Fatima should not be treated as one of the Marian apparitions.

CHAPTER 6

UFO phenomena

UFO phenomena belong to very unusual events. Their analysis is very difficult, because we are dealing here with thousands of cases spanning very diverse types of incidents, from lights in the sky to kidnapping and rape committed by extraterrestrial beings. Because in Fatima many strange phenomena were observed which could not always be interpreted in purely religious ways, some researchers of the events in Fatima are inclined to believe that these events were a type of UFO phenomena. This explanation is supported by a Portuguese investigator Fina d'Armada (1980), who in her book about Fatima provides a lot of hitherto unknown information. The author presents many significant arguments backing her theory. To help the reader to form his opinion on this subject, let us look more closely at UFO phenomena in the context of the events in Fatima.

History of UFO observations

Although observations of strange and incomprehensible phenomena in the sky and on or near the ground have been reported on several occasions throughout history, the beginning of the “UFO affair” in the USA started in 1947. That year for the first time a lot of information concerning observations of flying saucers and mysterious lights were published. On account of the potential threat to national security of the

country, the United States Air Force became involved in these events, however very quickly reached the conclusion that there was no real danger. Due to the increasing number of reports of UFO sightings, in 1948, to coordinate all the activities aimed at analyzing and explaining these events, Project Sign was created, followed by Project Grudge which continued until December 1949.

Only in 1952, after many sightings of flying saucers and because of the appearance of unusual lights above Washington, the interest in UFOs grew rapidly. The CIA was also interested in this subject, because there was a danger that Russia could use these phenomena for hostile activities. Project Blue Book was created which had the task of dispelling doubts associated with the observation of UFOs and to explain their origin. In the project, carried out until 1969, outstanding physicists and astronomers, among them Dr. Allen Hynek, participated. Archives of the project contained more than 13,000 reports of unusual events, many of them were just inept forgeries, but experts regarded about 5 percent of the sightings as truly inexplicable phenomena. Recently declassified CIA documents show that the Agency used society's belief in the existence of UFOs to hide the work on the development of secret means of transport such as Black Bird – invisible planes, rockets and other special vehicles. They also used the notion of UFOs to hide spy missions to Russia, using special stratospheric balloons and planes such as the U2. It turned out that the CIA was giving false information to the press about sightings of UFOs.

In the Soviet Union the potential danger from UFOs was also treated seriously. It was suspected that the United States were involved in the sightings of some unexplained objects which could perform spying missions. In 1977 the Russian Army was ordered to report all unusual events, but after 13 years of research and analyzing many thousands of observations, although many of them were regarded inexplicable, they could not manage to find any evidence of the extraterrestrial origin of even one of the observed phenomena.

In order to provide insight into the character of UFO phenomena, the three most credible and best substantiated cases of sightings in the USA, which took place in Washington, D.C. in 1952, in Roswell in 1947

and in Socorro in 1964 will be described.

Washington

In 1952 there were 3 nights of intense activity over Washington, D.C. On July 19/20, July 26/27 and August 2/3, the skies above the nation's capital were crowded with UFOs darting here and there, over the White House, over the Capitol Building, over the Pentagon.

They were seen from the ground, seen and also detected on radar from control towers at Washington National Airport, Bolling Air Force Base across the Potomac River, and from nearby Andrews Air Force Base. The radar operators conferred by telephone to ensure they were tracking the same targets. In many cases, airline pilots flying in the area were able to provide visual confirmation of radar tracking.

The Washington Post reported that on 19 July from 9:08 p.m. till 3:00 a.m., four to twelve objects were observed on the screen of the airport radar. At about 11:25 p.m. two F-94 military planes took off in order to verify the origins of the radar signals. One of the pilots noticed 4 bright objects in the vicinity of Andrews Air Force Base, but could not catch up with them and after two minutes of pursuit the lights disappeared. The same pilot at 11:49 p.m. observed lights at a distance of about 5 miles (8 km). Again the lights disappeared when the aircraft got closer to them. Observers on the ground also noticed bright objects moving in the sky with high speeds. Some had fiery tails, like comets. At about 1:40 a.m. two more F-94 planes took off in order to search for the reported lights, but the pilots return at 2:20 a.m. having noticed nothing.

During this night for the first time unidentified objects were detected by radar and at the same time were seen by several observers. Pilots saw groups or sets of orange and red lights. Operators of the radar calculated that the objects had speeds from 38 to 90 mph (60 to 145 km/h), however pilots think that they were much higher because they could not catch up with them, and exceeded even the speed of a jet aircraft of 600 mph (1000 km/h). President Truman became interested in these phenomena, but officially he was told that during special weather conditions radar signals could give false readings⁴.

Analyzing various descriptions and witness statements it is difficult to work out whether the lights seen by the pilots could have originated from the objects detected by radar. Pilots stated that objects moved with high speeds, but the ground crew does not confirm this. In individual statements a lot of inaccuracies and contradictions exist. Since the pilots were the most important witnesses, and there is no access to their statements, it is hard to form an opinion about the real course of these events. One thing is certain, that five outstanding American scientists studied the evidence collected by the Air Force and very quickly reached a conclusion that there was no threat to United States security.

Roswell

On 7 July 1947, on a ranch about 30 miles north of Roswell in the state of New Mexico, broken remains of an unknown object were found. Two days later the local newspaper Roswell Daily Record described the event under the headline: "Harassed Rancher who Located 'Saucer' Sorry He Told About It". William Brazel was the rancher who found some remains of an unknown object. According to his statement, the bright wreckage was made up of rubber strips, tinfoil, a rather tough paper, tape and sticks. The debris did not weigh more than 5 pounds (2 kg) and did not contain any metal parts or fragments of an engine. Major Jesse Marcel of the 509th Bomb Group Intelligence Office arrived at the ranch and collected these parts. Major Marcel exerted pressure on the rancher, demanding that he must keep quiet about the findings. The next day the Air Force issued a statement that it was a flying saucer, however in the following announcement they contradicted everything. This time the debris was described as the remains of a weather balloon.

After over 30 years, in 1978, known ufologist S.T. Friedman published an interview with major Jesse Marcel who said that he had found parts of an alien ship including metal of extraordinary hardness, unknown on earth. Soon more witnesses came forward with accounts of 11 other UFO incidents in that area and the sightings of bodies of extraterrestrial beings. Due to the publication of numerous books and films on this subject, the Roswell incident became very popular and is

ranked among the most important UFO sightings in the history of ufology.

In the mid 1990s the US Air Force issued two reports which confirmed that the found debris were the remains of a stratospheric spy balloon sent to Russia as part of a very secret mission called Project Mogul. Under the balloon was suspended a reflector, helping radar to determine the position of the balloon. If the found remains indeed belonged to the classified program, this explains the panic in the US Air Force and the changing of their statements, as well as the attempt of putting pressure on the witnesses to keep the secret.

Socorro

Sergeant Lonnie Zamora was chasing a speeding car south of Socorro, New Mexico on April 24, 1964, at about 5:45 p.m. when he heard a roar and saw a flame in the sky to the southwest some distance away, possibly up to a mile. Thinking a local dynamite shack might have exploded, Zamora broke off the chase and went to investigate. He turned into a gravel road and drove further when he noticed a shiny object about 500 feet (150 m) away which at first glance looked like a white overturned car with two people standing next to it. Zamora thought that it was an accident and he decided to help the driver. He drove up closer, left the car and on foot started to approach the object. He had hardly turned from his car, when he heard a very loud roar, but not like a jet. At the same time as the roar he saw a flame. The flame was under the object. The object was starting to slowly go straight up. Zamora got scared and started running in the direction of his car, which he hid behind.

However he saw that the object was oval, aluminium-white color, without windows or doors, and with a red inscription on one side. Zamora continued his escape and hid behind the edge of hill about 70 feet (21 m) from the car. He saw the object rise to about 10 feet (3 m) and move away in a straight line. Zamora returned to his car and contacted the Sheriff's office by radio and informed him about the incident. He watched the object fly away swiftly but silently. It was climbing until it went high over the mountain and slowly disappeared.

Soon Sergeant Chavez arrived, but he did not manage to see anything. After inspecting the place where the object had been standing, they found its marks impressed in the soil.

Zamora's revelations evoked enormous interest. A well-known ufologist Raz Stanford arrived in Socorro. He examined police officers, as well as other witnesses who had seen the low flying object. Stanford published a book describing exactly the witnesses' statements. Officers from the Air Force representing the Blue Book project carried out a investigation. FBI and CIA agents as well as astronomer Dr. Allen Hynek who was Blue Book's consultant also arrived. Hynek assumed at first that the vehicle was a Lunar Landing Module tested by NASA, but after talking to the witnesses he changed his mind and described the case as a potential "Rosetta Stone" that might unlock the UFO mystery.

Recently some classified information was made publicly available which could explain the events in Socorro. Richard Bissell, a deputy director of the CIA, responsible for spying missions in the 1960s, stated in a television interview that after the shooting down of the U2 in Russia, the Americans were looking for new technologies, which could be used for new spy vehicles. A Canadian company AVRO worked on a vertical takeoff vehicle known as VZ-9-AV Avrocar, designed by an English engineer John Frost. The US Army bought the design from AVRO and the information on this subject was kept secret, so even the US Air Force did not know about it. This vehicle was shown on English television in 2009. It was in the shape of a disc about 20 feet (6 m) in diameter and was handled by two pilots, sitting in two independent cockpits. The test flights were probably held on the biggest artillery ranges in the United States in White Sands, New Mexico, not far from Socorro. Most likely, what Zamora saw, was an improved version of Avrocar, which in 1958-1959 barely got off the ground. The fact that Avrocar used special legs for landing, similar to the ones Zamora described, supports this hypothesis.

Dr. Allen Hynek- father of ufology

Dr. Hynek was one of the few scientists who had an unbiased approach

to and objectively investigated UFO phenomena. Before he formed an opinion about this subject, he devoted many years to their study. He implemented scientific methodology for the study of UFOs, proposing a new classification of these phenomena which at present is universally accepted.

Dr. Hynek was an astrophysicist. From 1936 he worked at Ohio State University in Columbus, and during the Second World War at the Johns Hopkins Physics Laboratory. From 1950 he served as a professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Ohio State University, and in 1956 became deputy director at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, where he was directing the tracking of American satellites. At the same time, from 1948 he was employed by the US Air Force as a scientific consultant for the investigation of UFO reports. He was involved in Project Sign, Project Grudge, and then in the years 1952 – 1969 in a program known as Blue Book Project. In 1973 Hynek was the founder and head of the Center for UFO Studies and he published *International UFO Reporter*.

To begin with Dr. Hynek had a skeptical approach to the sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects. His task as advisor to the UFO projects was to find scientific explanations for unusual incidents reported by witnesses. In 1948 he said that the entire issue was completely incredible and the interest in UFOs would soon fade. But, after analyzing hundreds of UFO phenomena, Hynek started slowly changing his mind. Many reports came from reliable sources. Pilots and even astronomers provided information about inexplicable phenomena. In the article published in 1953 Dr. Hynek states that scientists have a duty to analyze observations originating from credible sources, and “ridicule is not part of the scientific method”. At the beginning of the sixties his attitude towards the UFO events had changed 180 degrees. It resulted from, among others factors, the skeptical approach of the people managing Blue Book Project who did not believe in the existence of the UFO phenomena and did not want to hear about any of Hynek’s doubts and about any further analyses of these phenomena. His superiors behaved as if they knew in advance all the answers, and only wanted confirmation of them. Such an unscientific approach did not suit Hynek. Therefore he

started openly to criticize the stance of the US Air Force, however, as a conservative person, formulated his opinions very cautiously. For example in 1966 he stated: “What we have here is a signal-to-noise ratio problem: there is indeed a fantastic amount of noise, represented by the many misidentifications of familiar objects seen under unusual or surprising circumstances – balloons, birds, satellites, meteors, aircraft, stars – yet, in all scientific honesty, one is led to ask whether there might not indeed be a signal somewhere in the noise”.

In 1973 Hynek started expressing doubts as to the extraterrestrial origins of UFOs. The fact that such a huge number of reports existed describing contacts with unidentified objects — their number at that time exceeded 10,000 – bothered him greatly. In 1975 at the MUFON conference in Akron, Ohio, he said that: *“A few good sightings a year, over the world, would bolster the extraterrestrial hypothesis –but many thousands every year? From remote regions of space? And to what purpose? To scare us by stopping cars, and disturbing animals, and puzzling us with their seemingly pointless antics? ”* (Stringfield, 1977, p. 40).

Towards the end of his life, in 1983, he spoke out critically about the extraterrestrial origin of UFOs. Since this is an opinion of an outstanding scientist and ufologist who spent 35 years studying a large number of UFO observations, and for 20 years had access to almost all, even secret, statements of witnesses, and who himself carried out many investigations, it is worthwhile to quote his arguments:

1. Despite worldwide radar systems and Earth-orbiting satellites, UFOs are alleged to flit in and out of the atmosphere, leaving little to no evidence.
2. Space aliens are alleged to be overwhelmingly humanoid, and are allegedly able to exist on Earth without much difficulty (often lacking space suits, despite the fact that extra-solar planets would likely have different atmospheres, biospheres, gravity and other factors, and extraterrestrial life would likely be very different from Earthly life).
3. The number of reported UFOs and of purported encounters with UFO-inhabitants outstrips the number of expeditions that an alien civilization (or civilizations) could statistically be expected to mount.

4. The behavior of extraterrestrials reported during alleged abductions is often inconsistent and irrational.
5. UFOs are isolated in time and space: like the Cheshire Cat, they seem to appear and disappear at will, leaving only vague, ambiguous and mocking evidence of their presence.
6. Reported UFOs are often far too small to support a crew traveling through space, and their reported flight behavior is often not representative of a craft under intelligent control (erratic flight patterns, sudden course changes).
7. The distance between planets makes interstellar travel impractical, particularly because of the amount of energy that would be required for interstellar travel using conventional means⁵.

Hynek stated that it could be possible to argue with points 1 to 6, but the arguments in point 7 represented an insurmountable barrier to the validity of the extraterrestrial origins of UFOs. Theoretically other propulsion technologies could exist, enabling travel at speeds higher than the speed of light, but the civilizations, which would have to be on a level far more advanced than our own, would not need to appear so frequently on Earth in order to learn how we live.

Comments

On Earth many inexplicable events occur which many people automatically assume to be of extraterrestrial origin, including thousands of observations of unidentified lights appearing at night. Many photographs show UFOs as radiating light discs. However one should ask a pertinent question: what should the interstellar ships be illuminated for, to what purpose? Is it so the residents of Earth could see them? When we see a bright object in the sky, it is usually either lit from outside by the sun, or it is so hot (above 1800°F (1000°C)) that it generates its own light. For example: combustion gasses of jet engines could reach such high temperatures, but in such a case only the outlet nozzles of the engine could be visible, not the whole aircraft. If we look at night at a civilian jet aircraft we will not see any lights coming out of the engines,

because the temperature of the combustion gasses is too low to radiate visible light.

Until now extraterrestrial civilizations have not established any intelligent contact with people. A question troubling many UFO investigators still remains: What would extraterrestrial beings travel to Earth for, since after the arrival they do not establish any closer contact with our civilization?

However there are many other questions pertinent to the existence of UFOs which are still left unanswered by the researchers of these phenomena. The lack of irrefutable material evidence leads us to another question, whether one should not look for the explanation of the UFO phenomena rather in the human psyche⁶ than in the physical reality? Sixty years of intensive UFO investigations have not brought clear-cut results. The scientific evidence is still very unconvincing. Many researchers of extraterrestrial civilizations, such as for example well known astrophysicist Carl Sagan, were not convinced about the authenticity of UFOs.

Although some phenomena similar to those observed in Fatima were also reported during UFO sightings (Fernandes, 2007), the events in Fatima cannot be compared with any other UFO phenomena. Also the display in Fatima does not remind us of any UFO observation, although during the last 50 years many moving fiery and luminous discs, globes and balls have been observed.

In my opinion the most important differences between the events in Fatima and the UFO phenomena are as follows:

- Most of the UFO manifestations were observed by single persons, or small groups of witnesses. Only unidentified lights in the night sky were reported by many independent witnesses or confirmed by photographs.
- No appearance of a UFO was ever predicted.

CHAPTER 7

Who was responsible for the events in Fatima?

The large majority of Catholics believe that a Marian apparition took place in Fatima. This conclusion was reached after the long inquiry, analyses and interrogations of the witnesses had been accepted by the Catholic Church. The Church included the Fatima events in the category of private revelations, because they were based exclusively on the statements of the three visionaries. The significance of “the display in the sky” observed by thousands of people was not taken into consideration, because it did not have a distinct religious character.

However a detailed analysis of the events does not provide the convincing evidence that they were manifestations of God's provenance. The aim of this chapter is to consider the character of these events and to attempt to find an answer to the question, who could have organized them? In order to cast more light on this problem, certain relevant occurrences observed in Fatima will be discussed in detail.

Arguments undermining the divine origin of the events

During the apparitions some incidents took place which cast doubts on the divine origin of these events. Among these incidents we could include some of the statements made to the visionaries. Most important was the statement on 13 October 1917 that “the war will finish even today”, while in fact it ended over a year later, on 18 November 1918.

The second, very significant mistake was the preparation of an apparition on 13 August, while the children were imprisoned and could not participate in it. The witnesses present at that time in Cova da Iria confirmed that they saw a flash of light and heard rumblings, as well as noticed a small cloud above the tree, as during the previous apparitions.

At first not everyone was convinced about the divine origin of the phenomena, and Lucia's mother was very hostile to the news that the Virgin Mary appeared to her daughter. After the first two apparitions, Lucia had great doubts as to the origin of this phenomenon and, although in her memoirs she does not discuss this issue in detail, it is possible to guess that during these two months she could not cope with this problem.

In Lucia's and Jacinta's statements we cannot find even one sentence confirming that the appearing Lady called herself the Mother of Jesus or the Mother of God. She used other expressions such as “I came from the sky”. If we look at this rationally, we must admit, that a figure about 3 ft 8 in (1.1 m) high and looking like a 12-15 year old girl could not call herself the Mother of God. Moreover the figure never made the sign of the cross, did not pray, and until the final meeting with the visionaries, she never said clearly that she was an envoy of God.

If we make an assumption that in Fatima we dealt with an apparition of the divine being, the figure of the Virgin Mary should not look unnatural. However analysis of the visionaries' descriptions points to the fact that her image was far from perfect. The appearing figure was so luminous that the children had a problem with looking at her. When speaking she did not move her lips, and when she walked away did not move her legs, which looked quite unnatural. It appears from the descriptions provided that she looked more like a doll than a living being.

It is reasonable to assume that anybody standing before the divine

being would be so shocked by this event that they would not pay any attention to details. However the children, especially Lucia, noticed many of them, for example, that the Lady's skirt was knee-length.

It is also necessary to mention the parish priest, Father Manuel Marques Ferreira, who was convinced that the apparitions were the works of the devil. Although his opinion was very subjective and rather isolated, it is worth noticing that he received information directly from the children, obtained straight after the apparitions, before Lucia had acknowledged that it was the apparition of the Virgin Mary. The priest without a doubt was biased, and therefore did not conduct a thorough examination of the seers and did not ask penetrating questions, and Lucia, knowing his hostile attitude to the matter, did not provide any additional information. However the priest's intuition told him that what had happened in Fatima was not a true divine miracle.

We could pose the question: why did the organizers of the apparitions get in touch with the spiritualists in Lisbon and Porto rather than with the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church? If it was to be a religious apparition, then priests would be better persons to contact than the members of a disreputable association, not having much authority in society. The possible answer is that so called spiritualistic media have the ability for "paranormal" communication. I put paranormal in inverted commas, because probably it is not a paranormal communication at all, but we simply know nothing about this subject.

Could the apparitions have a secular character?

It is most unlikely that an apparition not referring to religious traditions would have had a chance to win the recognition and approval of society. Educated rationalists would regard it as charlatanism, hallucinations, illusions or mass hypnosis, regardless of what evidence might be available to prove its authenticity. The world of science, both then and today, avoids getting involved with scientifically inexplicable phenomena and therefore would certainly ignore the whole event.

In the case of a secular apparition people would ask themselves: "if this is not a divine manifestation, who is hiding behind it, and what

business does he have?”. Religious persons, who are in the majority, would assume that this is the work of the devil, therefore every event would be discredited or ignored. Therefore one could conclude that if the visionaries had announced that some unknown mysterious figure, rather than the Virgin Mary, had appeared to them, nobody would become interested in it.

Who prepared the apparitions?

We come to the most important point of our deliberations that is to the question: Who could prepare these apparitions? Analysis of the mistakes made during these events indicates that they could not be of divine origin. From the examples referred to earlier in this chapter, it is difficult to imagine that a divine being would not know about the imprisonment of the children on 13 August and also about the true date the war would end.

Divine apparitions driven by supernatural powers should not suffer from technical limitations, they should be perfect and unconstrained by any practical problems. The appearing figure should look and act like a normal person, and not resemble a doll radiating blinding light. Scientific analysis of the phenomena in Fatima explains the technical restrictions associated with the optical projection and shows that this event was based on the laws of physics, rather than on supernatural powers. However one could conclude that the knowledge and the technical level of the organizers of the apparitions significantly exceed the capabilities of our present science.

Taking the above arguments into consideration, I have reached a conclusion that the apparitions in Fatima could have been organized by intelligent extraterrestrial beings⁷. These beings are fully material and function in the framework of restrictions of biological systems and their activity is based on the scientific laws being valid in the whole universe.

CHAPTER 8

Extraterrestrial civilizations

The hypothesis that extraterrestrial beings were responsible for the Fatima apparitions should not be a source of great controversy because the possibility of the existence of aliens is becoming more and more acceptable to the world of science. For example, one of the most prominent contemporary astrophysicists, Stephen Hawking, warns mankind against extraterrestrial invaders⁸.

In this chapter we will look at the search for intelligent extraterrestrial civilizations, and the lack of corroborating evidence of their existence.

Searching for intelligent civilizations

Since 1962 the scientific world has seriously been considering the hypothesis of the existence of intelligent beings in the universe. Astrophysicists started to calculate the numbers of possible intelligent civilizations and, according to Drake's equation, in our galaxy, the Milky Way, there are probably from 100 to 100 million civilizations. Such a big spread in the estimate is due to the impossibility of accurate evaluation of the value of the components in this equation. It results from the fact that there are about 200 billion stars in our galaxy, about 10 percent of them

have physical parameters similar to the Sun, and many of them have planets. Recently Duncan Forman, a British scientist from Edinburgh University, estimated that suitable conditions for intelligent beings exist on almost 38,000 planets in our galaxy.

Apart from the theoretical analyses, activities have been undertaken aiming at establishing contact with extraterrestrial civilizations. One of the most controversial space explorations, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence SETI, as it is commonly known, began on April 8, 1960 and is still active. In 1974, using the largest in the world radio telescope at the Observatory in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, a specially encrypted radio signal was sent into outer space. There is also radio monitoring of the closest stars. Projects engaged in searching for extraterrestrial civilizations include META (Megachannel Extraterrestrial Array) programs, which work on the analysis of signals received from outer space. Although so far a few regular signals have been discovered, they are not repeated and therefore it is not possible to prove that they were sent by intelligent beings.

In October 1992 NASA inaugurated a new HRMS (High Resolution Microwave Survey) program, which was involved in the examination of several dozen stars similar to our Sun, using the biggest radio telescopes in the world. At the end of the nineties examinations of the optical signals received from a few thousand stars also commenced, but so far without positive results. The search for intelligent civilizations continues and it has now become a justifiable, regular part of scientific research.

Missing contacts

Despite the long search, it is still not possible to confirm the existence of intelligent civilizations in the universe. In 1950 Enrico Fermi, a famous Italian physicist, formulated the so-called “Fermi Paradox” which states that there is an apparent contradiction between the high probability of the existence of extraterrestrial civilizations and the lack of contact with such civilizations. Recently the Rare Earth hypothesis has been proposed by two scientists, Peter Ward and Donald Brownlee (2000), which explains the Fermi Paradox. According to them, a planet to be able to

support life must have very special properties, such as appropriate magnetosphere, tectonic plates, suitable chemical composition of the lithosphere, atmospheres and of the oceans. Values of many physical parameters of such a planet should lie in a very narrow and specific range. Such conditions can be fulfilled only by very few planets which are distant from each other and from us by thousands of light years and therefore it is almost impossible to discover them.

False premises

Calculations of the number of possible extraterrestrial civilizations are based on the assumption that if climatic conditions similar to Earth prevail on a planet, i.e. there is liquid water and the right temperature, then life will automatically come into existence which, as a result of evolution, will produce an intelligent civilization.

This hypothesis was proposed by a Soviet biochemist Alexander Oparin (2003) in his book “The origin of life”, published in 1922. Oparin proposed that there is no fundamental difference between a living organism and lifeless matter, therefore life on earth could come into existence as a result of chemical reactions in the reducing atmosphere containing methane, ammonia, hydrogen and water. In his opinion, these were the raw materials for the evolution of life. He performed no experiments which could confirm his theory, but in 1953 Stanley Miller, a student at the University in Chicago, subjected a mixture of methane, hydrogen, ammonia to electric discharges and demonstrated that these compounds and water can react to produce amino acids essential for the formation of living matter.

Since then the word of science has assumed that life on earth came into existence in a similar way. In spite of many years of experiments using comparable techniques, still nobody could manage to create any fragments of the DNA code from carbon, oxygen, nitrogen and other elements, nor even suggest a theoretical solution describing the possible process of forming it. However life depends not only on the extremely complicated DNA code, but also on the specific conditions needed for its formation and development. It turns out that producing the synthetic

code does not solve the riddle of life, and we know now that for a living organism to come into existence this DNA must be placed in a suitable cell which exerts an influence on this code. With the progress of science we learn that life is a very complicated phenomenon, and that Oparin's simplistic theory is not confirmed by the latest research results.

Analyzing these experiments, which were supposed to prove the origins of life from lifeless matter, we reach a conclusion that it is very improbable that life on earth, and on other planets having similar climatic conditions, could accidentally come into existence. Therefore the hypothesis of the existence of many intelligent civilizations in the universe is based on false premises.

Hypothesis of panspermia

So how could life on earth have come into existence? A Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius (1859-1927) put forward a hypothesis of panspermia. Panspermia proposes that life that can survive the effects of space, such as bacteria, becomes trapped in debris that's ejected into space after collisions between planets that harbor life. Bacteria may travel dormant for an extended amount of time before colliding randomly with other planets having a suitable habitat to support life. The means of travel could include meteorites, comets or simply pressure of radiation. This hypothesis was supported by a well known British astrophysicist Fred Hoyle and a famous scientist, Nobel Prize winner and discoverer of DNA, Prof. Francis Crick. Crick in 1973 admitted that the origin of life in the universe was unusually difficult to explain and was a very rare event. If life came into existence in one place, it was probably proliferated by intelligent, extraterrestrial civilizations.

The possibility that amino acids and even more complex biochemical components arrived at our planet along with comets, meteorites and cosmic dust is becoming more and more accepted by scientists. The fact that life on earth appeared very shortly after suitable climatic conditions had been established enhances this hypothesis, because there was not enough time for gradual evolution. It is important to emphasize that the first bacteria discovered on earth had intricate biochemical structures and

well-developed DNA codes.

Researchers have at their disposal more and more evidence corroborating the presence of organic material in outer space. In the cracks of the meteorite from Mars, discovered in 1984 in Antarctica, were found fossils of primitive bacteria and organic compounds, by-products of organic activity. In 2004 the space probe Stardust took samples from the tail of a comet called Wild 2. In these samples scientists from NASA discovered the presence of glycine, a building block of life. A study of the Murchison meteorite which fell in 1969 in Australia, shows the presence of 14,000 organic compounds including 70 amino acids and supports the hypothesis of panspermia. We also have more evidence for the existence of biochemical material in the upper layers of the stratosphere. Scientists in India confirmed the presence of bacteria at 26 miles (41 km) altitude. Recently American researchers discovered a thin layer of water and organic molecules on the surface of asteroid 24 Themis, which is on the orbit between Mars and Jupiter.

The hypothesis of panspermia does not answer the question as to how life originated, but makes us aware that it could arise in unknown nooks of the Universe. Perhaps its arrival on Earth happened by accident but, if not, it would attest to the existence of a highly developed civilization which somehow contributes to the proliferation of life.

Summary

The possibility of the existence of intelligent extraterrestrial civilizations in the universe has already been accepted by the world of science, which is reflected by numerous cosmic signal search programs carried out by various scientific institutions. It is also acknowledged that many civilizations could be at a much higher level of development than our own, and even the possibility of their interference in human lives is not rejected.

The spontaneous arising of life on Earth is not confirmed by scientific experiments and, so far, we are not even able to understand how biological organisms come into existence. Extremely complicated biochemical and genetic mechanisms of functioning of even the simplest

types of species makes their accidental coming into existence very improbable. Based exclusively on the available scientific data and on rational premises, we can come to the only logical conclusion that life had to arrive on Earth from outer space. The hypothesis accepted by the world of science that water was delivered to Earth by comets in which was also discovered biological material, supports a solution that these comets could also be responsible for the transport of the original biological organisms from which evolved all life forms known to us.

Establishing contact with higher civilizations is practically impossible, because when searching for them we use methods and technologies which correspond to our level of knowledge. These civilizations are probably much more advanced than we are, and therefore the likelihood that they use methods of communication similar to ours is very slight.

However there is another method of discovering the existence of extraterrestrial civilizations, based on looking for phenomena on earth which could be produced by the unknown to us, intelligent beings. If these civilizations wanted to establish contact with people, they would use methods of communication adapted for our level of reception. The events in Fatima therefore could be a proof of establishing such a contact.

CHAPTER 9

Organization of the apparitions

Assuming that intelligent beings were responsible for the Fatima events, let us consider the organization of these events from the point of view of modern project management. These events were planned to be on a large scale, requiring coordination of many different elements and understanding of the local conditions, and therefore a major organizational and physical effort was needed.

Place of the apparitions

The apparitions were organized in Portugal, because the situation in this country required fast intervention. The new revolutionary government, supported by Freemasons and atheists, tried to force the Catholic society to reject their religion and adopt the materialistic world view and that created a real threat of civil war.

For the place of the apparitions Fatima was selected, which is located to the north of Lisbon. Why was this poor village singled out? The name of the place has connections with legendary events which took place nearly 800 years earlier and is associated with the Muslim religion, because the beloved daughter of the prophet Muhammad was called

Fatima. According to a local story at the beginning of the 12th century, when the Moors governed southern Portugal, a leader of Christian soldiers fighting against the Muslims – Gonçalo Hermingues – captured a daughter of the Muslim ruler of the province during a skirmish with the enemy. Gonçalo fell in love with the princess, called Fatima, and they were soon married. The Portuguese king, Alfonso Henriques, gave Gonçalo as a wedding gift land called at present Vila Nova de Ourem. Unfortunately the beautiful princess died very young and was buried in a church in the nearby village which from then on was called Fatima.

So it is not a coincidence that exactly this place was chosen out of thousands of other villages. Islam belongs to the main monotheistic religions and has very strong connections with Christianity. Christ is regarded by Muslims as one of the most important prophets. The Mother of Christ is also worshipped and she is mentioned in the Quran as many as thirty times, and four verses are exclusively devoted to her. In the Muslim hierarchy the Virgin Mary occupies the highest place amongst women, enjoying greater reverence than Muhammad's daughter Fatima. It is not certain whether connecting the Marian apparitions with the name Fatima would help in recognizing this apparition by the Muslim world. The problem lies in the fact that in Islam there are no intermediaries between God and people, and God does not appear to the faithful. So Muslims normally disregard apparitions, yet the events in Cova da Iria were noticed by the Islamic world and many of them make a pilgrimage to Fatima.

The selection and proving of the visionaries

Choosing the right recipients, namely visionaries, who would be trustworthy and able to pass the contents of the apparitions on to other people, was a very important issue. At least two or three seers should take part in order to authenticate their statements. Children are most suitable for this task, because hardly anyone will suspect that they act in a calculating way, in order to obtain some benefits. However, children have a very vivid imagination and often they do not distinguish reality from fantasy. Moreover they are susceptible to suggestions, but this

characteristic could turn out to be beneficial and would make them good recipients of the apparitions.

In a perfect situation the recipients should also be illiterate which would guarantee that they have not read fables and other fantasy stories stimulating their imagination, and do not know religious books with the descriptions of other apparitions which could influence them. The visionaries should be religious in order to obediently carry out the received instructions. But at the same time they should display courage and mental acuity so that they will not be scared of the appearing figure, and they should be able to ask sensible questions and to understand replies. The seers should also remember and pass to others the received information without any distortions, and, after the events, should be able to learn to read and to write in order to actively disseminate the knowledge acquired during the apparitions.

Probably the best candidates for visionaries are children from 7 to 14 years old. As we know, in the three most important apparitions in Europe: in La Salette, Lourdes and Fatima, children in this age bracket played the main role. However, although boys took a part in them, they played minor roles, and in the center of events were always girls. Perhaps they have a more sensitive structure of the brain susceptible to “paranormal” communication, however nobody has investigated this subject.

Admittedly Lucia, who was chosen to be a visionary in Fatima, met all the requirements, and above all we are amazed by the way she conducted conversations with the Lady. There was no whit of anxiety, being lost or unsure. The first questions: “Where are you from?” and “What are you doing in this world?” seem unusual for a 10 year old shepherdess standing in front of the heavenly figure and show great self-confidence and courage. Lucia fulfilled her role superbly. She not only withstood enormous stresses associated with the contact with the supernatural figure, but also with the pressure of many interrogations, interviews by the press, arrest, not to mention the pressures from unexpected directions such as from her mother, the priest and hostile neighbors. After these events, Lucia, for many years, exerted a strong influence on the Church Fathers to fulfill instruction that she received during the

apparitions.

If one organizes such an important event, it is necessary to make sure beforehand that principal participants have appropriate predispositions, enabling them to receive certain kinds of information. Early apparitions, which according to Lucia took place in 1915, were such a test. These apparitions were very primitive and the figure which appeared to Lucia several times said nothing, was as white as snow and in the sun seemed transparent like clear crystal. Probably this apparition was meant to be a technical trial, and was not very successful, because Lucia had not associated the figure with the Virgin Mary. Francisco and Jacinta did not participate in these early apparitions. The test concerned only Lucia and it showed that she had the appropriate predispositions to be a visionary. Because of this experience she was prepared much earlier for that kind of event and therefore when she faced the heavenly figure she did not get scared and was able to carry out an intelligent conversation with her. Choosing Lucia out of many other children contributed to the success of the Fatima apparitions.

Preparations before the apparitions

To ensure the effectiveness of the apparitions and that they will fulfill their objectives, as many people as possible should know about them, therefore the press should be involved right from the beginning. This was done by using spiritualists. At first a group based in Lisbon was contacted by sending them an encrypted message. Although it contained no essential information, the spiritualists regarded it as important enough to place an advertisement in the newspaper two months before the planned apparition. However because it was not noticed by journalists and readers, it was decided to get in touch once more with spiritualists, but this time in Porto, where three newspapers published a letter. In order to catch the attention of journalists, the letter also mentioned the war. It is hard to find a better subject arousing greater emotions at that time. The war that had lasted for almost three years already, was the most important event in Portugal which had joined the fighting in 1916, and sent many soldiers to the front. However if we analyze the statements of

the visionaries they show that including in the announcements passages concerning the war, it was only a stratagem, because nothing important on this subject was said during the apparitions.

The plan in Porto succeeded superbly, because journalists picked up the subject of spiritualism, in which normally they were not interested, and wrote critical, ironic, not to say humorous commentaries. We know now that this is one of the essential principles of marketing. There is no better method of promoting artists, film stars, politicians or various events than to stir up some controversy about them. Thanks to that, three leading newspapers in Portugal placed editorial commentaries which could not pass unnoticed by the wide circle of readers.

This attests to the fact that whoever was responsible for the apparitions knew human nature very well, knew how to arouse the interest of the press, sending to them not necessarily completely accurate information. They also knew that society must be prepared for the planned events, so that when they take place, people will associate the newspaper articles with information about the apparitions and will become interested in them. We could say that this propaganda campaign was very well planned. At present such a strategy does not raise any surprises, but in those times, and what's more in Portugal, it was certainly unusual.

Religious character of the apparitions

To ensure that the information about the apparitions will be disseminated around the world reaching the largest circle of people, and be consolidated in society, there is a need for an institution or an organization consisting of the right people and having at its disposal significant resources. All these requirements were met by the Catholic Church, which had a centralized management structure, vast financial resources, but above all numerous disciplined priests, who carried out without any hesitation the orders of their superiors.

Beings responsible for the Fatima events reached the conclusion that the apparitions must be perceived in a religious context and, if they are going to accomplish their task, in a Catholic country, the Virgin Mary should appear to children.

Methods of popularizing the apparitions

In order to pass the message to the children, one apparition would be enough, as for example in La Salette. But why were as many as six sessions needed, especially as during the second meeting nothing new was said, and they may possibly be considered a waste of time? However it was in fact a well thought out plan. It turned out that each time the number of witnesses increased. While in May only three seers attended the meeting and in June about 40 persons, in July as many as 5000 pilgrims came, in August 15,000, in September over 25,000, and in October about 50,000. Although the onlookers present in Cova da Iria could see nothing notable, they did spread information about the apparitions. As the events became more and more well-known, faith in their authenticity increased, therefore very few witnesses of the last apparition had any doubts about the truthfulness of the visionaries.

An additional element contributing to the increasing interest in the apparitions were secrets which were to be revealed only many years after the events. Nothing attracts the press and stimulates the curiosity of people more than matters which are kept secret and unavailable to the public. Arousing curiosity and keeping interest in the apparitions alive for a long time was the only rational explanation for the existence of the secrets. In Fatima we dealt with three mysteries. The first two were revealed in 1942, but the third one only in the year 2000. Over the last 90 years, world press writing about Fatima was mainly interested in the secrets, especially the third one. And so we witness manipulation of public opinion using public relations techniques.

Events in La Salette and Lourdes, owing to the media, achieved considerable popularity before they were acknowledged by the Church. In the case of the events in Fatima, the role of the press was already significant during the apparitions, even before they started. Thanks to the press, thousands of people were able to observe “the display in the sky”, and, what is more important, detailed descriptions of this event were printed in magazines and newspapers which helped to popularize the apparitions in Portugal.

Show business

The apogee of the events in Fatima was “the display in the sky”, when tens of thousands of people saw in the sky a moving disc of silver-blue color. For the first time in the history of apparitions, such an event was announced a few months earlier, and this enabled participation in it of many people. Until then only a few visionaries witnessed unusual manifestations, but the faithful and the Church Fathers had to accept their truthfulness, based exclusively on their statements.

However if one wanted to convince hard atheists and anticlerical individuals about events of divine origin, it would not be sufficient to say to them, for example: “believe that these three shepherds saw something”. Some people want to experience unusual phenomena themselves and only on this basis will they make decisions. Telling them about the experiences of others would never convince them. Since the elite ruling in Portugal were not only atheistic, but also had a hostile predisposition to religion and to the Church, evidence was needed which would be very difficult to dismiss. Regardless of the attitudes and beliefs of the observers in Fatima, they witnessed a very spectacular show, leaving no doubt as to its miraculous origins.

CHAPTER 10

The purpose of the Fatima events

What purpose did the apparitions serve? Why did they happen in Portugal, rather than in other countries? are the most frequently asked questions by persons interested in the Fatima events. They had special objectives to fulfill, but in order to understand them, we must first consider the political situation in the first decades of the 20th century in Portugal.

Political situation in Portugal

At the beginning of the 20th century, Portugal was very much weakened by continuous fighting between the Catholic monarchists, supported by the aristocracy and clergy, and the republicans, led by Freemasons supported by the intelligentsia. Portugal was then a very backward country with a low standard of living and widespread illiteracy. Progressive groups tried to change this situation however they realized that it would not be possible to take over the government using free elections. At the beginning of 1908, King Carlos I of Portugal and his son and heir, prince Luis Filipe, Duke of Braganza, were killed by assassins belonging to the republican camp. Eighteen-year-old Manuel II,

who assumed power after the death of his father, was a weak ruler, submissive to the republicans which led to the fall of the monarchy. On the night of 3 October 1910, as a result of a coup d'état, the king was forced to leave the country, which was then proclaimed the Portuguese Republic. After staging the coup, the anticlerical Freemasons assumed all the most important political and administrative positions in the Republic.

From the first days of the Republic, fighting against the Catholic religion became one of the main objectives of the new regime. As part of the anticlerical revolution, the bishops were driven from their dioceses, the property of clerics was seized by the state, wearing of the cassock was banned, all minor seminaries and all but five major seminaries were closed and religious orders were expelled from the country. Religious education was prohibited in both primary and secondary schools. The ambassador at the Holy See was recalled, and the papal nuncio had to leave Portugal. Religious symbols were removed from public buildings, religious holidays were no longer public holidays, and Sundays were called “the day of rest”.

The government officially carried out the total separation of the Church from the State, but at the same time confiscated church property. Author of these changes, Alfonso Costa, Justice Minister and leader of the ruling Democratic Party, was also an atheist. His objective was to remove the Catholic religion from Portugal within two generations. He started a mass publicity campaign to promote atheism and the scientific world view, defaming religion and the Church. Mobilized by Costa, hit squads made bomb attacks on churches during services, and the most brutal murder was committed when they bombed the St. Anthony procession on 10 June 1913 in Lisbon, killing several children. These policies of the Portuguese government were ahead of the religious persecutions in the Soviet Union by at least 15 years and could have led to a quick extirpation of religion from the country.

Objectives of the apparitions

In order to stop this atheistic “crusade” before it led to dramatic social changes, fast and unequivocal help was needed. It is fair to assume that

the beings responsible for the events in Fatima had full knowledge of the events on Earth. They knew about the war destroying Europe, about the revolution and the persecution of the Church in Portugal. An intervention had to take place quickly, before the new regime consolidated its powers and until forces existed in the country able to oppose it. However, the beings were not able to directly influence the situation in Portugal and any political change would have to be made by the affected people themselves. Because the regime tried to remove religion, and there were many atheists especially amongst the intelligentsia, the intervention consisted mainly in strengthening the faith of the believers and in convincing the atheists of the existence of God.

The events in Fatima, especially “the display in the sky”, reinforced the faith of millions of Portuguese people, and as a result weakened the ruling elite. Very soon after the apparitions, in December 1917, the military coup under the leadership of Sidonio Pais restored traditional religious values. A year later, in December 1918, the president, Pais, was murdered by the radicals who again came to power. However, after the Fatima apparitions, their anti religious policies lost many supporters and were not very effective. The Fatima intervention achieved almost immediate success, although another 8 years had to pass until the Church regained its lost position.

Information provided during the apparitions

The information handed over during the apparitions was not very important. The Lady informed Lucia, that the war “will end even today”, that is on 13 October 1917. In fact, as we know, it ended in November 1918. Anyway the victory over the German coalition was sealed at the moment when the United States entered the war on 6 April 1917, therefore the importance of the given prophecy was minimal.

The Fatima secrets were revealed only after the events which they predicted, therefore their value was negligible. Without any doubt the most important information was included in the second secret, foretelling the outbreak of the second world war. It was predicted as an even more horrific war than the one which was taking place. According to Lucia’s

memoirs, in the sky would appear unusual lights which would herald terrible events which would take place during the pontificate of Pope Pius XI. And thus it happened. On 25 January 1938 the sky above the entire continent of Europe burst into flames⁹. The glow was visible from Scandinavia to North Africa. It was the result of the formation of an intense aurora borealis, unseen so far in Europe. Was this event a true prediction? In the opinion of some historians, the Second World War started when the German armies entered Austria on 12 March 1938, about one month after the death of the Pope Pius XI. The prophecy, although known earlier, was published on 13 October 1942.

The second secret also contains a prediction that Russia will “convert herself”, something that happened only in 1991. The events causing the fall of the Soviet Union are discussed in Chapter 24.

The third secret forecasts some horrifying events, but especially the death of a Pope. The prophecy has a very general character and it would be difficult to establish when these events were supposed to take place.

We could conclude that the information disclosed to the visionaries did not make much impact on the course of history and therefore did not belong to the main objectives of the apparitions.

CHAPTER 11

Principles and objectives of the interventions

Hypothesis of multiple interventions

Analysis of the events in Fatima supports the hypothesis that they were prepared by intelligent beings whose level of development is beyond human capabilities. Their understanding of the laws of physics, biological structures and psychological phenomena is close to absolute knowledge.

Regardless of how advanced these beings are and what resources they have at their disposal, their potential for interaction with human beings is very limited. The beings from such an advanced civilization, apart from the desire to help us, do not have any other reasons to establish contact with us, because they cannot learn anything from us, we can give them nothing, and we would understand very little of what they could tell us about themselves. Any transfer of technical or scientific information from their side would only result in disaster for us. Therefore from the point of view of the higher civilization, contacts of the UFO type do not make much sense. They know that any direct contact with us would be

detrimental for us, similar to the outcome of our contacts with primitive people, such as the Amazon tribes in South America.

The significance of the Fatima apparitions is not exclusively linked to the issues associated with the situation in Portugal. Apart from the short-term objectives, aiming at preventing the conflict escalating in the country which could have led to the outbreak of a bloody civil war, a more far-sighted purpose existed. For the first time in the history of humankind, the intelligent beings provided us with unique evidence of their existence, and proof that they intervene in our affairs in order to help us.

Since evidence exists that, at least in one case, the intelligent beings provided aid to the inhabitants of Portugal, one could draw a logical conclusion that probably it was not their first intervention during the history of mankind. We could put forward a hypothesis that the apparition in Fatima was not a single, unrelated event but part of a greater plan based on principles set out by the intelligent beings. Going further, we could assume that these beings have followed the existence of Homo sapiens since this species appeared on Earth. Their interest was not limited to observations, they were providing help to people when it was necessary.

The principles of interventions

As we mentioned, interventions of intelligent beings in human matters are not accidental. On the contrary, they result from the rules of engagement established by them. It is necessary to emphasize once more that when we talk about the interventions of intelligent beings we do not mean God or supernatural powers. The beings which look after us are fully material and they function in the framework of the laws ruling the universe, therefore all their actions must comply with these laws. We do not yet know all of them, but many, like the laws of thermodynamics, gravity, and relativity, have already been discovered by us.

The possibility of contacts by intelligent beings with people is also determined by the physical conditions of the existence and functioning of both civilizations. We do not know where they are located, but we are

sure that they are far from Earth, and this fact limits the means of contact to some forms of communication. Direct physical interventions could be very difficult to carry out, although not impossible. We also do not know how the intelligent beings look, but their bodies are probably similar to our own biological structures. If evolution on Earth proceeded according to some common universal principles, it is possible that these beings have hominid-like forms.

It is reasonable to assume that extraterrestrial civilizations, which could have existed for billions of years, possess total scientific knowledge and understanding of all physical processes which exist in the universe. Perhaps their inhabitants know and are able to use other types of energy and waves which have not yet been discovered by mankind. It cannot be ruled out that these waves, unlike radio or light waves, could travel with speeds much greater than the speed of light. The knowledge of the intelligent beings would allow them to understand our psyche and the working of our brain and communicate directly with our minds. Although I reject any supernatural influences, however, because our science is still in the early stages of its development I cannot exclude the possibility of the existence of special waves which could be used for the transmission of both vision, and voice, and could be received directly by the human mind. For example an unusual psychological manifestation such as hypnosis is well substantiated and is applied in the medical field, but scientists are still unable to explain how it works.

The most common forms of intervention by intelligent beings are probably limited to the passing of certain information to people such as new ideas, and perhaps even influencing the ways of their thinking. It is reasonable to suppose that the intelligent beings try to modify people's behavior mainly through their education. This could have an enormous effect on our mutual relations, because if people from their own free will do not accept help, do not take any note of the provided information, and will not follow it with the necessary action, the intelligent beings are not able to force them to do so. And this is the most important rule, limiting the extent and the effectiveness of any interventions.

It is very unlikely, although not impossible, that the intelligent beings wish to intervene in human matters directly, using physical means.

Probably such an intervention would not bring the desired effects, and could lead to a physical assault, including killing people. Therefore one should exclude direct participation of the intelligent beings in human fights, wars and revolutions. They cannot force us to do any unwanted activity, give us material goods, or intervene physically in the life of an individual person or larger communities, e.g. heal the sick or protect the weak from violence. They are not able, or do not want, to prevent natural cataclysms such as droughts, floods, or earthquakes, although they probably would intervene if mankind was threatened by total extermination.

Perhaps in the past, under special circumstances, for example when it was necessary to transfer to humans a very large amount of complex information, one cannot rule out the possibility of direct contacts by intelligent beings with people, such as arriving on Earth in order to hand over certain knowledge to our ancestors.

Forms of communication

As already mentioned, interventions of intelligent beings mainly take the form of communicating with people. Analysis of the events in Fatima gives us some insight into what types of communication could be used for such contact.

During “the display in the sky” a visual form of communication was used, intended for a gathering of several thousand people. The message was simple and contained very little information. The objective of this public display was to convince the onlookers that the observed event had a supernatural character. Such a public display has a very limited application and can only be used in special situations.

The visionaries received several different forms of communication. During the apparitions, visual and acoustic techniques were used. Visual communication was limited to the transmission of an almost stationary image of the appearing figure. The majority of the information was handed over to the seers via verbal communication.

During the communication of the Fatima secrets, the visionaries, but above all Lucia, received special transmissions directly to their minds.

These personal visions contained complex messages, introduced in the form of allegorical images. Sending information directly to the minds of seers is the most effective form of communication, and was used during other apparitions. Images, full of symbolism, require further interpretation, however verbal communication can contain accurate, easily understandable instructions.

Recipients of the information

A question arises as to whether the intelligent beings can communicate with everyone, or only with selected individuals having a special predisposition. The recipient must probably have specific mind attributes such as sensitivity, intelligence, idealism, belief in God or ideas. It is not clear whether only children can be the recipients, although they were selected as visionaries in the large majority of Marian apparitions. Perhaps only young people have certain abilities which disappear later in adulthood. However we know that Lucia experienced personal apparitions for many years, so she did not lose her predisposition with age.

The history of apparitions shows that contacts with intelligent beings were usually part of a religious experience. A deeply devout person, convinced about the divine origin of the apparition, would follow received orders or would accept information passed on to him or her without any psychological or intellectual resistance. The situation would be much more difficult in the case of skeptics or atheists who at best would regard an experience of this type as a delusion or a daydream, and at worst as hallucinations or mental illness¹⁰.

However we cannot exclude the possibility of communication between intelligent beings and nonbelievers, but this can only take place under conditions where the recipient is unaware of anything. It could happen that at one instant, a person has a flash of insight, when some thought, observation or idea comes to his or her mind. It could take place while a person is awake or asleep. The advantage of such an interaction is that the recipient considers himself as the originator of a specific solution, a new method or new approach towards some

problems. In certain cases it could be several transmissions of data which would slowly change man's beliefs and direct his activity in the desired direction, at the same time this person remaining completely unaware of these changes.

Limitations of intervention

The prospect of intelligent beings contacting us depends on many elements, the most important being the distance between them and the Earth. It is probably very large which rules out, or in any case hampers, direct physical interactions and personal contacts. Various forms of communication are subject to distance restrictions caused by the existence of noise in nature. For good reception the signal level would have to be much higher than the noise level. Analysis of the events in Fatima points to the fact that their organizers had to be in outer space, at a distance not greater than a few thousand kilometers from the Earth. It is unlikely that this place was their permanent abode. Therefore we could assume that interventions such as the Fatima apparitions would require a relocation of the intelligent beings.

To intervene at the right time, the intelligent beings must have information at their disposal about what happens on earth. While in the Stone Age the amount of received information was minimal, at present, as a result of the development of our civilization and our increased population, the amount of data would certainly be enormous, therefore these beings must have a system of monitoring events on earth. The monitoring system could be based on satellites orbiting the Earth at a distance which makes them undetectable. Such unmanned spacecrafts could stay in a high orbit for thousands of years and they could also be used to prepare apparitions.

The causes and objectives of interventions

Analysis of historical data points to the likelihood that intelligent beings intervened mainly in situations critical for the development of mankind. If they undertook long term actions, they were exclusively concerned with the most significant matters associated with the survival of our kind.

During the early period, one of their most important objectives was to ensure that mankind had sufficient food. Anthropological and genetic investigations showed that *Homo sapiens* appeared in Africa about 200,000 years ago, and after 140,000 years started gradually migrating, populating areas of Asia, Australia and of Europe. The climatic conditions in Africa provided enough food which was obtained with traditional methods, e.g. hunting and gathering edible parts of plants. After leaving Africa these methods could not secure enough food for a growing population living in difficult climatic conditions, and therefore there was a need to implement the cultivation of plants and the rearing of domesticated animals.

It is very likely that the basic principles of agriculture were passed to mankind by intelligent beings, because they were not invented independently in many different faraway corners of the world. The first cultivation of land appeared about 9000 years BC in a “fertile crescent” lying in present day west Iran, north Iraq, Syria and south-east Turkey, from where it slowly spread to Asia and Europe¹¹. Recent investigations show that the eight most important species of grain and other plants were introduced practically at the same time and their seeds differed greatly from the seeds of wild growing plants. In particular domesticated wheat shows significant genetic modifications. Wheat of the domesticated form has larger seeds and a non-shattering stem. When wild wheat is ripe, the stem that keeps the wheat shafts together shatters, so that the seeds can disperse themselves. Domesticated wheat seeds remain on the stem enabling farmers to harvest them. It is difficult to imagine how wheat could have evolved such a modification which prevents its natural spreading, and only helps man to collect its seeds. The divine origins of agriculture are mentioned in Sumerian as well as Egyptian mythology; according to them the gods gave the seeds to people and taught them farming.

In the history of humanity the next critical event was the development of the intellectual and spiritual aspects of man, his transition from a primitive, purely biological existence, to a conscious being. This took place as a result of the arising of the first civilizations which was a watershed event, because it created the foundations of the

existence of the modern, civilized man. During this stage many modern institutions, new methods of organization and management, new technologies and new laws and social rules were established. The issues associated with the coming into existence of civilizations are discussed in Part Two.

Societies existing thousands of years ago formed their own, local laws, which in many cases were brutal and unfair, such as religious rites requiring human sacrifices. To make these societies more humanitarian new rules controlling people's behavior – protecting the weak against the power of the strong, rich and brutal, taking care of poor men, widows and orphans, had to be introduced. To ensure that such new laws were observed, new institutions had to come into existence to enforce them. The new religions which are discussed in Part Three were such institutions.

Activities whose purpose is to protect the development of mankind when it is threatened by extremely harmful actions of certain groups of people, belong to a special class of intervention by intelligent beings. In the 20th century, as a result of the birth of new totalitarian ideologies, a considerable risk arose for all mankind. The Nazi and Communist powers were destroying many intrinsic human values important for the development of western civilization and, if they were not thwarted, would cause irreparable damage to mankind. The most dangerous elements of their activities included their aspiration to change the mentality and awareness of the whole of society using education, propaganda, manipulation and psychological pressure. These imminent dangers for humanity required decisive actions. I consider that these actions included preventing the victory of the Nazis during the Second World War, and contributing to the fall of the Soviet Union which threatened people not only in Europe, but in the entire world. These interventions are discussed in Part Four.

As we know, nobody so far has been able to prevent the outbreaks of wars and the suffering of their victims, and for this to happen, the nature of man must change. I believe that intelligent beings want to change the psyche of man in such a way that he will stop solving interpersonal conflicts by the use of force and will cease inflicting suffering on other

human beings. So to stop this primitive behavior, man must achieve a higher awareness of himself. It is one of the most important objectives of interference by intelligent beings. This issue is discussed in Part Five.

Part Two

The first civilizations

CHAPTER 12

Sumerian civilization

Beginnings of the first civilizations

The three earliest civilizations, in Egypt, Sumer (known as Mesopotamia, modern Iraq) and in the Indus valley (modern Pakistan), came into existence in the fourth millennium BC. It is surprising that all three originated in very similar climatic and geographical conditions. These are practically semi desert areas, across which flow big rivers – the Nile in Egypt, the Euphrates and Tigris in Sumer and the Indus in Pakistan. These areas, having high yearly average air temperature and low rainfall, below 8 inches (200 mm), were not suitable for efficient agriculture. Nonetheless in the run up to the development of these civilizations the local population was occupied with farming and fishery, and lived in very modest, primitive conditions. As a result of the development of new civilizations, in a very short space of time in these areas, cities came into existence with wonderful temples, with developed trade, with humanitarian laws, and most importantly with a very productive agriculture providing everyone with sufficient food.

The arising of civilizations next to large rivers could be linked to drastic climatic changes which occurred in the fourth millennium BC. On account of constantly decreasing rainfall, many areas lying on certain latitudes such as the Sahara became deserts¹², and about 3,500 years BC, a great drop of rainfall was also recorded in Egypt. So the big rivers

ensured a constant and reliable water supply, without which obviously no civilization could come into existence and grow.

Archaeological discoveries show that Sumerians appeared in Mesopotamia, probably about 5,500 years ago. However it was not possible to establish where they arrived from. We learn about their language from the tablets covered with cuneiform writing which originated about 3,000 years BC. The Sumerian language had entirely different vocabulary, grammar and syntax than the languages of the local Semitic tribes. It belongs to the agglutinative languages, which combine parts of words into long sequences to form sentences. It is related to the Ural-Altaic languages, including the Finno-Ugrian family, Finnish and Hungarian among others, as well as the Turkish tongues. Lands occupied by the Sumerians had been already inhabited earlier. This is confirmed by the fact that the original names of several cities, such as Eridu and Larsa, and the rivers Idiglat (Tigris) and Buranun (Euphrates) are not of Sumerian origin because they are not monosyllabic.

It is difficult to answer the question as to why the founders of these civilizations chose to settle in these semi desert areas. In Sumer there were no forests and little vegetation, but five hundred miles (800 km) to the north were fertile lands, covered by forest, with sufficient rainfall. However these territories were already inhabited and, in order to take possession of them, it would have been necessary to remove or enslave the previous owners. Sumerians belonged, for contemporary times, to an exceptionally peacefully inclined people and probably did not want to conquer new lands. Analyzing the beginnings of their civilization we can state that it was not introduced by force. It came into existence as a result of the settling in Mesopotamia of small groups of unknown travelers, choosing places, in which the life of the local residents seemed particularly difficult and uncertain. The strangers preferred to settle there, where they could show the superiority of their civilization, creating a better standard of living, thanks to the new technique of cultivation of soil based on the irrigation of fields, and in this way to become benefactors of the local population.

Outline of Sumerian history

The Sumerian civilization was probably established about 3500 years BC¹³ in the area of about 12,000 square miles (30,000 square kilometers), in the lower valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which thousands of years earlier was part of the seabed, and then filled up with fertile silt and sediments brought by the rivers. In the delta of the rivers the alluvial areas were covered mainly by marshes and bogs, whereas the landscape beyond the delta was predominantly arid. These lands, sparse in vegetation and mineral resources, were inhabited by a population known as the Ubaid people who earned a living by farming, fishing and animal breeding, although larger clusters of the population developed craft and trade. In spite of such difficult geographical and climatic conditions, the arrival of the Sumerians led in a very short time to the extraordinary development of farming, trade, crafts, architecture, religion and sciences.

We do not know how many strangers arrived, but we know that they established twelve independent city-states: Eridu, Ur, Akshak, Adab, Larsa, Umma, Erech, Sippar, Lagash, Nippur, Shuruppak and Kish. So probably twelve groups or patriarchal clans arrived. The Sumerians, as we mentioned, differed very much from the local population, but it is not possible to link them to any ethnic group existing at the present time. They constituted a small percentage of society, and the Sumerian language did not become the mother tongue of the local population. It was mainly used by the priests, administration and the ruling and middle classes. This assumption is supported by the fact that when the Sumer were finally conquered by the Semitic King of Akkad in the 24th century BC, the Sumerian language vanished quickly without a trace and only cuneiform writing remained.

The city-states were not large and Lagash, for example, had an area of about 1,200 square miles (3000 square kilometers) with a population of approximately 100,000, and Ur, in 2000 BC had about 200,000 citizens. In the early periods of Sumerian history the power in the city-states belonged to the priests working in the local temples, which were the centers of administration and education. The temple controlled all the arable lands and collected taxes from their users. The political leadership exercised “ensi” – governors which at the beginning were chosen by the

elders, but from about 3000 BC Semitic kings seized power.

In the beginning relationships between the city-states were good and peaceful, therefore there was no need for a professional army. Farming based on the irrigation of land supplied plenty of food, therefore every city was economically independent and self-sufficient. According to much later legends, the first kings arrived from the sky and lived for thousands of years. Actually the appearance of the kings was the result of the fact that Sumer was a rich and abundant country which attracted belligerent Semitic tribes. The peacefully inclined Sumerians were not able to defend against their aggression.

The Semitic invaders became assimilated, adopting the Sumerian language, culture, organization and religion. The records confirm that in about 3000 BC Etana, who was of Semitic origin, became the first king of Kish. Similar power transfer had happened in the majority of the Sumerian city-states. The new kings, who did not have the peaceful nature of the Sumerians, were on the contrary interested in conquest, so they formed large professional armies. The new masters made an attempt to take over the power and the wealth which belonged to the temple, however they were dependent on the priests who had the knowledge and the management experience to administer the country. Soon quarrels commenced between the kings, ending in bloody fights especially between the cities of Lagash, Ur, Kish and Erech. About 2500 BC, the king of Lagash, as a result of long wars, managed to unite Sumer, but within only one century, as a result of continuous internal fighting, his empire disintegrated.

Sumer also suffered attacks by barbarian tribes from the east and because of the lack of unity it was unable to defend itself against them. In the 24th century BC Sargon, the Semitic king of Akkad, conquered the quarrelling Sumerian cities and annexed them to his empire. Sargon continued the legacy of Sumer, so it was not destroyed, but the Sumerian language disappeared from everyday use. Only the establishing of Babylon by Hammurabi in the 18th century BC ultimately destroyed the ancient institutions, and only the Sumerian cuneiform writing remained.

Democratic institutions

In Sumer, one of the key governing principles was making decisions, which were important for the whole of the city-state, in a democratic way. Although the executive power belonged to the priests, and later to the king, for the first time in history a system of representation of the population was created similar in principle to parliamentary democracies. It consisted of two houses: a senate or an assembly of elders including noble and rich men, and a lower house or an assembly of arms bearing free male citizens including craftsmen, temple administrators, people employed by noblemen and agricultural workers. The houses made important decisions such as the declaration of war, and the representatives of the lower house had the prevailing vote. Documents recorded on clay tablets show that already in about 3000 BC, meetings of both houses were held. A few thousand years would pass before similar systems would be functioning in ancient Greece and republican Rome. We can say that the Sumerian system of representation of citizens was the precursor of contemporary democracies.

Farming and industry

The main place of employment and the most important source of revenue of the city-states was farming which provided not only food for the residents, but also goods for export. It was based on the artificial irrigation of fields. The irrigation system consisted of canals, dams, weirs, dykes and water reservoirs. Its construction required the knowledge of trigonometry, geodesy, drawing maps and plans, calculation of gradients and speeds of water flow in canals. Also vital was the ability to plan and manage complex engineering projects, the construction of which required coordinating the action of thousands of workers. Many of them had to have high qualifications, because the building of the irrigation system was not limited to digging thousands of miles of canals, but also required the knowledge and skills to deliver an appropriate amount of water to individual fields. To make sure that the whole system operated correctly, it was necessary to carry out maintenance and conservation works. The irrigation system was not a conglomerate of small private canals feeding

individual plots, but an integrated structure, covering thousands of square miles of fields. Building it was an enterprise on an enormous scale. For example in Lagash, as many as 800 square miles (2000 square kilometers) of land that constituted about two thirds of the area of the state were allocated for cultivation.

Farming in such conditions required considerable new knowledge and therefore Sumerians prepared a special handbook giving a farmer explicit instructions on what should be done and when. It was a compendium, containing detailed information about, among other things, the correct usage of irrigation. We learn from it that, for example, the level of inundating water must not rise too high over the field and when the water subsides, it is necessary to send shod oxen to trample the wet ground. Next the soil must be ploughed twice with two different ploughs and only then should one sow appropriate seeds, using a special seeder. Then the growing plants had to be watered three times at precisely determined intervals. Since the farmers were not able to read the instructions prepared for them, a profession of educated agricultural managers was created which supervised the works. The need to write a handbook attests to the fact that the original local population did not have knowledge of modern farming.

Officials of the temple were responsible for the administration of the agricultural lands and the use and functioning of the irrigation system. The farmers did not own the fields, but leased them and paid tax on them. In the later period the temple lost its dominating position and the majority of farmland belonged to the king and to individual owners. Apart from wheat and barley, farmers grew vegetables, such as chick-peas, lentils, onions, garlic, lettuce, leaks, turnips, cucumbers and many others. The breeding of oxen, sheep, pigs and cows was also well-developed.

Besides farming other industries contributed to the economy. Crafts were well advanced such as working with metals: gold, silver, tin, lead, copper, bronze and others. The metallurgy industry included not only metal casting but techniques such as cold hammering, annealing and hardening were also mastered. Craftsmen used copper and bronze to make many products such as agricultural tools, vessels, containers, hooks,

nails and weapons. Techniques such as spinning and weaving were known, and the textile industry was based mainly on the processing of wool and linen.

Since the land was poor in raw materials, many of them had to be imported, which contributed to the development of trade. Researchers found that Sumer had a close relationship with the state named Aratta, located in modern north-western Iran, probably to the south of Lake Urmia. In Aratta they used the Sumerian language and worshipped Sumerian gods. Documents confirm that trade thrived between these two states. Sumer received metals, wood, precious stones, gold and silver in exchange for cereal crops. Wagons and sledges drawn by oxen and wild donkeys were used for transport of goods¹⁴. However boats were also a very efficient means of transport, some built for overseas voyages. Thanks to them Sumer kept trade relations with many distant countries located in the Indus valley and in Africa.

Medicine in Sumer was very advanced and the ancient physician was a highly educated person and had a relatively high social status. Prescriptions found on clay tablets attest to the knowledge of the healing efficacy of many minerals and plants. Preparation of medicines required conducting of complex sequences of chemical processes. It is known that for prescriptions compounds of sodium, potassium and of nitrogen as well as many plant extracts were used. Similar medicines are still used today in India and Egypt.

Law and justice

Advanced Sumerian society needed a sophisticated justice system. The provisions of law controlled all aspects of life in Sumer. It was the first place in the world where written law appeared in about 2000 BC. However the legal code was not based on the then common principle of “an eye for an eye”. The lawgivers realized that it would not be possible to reverse certain effects of a committed crime, and the offender must be useful to society. It was a very humane approach in which, for smaller offences, a monetary fine was substituted as a penalty which often was more biting and better educating than physical punishments. Relevant

provisions of the law regulated the behavior of people in all spheres of their life, such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, conducting business and concerned women as well as slaves.

Slavery was a recognized institution, but slaves were not only prisoners of war, but also once free citizens who had fallen into debt or committed despicable acts. Parents who were unable to pay creditors could sell them their children or even their entire family. However the position of Sumerian slaves differed considerably from the situation of persons enslaved in other countries, because they had greater legal rights. They could engage in businesses, borrow money, and most importantly, they could buy their freedom.

Marriages were arranged by parents, and were confirmed by a wedding contract. This was done by a notary who also certified divorce settlements, maintenance payments and business agreements. A married woman could own property and engage in businesses¹⁵. The law protected orphans and widows from exploitation, and therefore performed important social functions which were not limited to exclusively representing the interests of the powerful and rich. It is important to note that such concepts as “freedom of man” and “human rights” were introduced for the first time by the Sumerians. Humanitarian rules which were called “the divine laws” were implemented for the protection of the whole population, but in the later periods Semitic kings used them for their own benefits. Gradually the freedom of citizens was reduced, and the law became a tool for the oppression of people with, among other things, high taxes and penalty payments.

Religion and philosophy

Religious life in the early period of the history of Sumer concentrated mainly around the temple, however this does not mean that it was a place accessible to the public. All ritual functions connected with the worship of gods were performed exclusively by priests. Each Sumerian city-state had its own protective god to which everything belonged, and the temple dealt only with the administration of these assets. Since in each of the 12 cities only one god was worshipped, it is possible to regard the religion of

Sumer as monotheistic. Despite the discovery of tens of thousands of tablets with cuneiform writing, no information describing their religious doctrine was found. This knowledge belonged only to the king and to the high priests, and therefore there was no need for writing it down. Priests passed down these secrets orally, from one generation to the next, and this guaranteed that they would not get into the wrong hands. Writing performed only supporting functions in the administration of the state, and priests, kings, rich elites and even judges were very often illiterate.

In the early period of Sumer history it was believed that the king had been of divine origin, arrived from heaven and would return there after his death. Nobody apart from the king had the right to an afterlife, but his courtiers and the closest dignitaries could serve him in his afterlife. This is confirmed by the discovery in the royal tomb in Ur (Wooley, 1982), from the period of about 2500 years BC, of 65 bodies of courtiers and ladies who took their own life to be buried with the king and serve him after his death, and in this way secure eternal life.

Since the common people were cut off from the religion of their masters, probably in the third millennium BC, Sumerian thinkers and philosophers created religious doctrines explaining the functioning of the world. The Sumerian pantheon reflected the system of royal power with a king at its head. Of all these hundreds of deities the four most important were the heaven-god, An, the air-god, Enlil, the water-god, Enki, and the great mother-goddess Ninhursag. An and Ninhursag were regarded as the parents of all gods, but later Enlil came to the forefront as the king of heaven and of the earth. According to the myths, Enlil felt the greatest kindness for the people. He gave them seeds of cereals, various plants and trees and ensured the profusion of all goods and riches. He also introduced very important agricultural tools such as the plough.

Enki was the god of wisdom responsible for arranging life on earth and creating culture and civilization. The Sumerians did not try to find out how their civilization came into existence. They assumed that its designer and builder was Enki and such an explanation completely satisfied them. The other important deities were: the moon-god Nanna, the sun-god Utu, and Nanna's daughter, the goddess Inanna known to

the Semites as Ishtar. The Sumerian gods were entirely anthropomorphic and even the most powerful among them acted and behaved like people. They ate, drank, married, raised families, and often became slaves to human passions and weaknesses.

The above gods were not involved in the management and control of the universe. This task was entrusted to fifty minor deities, superhuman and immortal beings, manlike in form, regarded as children of An. They were invisible and were responsible for keeping the natural order on earth and in the cosmos according to laws and designs established beforehand. And so the sky, the earth, the sea, the heavenly bodies, the rivers and cities, and even individual estates were under their control.

According to Sumerian philosophers, the entire universe was defined by “me” which was a set of divine regulations, principles and rules. A list which contains over one hundred constituents making up the civilization and the state was discovered. It included such phenomena as god, kingship, kingdom, temples, priests, priestesses, truth, prostitution, sex, laws, music, power, hostility, falseness, justice, art, letters, wisdom, court, craft and musical instruments. Each element required “me” to originate and keep it working. This list attests to the deep understanding by the Sumerians of complicated relationships contributing to the functioning of their civilization.

The religious beliefs of the Sumer residents were written up during much later periods and therefore did not disappear into total oblivion. Many fragments of these beliefs, after some changes, were included in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. And so the story of Creation described in the Bible was entirely borrowed from the Sumerians, although the Sumerian paradise was intended only for the gods, rather than for people. It was located in Dilmun, somewhere to the east of Sumer, similar to the Eden described in the Bible as a garden in the east. In Sumerian mythology we find an explanation of the most puzzling story in the Bible: why Eve was created from Adam's rib. The Sumerian god Enki had a sick rib and in order to heal it a goddess was created who in Sumerian was called Nin-ti, “the Lady of the rib”, but it also means “the Lady who makes live”, which in Hebrew means Eve. This Sumerian literary double entendre was transformed in the Bible as “the woman created from the

rib”.

The Biblical Flood story is also described in Sumerian literature. According to the legend Ziusudra, the Sumerian counterpart of the biblical Noah, learns from the god Enki that the decision was taken by the assembly of the gods to send a deluge and destroy human kind. Ziusudra obtained instructions on how to build a giant boat and save himself from destruction. The flood raged for seven days and nights and at the end of that time the sun-god, Utu warmed the land. Ziusudra had prostrated himself before An and Enlil and was admitted to the paradise of gods.

The Sumerians had no exaggerated confidence in man and his destiny. They believed and accepted that man was created to serve the immortal gods. Man's life was beset with uncertainty and lack of security, as he did not know beforehand what fate the gods had prepared for him. After he died the situation was no better because his spirit descended to the dark, abominable nether world reflecting the earthly life. Therefore their afterlife was always a source of anxiety and perplexity.

The Sumerians believed in personal gods, that is beings resembling guardian angels who looked after them and to whom they opened their hearts during prayer. They tried also to find a solution to the oldest problem which is never ending human suffering. We learned about it from the Sumerian precursor of the biblical Book of Job which is the first recorded attempt to deal with the age-old problem. The advice given then was similar to the help given to the believers of contemporary religions, that is that one should beg his god until the god gave heed to his prayer and delivered him from his misfortune.

The Sumerians achieved very high ethical and moral standards thanks to the commandments of the gods which they obediently followed. They cherished goodness, truth, law and order, justice, freedom, honesty, directness, mercy and charity. They abhorred their opposites such as evil and falsehood, lawlessness and anarchy, injustice, oppression, sinfulness and perversity, cruelty and pitilessness. Kings and rulers reminded their subjects of the fact that they had established law and order, protected the weak from the strong and the poor from the rich and wiped out evil and violence. The ethical and moral principles were not created by the local,

primitive population, but were imposed by the rulers and in a certain sense they were ahead of the development of man by a few thousand years. Therefore early Sumer was an island of peace and humanitarianism in a sea of brutality, aggression and atrocities. Only nowadays do we start appreciating the fact that the Sumerian's moral code was based on the values which became universally accepted several thousands of years after the disappearance of their civilization. This code charted the direction of the development of mankind and to this day remains relevant.

Education, literature and sciences

Thanks to information recorded on the clay tablets, we know quite a lot today about ancient Sumer. In Sumer the art of writing originated in about 3000 BC and became an instrument in helping to manage temples and city administration. At first the writing was crude and pictographic, having a large number of symbols which limited its application to the simplest administrative notations. Gradually it was simplified, losing its pictographic character and becoming a purely phonetic system of writing in which pictures were replaced by lines.

With the economic development and increasing numbers of residents arose a need for preparation of managers and administrators who would be able to write and read. In the second half of the third millennium BC, thousands of scribes specializing in various fields were already employed. So there were royal and temple scribes, scribes specialized in the various fields of administration, some of them becoming high officials in government, who received their education at special schools. Students at first learnt to memorize writing elementary syllables and single expressions, followed by short sentences and stories. More advanced students mastered the art of drafting contracts and other legal documents. Schools employed teachers specializing in different subjects. The teachers were paid out of the tuition fees collected from the students, who came mainly from the richer social strata, and after leaving school enjoyed well paid jobs.

Schools gradually became centers of learning and culture. Scientific subjects included botany, zoology, geography and mathematics. The

Sumerians believed that there was no need to investigate the world and nature, because these matters were controlled by the gods, who provided man with adequate knowledge for a decent life. Therefore scientific development did not originate from the need to establish the truth about the world, but from a desire for learning practical skills. For example, mathematics included learning of multiplication and division tables, calculating volume and weight measurements. Later this knowledge was applied to the design and building of the irrigation system and architectural constructions.

At school grammar was taught which with time became more and more advanced. In the later period Sumerian – Akkadian dictionaries were prepared, because the Semitic Akkadian conquerors treasured highly the Sumerian literary works, which included myths, epic tales, narrative stories, poems, elegies, hymns, proverbs, fables and essays.

The Sumerian school performed not only essential social functions, but provided a significant contribution to the development of human thought. For the first time in the history of humanity there came into existence text books which contributed to the advance of learning during the next millennia, and catalogues of literary works. Prof. Samuel Noah Kramer, an outstanding researcher of the Sumerian civilization, stated: “It is no exaggeration to say, that had it not been for the inventiveness and perseverance of the anonymous, practically oriented Sumerian pundits and teachers who lived in the early third millennium BC, it is hardly likely that the intellectual and scientific achievements of modern days would have been possible” (Kramer, 1963, p. 229).

Comments

The Sumerian civilization, created by unknown travelers, existed for less than a thousand years, and as a result of the harmful influences of the Semitic masters underwent slow negative transformations. Although the original laws were not officially replaced, the Sumerian society, as a result of suffering never ending wars and the despotism of the new kings, changed and the traditional values and standards underwent gradual devaluation. This was exacerbated by the loss of position and diminution

of the authority of the temple which until then had ruled the lives of the residents. A large majority of the found documents were written in the later periods, during the reign of the Semitic masters. Therefore our knowledge about the beginnings and the early development of the city – states is very limited, but the periods of strife and wars are recorded in more detail.

Although in Mesopotamia thousands of tablets with cuneiform writing were uncovered, we are still unable to get to the source of the information about Sumerian thought, religion and philosophy, nor to learn about the life of early Sumerian society. We can only project certain solutions and propose rational hypotheses relying on the information included in the much later written down myths, epic stories and other literary works.

CHAPTER 13

Egyptian civilization

Predynastic period

According to the latest archaeological research, there were three pre-dynastic stages of development in Egypt: Naqada I, 4400-3500 BC, Naqada II, 3500-3200 BC, and Naqada III, 3200-3000 BC.

Naqada I represents a typical primitive Neolithic culture, of which the biggest achievements were simple painted pottery, clay figurines, combs made of ivory, stone vessels and maces. Settlements consisted of houses made of mud, wood and reed. The deceased were buried in a pit in graveyards.

During the short period of Naqada II we witness in Upper Egypt an accelerated development of civilization. New decorated ceramics came into existence, especially large jars with lug handles reminiscent of Mesopotamian pottery, copper tools and products made from gold and silver. The methods of burying the dead changed, which is visible in the tombs of rulers containing many precious objects. Well developed trade existed with Sumer and Palestine which is confirmed by many objects originating from these places found in the burial-grounds. The country consisted of independent princedoms ruled by local masters, belonging to the so-called dynasty "00". It is possible that in this period about 20 independent city-states were created¹⁶. The period of Naqada III is a continuation of Naqada II and is characterized by further rapid

development of civilization, confirmed by such discoveries as the first graphical inscriptions on palettes, the first hieroglyphs, the first royal cemeteries and sculptures of lions found at the Koptos temple. Richly endowed tombs of about 15 rulers belonging to the so-called dynasty “0” were also identified. In this period the first irrigating systems were introduced.

This period culminated in the unification by the pharaoh Narmer, (in Greek, Menes) of Upper and Lower Egypt. It took place in about 3100 BC. From this event begin the dynastic history of Egypt. This united country, in spite of many wars, internal struggles and fights, and conquests by barbaric tribes survived for almost 3,000 years. Egyptian independence ends after the conquest by Alexander the Great and with the establishment of the Ptolemaic Dynasty in 332 BC.

Documents

The Egyptian civilization probably came into existence in the same period as the Sumerian civilization, about 3500 BC. However its history is much longer than that of Sumer because Egypt, having a better geographical location, was separated from bellicose, barbaric Asian tribes¹⁷ and, being united under one ruler, was better prepared to defend itself against their attacks. Although the Egyptian civilization survived 2000 years longer than the Sumerian one, it left many fewer written documents. This was caused by the fact that the Egyptian papyri were made of plant fibers which were not able to survive as long as dried clay tablets. And, for example, during the fires of the famous library in Alexandria in 48 BC and 642 AD, most of the original Egyptian papyri were destroyed. Furthermore the temples kept their dominant position until the Greek conquest and the priests did not want to disclose their secrets which contributed to the lack of written material in Egypt. Therefore, apart from the religious inscriptions placed mainly in the royal tombs and temples, few authentic documents survived until our times. In Sumer the large majority of the discovered tablet documents were written in the period when the city-states were ruled by the Semitic kings, who appreciated old Sumerian myths which had survived in the oral tradition

for thousands of years, and therefore they encouraged them to be written down.

However the achievements of Egyptian civilization had not been lost because, during the ruling of the Ptolemaic dynasty, the Greeks took over the majority of Egyptian knowledge accessible to them and in this way it became a part of Greek and Roman cultures.

Government and administration

In the early dynastic period, a very simple governing system existed. The pharaoh was the head of the administration, chief judge, Commander-in-Chief of the army, the High priest at every temple and the owner of all wealth and lands. The system of administration of the country was already established at the beginning of the Old Kingdom. Egypt was divided into twenty provinces, probably corresponding to the pre-dynastic city-states, each with its own governor. Agriculture based on artificial irrigation was the main source of revenue. The land belonged to the pharaoh and was not owned by the farmers working on it. They paid annual rents and taxes, which depended on the water levels, the cultivated area and on the amount of gathered crops. The due tax was paid in kind, mainly in corn, however the payment abilities of the farmers were taken into consideration, therefore they were not oppressed by the taxes in a heartless way. Every two years there was a census of farm animals to update the level of taxes. The entire tax system required an efficient organization and a large number of qualified officials and tax assessors. Although the functioning of the civil service was controlled by special supervisors, the pharaoh traveled incessantly along the Nile, checking everything personally.

Each province had its own courts and judges dealing with the settling of local matters. However it was possible to appeal against their sentences to the Supreme Court or to the pharaoh. In the period of the 12th dynasty, all cases, except small offences, were judged in the capital city of the country where the pharaoh passed the sentences. Such a centralized system of authority, controlled by one man, was in the long run impossible to maintain. Therefore the pharaoh handed part of his

duties over to his deputy, a Vizier who acted as the minister of war, of finances, of agriculture and of irrigation, as well as the administrator of the estates of the temples.

This system of governing functioned very well for almost 3,000 years, because it was based on high ethical standards being enforced in Egypt, and above all on the honesty of the pharaoh and of the officials, whose main concern was the well-being of the citizens. Although the Egyptians were subject to an authoritarian rule, it was possible for anyone, even the poorest man, to approach and be heard by the pharaoh, and this helped to guarantee good behavior by the officials. It was a system of caring paternalism based on a personal relationship between the pharaoh and his subjects.

In fact Egypt was a theocratic state, in which the life of the citizens concentrated on how to serve the gods and the pharaoh, who also served the gods, fulfilling his duty by justly ruling the country. Although officially everything belonged to the pharaoh, in fact he was only in charge of the estates given to him by the gods and he could not freely dispose of them, or pass them over to his offspring. Egypt in the early period did not have a professional army and the pharaoh was not interested in conquests of other countries and accumulation of riches or gaining personal glory. The financial resources of the state were allocated almost exclusively for religious purposes, mainly for the building of wonderful temples and pyramids; but the pharaoh's palaces were built as normal houses, made of clay bricks and timber.

In the building of pyramids the entire country participated, not exclusively slaves as we believed not long ago. During the inundation of the Nile, lasting at least three months, all agriculture was at a standstill, so farmers were called to build temples and pyramids. The work for the pharaoh and the gods was considered an honor and a duty. The workers lived in special dormitories and were well fed. The work was hard, but the teams changed quite often because everyone wanted to participate in this holy work.

The situation changed entirely when the Greeks seized power in the 4th century BC. The gigantic Civil Service system, deprived of moral direction, changed into the soulless apparatus which exploited society

with the greatest ruthlessness, particularly farmers, imposing excessive taxes regardless of their financial situation. The corrupt and bureaucratic Greek officials caused much hardship resulting in frequent strikes and occasional revolts which invariably ended in massacres. It shows that the same law can be used for the good of the people or for their enslavement and suppression.

Philosophy and religion

Egyptians had a very pragmatic approach towards the world and their spiritual needs were entirely satisfied by their religion. They perceived the universe and society as a static system which functioned according to the principles which were established and handed over to mankind at the beginning of existence by the gods. Any changes and development were not only unnecessary, but even undesirable, and the entire mental and physical effort of the Egyptians concentrated on the maintenance of the status quo. Since everything had been established by the gods, nothing should be changed; since everything is known, there is no need to ask questions and to search for answers; these were the main canons of their philosophy. The Egyptian religious system in principle did not change during almost 3,500 years of its existence. If in the later periods the worship of “new gods” was introduced, it resulted not from the inventiveness of the pharaoh or the priests, but was caused by a return to the original beliefs which had been forgotten through the ages.

The lack of written documents means that information concerning Egyptian religion is very sparse and confusing and, as a result, many diverse often mutually exclusive hypotheses have appeared in the field of Egyptology. The problem originates from the fact that in Egypt, as in Sumer, two religious systems existed at the same time. The first was associated exclusively with the pharaoh, and the second encompassed the rest of the population. The main canons of the first system included a dogma that the ruler is of divine origin and only he has guaranteed immortality. The temples were built for the sole purpose that the pharaoh could frequent and worship his divine father, from whom he received the gift of the life essence, helping him to exercise his duties.

Only the ruler and the priests had access to the holy places. Every day in the main temple, complicated ceremonies were held which would normally be conducted by the pharaoh. However he was not able to cope with these everyday duties, so the high priest replaced him, in this way gaining access to the divine sources which increased his prestige and power in the country. We know very few details concerning the religious doctrines of the rulers and of the ceremonies associated with them because, as in Sumer, they were never written down. Our superficial knowledge is based mainly on studies of inscriptions in burial places. These matters were kept very secret and nobody apart from the pharaoh and the high priests were allowed access to them. E.A. Wallis Budge (1988), an authority on the Egyptian religion, stated that: "Undoubtedly the priests of the higher grades possessed esoteric knowledge, which they communicated orally to those who were their equals or successors, but it is tolerably certain that they did not commit it to writing". The priests in Egypt were not concerned with the creation of new religious doctrines, but concentrated on the faithful handing over of traditional beliefs from one generation to the next. However in the main religious centers of Thebes, Memphis or Heliopolis, during the course of a few thousand years, the dominant Egyptian religious doctrines and the gods worshipped did change. This fact complicates our understanding of Egyptians beliefs.

To the most profound and metaphysical, without any doubt, belongs the Memphis doctrine which we know more about thanks to the saved inscriptions from the Shabak period¹⁸. We learnt from them that in the period of the Old Kingdom this doctrine had a deep spiritual and philosophical character and in this respect was greatly superior to all other Egyptian doctrines. For the Memphis priests, Ptah was the highest god, described as all-encompassing, self-creating, self-subsisting, of immaterial substance, without beginning and end. He was regarded as pure Mind which is the ultimate origin of all creation, whose thought created every material thing and every being on the earth, in the sky and underground. Other gods were regarded as an emanation of his thoughts, therefore, strictly speaking, he was the only god. A light radiated from his heart which permeated the entire nature, all beings lived thanks to his

breath, and the Words said by him had an enormous, causative power. The original Memphis doctrine came into existence much earlier and probably arrived in Egypt with new masters-gods. This abstract image of the god had faithfully been transferred to the Bible and constitutes the foundations of the main contemporary monotheistic religions. This intellectual concept of god is undoubtedly astounding, considering that it was created at least 3,000 years before Christianity.

However such a vision of god was possibly too difficult for some pharaohs and high priests to comprehend. And it is perhaps for this reason, in about the third dynasty, that a new and more conventional worship, that of the sun-god, Ra, was introduced. However the original doctrine, associated with the Ptah worship, had been too deep-rooted in the Egyptian theology to be completely forgotten, because after almost a thousand years, in the period of the New Kingdom, it returned in the form of a new god, Amon, who had many attributes of Ptah.

Amenhotep IV, also called Akhenaten, a pharaoh of the 18th dynasty ruling in the 14th century BC, dismissed Amon priests and for the period of his rule introduced monotheistic worship of the sun-god Aten. This worship was not widespread and, after the death of the pharaoh, was quickly forgotten. Some scholars promote the idea which incorrectly attributes to Amenhotep IV the creation of the revolutionary, monotheistic religion which was adopted by Judaism. However it is known that Akhenaten, being the youngest son of the pharaoh Amenhotep III, was prepared for the high priesthood and was familiar with old beliefs, therefore his monotheistic religion was not his invention but the reviving of very old traditions.

Theology referring only to the pharaoh and ignoring the afterlife of other people could not be satisfactory for the growing in strength middle classes and the influential priests belonging to the higher social strata. Therefore a need arose to introduce a second religious doctrine, embracing all people. This is how the worship of Osiris came about, who was assumed to be a predynastic king of Upper Egypt who implemented farming. The name Osiris indicates that originally he was the astral god associated with the star Sirius, and his wife Isis was associated with the planet Venus.

Osiris worship spread in Egypt during the 12th dynasty, about the 21st century BC. This was a very popular cult, because it destroyed the pharaoh's monopoly of heaven, and promised every man renewed life after death. According to the contemporary beliefs, Osiris was killed and then resurrected, and his body was restored as a result of certain magic ceremonies symbolizing life after death. There is no evidence showing that the believers regarded Osiris as the Savior. He was worshipped as the King of Kings, the Ruler of Men and the master of the Nether World. The Book of the Dead describes the "Great Judgment" of the dead based on "the Weighing of Hearts", during which the life of the deceased is subjected to evaluation. If he committed more good than bad acts, then his soul would find its way to heaven. The soul of an irredeemable sinner is surrendered to destruction. Some of the Osiris cult elements were borrowed by Christianity and Islam.

Egyptologists formulated many hypotheses about the religious beliefs in the land of the pharaohs. Problems in establishing a consensus on religious life originates largely from the fact that in Egypt, in different periods of its long-lived history, many various gods and demigods were worshipped, and each of them had peculiar characteristics and abilities, which allowed them to affect human life. As in Sumer, every city-state before the unification had its own god, therefore in the united country all these gods were still worshipped. Atum, Ra, Amun, Ptah, Aten and Osiris belonged to the main pantheon of gods. Many other gods were related to them, and together created a complicated structure governing heaven, earth and the underworld. The fact that they believed in so many gods does not automatically preclude the monotheistic character of Egyptian religion. Jean Champollion, a famous French Egyptologist, wrote in 1839: "The Egyptian religion is a pure monotheism, which manifested itself externally by a symbolic polytheism". This shows his remarkable insight into such a complex subject.

The depicting of human gods with the head of an animal is one of the most controversial and often misunderstood symbols associated with the beliefs of Egyptians. Many contemporary Egyptologists interpret these symbols literally and are convinced that they belong to a typical primitive animistic religion. Without a doubt some animals, like the Bull Apis, were

worshipped in Memphis as an incarnation of Osiris and the second life of Ptah. Anubis, the son of Osiris and Nephthys, was regarded as the god of the deceased and is depicted as a man-god with the head of a dog or a jackal. However it does not mean that dogs were worshipped as gods or that the Egyptians believed in some hybrid god-monsters. The head of an animal symbolized certain characteristics of the god such as courage, wisdom and intelligence and in practice facilitated the identification of individual representatives of the vast pantheon of gods, of which it would be difficult to distinguish their human faces, particularly on pictures in dim temples and tombs.

Ethics and morality

Even though we do not know the doctrines of Egyptian religion in detail, we can try to draw certain conclusions by analyzing the ethics of the rulers, of the privileged groups and of the ordinary inhabitants of Egypt. Nothing attests better to the influence and principles of religion than the behavior of its believers, particularly the ruling elite. We learn from the inscriptions in the royal tombs that the pharaohs regarded taking good care of their citizens and securing their high standard of living as very important achievements and took pride in them. They did not boast about building temples and pyramids and making military conquests. Their most significant achievement was that during their rule nobody went hungry. Pharaohs also boasted about taking care of orphans, widows and the poor, as well as emphasizing that all subjects were treated fairly.

Without any doubt the advancement of every civilization is reflected by its standard of justice. In Egypt impartiality of the judges and the equal treatment of all accused was among the most important and strictly observed principles of the justice system. In the Egyptian system of governing, giving favors to family and friends was inadmissible, and the bribery of officials and dignitaries was severely punished, and even during the 18th dynasty was subject to capital punishment. Judges, similarly to pharaohs, vaunted the fact that they protected the weak and the poor against the power of the rich.

The Egyptians were not racists and had no ethnic prejudice. Skin color and social origins did not play any role in public and private life. Everyone was equal before the gods and the pharaoh. We know that viziers, deputies of the pharaohs, sometimes came from low social strata, and their promotion was owed exclusively to their abilities and hard work. Egypt was a tolerant country and therefore strangers, and among them Jews, lived in it for hundreds of years, reaching senior positions. We learn from the Bible that Joseph was a vizier in Egypt and, according to the historian Josephus, Moses was a chief priest in the holy center in Heliopolis.

The Egyptian concept of a healthy society was based on the preservation of the correct proportion between various aspects of life such as religion, family life and financial matters. Any excesses were undesirable and should be eliminated. This social system imposed from above by the pharaohs collapsed in later periods, during the changes of dynasties. As in other parts of the world, brutal and cruel events, which almost always accompany a power struggle, took place in Egypt.

The importance of high ethical standards confirms the Book of the Dead from which we learn that everyone who does good acts will be blessed in a future life, but his sins will be counted and punished. It describes how during the Great Judgment the deceased recites a long list of sins which he did not commit, so called “negative confession”, such as murder, seduction, robbery, giving false testimony, slander, blasphemy etc. He must also convince the judges that he did not cause pain, did not bring tears, did not rob widows, did not oppress the poor and did not say words in anger.

Caring about one’s own children and parents was an essential obligation for every Egyptian. Inscriptions found in tombs tell of the deceased’s love, obedience and deep affection for his family and friends. The same high standards applied also to the pharaoh. His offspring attended the royal school which also accepted other privileged children. After reaching maturity sons of the pharaoh were sent off to work in different professions such as priesthood and administration and nobody was allowed to be idle.

Law

The most important person in the country was a pharaoh. Any action directed against him was treated as treason and punished by death. The great oath in the law-courts was by the life of pharaoh, therefore perjury was also a capital crime, because to swear falsely could harm the ruler. A worse punishment than taking the condemned man's life was throwing the perpetrator's body into water, because not placing the body in a grave meant destroying a man's soul. For serious crimes the convict's nose or ears were cut off, or he was sentenced to hard labor in the mines. For smaller offences such as a theft, the thief had to pay back treble the value of the stolen items. Civil, property and inheritance cases were tried before the Vizier.

The same law applied to men and women. Women had the right to own, manage and sell property, to sign legal contracts and were able to take legal action and to appear as a witness. It was also accepted that they traveled independently, without a male escort. All marriages were monogamous and women had the right to negotiate marital contracts. It is worthwhile noting that the conditions of women in despotically governed Egypt, were completely different than in democratic Greece, where women had no legal rights and were treated as second-class citizens. A Greek historian Herodotus wrote maliciously that in Egypt the roles were reversed: "the women trade on the market, and the men stay at home and spin".

The Egyptian legal system was not interested in controlling the life of married couples or preventing divorces. Even though marital conflicts were, as today quite frequent, the law-courts in more serious disputes did not favor either side. It is interesting that Egypt was the only country in history, where in cases of adultery the man was punished more severely than the woman.

The Great Papyrus of Harris, which quotes the pharaoh Ramses III, tells us a lot about the attitude of the Egyptians towards women: "I planted the entire country with trees so thanks to this people could sit in their shadow. I caused that every woman in Egypt could go with raised head where she wanted, and no stranger nor traveler on the road molested her".

Special position of women

Women in Egypt enjoyed a special, privileged position which originated from the fact that all landed property descended in the female line from mother to daughter. In practice the husband enjoyed the wealth as long as his wife was alive, but after her death her daughter came into possession. This marriage law was never written down, therefore probably had to be established in the predynastic period of the Egyptian civilization. This law was very strictly followed in the royal family where a female was heiress to the throne (Murrey, 1987). Such a method of succession is not obvious, because the royal list contains mainly male names, but it was women who secured continuation of the royal line. The Great Wife of the pharaoh was the heiress and by right of marriage the king came to the throne. The king's birth was not important and he could be of any rank, but to be recognized as the ruler he had to marry the heiress to the royal line. In order to stay in power in case of the death of his wife, a pharaoh safeguarded himself from abdication by marrying several heiresses including his own daughters regardless of their age. If the pharaoh wanted to secure the throne for his son, he had to arrange his son's marriage with a royal heiress, which could be his own mother, grandmother, sister or even a newly born niece.

The law of matrilineal succession explains the many marriages of Cleopatra who was married to her eldest brother, who reigned by right of that marriage. After his death she was married to her younger brother. When Julius Caesar conquered Egypt he had to "marry" Cleopatra to be recognized as the rightful ruler and after his death the queen married Anthony, the next Roman conqueror. The fact that this law was followed by the Ptolemaic Greek dynasty attests to its importance for the Egyptian population.

Such a law created favorable conditions for the changing of dynasties, because as a result of revolution or a palace coup, the new master married any heiress of the old royal line, not necessarily the queen, and was recognized as a pharaoh. In a certain way it was beneficial for the country, because it provided a supply of a new blood to the royal line, since, as it often happens that the sons of outstanding rulers do not necessarily inherit from their fathers their extraordinary political talents.

Also the law of primogeniture, which passes inheritance to the oldest descendant, did not apply in Egypt, and for example, the thirteenth son of Ramses II became his successor. However marriages of closely related persons were harmful and resulted in genetic illnesses of their descendants. It has been discovered that Amenhotep IV, the pharaoh of the 18th dynasty ruling about 1350 BC suffered from a serious deformation of the body. Researchers believe that all pharaohs of this dynasty suffered with this problem.

An interesting question arises as to why such a law was enforced. Undoubtedly it complicated the handing over of power from father to son. Total power lay in the hands of a pharaoh and only he was regarded as the god, however the political significance of the queen, with a few exceptions³⁵, was limited to sanctioning his right to the throne. So what was the purpose of the divine marriage? Where does the special position of the queen originate from?

In Egyptian mythology it is often emphasized that the first king was a son of the god and of a mortal woman. This means that the offspring of the first queen were of divine origin. Using modern language one could say that the divine genes were passed from one generation to another only in the female line. One could argue that the divine element could also be transmitted through the male line. It is possible, but it would never be absolutely certain, because children of the pharaoh's wife potentially could be begotten by another man, and then the transmission of the divine genes would be discontinued. It is interesting to notice that the Judaic law states that a Jew is a person having a Jewish mother. Whoever introduced this law was familiar with the problems associated with the inheritance of certain, in this case, divine features, and perhaps knew about genetics. Although this system did not ensure that every pharaoh would have divine genes, it did give a guarantee that these genes would survive in the royal line for thousands of years.

Engineering and sciences

Engineering played very important role in Egypt and without this knowledge the country would not have been able to function. One of the

most important engineering undertakings was a gigantic irrigation system spreading throughout the country along the Nile, consisting of many dams, canals and dykes. Since the level of inundation was variable, the irrigation system had to function at the lowest level of water, as well as delivering water to the fields lying a long way from the river. The whole system was in operation during the first dynasty, but some significant improvements, including the building of an artificial water storage system in the Fayum depression, were added during the 12th dynasty. The irrigation system was a great engineering feat, comparable to the greatest contemporary constructions, although it was not as advanced as the one in Sumer. The advanced technology of civil engineering was already used right at the beginning of the dynastic period when the first pharaoh of the united Egypt, Menes, diverted the flow of the Nile in Lower Egypt in order to build a new town, Memphis in its dry bed. The hypothesis that the knowledge enabling implementation of undertakings on such a great scale came from outside is supported by the fact that the irrigation system did not change much for 5,000 years and in principle it functioned till the 19th century, when it was modernized by French engineers.

Without any doubt, the pyramids are one of the greatest achievements of Egyptian engineering. There are many books published on this subject, but it is worthwhile to mention that in spite of 150 years of research and of many proposed hypotheses it is still not certain what the pyramids were used for and how they were built. Constructing such gigantic buildings required an advanced knowledge which Egyptians possessed already at the beginning of the Old Kingdom. It is probable that it came from Sumer, since a close cooperation existed between these two civilizations. We know that Imhotep, the Vizier and architect of the pharaoh Djoser from the third dynasty, who designed the step pyramid at Saqqara about 2650 BC, studied in Sumer. The accuracy of the Egyptian engineers is amazing. Alignment of the sides of the pyramid of Khufu at Giza with the north-south directions was carried out with the accuracy of $1/12$ of a degree, and the angular deviation of its base was less than $1/15$ of a degree. Such precision was achieved in the West only from the middle of the 19th century.

Apart from engineering, medicine also attained a very advanced level in Egypt. The centers of medical knowledge were temples, where appropriately trained priests worked as doctors. Egyptians had a good knowledge of human anatomy, enabling them to perform surgical operations. Somehow they were also aware of the existence of bacterium, because they sterilized surgical instruments and recommended drinking boiled water. They knew how to make medicines helping to cure various illnesses and they wrote prescriptions similar to the ones used in contemporary pharmacology. Methods of contraception and obstetric techniques were also known. According to Clement of Alexandria (who died in 215 CE), their medical knowledge was contained in six books on anatomy, illnesses, surgery, medicines, eye diseases and gynecology which were based on the experience of the early Egyptian doctors. Unfortunately only a few papyri have survived until our times.

Egyptians created the foundations of the modern calendar. The year consisted of 365 days and was divided into 12 months. However, for setting the dates of agricultural works, the solar calendar with 365.25 days, based on astronomical observation, was used. Egyptian astronomers were able to forecast eclipses of the sun and moon well in advance and in this way prevented panic. For the first time, a day was divided into twenty four hours and in order to measure time a water clock was used, called by the Greeks clepsydrae.

In order to provide educated officials and priests, there were many schools which were attended by boys from the age of four. The subjects taught at school were primarily reading, writing and arithmetic. Each government department had its own school attended by the children of the employees, learning the skills needed to take over their father's position. However there was no compulsion to follow a parent's profession. Future scribes learnt how to write petitions and letters to the offices and law-courts. Arithmetic was one of the most important subjects, because it was used to calculate taxes.

CHAPTER 14

The legacy of the first civilizations

Let us first consider what we understand by the expression “civilization”. What distinguishes the first civilized societies from the primitive ones? The most visible differences are achievements in the fields of material culture, such as buildings, tombs and temples left by them. Civilizations also value such cultural achievements as objects of art and literature. This notion also includes the existence of diverse social institutions and the mastered knowledge of producing sophisticated goods for everyday use. However if we would ponder what in everyday language we understand by the expression “a civilized person”, we would realize that we do not mean a man exercising authority, possessing riches, education or enjoying popularity, but somebody who is endowed with internal culture, being guided by high moral standards and living harmoniously with other people observing universally accepted norms of good behavior. Perhaps the following definition offered by Albert Schweitzer best conveys the meaning of the notion of civilization: “It is the sum total of all progress made by man in every sphere of action and from every point of view in so far as the progress helps towards the spiritual perfecting of individuals as the progress of all progress” (Schweitzer, 1987).

In judging the advancement of the first civilizations, contemporary researchers concentrate mainly on their material achievements, which in the case of Sumerians is not very impressive. Apart from the tablets with the cuneiform writing, this civilization left very few material remains and because of this tends to be undervalued. In contrast, the ancient Egyptians can be proud of their wonderful temples and pyramids, however very few papyri documenting their high intellectual and moral standards survived to our times, and because of this their achievements in that field are also often disregarded. It is true that we do not have incontrovertible evidence of high intellectual and moral standards achieved by Sumerian and Egyptian societies, but we know that the new system of justice created by them based on new ethics is sufficient proof of their extraordinary contribution to the development of humanity.

Justice

If we look at the civilizations of Sumer and Egypt, we notice that their main quality was concern about ordinary people. As we know “man cannot live by bread alone”, therefore a judiciary system based on the principles of justice and care is needed for the healthy functioning of society. Justice, as Nietzsche said, is not needed by the powerful – they mete out justice themselves. It is needed by the weak to protect them from the strong. What we can observe in Sumer and Egypt, so very unusual for those times, was the development of a system of justice, law-courts and provisions of law treating all citizens equally. The most important feature of this system, of which the main objective included protecting the weak and the poor from exploitation and violence by the rich and strong, was the impartiality and incorruptibility of judges. These principles did not arise spontaneously from the initiative of mighty citizens, but were imposed by force by the rulers. The fact that in Egypt literally everyone could appeal to the pharaoh against a decision of the local law-courts was a guarantee of the incorruptible operation of the system. The law did not discriminate against ethnic minorities and guaranteed women equal rights in marriage and in conducting their

business. If we visited a contemporary law-court and observed the process of justice, we would not feel that we had moved back 5,000 years. Many elements of this system of justice were implemented in the developed countries of the Western civilization only in the 19th or even in the 20th century.

New ethics

Our family is one of the most important aspects of our life, and so it was in the first civilizations. Parents cared about the upbringing and education of their children, sent them, if they could afford it, to the best, expensive schools, where their sons spent many years in study so they could subsequently obtain well paid jobs. Children took pride in the fact that they were not causing their parents any worries and that they obeyed them. Marriages, as happens today sometimes ended in divorce, but the law-courts were not partial, and marital contracts regulated property matters exactly. People took pride in acts of kindness, charitable activities, honest behavior and in good relations with others, especially with their family. Envy, interfering in others people's business and slander were stigmatized. One could say that the general climate of these civilizations was "civilized". Probably in reality life was not that idyllic, but the values society regarded as appropriate are important, treating them as the aim to which one should aspire, even if it is not possible to achieve them. Sumerians and Egyptians adopted high moral standards in the early period of the development of their civilization, whereas with time we observe the process of the gradual declining of their ethics – in Sumer as a result of the Semitic invasion, and in Egypt due to the internal struggles.

It is necessary to emphasize that the people did not become "civilized" as with the wave of a magic wand. Their behavior was determined by the founders of theses civilizations who introduced new rules. People obeyed these laws partly because they believed that the laws were given by gods, but above all because they were enforced by a strong justice system.

Significance of the first civilizations

The first civilizations were the model and the source of knowledge not only for the next generations, but also for people and nations formed thousands of years later. The history of the development of civilizations in other parts of the world points not only to the fact that they came into existence much later than in Sumer and Egypt, but also that they borrowed heavily from them. The founders of the Babylonian state and the Persian empire adopted the knowledge directly from the Sumerian civilization, which spread to the areas lying in present day Turkey and Asia Minor. As a result of the conquests of Alexander the Great, the Greeks, and then the Romans, became acquainted with the achievements of the Persian civilization.

Egypt played an even more important role in the dissemination of the fruits of their civilization. After the conquest by Alexander the Great, during the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty, about 150,000 Greeks settled in Egypt and many helped to assimilate the teaching of the ancient knowledge. Alexandria became the center of learning and its famous Library held about half a million papyri. In Alexandria many famous Greek minds such as Pythagoras, Archimedes, Euclid and Hero, an inventor of the jet steam engine, studied and worked.

The Egyptian contributions to the world of learning are most visible in the field of medicine. From Greek sources we learn that Egyptian doctors were well known in the contemporary world and many Greeks, such as Tales of Miletus, a founder of the Ionic medical school, studied in Egypt. Also Hippocrates of Kos, living in the 5th century BC, recognized as the father of Western medicine, based his writings on Egyptian teachings. In the 3rd century BC a significant development of Greek medicine took place thanks to access to the knowledge included in Egyptian papyri kept at the library in Alexandria. This knowledge reached Greece, Rome and Byzantium, and then passed to Western Europe, where it was applied until the development of modern medicine.

The existence of extensive Egyptian knowledge stirs up a lot of controversy, because very few authentic documents survive to this day. According to already mentioned Clement of Alexandria, forty two books of the authorship of the legendary god-sage, Hermes Trismegistus

existed, six of which referred to philosophy, four to astrology, ten to law, ten to rites and rituals, six to medicine, two to music, and the remaining referred to cosmology, writing, mathematics and geography. These books or their copies probably existed in the library in Alexandria and were destroyed during the fires in 48 BC and 642 CE. However, part of the knowledge included in them was taken over earlier by the Greeks and entered the history of sciences as Greek achievements.

Amongst many researchers a view prevails that contemporary Western civilization came into existence mainly due to the creative efforts of European minds. While they recognize the Greek and Roman influences, the first civilizations of Sumer and Egypt are regarded as backward or simply primitive. This might be due to the fact that even the Sumerian civilization with thousands of cuneiform tablets was not able to pass to us much information about its origins, religion, philosophy, the development of their thought and the history of city-states.

Contemporary historians accustomed to studying European documents, consider mainly information in writing. This attitude results, on the one hand, from the need to base research on the most reliable evidence, and on the other hand, from the lack of understanding of the fact that writing in the early periods of the existence of the first civilizations was largely a tool of administration. It was used at first to control collection of taxes by the temples and later to make a record of business transactions and of legal acts. Essential information about the esoteric beliefs, religious rituals and theological dogmas was communicated orally between high priests and their successors. In this way the knowledge did not get into the wrong hands, and unfortunately, because of it, our understanding of the workings of these civilizations is very limited. In the first civilizations there was no need to keep records of historical events for future generations, because all the knowledge was the property of the ruler-god, and for the man in the street only the unchanging “here and now” existed.

To sum up, we can say that the Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations became the cradle of all following civilizations. They, for the first time, implemented basic elements of the monotheistic religions, they taught society new moral principles and cultivated high standards of ethical

behavior, enforced by the uncorrupted justice system. They created a sophisticated system of centralized government and were able to conduct complex civil engineering projects. They also built foundations of humanitarianism and ensured the equality of all citizens. However their most important contribution is that they initiated the development of man's consciousness and raised his awareness of the importance of proper social relations based on new moral standards. All these facts confirm that the appearance of the first civilizations was a huge step in determining the further development of mankind.

CHAPTER 15

Hypotheses of the origins of the first civilizations

The first hypothesis of the origins of the Egyptian civilization

In 1894-95 William Matthew Petrie Flinders, one of the most outstanding Egyptologists, found two types of skeletons belonging to two different races while conducting excavations of the predynastic cemetery in Naqada, about 20 miles (32 km) to the north of Luxor. Corpses dating from the period Naqada I were buried directly in soil and were covered with the branches of palm trees, while the remains originating from the period Naqada II were placed in brick tombs in which among other things many valuable objects of lapis lazuli, mined in Afghanistan, were found.

Taking into consideration the anatomical differences of the skeletons, the new construction of tombs from Naqada II and the objects of Sumerian origin found in them, Petrie reached the conclusion that unknown invaders arrived in Egypt from Mesopotamia and established civilization there. In this way a theory arose of the “dynastic race”. According to Petrie this race conquered Upper Egypt and settled in the

place called Neken, known as Hierakonpolis. The holy centers of Thebes, Luxor and Abydos were later found in this area.

Petrie's hypothesis was proven by Douglas Derry, a famous anthropologist who in the 1930s X-rayed mummies and inspected skeletons uncovered in the Naqada royal tombs. This researcher came to the following conclusion:

"The predynastic people are seen to have had narrow skulls with a height measurement exceeding the breadth, a condition common also in Negroes. The reverse is the case in the Dynastic Race, who not only had broader skulls but the height of these skulls, while exceeding that in the Predynastic Race, is still less than the breadth" (Rohl, 1998).

The "dynastic race" hypothesis found recognition among many archaeologists including Margaret Murrey, Henri Frankfort and Bryan Emery and was universally accepted up to the 1950s. An outstanding American Egyptologist, professor John A. Wilson, claimed that the Egyptians had passed from the barbarian state to civilization within one century.

Contemporary theories of the origins of the civilization

According to the contemporary, very much simplified, academic and politically correct theories, the first civilizations were created by local farmers who in the hours after daily work invented new architecture, art, law, schools, mathematics, astronomy, religions, new technologies, techniques of agriculture, writing and many more. Any suggestion that external influences existed which could contribute to their development provokes hostile reactions in academic circles.

The genesis of the Egyptian civilization is still a controversial subject in the word of science. The fact that this civilization appeared in a short period of time contributes to the controversy because it is difficult to find a convincing, scientific explanation of the mechanism which was responsible for its rise. Researchers proposed a few hypotheses, however they are difficult to prove because very little information exists concerning this period, and its main source are royal tombs in Naqada and Abydos. Since the archaeological discoveries do not confirm the

evolutionary theory of the origins of the Egyptian civilization, in order to explain this unusual phenomenon, it was suggested that due to the climatic changes in the region of Sahara in Upper Egypt a new population settled, arriving from the western areas (El-Baz, 2003). However this publication does not explain in what way this foreign, North African population could contribute to the development of the civilization.

Peter D. Goodgame, in his book “The Giza discoveries”, comments in this way on the contemporary theories:

“One of the most controversial questions in the entire field of Egyptology is also its most basic: Where did the advanced pharaonic Egyptian civilization come from? At the very beginning of the first dynasties the Egyptian state appeared to be fully developed, intricately structured, technologically advanced and economically vibrant. How could something so complete appear so suddenly and seemingly out of nowhere? Today the answer that you will most often hear is that “it just happened that way”, that Egypt was built by African Egyptians, that they did it on their own using their own knowledge and resources, and that to argue for any other answer is an insult to Egypt and to Africans everywhere! This “politically correct” tone that is so pervasive within mainstream academia today was, however, not always so influential in the past”.

This tone appeared only after the Second World War and the decolonization of Africa. The academic world, as a reaction to Nazi theories, became very sensitive to accusations of racism and rejected all theories suggesting superiority of certain ethnic groups. However if we look more closely into these “politically correct” theories, it will appear that they also contain racist elements.

If the birth of the first civilizations was a result of evolution, one should ask a few questions: Why had they come into existence in some areas of the world, and not in others? Why, for example, had the tribes of Australian aborigines not developed during the last 60,000 years? This question applies also to the tribes in Africa and to the inhabitants of many regions of South America. If we accept that some ethnic groups such as North African people, had a special predisposition, or had an

innate intelligence much higher than the other primitive tribes, this would also be a racist approach.

Although the average intelligence of the Chinese, as measured using the IQ method, is higher than the average intelligence of the Indo-European population, civilization in China developed about 1500 years after that in Egypt and Sumer. Numerous inventions such as the magnetic compass, porcelain, silk, paper, the printing press and gun powder seem to confirm the high intelligence of the Chinese, but they were discovered in later periods. At present scientists agree with the thesis that no substantial, biological differences exist between various ethnic groups, therefore all races should be able to build a civilization. Simplifying this, one could say that from the point of view of science there is no noticeable difference between the brain of Einstein and that of the Aborigines. So why did some people create civilizations and others not?

Among the most controversial is a hypothesis proposed by Erich von Däniken (1969), who suggested extraterrestrial origins of civilizations. The evidence produced by this author is based mainly on his interpretation of information included in the Bible and on certain unusual objects and pictures the origins of which are difficult to explain. These artifacts include among many others: Mayan temples, pictures and lines from Nazca in Peru, and paintings on rocks showing, according to von Däniken, astronauts. However he does not explain the motives of the extraterrestrial beings' activities.

CHAPTER 16

New hypothesis of the genesis of civilization

The theories presented above do not give an answer to the crucial questions: Why did the first civilizations come into existence at all? and What was the driving force behind this huge step in the development of mankind? Both the “dynastic race” and the evolutionary development hypotheses passed over this important issue. Also von Däniken does not provide convincing arguments explaining the purpose of the extraterrestrial beings’ involvement.

In order to understand why the first civilizations came into existence, first we have to examine conditions in which people lived before this event.

Life of the primitive societies

As was mentioned, in some areas of the Middle East about 9000 years BC, human agriculture settlements already existed. The Neolithic societies were characterized by a settled way of life, an ability to cultivate soil and to produce basic primitive tools. The first large agricultural communities originated from before 7500 BC in the present day Iran and Iraq. Among the most important is a settlement discovered in Çatal

Hüyük in Turkish Anatolia, covering an area of about 60 acres, which was inhabited in 6500 BC by about 6,000 people. The one story houses discovered there did not have doors or windows, and the entrance was located on the roof. The city did not have streets, and the houses were connected with each other enabling easy passage for people.

The life of Neolithic society earning its living from the land was dominated by fear of an uncertain future. Above all people were afraid of crop failure which meant death from starvation. These societies were almost completely dependent on the vicissitudes of nature, whose laws they did not understand. Therefore they developed primitive rituals and ceremonies which helped, according to their beliefs, to bring rainfall and ensure sufficient crops. These beliefs are confirmed by the discoveries of a large number of woman clay figurines which were associated with fertility worship and with the rites ensuring a good harvest.

Their gods resembled man, however they were regarded as being all powerful. Since the people of that time were brutal and did not show compassion or mercy, their gods were also attributed with these features. In order to appease their wrath and to secure a good harvest, they practiced ritual human sacrifices which included offerings of even women and children¹⁹. Society lived at the very rock bottom of their consciousness, caring mainly about its material needs, differing little from the needs of animals. However people managed to establish a comparatively stable existence for themselves and they developed religious systems which gave them a certain sense of security.

Fear of any change is a shared feature of most people, because it is never known whether a change will bring good or detrimental effects. The average man normally wants to work as little as possible and lead a safe and easy life. Only a few exceptional individuals are the promoters of new ideas and aspire to introduce changes to society, however to implement them they need the support of members of the community. Primitive societies, unlike civilized ones, are afraid of exceptional, creative individuals, with the exception of shamans, and isolate them rather than adopt their new ideas. Therefore the agricultural Neolithic communities characterized social stagnation, and changes were very slow.

Sometimes an argument may surface to the effect that primitive

people must have aspired to changes, because they left Africa and spread over the entire world undertaking very risky journeys. However this is true regarding most groups of people relying for their existence on hunting and plant gathering, which are not as dependent on the vagaries of the weather as were the agricultural communities, therefore hunting societies did not develop human sacrifices to appease the gods. Hunting was always linked with a greater personal danger than farming, but also offered a freedom of migration in search of game, while farmers were attached to their land and were dependent on its fruits.

Creating evolutionary theories of the development of civilization, academic researchers look at the functioning of primitive societies which existed many thousands of years ago, from the point of view of the mentality of the contemporary man. As a result of the scientific discoveries and the accumulation of knowledge of the world during the last two centuries, people gained self-confidence and a sense of security. This knowledge gives man control over material living conditions and protects his existence, therefore contemporary societies accept certain low risk changes which implement progress.

However, primitive Neolithic societies were afraid of any innovations, because they could not predict what their final effect would be. Their entire existence was based on a delicate balance of precarious conditions, and any changes could have lead to a tragic destabilization. Therefore archaeological excavations do not indicate much progress even in the highly developed Neolithic settlements, such as Çatal Hüyük which existed for over 1500 years. And so it is highly improbable that Neolithic societies would be able to independently create a civilization.

The first civilization implemented radical changes in almost all aspects of human life, therefore if we assume the local evolutionary hypothesis, new developments would have had to come into existence as a result of cooperation between many creative individuals sharing the same purpose. Activities leading to the improvement of material living conditions would require knowledge, experience and courage in their implementation. However the most difficult and revolutionary changes concerning the shaping of human consciousness, introduction of new ethics and social institutions, as well as establishing a new way of

governing would be almost impossible to be freely accepted by Neolithic people. The probability of a sudden appearance in a relatively small Neolithic community of dozens, or maybe even hundreds, of creative individuals able to instill their ideas into the rest of society seems extremely remote.

Who was responsible for the arising of civilization?

Looking at the material achievements of the first civilizations from the point of view of present technical progress, we do not appreciate how giant a step it was in the history of humanity. Only close analysis of their new public institutions and new social relations based on new ethical principles lead us to believe that Neolithic man would not be able to make such a spectacular civilization jump in such a short time. Therefore we have to ask the question: who was responsible?

Searching for the solution to this riddle, I reached a conclusion that the arising of the first civilizations came as a result of the intervention planned by intelligent extraterrestrial beings. The need for the development stemmed from the fact that human communities, which a few thousand years earlier mastered agricultural technology which guaranteed sufficient supply of food, still lived in very primitive and brutal conditions, with minimum understanding of the world and with little awareness of themselves and other human beings. So the introduction of civilization was a necessary, revolutionary process ensuring intellectual and spiritual development of man, enabling him to achieve a higher level of existence. However this progress could not be achieved until man had freed himself from his slavish dependence on nature. Therefore the material and technical progress accompanying the development of civilization was not its main purpose, but a by-product which served to secure a reasonably good and safe life for people.

Mankind, having struggled through thousands of years in primitive conditions, was ready for the next step of its development. But the triggering impulse had to come from outside, from the intelligent beings who decided that there was a need for change in the existing living conditions, for the implementation of new social rules and the

establishment of new principles of coexistence of people. However the main objective of this process was the development of man's consciousness.

One of the most important pieces of evidence supporting this intervention hypothesis is the fact that the Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations did not come into existence independently, but had common roots.

Let us sum up what links both these civilizations:

1. They appeared almost at the same time, about 5500 years ago.
2. They came into existence as a result of the arrival of groups of people of unknown origins which formed ruling classes.
3. They adopted similar religious beliefs with a special position of king-gods.
4. They produced similar, theocratic forms of government with the dominating role of priests.
5. They developed new systems of justice, giving women and men equal rights.
6. There was close, friendly contacts between Sumer and Egypt.
7. They introduced unusual, for those times, high ethical standards.
8. They used new similar techniques for the irrigation of fields.
9. They developed writing, schools, sciences, engineering and medicine.

It is important to emphasize once again that both civilizations came into existence suddenly and that many elements, such as modern agriculture, new technologies, new architecture, new religious beliefs, new forms of management, education and the system of justice, were introduced in a very short space of time. This has been confirmed by archaeological findings over the last two centuries.

Founders of the civilization

Extensive evidence exists that the founders of the Egyptian and Sumerian civilizations were strangers to these lands. While hardly anybody casts any doubts on the fact that the Sumerians had nothing in

common with the indigenous occupiers of Mesopotamia, because the existence of their unique language is indisputable, the arrival in Egypt from somewhere the progenitors of the royal dynasty is still questioned in academic circles. However the foreign origins are confirmed by the above mentioned similarities between these two civilizations, and by the fact that the ruling classes in Egypt were different from the rest of society²⁰.

An interesting question arises, were founders of the Egyptian and Sumerian city-states also the creators of the knowledge applied by them? In these present times, when we are dominated by a belief in constant development and progress, it might perhaps come as a surprise that in this respect stagnation prevailed in Egypt and Sumer. People living there believed that their knowledge was sufficient, because it was given by the gods, therefore they did not try to broaden it or to discover new things. The social system right from the beginning was fully formed and provided fair justice for all, and as such it met the needs of the citizens who in this situation did not aspire to any reforms. Social upheavals usually arise not as a result of the lack of improvements, but as a result of the detrimental changes introduced by new rulers, or caused by the incompetence and negligence of the administration.

This does not mean that over thousands of years there were no changes; however, the fundamental canons of religion, justice, state structure, methods of management and the techniques of irrigation remained the same. Archaeological examinations do not show any significant developments in Egypt and Sumer, over 3,000 and 1,000 years respectively, and support the hypothesis of stagnation. Relying on the above facts we can draw a conclusion that the founders of these civilizations were not the original creators of the knowledge, since real discoverers do not stop halfway through the process of creation. This is confirmed by the development of science and society in present Western civilization.

However it is not clear how such a huge amount of information needed for the creation of the first civilizations was handed over to their originators. We know that the founders who reached Sumer and Egypt possessed, right from the beginning, essential practical knowledge.

Therefore it had to be already applied earlier and probably came into existence in one place, rather than simultaneously in many different locations. This leads us to the further conclusion that a so called proto-civilization had to exist whose achievements were taken over and assimilated by the founders of the first civilizations.

Proto-civilization

The theme of the existence of a proto-civilization turns up in many old myths and legends. If there is a grain of truth in these stories, where could it be situated? The most well known is called Atlantis and is placed by Plato (2008) on an island in the Atlantic Ocean. This incredible information which, according to the great philosopher was handed over to Solon, a famous Greek poet and politician, by the Egyptian priests of the temple Neith in Sais, could be a figment of Plato's imagination. The myth of Atlantis is probably related to the Minoan civilization, which existed on the islands of Crete and Thera, and which was destroyed in 1625 BC by the eruption of the Santorini volcano.

It appears that referring to myths and old stories will not help us to place this early civilization; however we have some clues about its possible location. According to Dell Hathaway Hymes, a well known anthropologist and linguist, there is no doubt that the Sumerian tongue belongs to the group of proto-Ural-Altaic languages, similar to the Finno-Ugric and Turkish languages. The results of his examination show that, out of one hundred Sumerian common root words from the Hymes list, more than fifty percent also appear in Turkish and Hungarian.

The recent findings of the genetic examination of the world population confirmed that the groups speaking Ural-Altaic languages emerged about 12,000 years ago from eastern China and moved slowly west through the areas of Altai and the Caspian Sea to north-eastern Europe. Therefore a plausible area for the original homeland of Sumerians may be the part of Central Asia which is bounded by the River Irtysh in the east and the River Volga in the west. Only in this area, as the most likely original homebase for Sumerians, could they have had close linguistic contact with Ural-Altaic peoples.

If we take into consideration that the dwellings of Sumer, Egypt and the Indus valley civilizations were in a hot and dry climate, in the valleys of large rivers, it is probable that the proto-civilization also existed in similar climatic and geographical conditions. A semi-desert area in the region of the Aral Sea with two large rivers would meet these requirements. Amu Daria and Syr Daria flowing into the Aral Sea had enough water to irrigate fields and to support a large population. This hypothetical proto-civilization could probably have come into existence on their banks. Climate research results show that thousands of years ago these rivers were more abundant than at present, and that a branch of the river Amu Daria also flowed into the Caspian Sea.

Greek sources mentioned the existence of civilization in these parts of the world. The ancient Greeks believed that somewhere in the North or East was a land inhabited by Hyperboreans, a long-lived, clever, peaceful race living in prosperity. They also believed that Apollo and Artemis were gods in this faraway land. Some Greek historians considered that this land could lie in the regions of Scythia – present Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan or Altai.

Existence of an early civilization in this area is also mentioned by Chinese sources which state that in the third millennium BC “Sons of the Heaven” spread all over the world, propagating new beliefs and bringing new knowledge from their base in the Karakorum mountains, in the western part of China, which is not far from Amu Daria.

Research conducted in the 1970s by Viktor Sarianidi, a Russian archaeologist of Greek origin, indicates that in the area of Bactria at the upper Amu Daria, in the vicinity of Gonur-Depe, in present day eastern Turkmenistan, existed in the third millennium BC the very advanced Oxus civilization whose farming was based on irrigation. This civilization knew writing and mastered bronze technology, and had good relations with the civilization in the Indus valley. It is possible that the Oxus civilization could be a continuation of the earlier proto-civilization which existed in this area.

It is also noteworthy that, according to the Zoroastrian holy scripture Avesta, Zoroaster, a creator of the first monotheistic religion who lived in the region of Bactria, died in the Pamir Mountains where Amu Daria

has its source.

We find additional confirmation in the Bible, in Genesis. 11. 2-3. which states that the early settlers arriving in Sumer, the descendants of Noah, came from the east. This information cannot refer to the Semitic tribes, because they arrived in Sumer from the west in a much later period.

It is not vital to know the exact location of the proto-civilization. Probably we will never find out because it did not exist for very long and when it disappeared it did not leave any permanent remains such as pyramids. The main purpose of its existence was to help people learn and assimilate knowledge handed over by the intelligent beings.

Transfer of knowledge

Accepting the thesis regarding the existence of an early, well-developed proto-civilization whose mission was to fundamentally change human nature and man's living conditions, we have to realize that a vast amount of knowledge and data would have had to be handed over to people. They would have to absorb technical as well as social and religious information necessary to create a new civilization. In this transfer we have to include law, medical sciences, mathematics, astronomy and writing.

It is necessary to ask the question as to whether Neolithic man, who lived for thousands of years in primitive conditions, without making any effort to get out of them, would suddenly be able to develop his faculties in order to learn so much completely new and unfamiliar information in such a short time? Apart from possessing an intellectual predisposition, Neolithic man would also have required a certain level of social awareness in order to absorb new ethics and to take ownership of new principles regulating human relations. It is difficult to imagine how these primitive people could suddenly gain these qualities and modify their consciousness.

The only practical solution which would significantly speed up the development of mankind could be based on the transfer of genes from the intelligent beings to man which would modify his intelligence and

behavior. Genetic changes have this advantage, that they can produce the desired effects comparatively quickly, within a generation, while the development of intelligence using educational methods is much slower. So let us consider some evidence supporting this hypothesis.

Genetic evidence

The most mysterious phenomena which we meet in everyday life, but which are rarely mentioned, are large differences in the levels of people's intelligence. These differences follow social and ethnic divisions and in spite of universal access to education they do not disappear, even after many generations. IQ tests showed that while the average intelligence quotient of Europeans is 100, the Chinese 105 and the Africans 70, that of the Ashkenazi Jews is as high as 115 (Cochran, 2005). There is no doubt that the average intelligence of the Ashkenazi Jews is much higher than of any other ethnic group. This is confirmed by the fact that although they constitute only 3 percent of the United States population they are winners of 25 percent of all Nobel Prizes granted Americans from 1950, and 20 percent of all chief executives of American companies comes from this ethnic group. Therefore we have to ask the question: What distinguishes them from other people?

Recently conducted large- scale genetic testing showed that the female Mitochondrial DNA of the Ashkenazi Jews belongs to very rare haplogroups²¹ **N1b** and **K**²² which hardly exist in Europe, but it is possible to find them in Egypt, Iran and Iraq. It turns out that half of Ashkenazi Jews, i.e. approximately about 4 million people, trace their origins from only 4 women (Behar, 2006) having these genes.

Investigations of the distribution of the male chromosome Y-DNA belonging to the haplogrup **J** show that the majority of men of the Jewish priesthood known as Cohanim, carry a characteristic chromosome known as the Cohen Modal Haplotype which originated from one male progenitor who lived approximately 3000 years ago (Hammer, 2009). Descent of the Ashkenazi Jews from such a small circle of primogenitors points to the fact that their original genes had exceptional abilities to proliferate over thousands of years. Without a doubt the intelligence of

their owners is one of the most important features enabling them to survive.

Where and how could Jews receive these genes? We know that they lived in Egypt for hundreds of years and held high positions there. So it is possible that as a result of mixed marriages with the Egyptian elites belonging to the “dynastic race” they received genes which, as in the case of Cohens, originated from the founders of the local civilization²³. Therefore we are able to propose a hypothesis that the progenitors of a large part of the Ashkenazi Jews’ population belonged to the “dynastic race” which handed over their genes to the Jews. This event took place thousands of years ago, however the effects are visible in our times due to the genetic isolation. We know from genetic research that the Ashkenazi Jews did not mix with other ethnic groups, which is confirmed by a very low diversity coefficient of their genes²⁴. Genetic isolation can exist even within the same ethnic group because in normal conditions social barriers do not allow for the mixing of genes of the upper classes with members of much lower social groups. In this way Cohens could keep the purity of their genetic features by isolating themselves from the rest of Jews.

Other genetic research results show, that 52% of Ashkenazi Levites males possess genes of haplotype **R1a1** (Bradman, 2002) which probably originates from the Altai region and is also present in Turkic tribes. We know that these tribes belong to the groups speaking Ural-Altaic languages which are related to the Sumerian tongue.

Close genetic ties of Ashkenazi Jews with the Altaian Turkic speakers confirm research findings which were undertaken by the Greek scientist Dienes Pontikos. He measured how often two male haplotypes **R1a** and **Q** appeared in these two groups. In Altaians the ratio of the frequency of occurrence of these haplotypes is about 2.7, while in Ashkenazim it is 2.4. As can be seen these ratios are very similar and attest to close genetic links of both ethnic groups.

The results of genetic research do not provide incontrovertible evidence that Ashkenazi Jews originated directly from proto-Sumerians. However they do convince us of their genetic links with ethnic groups which lived thousands of years ago in an area where the proto-civilization

probably existed. So we cannot reject the possibility that they could have received “genes of intelligence” from the descendants of the proto-Sumerians.

The existence at the present time of an ethnic group having possible connections with the royal dynasty in Egypt as well as with the Sumerian progenitors and at the same time having an exceptionally high intelligence, supports the hypothesis that the founders of the first civilizations had much higher intelligence than the indigenous population. These new abilities were transferred genetically by the intelligent beings, because they were necessary to secure assimilation of the handed over knowledge. The above hypothesis also explains why at that time civilizations did not come into existence in various other places in the world, but only there where the “intelligent genes” had been handed over.

Emergence of the conscious man

The development of the intelligence of man is linked to the development of his consciousness. Until now the world of science has believed that man had an awareness of himself right from the very beginning of his being, or at least for tens of thousands of years. However a Princeton University, professor of psychology, Julian Jaynes (1976), disagreed with this thesis. In 1976 he advanced a very controversial hypothesis that consciousness did not arise far back in human evolution, but that it was formed only in a period of the last 3000 years. Primitive man had, as he called it, a bicameral mind in which both hemispheres did not cooperate with each other in the way that this takes place in the conscious man. Bicameral people were not aware of the existence of their own thoughts and internal dialogues, experiencing them as a kind of auditory hallucination or voices coming from outside directing their actions, similar to commands received by schizophrenics. Jaynes justified it with the fact that the left hemisphere, which was responsible for speech, was modulated by auditory verbal hallucinations originating in the right hemisphere, responsible for thinking, and these hallucinations were interpreted as the voices of chiefs, rulers, or the gods.

Jaynes based his hypothesis on the studies of Sumerian civilization and on early Greek literature, particularly on the works of Homer. He considered that the theocratic Sumerian civilization with a rigid hierarchy, resembling a bee hive, where everyone had its place fixed in advance, reflected the bicameral mind. The ordinary Sumerians did not possess a full consciousness, because they blindly carried out orders of the gods. This interpretation cannot however apply to the founders of this civilization, because to establish and govern the city-states the Sumerians as well as the Egyptian leaders had to have a developed consciousness.

This lack of awareness is implied by S.N. Kramer (Kramer, 1963, p. 123) who wrote *“Convinced beyond all need for argument that man was created by gods solely for their benefit and leisure, the Sumerians accepted their dependent status just as they accepted the divine decision that death was man’s lot. All credit for the high moral qualities was attributed to the gods; it was gods who planned it that way, and man was only following divine orders.”*

According to Jaynes, the development of consciousness took place in Mesopotamia and in Greece only about 1000 BC, and in other places even later. However he is not able, in a convincing way, to explain the mechanism of the arising of consciousness which took place in such a short time, although essential changes had to occur in the functioning of the brain. In the late 1990s, Jaynes' ideas received renewed attention as brain imaging technology confirmed many of his early predictions. More recently his hypothesis has been finding more support in the world of science, although it continues to be subject to controversy.

The development of man’s consciousness still remains a controversial puzzle, however we can propose a plausible explanation of this conundrum. If the arising of self-awareness is related to the development of intelligence, we could assume that the intelligent beings, when transferring the “genes of intelligence” to man, could at the same time pass the “consciousness genes” thus enabling development of his awareness. At the beginning of the civilizations the primary carriers of these genes in Sumer and Egypt were kings and the ruling classes, who, having a privileged position, were able to have more numerous progeny. With time these genes, having advantageous conditions in which to proliferate, spread into the middle classes.

Due to that process in such places like Sumer and Egypt, the awareness of society probably started to develop some 5,000 years ago. It is especially visible in Egypt during Old Kingdom, where the development of consciousness of a part of society could have contributed to political conflicts and to the changes of dynasties. In Sumer we do not observe this phenomenon, because power there was in the hands of Semitic kings who subordinated the rest of society by force.

The course of events

Relying on information obtained as a result of archaeological discoveries and the studies of the Sumerian language, as well as taking into consideration the results of genetic testing which threw light on the migration of population, we can propose a scenario illustrating the origins of the first proto-civilizations on earth and the development of man's consciousness. The proposed course of events is based on the assumption that such large amounts of complex information, necessary for the founding of the first civilizations, could not be passed on to man in a form of telepathic transmission. The knowledge handed over had to be above all practical, being suitable for immediate implementation so that people could see instant benefits and gain sufficient experience in its application. Therefore I propose a hypothesis that in order to achieve an effective and efficient transfer of knowledge it had to be done in the form of physical contacts between the intelligent beings and people. The course of events could be as follows.

In order to initiate further development of mankind, the intelligent beings arrived on Earth and probably settled in Bactria, in the region of the river Amu Daria. Here they established the economic foundations of the proto-civilization, securing the safe and stable existence of the indigenous Altaic population, which used a proto-Sumerian language.

Before commencing the transfer of information essential for the further development of mankind, the intelligent beings had to first prepare a suitable team of people that would be able to learn and assimilate this knowledge. Since buying young girls for wives was then the accepted custom, an appropriately large number of women would

have been easily gathered. In order to hand the new genes over to them they probably used the method of artificial insemination. With the help of appropriate pharmacological means, this event could be blotted out from the memory of these women, and perhaps, became in many religions a source of beliefs in the virgin birth of gods. Also the law of the matrilineal succession in Egypt could arise as a result of the passing of the “divine” genes to women in the proto-civilization.

This type of relations between gods and people is mentioned in Genesis 6. 2: *“That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that were fair; and they took them wives, of all which they chose”*. This strange verse was retained in the Bible in spite of the strict censorship and editing, therefore must contain information which then was regarded as true. If we assume that in the times the Bible was written, Jews believed in one God, what God's sons is this verse talking about? It can only refer to very early events in the history of humankind which survived as ancient legends, before they were written down. Probably Hebrews living hundreds of years in Egypt and serving as high priests, had access to a secret knowledge referring to the origins of the first king-gods.

The process of handing over the genes was a one-off act and it is unlikely that the intelligent beings married “human daughters” as the Bible says. After a few generations the number of genetically improved members of the community increased enough to allow the process of building a proto-civilization to commence. The indigenous, primitive population also played an important role, constituting the basic workforce needed for agriculture and performing various physical labors.

As a result of the education and special upbringing of the intelligent members of the community, a new elite arose which possessed technical knowledge and the abilities to perform managerial tasks. As the number of members of the new elite increased, further development of the proto-civilization could take place. Proto-structures of the new society appeared with the novel organization of management and the new justice system. For land under cultivation an irrigation system was built and new agricultural technologies were introduced. People learnt the principles of metallurgy, civil engineering and medicines. While learning how to apply the gained knowledge, they probably did not understand the principles it

was based on, therefore they were not able to improve it in the future.

It is possible that the intelligent beings were not fully adapted for existence in earthly conditions and had to use special protective “spacesuits” or stay in special environmental rooms, in which temperature and atmosphere was controlled. To these houses every day came administrators and managers for instructions from the intelligent beings – their gods. These buildings, with time, evolved into temples and everyday visits became religious rituals which were continued even by the pharaohs in Egypt. This scenario is supported by two facts. The Sumerian temples were always built on the top of a mound or a pyramid to protect their occupants against flooding, however this was not needed in Egypt, where the terrain and high stone walls enclosing the temple offered flood protection. Also the sanctuary, the most holy part of a temple, was dark to protect its first occupants from too much light, or to hide them from the view of humans. We know that in Solomon’s temple, the design of which was probably based on the Egyptian temples, the Most Holy Place was without windows.

The new elites, after several generations finally assumed total control over community affairs, preserving in their tradition the principles that all material goods and all lands belonged to the gods. The same rules were obeyed later in Sumer and Egypt, where the priests and pharaohs had not considered themselves to be owners, but only administrators of earthly goods. When the entire system of the proto-civilization was stable and had been working efficiently and the handed over rules, orders and instructions were strictly adhered to, the intelligent beings prepared the final the missionary work, and then they disappeared from Earth.

It is worthwhile emphasizing that within the new elites neither dominating groups nor political leaders emerged because everybody was equal before the gods. This is supported by the fact that after arriving in a new place no homogeneous state was created, but several independent cities-states. This happened in Sumer and in Egypt. Also in these states in the beginning a class of professional soldiers did not exist, which was unusual for those dangerous times.

Probably in about the middle of the fourth millennium BC, after the full formation of the proto-civilization and sufficient increase of the

educated elite numbers, missionary expeditions commenced. The purpose of these expeditions was to spread new genes and to teach other groups of people how to build a civilization. The character of these missions was peaceful and they were not military conquest expeditions, as confirmed by the fact that small groups of envoys arrived to Sumer and Egypt. It was also not a normal migration of nomadic populations during which, to protect against attacks by other barbaric tribes, the entire community moved together in a new place.

Taking into account that in those times there were very few roads, and travelling across mountains was very treacherous, the safest and fastest way of transport was by water. Probably the first missions used the river Indus which is relatively easily accessible from Bactria. The travelers moved down the river to the Indian Ocean, leaving behind in the Indus valley settlements which became the seed of a new civilization. Travelling west along the coast they arrived at the delta of the two rivers: Euphrates and Tigris, where they built Sumerian city-states. The other groups followed the coast further and arrived on the shores of the Red Sea, which are only about a hundred and fifty miles (240 km) from the River Nile and Upper Egypt. This travelling scenario is supported by the later Sumerian trading routes which reach the Indus valley and Africa.

The other water route led down the Amu Dari River to the Caspian sea and along its coast to the Caucasus Mountains. Here the travelers formed the Maikop civilization in the north-west Caucasus, where advanced bronze objects from the middle of the fourth millennium BC were found.

Another early civilization near the Caspian Sea, which we learnt about from Sumerian records, was Aratta, where the Sumerian language was also spoken (see Figure 2).

Members of the Maikop civilization probably contributed to further spreading of civilization, travelling along the coasts of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea and establishing the Minoan civilization on Crete in about 2700 BC, where advanced bronze objects and seals similar to the Sumerian cylindrical seals were found.

The missionaries of the proto-civilization traveled not only to Sumer and Egypt but probably migrated in other directions, spreading knowledge all over the world. It is possible that they reached China in the

3rd millennium BC as well as other parts of Eurasia.

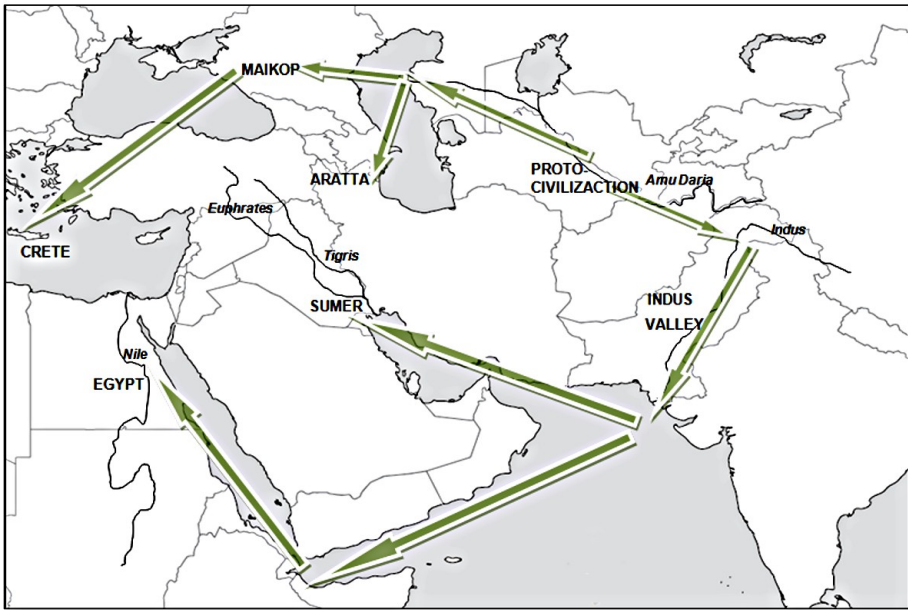


Figure 2. Map showing the travelling routes of the first protocivilization missionaries

It is possible that the descendants of the proto-civilization population spread all over Europe. This is supported by the existence of mysterious megalithic structures discovered in Malta, Spain, England, Ireland and Scandinavia, which were built from the fourth to the second millennia BC. It is interesting that the majority of them are in coastal areas, so it seems probable that they were built by sea travelers.

Contemporary genetic research confirms large migration of population on the Eurasian continent, as a result of which the “intelligence genes” were able to spread in this part of the world. It is not certain what constitutes the intelligence of man and IQ tests do not necessarily reflect all its elements, but an irrefutable fact exists that the ethnic groups whose contact with the “intelligence genes” was improbable, like the inhabitants of Africa south of Sahara, or the Aborigines in Australia, never developed civilization.

Part Three

Arising of the main religions

CHAPTER 17

The function of religions in the development of mankind

We know from archaeological discoveries and cave paintings that even Paleolithic man, living 30 thousand years ago, followed certain religious rituals. His beliefs originated in the incomprehension of the mysteries of nature surrounding him, but also had roots in his subconscious in the form of archetypes. These conditions contributed to the development of shamanistic beliefs and rites which we can observe even today in the primitive tribes of Asia and South America. One of the basic elements of shamanism was a belief in the spirits of nature and the spirits of ancestors which are still part of the main canons of the present Chinese religion. We know very little about the religious beliefs of the Neolithic agricultural society, whose life was dominated by the fear of crop failure and starvation. Living under constant stress about the future created the need for beliefs incorporating religious ceremonies and rituals to appease gods and to secure their favors. They also gave Neolithic man a certain comfort and a sense of security in a life deprived of humanitarian feelings, in which human existence did not have any value.

But only the development of the first civilizations resulted in the security associated with the provision of all essential material needs, and during this period beliefs came into existence which reflected spiritual needs, and particularly a desire for the afterlife. The new rituals did not demand human sacrifices in order to appease the gods, because people knew what gods required from them and how they should behave. Society accepted the rules imposed earlier by the kings and priests, who themselves respected principles established by the intelligent beings. People obediently fulfilled commandments handed over to them, because they believed that the laws originated from gods. As a result of the introduction of the new ethics, society encompassed humanitarian values protecting the underdogs and poor. In that period people observed high standards of behavior which are comparable to present day social norms.

In the territories outside these civilizations, human relations were based mainly on force and were often characterized by violence, brutality and a lack of justice. With the growth of the population and the emergence of the warlike elites, brutal inter-tribal fights began, which still take place in some areas of Africa. Literally a vast chasm separated these communities from the culture and ethics of the Sumerians and the inhabitants of ancient Egypt.

The first civilizations had not managed to spread their own standards and social norms beyond their own boundaries. As a result of the conquests carried out by barbaric tribes, previously implemented humanitarian principles gradually disappeared from their lands. There was therefore a need to create and implement new rules, similar to the laws of the first civilizations, which would be more firmly and widely established in society. To secure such conditions, an element of power was needed which would force people to follow these rules.

Contemporary systems of justice were in the hands of strong and often brutal rulers. Therefore a new system had to be created regulating man's behavior, encompassing all strata of society, particularly the rich and influential elites, as well as the local masters. It would have to contain a new structure, which would not be affected by the passage of time, would not have any ethnic bias, which would survive wars and the changes of ruling elites. Religion was this new phenomenon.

The new religion had to be independent, should not serve any interests of the leaders and the ruling elites, and should not be influenced by any social or state organizations. It had to have at its disposal strong arguments forcing ordinary men and their masters to observe the set rules. Therefore apart from the main religious canon, which was the belief in God, an element of fear was needed forcing the obedience of people. Dogma concerning the existence of the immortal soul exposed to suffering after death fitted this purpose superbly. Therefore new concepts of Heaven and Hell, the judgment of man's deeds after his death, and the Last Judgment at the end of the world were implemented. In the course of the last few thousand years, five main religions meeting these criteria came into existence: Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

Religions with this element of fear of eternal damnation were not used everywhere to control society. Where a strong and feared government existed, as in China, Confucius' laws established the new social order in which everyone, including the emperor, knew their place and had to observe the imposed rules of behavior. However it did not happen at once. A few hundred years had to pass before these rules were accepted by the Chinese masters who themselves enforced them in society.

Buddhism does not have the element of belief in an almighty God and therefore there is no fear of condemnation. It is a unique religion, or rather a philosophy of life, which delineates human behavior in a completely new frame of reference. Man's behavior is not defined by a new set of rules but originates from his developed consciousness which guides him through life.

I believe that the above mentioned religions came into existence as a result of an intervention of the intelligent beings, who in the form of divine commandments introduced for men new rules of conduct. These beings used certain chosen individuals whose task was to teach and to spread these new laws. These messengers included Zoroaster (Zarathustra), Moses, Buddha, Christ and Muhammad who were founders of the great new religions. It is important to emphasize that their teachings, especially Buddha's and Christ's, contained unusually

novel ideas and concepts. These new religions implemented strong discipline amongst their followers, who were forced to observe the new norms and moral directives which have survived till today. The coming into existence of the new religions as a result of the intervention of the outside forces is supported by their followers who believe that God himself passed the canons of their faith to the founders in the form of revelations.

Having such origins also explains why these religions did not arise amongst primitive tribes in Asia or Africa, but instead only where their teachings would find favorable conditions, where they would be truly needed and comprehended. And so Buddhism arose in India where well-developed Hinduism already existed, Judaism was connected with the civilizations of Sumer and Egypt, Christianity grew out of Judaism on the lands of the Greco-Roman civilization, and Islam contains in itself the most important elements of Judaism and Christianity.

Some non-believers might argue that religions arose as a result of socio-economic conditions and pressures, and that the prophets expressed the needs of the people. However this cannot be the case because the teachings of messengers were very much advanced for the local population, and some of the original concepts of Buddha or Christ are still not assimilated by people. Also the fact that these religious beliefs had to be enforced supports the hypothesis of external intervention.

The religious character of interventions

The religious character of the interventions of the intelligent beings, who function in the physical world and operate in the framework of the laws of nature, could seem for some incomprehensible. Why did these beings choose religion as a tool to influence and control people? I came to the conclusion that this choice was based on their understanding of the psyche of man, and on the need to select the best method to control his egotistical and brutal behavior. While the relationship of man with other members of his clan or his tribe was controlled by precise and very often strict social rules, people belonging to other communities were regarded as enemies that one should mercilessly destroy.

The effective change of man's attitude towards other people could only take place as a result of creating a strong belief in supernatural powers, which would be able to punish him, even if he managed to hide his deeds from other members of the community. It was particularly important in the case of rulers and influential, wealthy individuals, who would not easily yield to physical forces, because they were powerful themselves.

Religion, creating a system of new rules which had to be followed under the threat of eternal damnation, modified the behavior of man effectively, without physical enforcement. Religious commandments gradually evolved into social rules, and then were included in secular laws. So it appears that the creation of religions was the only practical solution which forced people to change their conduct. This is confirmed by the fact that where influences of the main religions are limited, as for example in many areas of Africa or Asia, people behave towards each other with exceptional brutality.

CHAPTER 18

Zoroastrianism

Zoroaster

Zoroaster, the founder of the first modern monotheistic religion, probably lived about 1400 BC in the area lying in present day north-east Iran and south Turkmenistan. According to Gathas, a part of Avesta, the holy Zoroastrian scripture, the Zoroaster tribe was annihilated as a result of tribal wars, and he alone wandered for a dozen or so years witnessing brutal tribal fights. At the age of thirty Zoroaster had a vision of the angel Vohu Manah. The angel told him there was only one true God, Ahura Mazda, and that he was to become his prophet. During the next ten years, Zoroaster had other visions in which several archangels of Ahura Mazda appeared and revealed further truths to him.

Zoroaster tried to preach his new faith to his compatriots, however they were not receptive to his teachings and persecuted him. He had to escape to the nearby kingdom of Bactria where he managed to convert the king Vishtaspa who introduced Zoroastrianism into his lands. Zoroaster became a chief priest and one of the most influential persons in the state.

According to later tradition, Zoroaster resigned at the end of his life from all positions, wrote Gathas, and then died through voluntary immersion in the icy cold, crystal-clear waters of Kasaoja lake in the Pamir Mountains. Avesta says that at some time Zoroaster's semen will

inseminate the virgin who will bathe in this lake at dawn. She will give birth to the Savior who will lead people to the ultimate victory over the forces of evil.

Elements of the Zoroastrian religion

Zoroastrians believe in one god called Ahura Mazda, who is all-knowing, omnipresent, almighty, unchanging, regarded as the creator of everything, source of happiness and goodness which man cannot comprehend. This is a description of the proto-god accepted through all monotheistic religions, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Ahura Mazda has been accredited with a number of emanations that are referred to as Amesha Spentas (Holy Immortals). These six primeval creations are: Vohu Manah (Good Mind), Asha Vahistah (Truth), Khshatra Vairya (Good Dominion), Spenta Armaiti (Devotion), Haurvatat (Wholeness and Health), Ameretat (Immortality).

Angra Mainyu, who lives in Hell, is responsible for all the evil in this world. Angra Mainyu is a spirit of destruction, responsible for death, illnesses and all that torments us. According to Zoroastrian beliefs, the material world is a battlefield between good and evil. The function of man is to help God to remove evil from the surface of the earth. It is possible to do this through correct behavior, supporting truth and order. Zoroastrianism is characterized by moral dualism resulting from the belief that human nature has both good and bad sides.

Zoroastrians believe that God first created a spiritual world and only later a material one. The spiritual world is beyond the reach of evil and cannot be touched by it. Human beings have a spiritual nature of God and are not born sinners and do not have a tendency to do evil. Man has free will and decides whether he will go along the rightful road of divine teaching or choose evil and be damned. God gave man knowledge, thanks to which he knows how to act, however God did not promise that he would take on his shoulders the sins of his believers.

Afterlife

Followers of this religion believe that death comes when the soul leaves the body. The soul of the deceased loses its corporeality until the day of the Last Judgment. It stays on earth after death for three days and then is led by the protective spirit to the gate of Heaven where Mitra waits for it. Mitra holds the scales of justice, on which are weighed good and bad deeds, thoughts and words. When the good outweighs the bad in the life of a soul, it goes to Heaven, where it can calmly wait for the Day of Judgment. When the bad outweighs the good, the soul is thrown to Hell, which it will never leave and where, under the rule of Angra Mainyu, it will endure endless agonies. When the scale pans are balanced the soul finds its way to purgatory, becoming a gray shadow without joy or sadness.

Zoroastrians believe that at the end of a cycle lasting 3000 years, God will destroy the powers of evil and will announce the Last Judgment. On that day the deceased will arise from their graves and their life will be judged once more. Followers of this religion believe that at the Last Judgment they will receive new young bodies. To secure this, the bodies of the deceased are neither cremated at a funeral pyre, nor buried in earth, but are left on the surface so that vultures can clean the bones, and such skeletons are ready for new bodies.

Comments

The Zoroastrian religion originated in the areas where continuous, devastating inter-tribal fighting prevailed. In order to thwart these brutal wars, it was necessary to influence people in such a way which would force them, particularly their leaders, to obey new rules. A new religion, evoking fear of eternal damnation and infernal tortures had such a power.

Therefore Hell appears in the Zoroastrian religion for the first time as a place of punishment, where souls suffer for the misdeeds committed on earth. Only such a threat could stop rulers and warriors from committing atrocities. Zoroastrianism was accepted because there was a need for a faith which included the belief that people who could not be

punished in their lifetime would be punished after their death. From the same sense of justice originates a vision of purgatory, a place “in-between” for souls with a similar number of good and bad deeds. An important element of this religion is that all people are treated equally and on the day of the Last Judgment will be assessed without any partiality. The Zoroastrian doctrine was very well thought over and unusually practical. It met the intellectual and spiritual requirements of the contemporary people.

The introduction of Angra Mainyu, a spirit responsible for evil on earth, solves the problem which torments believers of other religions: Why an almighty and caring God sends so much suffering on innocent people?

The Zoroastrian religion is a forerunner of all present monotheistic religions which took from it the notion of an omniscient and almighty God. It also created a new order of the world in which, quite apart from earthly life, a rich spiritual world with Heaven and Hell exists. In this new reality all human deeds are subject to ultimate and irrevocable assessment on the Day of Judgment. Zoroastrianism created a new hierarchy with angels and archangels in Heaven and an archetype of Satan in Hell, all of which also became a part of other, later religions. Even such idiosyncratic beliefs in Christianity as giving birth to the Savior by the Virgin Mary, have their origins here.

Zoroastrianism was established in the Persian Empire and spread with its conquests. It became the official religion of the Babylonian state after its conquest by the Persians. When Cyrus the Great in the 6th century BC allowed the Jews, after years in exile, to return from Babylon to Jerusalem, they brought with them Zoroastrian beliefs and included them in their religion. These beliefs were also later included in the Christian and Muslim religions. After the conquest by Alexander the Great, Zoroastrianism suffered a setback, but in the period from the 2nd to the 4th century AD, under the name of Mithraism, it had many supporters in the Roman empire.

It is worth mentioning that in many elements of the Zoroastrian religion we observe some similarities to the much earlier worship of Osiris in Egypt. How was the coming into existence of these related

beliefs in places separated by more than 3000 miles (4800 km) and not having any contact with each other possible? It could be explained by the fact that Zoroaster preached in the lands where the proto-civilization existed, so it is possible that his teachings and the Osiris cult originated from the same source of knowledge.

CHAPTER 19

Buddhism

In order to understand the need to implement Buddhism and to appreciate its role in the development of mankind, let us examine early prevailing beliefs in India.

Hinduism

Hinduism belongs to the oldest religions in the world and it is a system of beliefs which does not have one main founder. Some researchers claim that it is 6,000 years old, others link its beginnings with the arrival of Aryans in India in about 1700 BC. At that time the composition of Rig-Veda, the oldest scripture of Hinduism, commenced. By around 1500 BC, several other Vedas were added to the religious scriptures. The majority of Hindus are guided in their lives by the sacred tradition handed over in two epics: the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. If we look at Hinduism from the point of view of its religious scriptures, we will see a well developed and refined philosophical system based on deep understanding of the human psyche and of the higher states of man's consciousness. The theses presented in these writings are so complex that they remain incomprehensible to an average follower, and the holy texts do not therefore perform the same role in their lives as the Gospels do in Christianity or the Quran in Islam.

It is difficult to say whether Hinduism is a cohesive religious system

or rather a conglomeration of beliefs, traditional values and ceremonies, as well as superstitions accumulated over thousands of years. In Hinduism there is no one scripture which would guide believers and it is not controlled by an institutionalized church or other central organization. Hinduism is open to new, diverse, often incomprehensible and contrary beliefs, thoughts and ideas, and because of this, accommodates itself easily to new conditions. It is rather a way of living, and in order to be a genuine Hindu it is necessary to be born into a family belonging to this culture.

Hindus acknowledge the existence of one God who created the world and established the main rules. This God is a universal concept, but unspecified and not manifesting itself and not taking an active part in supervising the world and in the life of people. This belief leads to a void filled up by hundreds of gods and goddesses, demigods and sages. This heavenly pantheon is responsible for ruling the world. Down below exist unknown, mysterious worlds of demons, devils and pure evil which oppose the divine forces causing fear and chaos in the world. God does not usually interfere in these fights, and rather helps to keep the balance between the good and bad forces enabling them to play their roles well.

Set deeply in the Indian religion, the system of castes is based on the fundamental principle that people are born unequal. The genesis of the caste division is explained by the myth of creation, according to which four different groups or Varna emerged from God. The holy Hindu scriptures, such as the Upanishads, divide society into five groups: priests, warriors and rulers, merchants and craftsmen, farmers and, at the bottom, Untouchables. According to religious scriptures, belonging to a caste is decided exclusively by the character and the abilities of a man, not on the caste of his parents. Yet in practice the membership of a caste depends exclusively on inheritance. The gap between the teachings of the holy books and the practice is nowhere so great as in Hinduism.

The system of castes belongs to the most unfair and discriminating ways of classifying people, and although officially repelled in 1947, it still functions in India. Transfer from one caste to another is impossible, because members of one caste do not mix with other castes and marriages are arranged by parents. Untouchables are in the worst

situation because they are not only exploited economically but also subjected to physical abuse. They are isolated from contact with other castes and suffer insults, they are not allowed to enter temples and houses of other castes, and are forced to eat and drink in public places from separate dishes. Deprived of ordinary human dignity they live, work and die in base conditions. This problem is a result of the religious system functioning in India for millennia. If today, in the 21st century, Untouchables are treated this way, it is possible to imagine what they suffered 2,500 years ago.

Hinduism created its own system of posthumous awards and punishments, connected with the caste division, described by the concept of reincarnation. Man, as in the majority of other religious systems, consists of a body and a soul. While the body dies, the soul remains unchanging and transmigrates from one body to another. However, transmigration does not happen by chance, but according to the established rules. If a man in his lifetime acts according to the rules appropriate to his caste, after death his soul, as a reward, will inhabit the body of a person belonging to a higher caste. If he sinned, his soul will be demoted and will move one step lower, and if in the next life no improvements take place, the soul moves further down until at last it settles in the body of an untouchable, or even in that of an animal or plant. On the other hand if an untouchable is obedient and humble towards members of other castes, it is possible that in a future incarnation his soul will advance to the body of a member of a higher caste. In this way, faith in reincarnation strengthens and justifies the caste system. Since the untouchables deserve their situation due to misbehavior in their previous lives, abusing them is justified.

Such a religious system sanctions injustice, aggression and the exploitation of a man by another man. It was created by Aryans during their invasion of India about 3,700 years ago to help them to dominate and subordinate the local population. This unfair system was consolidated in Hinduism and prevented the development of humanitarian and spiritual values.

Buddha

Buddhism was introduced in India in the 6th century BC by Siddhartha Gautama who was a son of the ruler of one of the kingdoms situated at the foot of the Himalayas, on the border of today's Nepal and India. Siddhartha Gautama, with his wife and children, lived in the splendor of his father's palace, isolated from the life of people by the palace walls. According to a legend, one day he decided to see the real world and so he took a ride outside the walls during which he saw an old man, an ill man, a funeral procession and a begging ascetic. Only then, realizing that everyone will age and die, did he become aware of human suffering. So he left the palace in order to become an ascetic and to search for the way to free all beings from suffering. The search took him about seven years, during which time he received education from different gurus, however, none of them was able to give him satisfying answers to the questions on his mind. Next, he decided to try a severe asceticism. He mortified his body, until he was all skin and bones, but this also did not help him to find the truth. And so Siddhartha left the ascetic life and chose a mid-way of living, deprived of sensory pleasures, but also without suffering. He decided to meditate to find a method of liberating mankind from suffering. After many days of deep meditation he attained enlightenment. He was then 35 years old. From this moment for the rest of his life, for 45 years, Siddhartha wandered all over the north of India, sharing his thoughts and experiences with people. His teachings were based on the deep understanding of human fate and on the sympathy which he showed every man he came across. He taught that it was possible to free oneself from suffering with one's own effort, without any help of external influences such as God or the mediation of priests. He, for the first time in the history of mankind, taught egotistical and self centered people about the need to work and to sacrifice themselves for others. It was Buddha who rebelled against the caste system and propagated the idea of equality and that all people should have the same opportunity in their life.

Buddhism

Buddhism differs from the three monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam in this, that it is not based on faith in an absolute God who demands obedience and adoration. Buddhists do not believe in the cosmic master, omnipresent and omniscient, to whom everything is subordinated and who rewards and punishes people. It is instead a religion based on the discovering of oneself and on seeking Enlightenment rather than on the expectation of Revelation. It shows how man should live and how he should bear suffering, it advocates the real equality of people and humanitarianism. Because Buddhists do not believe in the divine origin of their faith, they do not think that they have a monopoly on truth and do not condemn other religions.

Believers do not pray because Buddha does not hand out favors and does not fulfill their wishes. Instead of prayers, Buddhists practice meditations which lead to self-control, purity and enlightenment. Mindful meditation is an active effort, rather than adoration or the expression of silent admiration.

Buddhism is free of the personal God and dogmas system, leading to the spiritual development of man. The main objective of practiced exercises is to cleanse the mind from negative emotions, to get rid of egoism and to develop all-embracing sympathy, intuitive wisdom and to achieve absolute freedom which leads to experiencing unconditional joy and happiness.

In order to experience happiness, man must get rid of suffering. Buddhism distinguishes several causes of suffering such as: giving birth, growing old, illness, dying, separation from a loved one, unwanted events, stress connected with acquiring property and keeping riches. A lot of this suffering is caused by us alone, and so could be avoided, but only a man who has attained enlightenment can really free himself of it.

Buddha identified a new kind of suffering which could be called “intentional”. This is suffering to which we expose ourselves voluntarily when fulfilling our duties. However when we truly accept it, it helps our spiritual development.

Buddha recognized that experiencing sensory pleasures was the only source of happiness of an average man. Without a doubt it is possible,

thanks to them, to attain satisfaction and the feeling of fulfillment, however it is short-lived and fleeting. According to Buddha it is possible to find happiness only inside oneself. Happiness on its own is not associated with wealth, having children, honor or fame. If these things were unfairly obtained, improperly used and, what's worse, are held with pathological attachment, they will become a source of suffering and sorrow for their owners.

Buddha recommended the Noble Eightfold Path which includes:

Right view – Looking at life, nature and the world in the right way, as they really are.

Right intention – Aspiring constantly to rid oneself of qualities we know to be wrong and immoral.

Right speech – Abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, from abusive speech, and from idle chatter.

Right action – Abstaining from taking life, from stealing, and from illicit sex.

Right livelihood – Leaving a dishonest way of living and conducting an appropriate life.

Right effort – Making a persistent effort to abandon all wrong and harmful thoughts, words, and deeds.

Right mindfulness – Focusing one's attention on one's body, feelings, thoughts and consciousness in such a way as to overcome craving, hatred, and ignorance.

Right concentration – Meditating in such a way as to progressively realize a true understanding of imperfection, impermanence, and non-separateness.

Buddha devoted much attention to the development of the human consciousness. Man should work on his consciousness so that he is:

- conscious of himself, that is conscious of his body, emotions, and thoughts.
- conscious of other people.
- conscious of reality.

The development of consciousness is the most important stage of the development and is necessary in order for man to become fully free.

Fully conscious man does not need a blind belief in God and his commandments, since his consciousness dictates how he should behave.

Looking now at Buddha's ideas after 2500 years we do not perceive their revolutionary character. However in those times and conditions his teachings that one must not be an egoist and should not only care about others but also should sacrifice himself for strangers was an extraordinary idea. In such a stratified society, where almost everyone defended their caste position, Buddha preached equality of all people, which is still not accepted in India. He tried to persuade Hindus, who believed in hundreds of gods and demigods, that instead of worshipping supernatural powers they should look deep into themselves. He created the foundations necessary to achieve a higher level of consciousness, which in the West found a response only in the 20th century. With the development of consciousness is associated the experience of enlightenment – the highest state man can achieve without the help of priests and churches. This view even today is not accepted by most people.

If we consider very carefully the teachings propagated by Buddha, we reach the conclusion that he laid the foundations of the ideas of humanitarianism, which even in the 21st century are not widely practiced. He gave mankind guidelines which were much too advanced for his times. It is possible to acknowledge that Buddha's teachings were one of the most crucial and advanced in the history of human thought. His ideas were so revolutionary and unusual that they could not be born spontaneously in the mind of contemporary man. They had to originate from the intelligent beings who gave directions to guide humanity for thousands of years.

CHAPTER 20

Judaism

Sumerian connections

Judaism is the only religion with direct connections to the first civilizations, and therefore is closely associated with the religions of Sumer and Egypt. According to the Bible, the beginnings of its history are connected with the city of Ur in Sumer, where Abraham, the progenitor of the Judaic religion, lived in about the 21st century BC. As already mentioned, each Sumerian city-state had its own god, therefore it is possible to regard their religion as monotheistic. We could assume that Abraham was familiar with the Sumerian religion and this knowledge influenced the development of Jewish beliefs and traditions.

Affiliation of Judaism with the Sumerian culture is confirmed by the fact that many similarities exist between the descriptions in the Bible and the ancient Sumerian myths. Since Abraham's ancestors probably lived in Sumer through many generations, connections between Hebrew and Sumerian cultures could be much closer than is universally recognized and officially admitted. For example, the Hebrew god Yahweh is like the Sumerian god of storms Adad, and, equally interesting, the Jews, like the Sumerians, consider themselves to be the chosen people of God. Some researchers of the Bible consider that many of its fragments are of Sumerian origin, and for example the description of the Creation and the history of the deluge are taken straight from

Sumerian mythology. In the biblical story about expelling Adam and Eve from Paradise there appears the element of knowledge, as an important aspect of human existence. It is very unlikely that such a sophisticated subject could be considered and thought through by members of uneducated pastoral-nomadic tribes. On the other hand we know that “knowledge” was an element on the Sumerian list of the most important factors contributing to civilization.

The Bible (in Genesis 10. 10) situates the kingdom of Nimrod, the descendant of Noah in the land of Sumer: “And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar” According to the Bible (Ezekiel 8.14), Hebrew women in Jerusalem in the 6th century BC would still bewail the death of the mythological Sumerian king-god Tammuz, and in the Hebrew calendar one month is named after him. According to Samuel Kramer, the name of the eldest son of Noah – Shem, originates from the ancient name of Sumer.

Covenant

At the root of Judaism is a covenant or an alliance between God and his chosen people. God made a promise to Abraham that he would have a male successor and promised him land. In exchange Abraham had to believe in and obey one God. Descendants of Abraham followed this covenant and circumcision symbolized the sealing of the agreement. Abraham moved at first from Ur to Haran, and then to the land of Canaan, where his son Isaac was born. This way Yahweh redeemed his promises. The covenant between the Jews and God has continued throughout the entire history of Judaism.

Moses

Historical records of the life of Moses are so fragmentary that some researchers suggest that Moses never actually existed as a historical figure. According to a Hellenistic Egyptian historian, Manetho, who lived in the Ptolemaic era, Moses was a high priest in Heliopolis, called Osarseph, which means the son of Osiris. Moses, his brother Aaron and sister

Miriam were Egyptians of Hebrew origins and received a good education and were familiar with Egyptian religion. Aaron was also an Egyptian priest and as he was a very good speaker, who acted later as a spokesman for Moses. At that time Hebrews, who rebelled against the pharaoh, chose Moses as their leader.

According to the Bible, Moses was the son of Amram and his wife, Jochebed, a Levite, and was brought up in the palace of the pharaoh. When defending a Hebrew, he killed an Egyptian and as a result he escaped to the kingdom of Midian. There for the first time on Mount Horeb, Yahweh spoke to him from the burning bush and ordered him to lead the Jews out of Egypt, and take them to the promised land. Against the will of the pharaoh, Moses did what God had commanded. Moses then led the Israelites through the desert to Mount Sinai where he received the Ten Commandments and other laws. Moses never entered the promised land and died on Mount Nebo.

Moses is regarded as the one who formed the second covenant with God, the liberator of the Israeli people from Egyptian slavery and the builder of Jewish national awareness. According to our hypothesis, Moses was one of the messengers of the intelligent beings.

Egyptian period

The Jews, according to some researchers, lived in Egypt for about 400 years and therefore it was a very long and important period which molded Jewish culture. According to the Bible, the Hebrews moved to Egypt at the time of Jacob (Genesis 46.26) and were accepted there because they held important official positions. In contemporary Egypt, even people of humble origins, due to their abilities, could achieve high government positions and gain wealth. This country attracted Jews because, compared with other lands, it was an oasis of peace and plenty and its granaries were full. The Jews were not discriminated against, but they had to however follow religious rules imposed by the state. In Egypt a religion was an important state-consolidating element, controlled by the pharaoh and priests. In such a situation Jews had to, like it or not, conform to the laws of the land and therefore follow many elements of

the Egyptian religion. It is also possible that Moses, being a priest, was well acquainted with the monotheistic worship of the god Aten and consequently this could have influenced the origin of the one God in Judaism. The connection between the Hebrew beliefs and the Egyptian religion is also shown by the worship of the sun-god in the Bible, (Ezekiel 8.16), according to which, Jews in Jerusalem in the 6th century BC bowed to the Sun. A further connection is the fact that the size of the Ark of the Covenant built by Moses is almost identical with the internal dimensions of the pharaoh's tomb in the Great Pyramid.

The basis of Judaism

As a result of the centuries-old accumulation of diverse beliefs, the religion of Israeli tribes was a mixture of various rituals and ceremonies. Moses rejected old beliefs and established new canons of Judaism which were based on the following:

- faith in the one and only God,
- confidence and faith in the religious mission of the Jews as the nation chosen by God.

The doctrine of Judaism defines the following attributes of God:

- the highest existence and the creator of the universe,
- omniscient,
- just and merciful,
- omnipotent,
- omnipresent,
- eternal.
- incorporeal (God is a pure spirit and it is forbidden to represent God in a physical form).

Although Moses is the progenitor of Judaism, two main monotheistic religions, Christianity and Islam, have their roots in Judaism and adopted similar attributes of God. Therefore one should regard Moses as the father of contemporary monotheistic religions.

The Torah, which according to the Hebrew tradition, was given Moses by God, is the most holy Jewish scripture. It contains 5 so-called Moses books, because their authorship is attributed to him. Principles of

the Jewish religion, including strictly obeyed laws, are provided by the Talmud which was written down between the 2nd and 6th century. The Talmud includes 613 rules and interdictions determining in every detail the behavior of the faithful. Judaism is a very practical religion and directs not only religious, but also everyday life in all its aspects, including what food one is allowed to eat and how it should be prepared.

Provisions of the Talmud require that faithful should look after the poor, widows and orphans. Every God-fearing Jew must hand over about 10 percent of his income to the community which distributes it among the needy. Charity is one of the most important foundations of Judaism and originates from the humanitarian principles of the Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations.

Adhering to the rules of the Talmud is not based on fear of eternal damnation, but on the covenant between God and the faithful. It is a type of contract: God will look after and will protect his people from misfortune and calamity, will provide them with necessary provisions, and in return they will obey Him and will not have any other Gods. This agreement served very well during stormy and difficult periods of Jewish history, but in times of stability and prosperity in the 2nd century BC this doctrine came close to collapse.

In 175 BC, when King Antiochus IV Epiphanes from the Seleucid dynasty assumed power in Syria and Palestine, he commenced the process of hellenization of the Hebrew population with the help of the Jewish religious leaders. Jews were offered advantages resulting from membership of the Hellenic society and Jerusalem would become an economic and cultural center of the region. Many supported these changes, but when in 167 BC Antiochus IV started the persecution of Jews, forbidding them to celebrate Sabbath and other holidays, this caused a revolution led by Judas the Maccabee which resulted in a victory over the armies of Antiochus IV. In this way orthodox Judaism was rescued, blocking Greek influences. At that time new elements entered into the Jewish beliefs and the faith in the Last Judgment and afterlife appeared.

CHAPTER 21

Christianity

Beliefs in the Greco-Roman civilization

Before we examine the significance of Christian teachings, let us consider the situation which existed in the first and second century BC in the Roman empire. At that time it included about 60 million people and stretched from Spain and France in the west up to Syria and Palestine in the east, spreading through some parts of North Africa, including Egypt.

From the time of Alexander the Great, the eastern part of the later Roman empire, including Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine, was dominated by Greek cultural and religious influences. The Greek religion was very different from Judaism and was rather a collection of myths and beliefs reflecting human nature than laws given by God.

The Olympian gods did not guarantee the existence of justice, morality and honesty. These immoral beings had been provoking conflicts in the world, causing chaos in the everyday life of people. They were capricious and broke human laws without justified reasons, rather than setting an example which man should follow. They did not help to spread moral principles and did not provide spiritual peace for their believers, who could not look for support from gods they could not trust. Plato considered that the religious myths gave a bad example to young people and he proposed that they should not be taught in schools.

However, even such malicious gods performed an important function in society. The Greek religion explained easily where evil and human suffering in the world originated from. Simply put, gods and goddesses amused themselves with people's misfortunes or used them in their own disputes and fights. Therefore the problem of human suffering, so difficult to justify in monotheistic religions which are based on the belief in the existence of an infinitely good and loving God, was convincingly explained by the Greek religion.

The worship of Dionysus who offered every person immortality of the soul, was a special belief. Dionysus was a demigod, Zeus was his father, but his mother was Semele – an ordinary woman. This cult's religious rites were covered in mystery and induced a state of ecstasy in their participants. Believers united with their god with the help of singing, dancing, sexual excesses and alcohol. This was the religion of joy, of freedom from everyday problems, giving believers rich experiences and, because it guaranteed immortality of the soul, it found many supporters in the Hellenistic world. It did not demand high moral standards or the following of appropriate behavior and its believers could also worship other gods.

Since the beliefs based on the myths and conception of anthropomorphic gods did not give an answer to very relevant questions for people concerning the meaning of their own life and the nature of the world, this function was taken over by philosophy. All sorts of schools were formed which were identified by the names of their great leaders such as Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle. In these schools only an intellectual approach towards problem solving mattered. So, for example, the disciples of Pythagoras studied mathematics which helped them to reveal the appropriate balance in the human personality and in society. Plato studied the structure of city-states and questioned the universal belief that what we perceive by our senses is the true reality. Aristotle and his followers examined, among other things, the nature of reasoning, elaborating the first logical system based on syllogism. They dealt with the world of nature, as well as studied the movements of the stars, the sun and the planets. New concepts arose concerning comprehension of time and space. More practical issues occupied Stoics, who gave advice

on how to control oneself and how to control one's own emotions in order to achieve rational behavior. All these philosophical movements questioned the values of the Olympian religion which was not concerned with finding the truth and did not help to direct the life of society towards justice and honesty.

The Romans also had a rich pantheon of gods and goddesses, which in the majority of cases had been borrowed from the Greeks. The Roman mythology narrative was not as the Greek, and their gods led less eventful lives than their Greek counterparts. Roman gods were based on objects or actions rather than personality traits and the exploits of gods and mortals in Roman mythology are far less individualistic than in Greek mythology. The Greeks were more concerned with physical life on earth as opposed to the afterlife. Mortals are remembered and rewarded for their good deeds on earth. In contrast, the Romans believed that good conduct could secure their place in Heaven. They could even earn a place among the gods and through their life on earth strove towards this goal. The Romans also worshipped the spirits of ancestors to whom they made offerings. The Roman as well as the Greek religions did not impose moral behavior upon believers and they played a secondary part in their lives, therefore the Romans tolerated and easily adopted foreign faiths, provided that they did not undermine the power of the emperor.

Related to Zoroastrianism, Mithraism was one of the most influential foreign religions in the Roman empire, spread especially in the army between the 1st and the 4th century AD. The solar god, Mithras, born to a virgin mother, similarly to Dionysus, had both divine and human origin. The religious practices were based on participating in ecstatic ceremonies – mysteries. The followers of Mithraism obeyed rules demanding exemplary life and self-control. Such conduct on earth guaranteed eternal life and salvation after death. A certain resemblance to Mithraism could be found in the worship of the Egyptian goddess Isis and her son Horus. Horus being an incarnation of a god was regarded as the son of god. He fought evil and he prevailed over death, and therefore members of this cult believed that they had assured immortality.

During the second century BC, Judaism experienced a crisis. It did not offer the faithful life after death⁵⁷, as the cults of Dionysus or Mithras

did. It was also devoid of the ecstatic component, so did not provide ceremonies giving pleasure and enabling an escape from reality. As a result of the revolution led by Judas the Maccabee, Judaism rejected the Greek advances and lost the opportunity to become a major Greco-Roman religion.

The Judaic religion was attractive to a part of Greek society which needed strong beliefs in God and sought clear rules of behavior. It was mostly visible in the areas of the Jewish Diaspora in Syria and present-day southern Turkey. However there were only a very few Greeks being converted to Judaism. This was caused by the requirement that all believers had to closely observe many detailed rituals and rules concerning all aspects of their lives, including food preparation and celebration of religious holidays. Observance of these strict rules discouraged many people from joining, resulting in the influences of Judaism being limited exclusively to the Hebrew groups and therefore having no chance of becoming a universal religion.

It appears that the Greco-Roman civilization did not have a strong religion which would explicitly show people how they should live, how to develop spiritually in order to achieve a higher level of awareness. Although high organizational, artistic and intellectual standards were achieved, in the sphere of human relationships it was still a barbaric civilization, in which the humanitarian and charitable elements were missing and the value of the individual man's life was not appreciated. In comparison with the situation which existed in ancient Sumer or Egypt, it was a very heartless society in which women were treated as inferior beings and had no rights, and slaves were treated exceptionally brutally. The Romans acted with the same cruelty as the barbaric tribes which they tried to civilize, and crucifying tens of thousands of rebellious slaves after the Spartacus uprising in 73 BC aroused no moral anxiety in the republican society. It would also be sufficient to study the history of emperors such as Caligula, Nero or Tiberius in order to see how cruel and base was the behavior of such rulers. In the largest, at that time, civilization in the world there existed an enormous gap between material and spiritual values and there was a danger that the development of mankind in this part of the world would go in the wrong direction.

Therefore there was a need for a strong religion which would establish a new direction for the spiritual development of man in a state inhabited by so many different ethnic, religious and cultural groups of people. It became necessary to introduce a new code of behavior similar to the ten commandments followed by the believers of Judaism, so it was logical and desirable that a new prophet should come from them. This new teacher was Jesus Christ.

Stages of the implementation of Christianity

Implementing a new religion in such a large area was not a simple matter. It took place in three independent stages. Each stage was carried out by a different leader best suited to the required task.

The introduction of the teachings and the creation of foundations for the new religion was the purpose of the first leader, Christ. Christ and his apostles functioned as a part of the Judaic Church, and more precisely they created one of its many sects. In such a situation there was no chance that Christ's teachings could reach beyond the narrow circle of the Hebrew believers. Therefore someone who would pass them over to mankind, or at least to the Greco-Roman civilization, was needed.

Such a person was Saint Paul, who in practice single handedly built the Christian Church. Choosing him for this role was not a matter of chance, because he had special qualities which equipped him to do this dangerous and difficult work. At this second stage many congregations were formed in different parts of the Roman empire. Structures of church organization and administration were established. The Gospels were written and the main theological foundations of the religion were laid out. However, Christianity could not proliferate because its followers were persecuted by many Roman emperors. So the next, third stage, consisted of the official acceptance of the new religion.

The emperor Constantine the Great was responsible for the most important breakthrough by recognizing Christianity as a national religion. From his times there began a period of mass conversion of the Roman population and of unchecked development of Christianity in the world. Owing to these three outstanding individuals, mankind has got to know

and has accepted the most revolutionary teachings in its contemporary history.

Revolutionary teachings of Christ

Although the teachings of Christ are largely based on the canons included in the Jewish holy book – the Torah and on the ten commandments received by Moses, his interpretation goes much farther and deeper than of any earlier Jewish prophets and priests. The main canons of his teaching are given in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5.1-42). And so the commandment “do not kill” refers not only to murder but, in the interpretation of Christ, even anger towards other people should be regarded as sin. Not only adultery, but even desiring in thoughts the wife of a neighbor is also forbidden. Imagining sin is as harmful as the very act, because it can lead to depravity.

Christ demanded high standards regarding the telling of truth. One should not swear on the Bible, God, on the life of a mother, or one’s own life, but one should simply tell the truth. It is interesting, that even at present in the Christian world, in courts of justice, these teachings are ignored and the pagan ritual of taking an oath is still carried out.

One of the most controversial teachings is the command that one should not resist people doing us a great harm: “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also ”(Matthew 5.39). This is a calling to be passive, to surrender to the perpetrator and it seems very difficult for most people to accept. Even more revolutionary is the directive: “But I say unto you: love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matthew 5.44). Loving those who wish us well is not difficult and it does not require an effort, but in order to love enemies a great deal of will power and work on oneself is needed. If we look at these commandments from the point of view of the development of the human consciousness, it becomes apparent that Christ addressed them to a man having a higher consciousness, because only such a person can “turn the other cheek”. These teachings have a very deep psychological

insight. If we do not forgive the perpetrator, then our hatred, could destroy our own soul, our being.

To the most important commandments without any doubt belongs an imperative: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”. It is possible to reach a conclusion that many other laws result from it, even ones like “do not kill” or “do not steal”. Leo Tolstoy (1987) wrote that if people scrupulously followed only this commandment, other laws would be unnecessary.

In present times, after 2,000 years of the existence of Christianity, these teachings do not make a great impression on us, because they became an indelible part of our culture in which we grew up and which we regard as normal. But in the age in which the law of “eye for eye” ruled, when human life had no value, when wars were conducted in a very cruel and brutal way, and the most bestial murders aroused no moral opposition, these teachings were truly revolutionary. They were misunderstood by contemporary people and they were ahead of their time because they were regarded as unacceptable and unfeasible to follow, which is not surprising if we consider that for many people they are still incomprehensible to this day. Thousands of years ago Christ looked into the future and established new principles of people’s conduct, which will be fully comprehended when man achieves higher consciousness.

St Paul

Christ lived and taught amongst Jewish believers and was regarded by his followers as a Messiah announced by the Jewish prophets. After his death, his sect, later called the Nazarenes and led by his brother James the Just, worked mainly amongst the Jews who still followed the rules given by the Torah. Obeying as many as 613 rules and restrictions included in the Torah, celebrating Sabbath and observing a special kosher diet could not be accepted by the Greco-Roman world and therefore it was very unlikely that the teachings of Christ would spread throughout the Roman empire. An individual was needed who could pass these difficult and unique teachings to a non Jewish circle of recipients. This

chosen messenger was St Paul.

Saul, who later assumed the name Paul, was born about 5-10 AD in to a Hellenistic Jewish family, in the town of Tarsus, in present-day south-east Turkey. Owing to the services of his family he had Roman citizenship and could travel freely all over the entire empire. From The Acts of the Apostles we learn that in about 35 AD, on the road to Damascus, he experienced a mystical apparition of Jesus which changed his life. His mission became the spreading of a new religion, in which Christ was the central character. St Paul probably knew less about Jesus than we know at present, because he never met him. He was not familiar with the teachings of Jesus because the Gospels had not been written yet and he had very limited contact with Christ's followers. For the first time, about three years after his conversion, St Paul spent only two weeks with the apostles. His next meeting with the brother of Jesus, James, took place 14 years later in Jerusalem, so he clearly did not have close ties with the Nazarenes.

The doctrines propagated by St Paul differed very much from the teachings of Christ and his apostles. Because he broke completely with the Jewish tradition, his missionary work was well received in Hellenistic society. He introduced in his teachings the Greek elements of death and resurrection, in common with the popular worship of Dionysus, Mithras and Isis. The resurrection of Christ becomes the pivotal canon in his teachings and the most important dogma of the new religion. An image of Christ as the Savior, dying on the cross in order to redeem the sins of man, appears for the first time. St Paul does not talk much about the life and teachings of the real Jesus – mainly underlining his personal mystical experiencing of Christ who speaks through him. He claimed that the apparition during which Christ passed to him significant knowledge, rather than what Jesus taught during his lifetime, constituted the main foundation of the new religion. One of the main advantages of this religion was a promise of eternal life after death given to everyone who believed in Christ. This religion treated everyone equally, regardless of race, social status and gender, which was also revolutionary for contemporary times.

St Paul proposed a new approach to the history of Judaism and

identified three distinguished periods in it. The first lasted from Abraham till Moses, the second is the period of following the Torah from Moses to Christ, and the third is the period of belief in Christ, whose teachings superseded all other laws, therefore there was no need to obey the Torah rules. It was a very controversial interpretation, which could not be accepted by the followers of traditional Judaism, therefore St Paul's teachings were met with hostility by both the members of the sect of Jesus, as well as of the orthodox Jews. However, undermining the observance of strict regulations included in the Torah and Talmud introduced a danger of anarchy in the Christian congregations. This is reflected in the letters of St Paul in which he frequently writes about inappropriate behavior of the faithful who never received explicit guidance about the rules and restrictions of their conduct.

In the forties, fiftieth and sixtieth years AD, St Paul undertook three long missionary journeys, preaching, converting and establishing Christian congregations, which he guided later by letters. The first mission in 46-48 AD was to Asia Minor. During the second mission in 50-52 AD he visited settlements in present day Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Greece, and repeated this route in 53-58 AD. In 60 AD St Paul was under arrest in Jerusalem and subsequently sent to Caesarea. After spending two years in the local prison, as a result of an appeal to the emperor, he was sent to Rome. After being freed, he undertook further missionary activities in Rome, Spain, Macedonia and Crete. He was murdered in Rome in about 67 AD, during the emperor Nero's persecution of Christians.

St Paul originated several new theological concepts, which were later developed by outstanding Church Fathers, and which initiated the establishing of Christian dogmas, as well as causing disputes between the different factions within the Church. Among other things, St Paul believed in the predetermination of the life of man. This doctrine states that God decides all events, including the earthly life and afterlife of individual people who are so immersed in sin that alone they are unable to find the road leading to salvation. Man achieves salvation only due to the grace of God, rather than as a result of his own merits. God knows in advance who will be given grace, which means that man cannot control

his future by free will, and his actions and decisions do not affect his salvation. This concept was fully elaborated by St Augustine, and many centuries later became a part of Luther's and Calvin's theology. It was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church, and the Council of Trent declared that man's free will can reject God's grace. St Paul also claimed that man is not saved by good acts, but by faith. This view was also recognized by Luther and Protestant churches.

Thanks to St Paul, the new religion spread to a large part of the Roman empire and congregations established by him became the foundation for the Christian Church. These congregations were able to function and grow after his death. This was enormously important for the survival of Christianity, because many of its Hebrew supporters died during the Jewish War in 67-70 AD. The spread of and the increase in congregations led to a need for more accurate information about the life and teachings of Christ and therefore the Gospels were written : Mark's in the seventies AD, Matthew's in the eighties, John's in the nineties and Luke's in 90-125 AD.

Emperor Constantine the Great

The new religion was becoming increasingly common in the Roman empire, due to the intensive missionary work of the faithful. The structure of the church was established and good communication existed among various congregations scattered all over the empire. The new religion had two problems hindering its further development. Persecutions by the emperors and Roman authorities resulted in the death of many thousands of the faithful, and they discouraged people from joining Christian communities, because at that time it was very dangerous to be a Christian. The persecutions meant that only very strong believers remained in the Church. The second problem arose inside the Church, where lack of uniform theology led to the splitting of the congregations into many sects. In 384 AD Epiphane estimated that about 80 varieties of Christianity existed, and Arianism³¹ was among the most troublesome.

So a new champion was needed who would solve these problems and

secure further development for Christianity. It turned out to be the emperor Constantine the Great who came to power in 306 AD. According to Constantine himself, before the deciding battle against Maxentius by the Milvian bridge in 312 AD, he saw in his sleep a cross with the inscription “in this sign you conquer”. After the victory, with the co-emperor Licinius, he announced in 313 AD in Milan an edict in which he granted Christians, as well as others faiths, freedom to exercise their religion. Extolled for his piety by the sycophants, in reality Constantine was a brutal ruler and did not hesitate to murder even his close family, including his wife and son, close friends and potential competitors for power. However for the development of Christianity, it is not important whether he was guided by faith or political strategy, whether he was a saint or a merciless murderer. He fulfilled an important role because, during his reign, he was deeply interested in spreading and strengthening Christianity. Thanks to him the Christian Church started to grow, to accumulate riches and to gain political influence. Constantine saw the Church as an ally which was supposed to help him to rule and strengthen his multi ethnic and religiously and culturally diversified empire. He needed a strong religion, uniting people around common values, contributing to keeping order and harmony in the state. Since Christianity gained followers in various ethnic groups and in diverse social strata, it was especially suitable for a religion bonding the empire. He gave the Church dignitaries financial benefits and power, but in exchange he demanded obedience and support for his often ruthless political activities.

Constantine's most important contribution to the shaping of Christian theology was the implementation of a dogma about the equality of Christ to God the Father. Constantine sought religious harmony in the state for political reasons and therefore quickly suppressed opposition, however he did not care about the doctrinal truth, but about the views of the majority. He needed a strong and monolithic religion, whereas disputes and schisms would weaken its influences. Immense dogmatic differences in the internally split Christian Church gave him the opportunity of appearing in the role of an “intermediary sent by God”. Uncompromising hostility between the Donatists in North Africa and

the adherents of Arius in the Eastern part of the empires made him aware that, in order to create a strong, united religion, persuasion on its own would not be enough. Wanting to solve disputes around views promoted by Arius, he convened in 325 AD in Nicaea, (located in present-day north-western Turkey), the first general Council in the history of the Church. Constantine, although he had not been baptized yet, chaired the Council and led the discussions. Out of 1800 bishops in the Church at the synod only about 250 arrived, but only 6 from the West, and Pope Sylvester I was not even invited. So the Council did not represent the entire Church, but this did not prevent it, under pressure from Constantine, establishing that Jesus Christ is not only God, but that he is equal to God the Father and comes from the same substance. Bishops intimidated by the emperor, with the exception of only two, put their signatures under this new Creed, and many did it contrary to their own beliefs. The emperor who was behind the council decrees awarded the obedient with riches and power, and the opponents of the doctrine were imprisoned. In this way a major split in the Christian religion was averted and the foundations of the Catholic Church were laid.

Constantine introduced many new rules consolidating the position of the Church. To the most important belonged: a ban on using crucifixion for capital punishment, establishing Sunday as a holiday for Christians, exemption of Christian priests from taxes and military service, approval of new marital rules biased against divorce and the introduction of capital punishment for adulterers, as well as taking care of orphans and widows. Other regulations forbade abuse of slaves and organizing of gladiator fights. Jurisdiction concerning Christians, even in purely secular matters, was put in the hands of bishops.

After the death of Constantine in 337 AD, during the reign of Julian Apostate between 355-363 AD a difficult period dawned for Christians when the pagan gods came back into favor. Only in 380 AD, after Theodosius I became emperor, was Christianity recognized as the official religion of the empire. The Church became a political organization, backing the aggressive actions of the emperor. Theodosius announced the Edict of Thessalonica, in which he ordered all subjects to profess the orthodox Christian faith and designated everybody else a heretic³².

Comments

As we can see, the process of introducing and of consolidating the new religion in the Roman empire was not simple and would not have ended with success, if not for the work of three outstanding individuals: Jesus, St Paul and the emperor Constantine the Great. The timing of the activities of these three persons were chosen in an optimal way. Jesus commenced his teaching in times when a great unrest already existed in the Hebrew world and when, for a long time, Jews had awaited the coming of the messiah. If the work of Jesus had been delayed, the new religion would not have had time to develop because the fall of Jerusalem and the mass Diaspora of Jews followed soon after his death. St Paul's work concentrating on the propagation of the new religion also took place at the right time. His tasks could not have been fulfilled in a later period because the teaching of Jesus would have been lost as a result of the political upheaval which took place in this area. Constantine the Great contribution also happened at an appropriate time, when the Roman empire, although already declining, was still powerful enough to secure the spread and consolidation of Christianity.

Some might argue that the events leading to the establishment of the Christian religion had nothing to do with the interference of the intelligent beings and happened as a result of several coincidences. However, because activities of the three key individuals were so closely related, so well timed and had a common objective, it is difficult to believe that chance would bring them about. The probability of three such coincidences is so small that it would have to be regarded as a miracle. I believe that in the real world miracles do not happen and that everything has its cause, although often we are not able to discern it. Considering the history of these events we must reach a conclusion that they were directed from outside. This is supported by the evidence that the conversions of Saul and Constantine took place as a result of their mystical visions, which was confirmed by them. Such apparitions could only have been organized by the intelligent beings.

CHAPTER 22

Islam

Pre-Islamic Arabia

Before the arising of Islam in the 6th century, the area of today's Arab Peninsula was inhabited by nomadic Arab tribes, who did not create a single state. The leader of a tribe was a sheik chosen out of the members of one clan by the council of elders. The religion of the Arabs was polytheistic, although there were groups practicing monotheistic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. At that time Arabia was a place of refuge for persecuted Jews and for non orthodox Christians who formed all sorts of sects, more interested in fights between themselves than in spreading the gospel. They worshipped not only Christ, but also the wood from the cross, as well as many different saints, and one of the sects regarded the Mother of Jesus as equal to God. The spreading of Christianity in Arabia was not successful for political reasons. The Arabs were hostile towards Christian Ethiopia, which was a vassal of the Byzantine emperor, and because of that they resisted all missionary attempts.

A religious pluralism ruled in the Arab world in the second half of the 6th century, which made it open to change. At the same time this world went through a domestic crisis, associated with the final stages of the disintegration of the primeval community. This crisis created favorable conditions for the appearance of various preachers, trying to change the

existing order. One of them was Muhammad who played the decisive part in the history of his people.

Muhammad

Muhammad was born in the year 570 AD in Mecca. He was orphaned at an early age and brought up under the care of his uncle, Abu Talib. He had many various mystic experiences during his early years, which directed him towards seeking God and a new religion. At the age of 25 he married a rich 40 year old widow and engaged in trade. His trade journeys to Syria helped him to establish contact with Jews and Christians. A good financial situation allowed Muhammad to spend time studying the teachings of the monotheistic religious sects which existed in Arabia. He spent time in a secluded spot in a cave on Mount Hira near Mecca, where he contemplated and tried to understand why people believed in so many different gods and idols. According to Muslim tradition, when he was about 40 years old, during one of these meditations, he had a vision of the angel Gabriel who commanded him to recite and in spite of his resistance words came out from his mouth. At first he did not accept received messages because he suspected that he had lost his mind and even considered suicide. When his wife found him in such a state in his retreat, she advised him to check the truth of the messages, and in this way he made sure that they came from an outside source, and they were not a product of his mind. After the first apparition came more sessions and in this way arose the Quran, the holy book of Muslims containing the core of Muhammad's teachings. Soon Muhammad started preaching and converting others to the new faith.

His faith was based on a strong conviction that, if God exists, He is the same for Jews, Christians and all other religions. Therefore the false idols which were worshipped in Mecca should be removed. This attitude encountered a hostile response from the local population who were gaining financial benefits from the religious ceremonies in Mecca. In the end Muhammad, in the year 622, had to escape to Medina. This year became the beginning of the Hegira calendar.

In Medina the first Islamic religious commune came into existence,

which was joined by many emigrants supporting the new religion. Soon a period of religious Islamic wars started. In spite of much smaller resources the Muslims got the upper hand over the pagans, finally capturing Mecca in the year 630. Muhammad turned out to be an effective diplomat, signing peace treaties with the local tribes who pledged to support him. When he died in the year 632 he did not leave a male descendant, although during his life he had 11 wives and two concubines, and his closest male relative was Ali bin Abi Talib, his cousin and son-in-law.

Development of Islam

Usually, during a crisis or a war, Arabs chose a person of outstanding military and leadership abilities. Because Muhammad had not decided who should become his successor, Abu Bakr, who forced local tribes to recognize Muhammad's authority, became his successor and during the following two years the Arabian Peninsula came under his control. In the year 634, Umar, who conquered Persia, Egypt and North Africa, and won Syria, Lebanon and Palestine from the Byzantine Empire became a caliph. During the next one hundred years Islam spread from the Atlantic Ocean to the borders of China.

During peaceful periods, Arab leaders were chosen on the principle of succession, according to which the successor to Muhammad should be his cousin, Ali bin Abi Talib. The party supporting his leadership caused a schism in Islam, forming the Shi'a sect. Although Ali in the end became the fourth caliph (657-661), he did not manage to stay in power and since then, until 1924, Sunni Muslims became caliphs. The Shi'a community has not recognised caliphs and was led, as it is today, by living scholars usually known by the honourable title Ayatollah.

Although all Muslims follow the principles of the Quran, the rules included in this book are not unequivocal and require interpretation by religious leaders – Imams, and many of them made their own exegesis of the Quran, contributing to further splits in Islam. In the end both the Shia and Sunni Muslims were divided into many sects. The main shortcoming of Islam is the lack of a single authorized interpretation of

the Quran, such as the Talmud in Judaism.

The principles of Islam

The corner-stone of Islam is the faith in only one God – Allah, who decides the fate of every man. The duty of the faithful is to submit to God's will. It is possible to become a follower of Islam by saying with sincere intention the formula: “There is no God apart from Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet” and accepting duties resulting from the Quran, the laws and traditions.

The religious doctrine of Islam may be summarized as follows:

- Faith in the one and only God – Allah. The God of Islam is the only creator of all things and creatures, the judge of all people. Almighty and omniscient, he exists beyond the understanding of the human mind, and his being does not have an end.
- Faith in the mission of the prophet Muhammad, the messenger of God
- Faith in life after death and the Last Judgment, heaven and hell
- Faith in angels, devils, demons and Jinns

There are five pillars of Islam which define the duties of Muslims:

- profession of faith in one God
- prayers five times every day
- fast in the month Ramadan
- giving charity to the poor
- pilgrimage to Mecca

Muhammad created a religion which referred to the traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. Jewish prophets including Abraham, as well as Jesus Christ along with Mary, the Mother of God, have a special, honorable place in Islam. Studying different religious doctrines, Muhammad drew ideas from the Torah and the Talmud traditions, but above all he simplified the theology of Islam in comparison with the complicated Christian religious system, and this

contributed to the fast growth in the number of its followers. Islam rejects the Christian dogma of the Holy Trinity, standing on strict monotheistic ground. According to Muhammad, Jesus was one of the prophets, not the Son of God. Islam forbids visualization of God and does not worship saints as does the Catholic Church. Descriptions of Heaven and Hell are taken from the Zoroastrian religion, finding a positive response in a society expecting simple rules concerning crime and punishment.

From the other side, the Muslim religion demands from the believers total compliance and obedience. Islam, unlike Christianity, is not a religion based only on faith. Muslims do not have the choice to observe some and reject other, less comfortable rules. In this context Islam is more similar to the Jewish customs and traditions than to Christianity. Such conduct of Muslims attests to their deep belief in God, because if we really have faith, what is more important than to comply with His will, what worldly matters have priority over God and his commandments? It is also true that in general people need a strong religion, such as Judaism or Islam. They want to receive clear instructions concerning appropriate behavior, because they are not able to interpret religious commandments on their own. In Islam and Judaism the faithful are judged by their acts, such as the care of the poor and charitable activity. Therefore every Muslim is obliged to give back usually about 2.5 percent of his income for the needs of the poor and to support his congregation.

Islam is the last main religion introduced by the intelligent beings. Since we have a significant amount of well substantiated information concerning the beginnings of this religion, there is no doubt that it arose as a result of the revelations received by Muhammad. Witnesses confirmed that when Muhammad recited verses of the Quran, his appearance and personality changed. Muhammad could not have written the Quran alone, since the text was completely different from the style which the prophet usually used. This book is characterized by rhythms and rhymes unknown then in Arabic literature.

Part Four

Interventions in the 20th century

CHAPTER 23

The German atom bomb

Over the course of the last several hundred years, the Second World War was among the most dangerous events for European civilization and for mankind. Although, perhaps as far as the battles fought on different fronts are concerned, it was not as bloody and cruel as the First World War, it posed a much greater threat to the development of mankind than any other previous armed conflict. This danger originated not only from the military strength of Germany, but more significantly because it was rooted in Nazi ideology which propagated the superiority of the Germanic race and planned the extermination of Jews and the enslavement of the Slav population. The Nazi ideology very quickly found response and support in the masses, and influenced the way of thinking of the majority of citizens in the country. The combination of German discipline with superb organization, lots of educated engineers and high caliber scientists, created the most mighty war machine which had ever existed so far in Europe. The Germans therefore had a great chance of winning the war, and the fact that they lost it should be regarded as a miracle, that is, in other words, an incomprehensible event. To a large extent, the inexplicable decision by the German command to stop working on the

construction of the atom bomb contributed to their loss.

Development of nuclear weapons

Before the war German scientists were leading research on the application of atomic energy. In 1938 Otto Hahn, a Nobel Prize winner from 1944, Lise Meitner and Fritz Strassmann discovered the process of uranium fission. In September 1939, more than two years before a similar Project Manhattan commenced in the United States, Germany started, under the direction of Kurt Diebner, working on the project “Uranverein” – a Uranium club, the aim of which was the construction of nuclear weapons. The activities included building an atomic reactor, production of Uranium and heavy water, and separation of the isotope of uranium 235. Because great doubts arose as to whether the nuclear weapon could be delivered before the expected end of the war, the German Army lost interest in the development work and in the summer of 1942 the project was transferred to the civil control of the Reich Research Council, with much reduced resources. The entire weapon development effort concentrated on the building of rockets, at first V1, and then V2. It is estimated that about 120 thousand people participated in these projects. The loss of interest in nuclear weapons has not so far been satisfactorily explained, but documents which have recently been disclosed by the British and the Russians allow us to establish the true cause of these events.

Warner Heisenberg

The key person in the research on atomic energy in Germany was Warner Heisenberg, a world-famous physicist and Nobel Prize winner in 1932 at the age of 31, creator of quantum mechanics, and discoverer of the Uncertainty Principle, which is one of the fundamental laws of nuclear physics. From 1941 he was responsible for atomic research as a director of the Keiser Wilhelm Institute for Physics in Berlin. In February 1942 Heisenberg delivered a lecture to Nazi high officials on the future of atomic energy. He talked about its civil applications and nearly did not mention the atom bomb. However he told Albert Speer, the Minister of

Armaments, that the bomb would not be ready before 1945.

After the war, Heisenberg, along with nine of the most important German scientists in the field of atomic research, was interned by Allied Forces at Farm Hall near Cambridge, England, where their conversations were recorded. Heisenberg, suspecting hidden microphones, presented himself as an opponent of the construction of the atom bomb, who sabotaged works on its development on purpose. Thanks to that explanation and to the fact that Germany had not succeeded in building the atom bomb, he was rehabilitated in 1946 and assumed the position of director of the Max Planck Institute for Physics.

Heisenberg's mistake

Heisenberg's explanation that he delayed construction of the atom bomb on purpose is not confirmed by his activities during the war and by available documents. From the transcriptions of the recorded conversations at Farm Hall, released by the British government in 1992, it appears that when the German scientists learnt about the dropping of the American atom bomb on Hiroshima, they could not believe it. They were deeply convinced that they had overtaken America in the research on atomic energy and that it was impossible to build the atom bomb. Although they were wary that their conversations were recorded, they could not control their amazement and surprise, and even suspected a planted fraud. Heisenberg on the blackboard (photographed by the staff) started calculating the critical mass³³ of the uranium fission reaction and obtained an incorrectly large amount of this element, but after a few days he had rectified the calculations and provided very good results. During his conversations with his colleagues in Farm Hall, Heisenberg said: "I would say that I was absolutely convinced of the possibility of our making a uranium engine, but I never thought we would make a bomb, and at the bottom of my heart I was really glad that it was to be an engine and not a bomb. I must admit that." In this statement, even though it was directed mainly at the allies, there is much truth. Heisenberg did not believe that it was possible to build the bomb for purely technical reasons, and he was not influenced in this matter by political beliefs.

It was Heisenberg's opinion that caused Germany to stop the work on atomic weapons, because he was deeply convinced that its construction within a few years was impossible. Documents from Farm Hall suggest that Heisenberg also in 1941, as in 1945, incorrectly calculated the critical mass needed for the operation of the bomb. According to German scientist Karl Wirtz, the critical mass calculated by Heisenberg was to be several tons of uranium, while in fact the critical mass is about 115 lb (52 kg). Such a large quantity required a huge amount of raw material from which the concentrated ^{235}U was extracted. Such a large amount of material was practically impossible to obtain in a short time, therefore the project was abandoned. A bomb having such a large critical mass would have to have an enormous size in order to combine precisely two such large masses of uranium. It would weigh tens of tons³⁴, and at that time no plane or rocket capable of delivering such a load over the enemy territory existed. These conclusions, presented to the German command, discouraged decision-makers from investing in further work on the bomb and they therefore only continued research on the atomic reactor.

The true aim of Heisenberg

It is not true that Heisenberg did not try to build the bomb, which is confirmed by witnesses who were in contact with him at that time. In the spring of 1941 he traveled with Carl Friedrich Von Weizsäcker to Copenhagen to meet with Niels Bohr, a famous Danish physicist, to find out how advanced atomic research in the United States was. The Bohr report published from the meeting confirms that the German scientist said that his work on the atom bomb could decide the outcome of the war. Bohr does not mention any scruples on Heisenberg's part concerning his supporting German war efforts. The report written by Von Weizsäcker from the visit to Copenhagen, and disclosed recently by the Russians, indicates that, at the time of the Copenhagen meeting, Heisenberg was very enthusiastic about the creation of the bomb. Both these documents confirm the strong commitment of the German scientist to the building of nuclear weapons.

It is true that Heisenberg was not a member of the fascist party and was attacked by some Nazi scientists, however, thanks to the protection of Himmler he was appointed to the most influential scientific position in Germany and was trusted by the party establishment. Even if Heisenberg did not sympathize with the Nazis, he still, without a doubt, as one of the most outstanding physicists in the world, wanted to be the first to apply nuclear energy. For him it was not only an arms race, but above all a scientific race. The first man to use atomic energy would have secured the highest place in the history of humanity. For the true scientist, political considerations do not play an important role, because the regimes and the men having power come and go, however scientific achievements remain appreciated for centuries, therefore Heisenberg would be unlikely to have had scruples associated with helping the Nazis to win the war. His declarations of hostility towards the Nazis, which are quoted as the main reason for his scientific failure, are not very convincing. Additionally it appears from the published letters which he wrote during the war to his wife, that he was very patriotic and supported the war effort.

Proposed hypothesis of events

So we have arrived at the most important question: How was it possible that Heisenberg committed such an error? In his calculations he did not consider a certain scientific phenomenon³⁵ which was well-known to every specialist in this field. Having learnt in Farm Hall about the Hiroshima bomb, he realized that the critical mass must be smaller and it took him only two days to find the right solution to this problem, calculating the correct amount of uranium, without any long investigation and with no access to a library or any scientific data. This means that he knew precisely the mechanisms occurring in the fission reactions of uranium, but still did not apply them in his calculations of critical mass. Any suggestion that he did not understand the nature of the process is not a responsible argument. Scientists of Heisenberg's caliber do not make such a trivial mistake on which depends the fate of mankind.

It is not necessary to have a great imagination in order to realize that

the destiny of hundreds of millions of people in Europe and even in the entire world depended on the accuracy of his calculations. If Germany had had nuclear weapons at its disposal in 1943 or even in 1944, the outcome of the war would have been totally different. It would have been enough, for example, for only one atom bomb to have been dropped on England, for Great Britain to surrender and for the western front to then cease to exist. Perhaps Russia would have resisted longer, however, without British and American help, they had no chance of winning the war. If Japan had had the atom bomb from Hitler, the United States would probably also have signed a peace treaty and the political map of the contemporary world would look totally different than it does today. It would be dominated by the German-Japanese coalition with neutral United States. It is a blood-curdling scenario which would have meant the end of European civilization in its then form. It is difficult to imagine that the fate of the world depended on a mistake by one man, but nevertheless thus it was.

Because the threat to humanity was real, one might think that the intelligent beings had to intervene in such a situation. They could not allow the annihilation of western civilization and waste a few thousand years of the development of man's consciousness. One could ask the question, why did the intelligent beings intervene in this case but not in other bloody events, wars and revolutions, which might thus have been prevented? This could be explained by the fact that, in the history of humanity, events of this type had until then a local character which affected mainly the political, social and material living conditions of certain groups of people, but their outlook and beliefs were not subjected to eradication. Although officially the Nazi policy was not anti Christian, Hitler planned to destroy Christianity³⁶. In the mean time the Nazis created their own beliefs based on the Germanic tradition, with special celebrations, marches and rallies of a pseudo religious character. The Nazis tried to change the consciousness of German society through psychological manipulation and ideological indoctrination such as the "brain washing" of young people. What was very threatening to the integrity of society was that the Nazis applied new methods of propaganda, acting on the subconscious of people. Instead of rational

arguments, they used demagoguery and emotions which worked on the imagination, especially of the lower social classes. If these changes consolidated in the minds of people, from the point of view of the development of their consciousness, they would cause an irreparable damage to society which would regress to the Neolithic period. This process would spread throughout not only Germany, but also Europe and maybe even the entire world.

One could ask why the intelligent beings would only intervene in the case of the German atom bomb. Firstly, the accession of the United States blighted the chances of Germany winning the war with conventional weapons, and only an exclusive possession of atomic weapons would secure a victory for Hitler. Furthermore, as was mentioned earlier, an intervention can only rely on influencing an individual having a certain predisposition, therefore the intelligent beings could not affect persons having firm convictions, such as faithful Nazi party members. In the case of the German atom bomb, it was sufficient to influence only one person, and this individual delivered the required results.

The intervention turned out to be possible because Heisenberg probably had the right predisposition and could be influenced by the intelligent beings. From his life story and personal writings we know that he was broadminded and open to new ideas, he was a sensitive, emotional idealist. As was mentioned, these features are required in order to become a good recipient of messages from the intelligent beings.

Messages provided by the intelligent beings do not have to be true, as we know that the visionaries in Fatima received some incorrect information. I believe that in the case of Heisenberg, the intervention consisted of blocking in his mind certain knowledge or passing to him certain false data in such a way that it affected his calculations. Heisenberg, having such prominent status, did not share with anybody the method of how he calculated the results and only presented the final conclusions to the government officials. Considering his scientific authority and high position, nobody dared to question his decision.

It is puzzling that, after the war, so little was said about the German atom bomb and even now very few people realize how close to victory

Germany was. A few specialized books were published about this subject, but a wide public in Europe and the United States is still ignorant. This is a very sensitive subject for all the involved parties. The Americans and the British do not want to admit that one miscalculation rescued them from defeat. They prefer to praise the wisdom of their leaders and the courage of their soldiers. In Germany, on principle, the media avoid topics associated with the war, in particular they would not want to annoy their citizens by admitting that they could have achieved victory. Also they do not want to ruin the reputation of their most famous scientist and therefore the explanation that Heisenberg sabotaged the building of the bomb, making him a hero, suits them.

CHAPTER 24

The fall of communism in the Soviet Union

The fall of communism in Russia is a riddle so far unexplained, because the Soviet Union, despite being militarily and economically well behind the United States, was at that time a world power and could have remained as such for many years. The matter is more mystifying due to the fact that “the conversion of Russia” was foretold in the second Fatima secret. The statement in the secret that Russia will return to the bosom of the Church is probably one of the most extraordinary fulfilled prophecies in the history of humanity. No man could have predicted it. Nevertheless it happened and communism collapsed. What decided it? Could the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary have contributed to it?

Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

The public learnt about the request for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary back in 1942, following the publication of Lucia’s memoirs, in which she wrote that the Lady told her:

”I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of reparation on the First Saturdays. If my

requests are fulfilled, Russia will be converted, and there will be peace; if not, then Russia will spread her errors throughout the world, bringing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred and the Holy Father will have much to suffer; various nations will be annihilated. In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph. The Holy Father will consecrate Russia to me, and she shall be converted, and a period of peace will be granted to the world” (Santos, 1996).

Although officially the consecration of Russia is part of the second Fatima secret, the seer stated that this subject was brought up during her personal apparitions which she had at the chapel of the monastery in Tuy in 1929. Perhaps it was connected with the fact that the persecutions of religions in Russia began in 1930, a few years after Stalin came to power. It is necessary to emphasize that “converting” Russia did not mean adopting the Catholic religion, but refers to casting off the yoke of communism and returning to the Orthodox church.

For political reasons, the consecration of Russia was a difficult subject for the Vatican. The Roman Catholic Church, not wanting to fall into disfavor with the Soviet Union and put at risk believers in the Communist bloc, did nothing regarding this matter for a long time. Lucia insisted on the consecration of Russia and kept reminding Church authorities about it, but without great effect. As a result of her intervention in 1930, Pope Pius XI celebrated a solemn expiatory mass for Russia and its persecuted Catholics, but this did not satisfy the visionary. In October 1942 Pope Pius XII also celebrated a mass, in which he referred to Russia, but again it was not, in Lucia’s opinion, in accordance with the request of the Mother of God. Since Lucia did not give up and kept the pressure on the Church, in July 1952, the Pope condemned communism in Russia and specifically consecrated the people of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in his apostolic letter *Sacro Vergente Anno*. Pope John Paul II, after the attempt on his life on 13 May 1981, 13 May 1982 in Fatima and 25 March 1984 in Rome consecrated Russia in a public ceremony, although the consecration was in the form of a whole world consecration and Russia was never specifically mentioned. Exactly one year after this event, changes began

to take place in the Soviet Union which triggered the fall of communism. In order to understand this process, let us first examine the communist system of government and the situation in the USSR before these events.

Situation in communist Russia

In communist Russia two systems of governing operated side by side. Officially the Supreme Council of the USSR, corresponding to a parliament chosen by citizens, was the highest authority. The Council selected the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, which was the official government. The Government and the Council of Ministers were nominally responsible to parliament.

However the real power was exercised by the communist party. At the top of the party administration and making all important political and economic decisions was the Politburo, comprising 10-15 members, which was chaired by a General Secretary selected by the Central Committee. In fact nobody was able to control the General Secretary who had absolute power and held the office for life, as Stalin, Brezhnev and Andropov did. It was possible to remove him only by staging a coup d'état as in the case of Khrushchev.

The Central Committee, responsible for making minor decisions, consisted of about 100 persons who were chosen by the delegates during the party convention. Three to four thousand higher-ranking party members ruled at the level of republics and districts. About 30,000 persons belonged to the middle layers of party management, responsible for small towns and communes. And about 150,000 party members were in charge of local and factory party organizations.

The communist party of the Soviet Union kept all the state power in its hands. All senior positions in industry, the police, the secret police, the army, and administration were filled exclusively by party members. In this way it became impossible to distinguish between the party and the state. It was the party, not the government that dealt with the day to day management of the country. The Politburo decided the structure of the government and formed and closed its departments, as well as appointed ministers and higher officials. The lack of boundaries between the party

and the state was also visible in the official emblems. Both the flag and the anthem of the party became the symbols of the Soviet Union.

The party machine controlled not only all appointments outside the party, but inside as well. Although in theory democratic elections were meant to be held in the party, in practice ordinary members were disenfranchised and the party machine had absolute power. Candidates for the lower party offices were nominated by higher party officials, and this procedure was applied all the way up to the Central Committee. Party members had to routinely approve the proposed candidates.

Although party members filled all senior positions in government departments, a double system of control was created by establishing alongside them corresponding departments in the Central Committee. Ministers were not responsible to the government but to the Central Committee, which in practice provided detailed guidelines and plans for all government departments.

The party held the main power in the country and its members created a privileged elite³⁷. They were given apartments and dachas (summer residences), bought goods from special shops, had a separate Health Service and even took meals in segregated canteens at work and college. In practical terms, they formed a state within the state. Different rules applied to them, they could travel abroad and at work could reach the highest professional positions. They had to pay for these privileges with absolute obedience and loyalty.

No doubt, almost everyone would want to be a party member, but membership was not open to all and was by invitation only. The candidates were chosen very cautiously, and the observation and selection of potential party members was carried out at a young age in youth organizations, such as Pioneers and Komsomol. The selected candidates did not have to be gifted and good students, but they needed to desire power and be loyal and obedient. Their career depended exclusively on the support at the top, and as a result of such a selection process, for party managerial positions people without initiative were chosen, completely loyal and uncritically carrying out party commands.

In a system in which nobody was trusted, power was centralized in the hands of top party officials to such an extent, that even simple

problems had to be solved at the highest levels, which effectively crippled economic development. Management of the country was not guided by economic principles, therefore nobody knew what the true costs of manufacturing products were, and therefore it was not possible to improve production. The industry concentrated mainly on the production of weapons and it was estimated that about 80 percent of the industrial output was connected with armaments. In shops there were shortages not only of industrial goods but also of basic food products such as sugar, flour, meat and fruits, but the supply problems did not affect the party members.

The justice system was also under the full control of the party. Not a single rule of law could be introduced without the agreement of the Politburo, and all judges belonged to the party and obediently followed its orders. The Law Courts did not mete out justice, but rather punished citizens who did not conform or held other than officially accepted political views. Millions of innocent people were sent to labor camps in Siberia, from where the majority of them never came back.

Spying and denunciations were widespread and became a social norm where everyone informed on everybody. Denunciation in a certain way safeguarded against arrest, because it proved the political loyalty of the informer. Believers in God were persecuted and the majority of Orthodox churches were practically deserted or closed. The Orthodox Church clergy cooperated with the security services, informing on their faithful, but non-conforming priests ended their lives in the forced-labor camps. Travelling abroad was closely controlled and available in practical terms only to trusted party members. A very strict censorship of the media was enforced, and the only available Western books and films showed the poverty and struggle of the working classes against capitalism. Programs of foreign stations in Russian, such as the BBC and Voice of America, were jammed, so society was cut off from the rest of world with a kind of “Wall of China”. Internal propaganda instilled in people, particularly the young, the perception of the superiority of communism over capitalism and emphasized Soviet achievements.

Such a system guaranteed the permanence of the communist rule, because the party absorbed in its ranks all able individuals avid for power,

whereas the rest of society was deprived of any independent leadership. Universal spying and informing plus operation of the efficient secret police secured the almost total elimination of independent thinking individuals from society. Under such conditions a revolution was impossible and any rebellion was suppressed in its embryonic stage. Soviet communism could therefore function for hundreds of years without any danger of internal threat.

International position

The Soviet Union after the Second World War became a military world power. It had a multi-million army of well trained soldiers, modern aircrafts, nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles. The communists in the nineties were slowly losing the arms race because the obsolete Soviet industry was not able to keep up with technical developments in the countries belonging to NATO. Therefore in theory an external military threat existed from the USA, but this danger was a fiction. In the last decades of the 20th century, the military and nuclear power of the Soviet Union, although technically outdated, was still a formidable force, large enough to scare any potential aggressor off. The USA, or rather the gigantic American armaments industry, needed the Russian threat to persuade American society to pay taxes for ever increasing new weapons contracts. American citizens would not have wanted to incur such enormous costs if they were not afraid of the exaggerated power of Russia. In 1960, before the election, J.F. Kennedy supported the “missile gap” story, which falsely claimed that the Russians had enough long range missiles to wipe out every major city in the US, while in fact the Soviet Union in May 1960 had only four intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Soon after the election, Kennedy signed the first contract to build more ICBMs to “catch up” with Russia.

The US armaments industry needed new contracts for the development of the most modern weapons and therefore an attack on Russia and winning the war would deprive them of huge future profits. As we know you do not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Looking at the internal and international position, one might say that

the Soviet Union was not endangered from the inside, nor from the outside, but despite this, for completely unknown reasons, it nonetheless collapsed like a house of cards. This fall without any doubt was initiated and caused by Mikhail Gorbachev when he became General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Mikhail Gorbachev early years

Gorbachev was born on 2nd March 1931 in the village of Privolnoye in the Stavropol Region, into a family of collective farm workers. From the age of 14, he worked on a collective farm, as did his father. In 1950 he began law studies at Moscow University and at that time he married Raisa Titorenko. In 1952 he joined the communist party. After his graduation in 1955, he returned to his homeland, where he worked as the Komsomol official and also studied agricultural economics. In 1970 he became first party secretary of the Stavropol Region. In 1971 he became a member of the Central Committee, in 1978 the agriculture secretary, and from 1980 he was a member of the Politburo. After the death, in March 1985, of the General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko, Gorbachev was chosen to be his successor.

Reforms

The economic situation in Russia in the eighties had been gradually deteriorating, but the Politburo and the general secretaries were not able to show initiative and introduce the necessary reforms. The situation in the Soviet Union changed diametrically when Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Gorbachev was chosen because the conviction in the country and in the party had been growing that it was necessary to break the economic stagnation prevailing from the times of the leadership of Brezhnev. Because the majority of the Politburo members were well into their seventies, he was regarded as the only candidate in his prime likely to be able to conduct reforms. Immediately after assuming the leadership, Gorbachev began a fight against corruption and alcoholism in Russia, as well as removing many conservative members from the Central

Committee, introducing his own supporters in their place. He planned reforms of the economic management, but his concepts encountered a hostile reception from the party administration, which was afraid of losing power and its privileged position. Therefore at the party convention in 1986, Gorbachev initiated the policies of perestroika (reconstruction) and glasnost (openness), which promoted limited economic and political liberalization and toned down censorship. Gorbachev tried to implement a democratic process of electing party officials in order to involve new, uncorrupted and able candidates, and in this way to renovate the power of the party.

He expected that by appealing directly to the party members and society and bypassing the party machine, which was fighting to hang on to power, he would manage to implement economic reforms. But the changes had to be introduced by middle rank party officials and factory managers, who without exception were party members. Unfortunately the party administration, although obedient, did not welcome changes, even though they were very limited, and as a result the reforms were implemented ineptly. The economic situation in Russia further deteriorated and in 1988 the plenum of the Central Committee removed the three main opponents of the reforms from the Politburo. The Supreme Council appointed Gorbachev to the top government position, corresponding to that of Prime Minister. In December 1988 the Supreme Council was replaced by the Congress of Representatives, which was the first parliament in the history of the USSR. In March 1989 almost free elections were held, in which many voters dared to delete names of communists from the list. Party members still managed to win 87 percent of the places, and out of 2,250 members of the Congress of Representatives, only about 300 truly backed the reforms, and Boris Yeltsin led the opposition. The article of the constitution on the dominating role of the party was removed in February 1990 and Gorbachev took up the post of president of the Soviet Union, holding in his hands all the top jobs.

The fall of Gorbachev

The reforms of Gorbachev, even though intended in theory to help the economy, in practice caused economic chaos. For the Russians, the proposed decentralization of the management was a huge step forward, but in reality the majority of the reforms were half measures. The state still set the prices of basic products and as a result of this many companies went bankrupt. The ruble was still a non-convertible currency, hindering international trade. In 1990, the government lost control of the economy, state income drastically decreased because the companies going bankrupt required subsidies. Upsetting the stability of the fossilized economic system, managed for many years by a top-down method, caused more and more shortages of essential goods, which increased the dissatisfaction of the citizens. The government was forced to ration food, and the workers started strikes. It was the beginning of the end.

In June 1991 Boris Yeltsin won the election for the President of the Russian Federation. During the night of 18th to 19th August 1991, old style communists opposing reforms staged a coup d'état, arrested Gorbachev, who was staying in the Crimea, and formed the State of Emergency National Committee. The Committee introduced a state of emergency practically throughout the entire Soviet Union, simultaneously censoring the media and banning demonstrations and strikes. Yeltsin denounced the action of the Committee as illegal, and called on people to protest and boycott the orders. On 21 August the Moscow putsch collapsed, thanks to the army which refused to shoot at the citizens. In the course of the events Latvia and Estonia proclaimed independence, soon followed by the Ukraine and Belarus. On 29 August the activities of the Communist Party were suspended. The putsch, against the hopes of its organizers, precipitated the ultimate disintegration of the USSR which took place in December 1991.

The role of Gorbachev

How could it happen that a vast empire, which was feared by the entire world, had broken down within a few years? Without a doubt it was the work of Gorbachev who alone initiated changes in Russia. Therefore we

must look more closely at certain aspects of his character and his career. Gorbachev, although an idealist and uncorrupted party member, was able to climb slowly up the rungs of the party ladder thanks to his own abilities and hard work and at the age of 39 became a party secretary of the Stavropol Region. This unremarkable land is situated close to the Caucasus, in the south-west of Russia. Gorbachev belonged to a group of a few thousand party high officials and nothing indicated that he would reach the peak of power, but he did. The turning point in his career was a meeting with Yuri Andropov, the KGB boss, who helped him to his meteoric career. The KGB boss who knew “everything about everyone” valued Gorbachev for his hard work, loyalty and incorruptibility. Andropov knew that Gorbachev would want to implement necessary economic reforms and he would not be short of courage or energy. Therefore the KGB chief groomed him for the highest position in the country. Although it might seem odd, it was the KGB which, having a true picture of the situation in the Soviet Union, first realized the necessity for reforms and later supported perestroika and glasnost.

Andropov chose Gorbachev to be his successor because he differed completely from the other members of the party elite. He was an idealist and true communist. For Gorbachev winning power and prestige did not constitute the main purpose in his life. He wanted above all to improve the economy and to increase the power of Russia. But he also wanted to improve the lives of people, to increase their standard of living, to give them more personal freedom, to eliminate their terror of the secret security services. He wanted to change the system and the people, and this effectively is what caused his downfall. He did not understand the deep-rooted mistrust and the passivity of Russian society.

The most important feature of his character was his reluctance to use force in internal and international conflicts. In 1988 he withdrew Russian forces from Afghanistan, and then announced the policy of non-intervention, called jokingly “the Sinatra doctrine”, enabling other states of the communist bloc “to go their own way”. This allowed for the political changes which took place in Poland and for the fall of the Berlin wall. When in 1991 some Baltic republics decided to separate from the USSR, he did not try to dispatch troops there in order to restore order.

Even when the situation in Russia was out of his control, he never considered using force against his own people. His consciousness and respect for the value of human life contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Yuri Andropov

One could say that Andropov's promoting and supporting Gorbachev also contributed to the fall of the USSR. Everything indicates that Andropov, like Gorbachev, belonged to people believing in communist ideas very sincerely. His father, a tsarist railway official, came from a Don Cossacks noble family, and his mother was a daughter of a wealthy Moscow businessman of German origin. In 1961 he was elected to the Central Committee and in 1967 he was appointed head of the KGB. Andropov having such bourgeois roots, in order to survive Stalin's purges and to reach the highest positions, had to be an unblemished communist. He also saw the need to reform the USSR, and when in May 1982 he became the General Secretary of the Communist Party, he immediately started energetic reforms and during the 15 months of his rule he dismissed 18 ministers and 37 regional first party secretaries, and started criminal investigations against many party dignitaries. Gorbachev writes about Andropov in his memoirs: "Andropov was a brilliant and large personality, generously endowed with gifts by nature, and a true intellectual. He resolutely denounced all the features commonly associated with Brezhnevism that is protectionism, in-fighting and intrigues, corruption, moral turpitude, bureaucracy, disorganization and laxity". Therefore Andropov, thanks to his outstanding abilities, was able to recognize similar features in Gorbachev and therefore selected him to be his heir.

Mystery of the collapse

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union the question: Why did Gorbachev let the USSR disintegrate? is still unexplained. Without a doubt he was a true communist and a sincere patriot wanting Russia to remain a global power, but in some inexplicable way, his activity resulted in a completely

unpredictable for him outcome.

On this subject dozens of books appeared and hundreds of articles were published attempting to answer this question, but the explanations included in them are not convincing and can be summarized as follows: Gorbachev did not realize that reforms would lead to the fall of the Soviet Union. It is difficult to imagine that such a man of outstanding intelligence and knowledge, an experienced politician, was not able to foresee that any deeper reforms must end in disintegration of the system. Gorbachev knew very well about the far more restricted earlier reforms of Khrushchev in 1956 and of Kosygin in 1965, which ended in rout. He should have understood that 70 years of communist power and terror had changed the mentality of the nation which in turn caused the system to be beyond repair, but still he decided on radical changes.

The reforms could not repair the communist system and had to lead to its fall. It was not so difficult to predict and documents revealed from this period demonstrate that the CIA – two years before the disintegration of the USSR – considered how to react in case of the fall of Gorbachev. Gorbachev had better information than the CIA, a better understanding of the situation in Russia, and yet he did not realize that his reforms could lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

I believe that the causes of the collapse of the Soviet Union have to be found somewhere else, but before we provide a solution to this puzzle, let's consider the Soviet threat to the world and humanity.

The Soviet threat

The Communist system in Russia was one of the most dangerous totalitarian systems in the world and during almost 75 years of its existence it drastically changed the lives of all people who were under its control. It controlled not only the material life of its citizens, but destroyed their mental and spiritual development by removing religion from their life. The study of many philosophical and scientific subjects, such as Freud and Jung psychology, which would have enabled people to understand the absurdity of the communist system, was forbidden. Russian society was atomized, which means that everyone was solely

concerned with his own life and did not participate in public life. People became passive and waited obediently for orders from above. The state took control over the upbringing of children and young people, who were indoctrinated with new ideology and were subjected to psychological brainwashing. As a result of this process the consciousness of society was decreasing. In a certain way, it is possible to compare the lives of people in the Soviet Union to the lives of those living in the theocratic civilizations of Sumer and Egypt, before the consciousness of the people there was developed. Changes implemented by the communists were slowly consolidating into society, obliterating achievements of thousands of years of the development of man.

The Soviet Union constituted a considerable risk for peace in the world, because its aim was to introduce communism to all countries in the world. The communist influences reached far beyond the borders of Russia and spread all over the world. This was visible during the Cuban crisis in 1962, when Russia, applying nuclear blackmail, won concessions from the United States³⁸.

The political situation in the world was becoming more and more dangerous, because the slowly declining Soviet Union could trigger European conflict, before losing its military advantage on the ground. It is not improbable that the United States, if threatened with a nuclear war, would have surrendered Europe to Russia without a single shot being fired. In such a case the communist system would have spread not only on the old continent, but also to many countries in the world. Already a large part of Asia, including China, Vietnam and Korea, had fallen under communist influences, and similar attempts were made in Latin America and Africa.

Intervention in Russia

I believe that, as in the case of Nazism in Germany, the situation in Russia required intervention because there was a need to remove the communist regime. In this case intervention would be very difficult because, as was already mentioned, the intelligent beings can influence the beliefs of individual persons, however they cannot interfere in the

activities of large groups of people who strongly believe in certain ideas. Therefore it is easier for them to achieve the necessary results in states ruled by a dictator than in democratic countries, because it would be sufficient to change the convictions of only one person. However the main problem is how to secure that the right man comes to power. Usually dictators are men avid for power and glory, ruthless and merciless, dishonest and distrustful, often having psychopathic traits. Such persons are not susceptible to influences by the intelligent beings, and they would never implement changes aimed at improving the lives of other people. The intelligent beings can influence beliefs of impressionable persons, but cannot modify their character, which means that they cannot change evil people into good ones.

Since in the communist party, the General Secretary was the absolute master, for the intervention to succeed, an intelligent, honest, idealistic person, who would want to change the situation in the country, was therefore needed for this position. This description is a complete antithesis of a typical, orthodox and dogmatic Soviet leader. Mikhail Gorbachev was probably the only person in the high strata of the party meeting these conditions. In order to fulfill the intelligent beings' objectives, he had to reach the position of General Secretary, but this could only be done with support of a man at the highest levels of power, and Andropov was such a person.

It might seem incredible that the KGB boss could become a tool in a plan aimed at the destruction of communism. However, the ideological beliefs of the people drawn into this plan were irrelevant. What counted was how to reach the ultimate objective in the most effective way. At the moment when Gorbachev would become General Secretary and reach absolute power, he would be able to start the process leading to the fall of the Soviet Union.

Of course Gorbachev was not aware that he was a tool in the hands of the intelligent beings. He was born with certain features which determined his character and directed him towards certain types of activities. He believed that what he did was right and necessary, and nothing would dissuade him from doing it.

How was this intervention carried out? Gorbachev confirmed in

many interviews for the press, as well as in his books, that he did not realize that the effects of his activities would result in the fall of communism. Somehow understanding the consequences of the planned changes in Russian society, which were obviously visible to many people, were disregarded by him. It looks as if a “blockade” was applied to his mind, which was sufficient to push him on the course of reforms.

As we know, the “conversion” of Russia predicted in Fatima took place and, thanks to this, the lives of hundreds of millions of people changed, not necessarily becoming easier, but certainly becoming more human. The threat to world peace disappeared and the threat of nuclear war was removed. Most importantly, people became free and could choose their own way of living and personal development.

Part Five

Towards higher consciousness

CHAPTER 25

The situation of mankind

This chapter, out of all the chapters in this book, is the most personal one and therefore the evaluation of the situation of mankind is very subjective. Some readers might not agree with my assessment of the state of affairs, but this is understandable, because we are looking at this from a different personal perception and experience point of view. What is most important for my thesis is the direction of the trends of the changes. To identify these trends, I am relying on some available statistical data which is the main tangible proof of my assumptions.

Human suffering

The life of man on earth is characterized by continuous suffering from birth till death. This fact was noticed by Buddha and set him off to search for a solution to this problem. He noticed that, apart from quirks of fate such as illness and death, much suffering is caused by people themselves. From Buddha's time onwards hardly anyone made consistent attempts to resolve this issue, and even the main religions call for the acceptance of suffering as an inseparable component of human existence in the world created by God.

Because of this attitude, social systems, even in some very Christian countries, were responsible for a large amount of suffering, especially amongst the poor and disabled. Only in the 20th century did Western civilization reach such a level of consciousness that it started noticing the situation of underprivileged citizens and try to alleviate their problems. First state organizations dealing with public aid were formed, National Health Services was established in many countries, awareness arose of the problems of disabled people and women acquired rights reserved until now only for men. Only today is our society overtaking the first civilizations which practiced humanitarianism over 5,000 years ago.

The worst and most proliferated sufferings are produced by wars and revolutions. Wars in the last century were in general caused by imperialist or undemocratically ruled countries. After the French Revolution the democratic system of government started slowly spreading in Europe, but only after the Second World War was it fully accepted by the majority of Western countries. Thanks to the growth of mutual trust and mutual interests between European countries, the European Union was established which ensured peace in this part of the world.

However the majority of suffering which affects people at present in the Western civilization is not caused by material problems but results from human interactions. Relationship with our family and in marriages, at work, with friends and strangers are the source of endless and frequently unnecessary suffering. These relationships are determined by a system of written and unwritten customs, laws and rules of conduct which were formed as a result of historical process. However many of these laws and rules must be enforced by relevant institutions. Three systems exist which define human conduct acceptable by society: social, religious and legal.

Social system

The social system is the first system of control of human conduct. We can still find it in the most primitive tribes of Africa and America. This system determined socially accepted rules of behavior of the earliest human groups living, working and hunting together. It secured efficient

functioning of a community by ensuring security and fair distribution of food for its members. It established a pecking order and principles of leadership, and protected the underdogs against the aggression of stronger members of the community.

Social rules were obeyed because they safeguarded the economic and social fabric of the community and were enforced by the entire group which could severely punish perpetrators. Excluding a person from the community was the most dreaded punishment. This system functioned very efficiently in small communities, where everyone knew his duties and his position in the group.

With the development of society, and with the arising of new beliefs, the rules were modified by new laws, as well as by religious interdictions and imperatives. When the religious commandments also became social decrees, it increased the strength of their influences, because not only had the Churches been punishing the faithful for committing sins, but also the community turned its back on the perpetrators, applying ostracism or even banishing them from the group.

The social systems function up to the present day and exert a significant influence on the behavior of people living in small communities. Influence of this system is decreasing in cities and metropolises, where interpersonal relationships are looser, based often on non-economic dependencies. In such conditions this system loses the power of controlling the behavior of people and is not able to prevent crimes and civil offences.

Religious systems

Religions such as Judaism or Islam define in much detail the conduct of their believers. Interpretations of the Judaic commandments are contained in the Talmud, which with 613 rules and interdictions regulates every aspect of the life of Jews. These directives dictate what one is allowed to do and should do, and what is forbidden, not leaving even the smallest doubt about what choice they are supposed to make. Almost every important moment of the life of the faithful, from birth till death, is exactly defined. The faithful know that they must follow these rules

whether they want to or not. Of course, total compliance with some directives could cause stresses and the feeling of living under duress, however, in the longer perspective it prevents much greater suffering of all members of the community. This set of laws, although so rigorous, has survived for a few thousand years, and what is even more surprising it is still strictly followed by about 2 million Jews.

In Islam the Quran is the main holy scripture but it does not provide detailed guidelines concerning behavior and therefore its canons must be interpreted by imams. As a result of this a separate Islamic Law called Sharia arose, defining which behavior is correct and which wrong. Sharia not only determines religious aspects of the life of the faithful, but encompasses all fields of people's activities such as business, economics, and family, and contains rules which in the West correspond to criminal and civil law.

Islam requires total and absolute compliance with the Sharia rules because it does not recognize any division between secular and religious life. These rules seem very cruel to people who do not know this religion well, but one must remember that from the point of view of the faithful they are justified, especially as breaking them offends God, and this is the biggest crime. Sharia treats mercilessly the guilty one, however gives protection to the weak, ensuring stability of society and family, and because of that, prevents suffering of many more people, especially children. One of the problems of Islam originates from the fact that these rules have existed for more than a thousand years and reflect the culture, intellectual level and customs of people living in the period of their coming into existence. They cannot be modernized, because it is believed that they were given by God, although there were finalized in the 10th century.

A different situation exists in the Roman Catholic Church, where Canon Law³⁹ applies. In contrast to the Judaic and Muslim regulations, this law deals mainly with matters and the jurisdiction within the Church, and out of 1,752 canons only about 30 define the duties of the faithful. A very important canon 212 gives decision making in the matters of the conduct of believers to the clergy. This constitutes the strength and weakness of the Catholic religious system. The strength comes from this,

that a priest making an appraisal of a given situation or a problem can take into account individual, local, cultural and social conditions, as well as ethnic customs and traditions. The weakness results from inconsistent interpretation of the canons of the law. It depends on the individual views, intellectual level and the authority of the priest. Nowadays the faithful having easy access to information and opinions coming from various sources, do not always accept the advice and orders of the priest. The church only unequivocally expresses its views on issues regarding the conduct of all believers concerning matrimony and abortion. Matters of this type do not belong to the jurisdiction of the local priests.

The Roman Catholic Church concentrates above all on the faith of its members, hoping that it will direct them to live in accordance with the ten commandments and with other church rules and interdictions. The Church puts more emphasis on what followers must not do, rather than on what they should do, in specific situations in their lives.

Protestant churches exert even less pressure on the behavior of their believers. Their Canon Law is more closely related to the civil law. Pastors act more as advisers and guides than mentors whose decisions should be absolutely followed. These churches, giving the faithful rights to independent interpretation of the Bible, consciously reduced the special position and the authority of the clergy, and because of that, diminished their influence on a community. They assume that people do not need intermediaries in order to achieve salvation and alone are able to distinguish between good and evil. This applies to some faithful, however there are many persons who need a strong shepherd to keep them on the right road.

Legal system

From the times of the French and American Revolutions began a process of secularization of Western society and separation of the Church from the state. Since the religious system has lost its power a long time ago, and the social dictates were not enforceable, they were replaced in many countries around the world by a state legal system. Laws referring to common criminal offences such as killing and physically hurting people,

or theft are relatively precisely defined. A little more difficult are the cases of misdemeanor which are not less harmful but more subtle, such as financial speculations and deceitful investments, in which naive people lose all their life savings. Offences covered by civil law are extremely diverse, therefore the rules of the civil code are more general and imprecise, and their correct interpretation depends on a judge who must know all the complicated circumstances of every act, to give a just ruling.

The main canon of the legal system is that any crime or offence must be proved beyond reasonable doubt. In some countries the legal system follows the rule that it is better the perpetrator goes unpunished than the innocent be sent to prison. This canon is the strength and at the same time the main weakness of the legal system⁴⁰. Since the law needs convincing proofs, to secure impunity it would be sufficient to physically remove any evidence and witnesses. In consequence, in this type of society people with the mentality of a gangster would be beyond the law. This is confirmed by the activities of organized crime syndicates, in some countries called Mafia, which operate with impunity, or rather very rarely are the bosses of these crime syndicates convicted in courts. And if they are convicted, other competing gangs benefit from their removal. For example, organized crime in the USA has prospered for almost one hundred years by removing key witnesses, and by supplying society, at first with alcohol and at present with drugs, and the law is helpless. Even worse situations exist in many other countries such as Italy, Russia or especially Mexico, where the local drug cartels have taken over control of some parts of the country.

One could be accused of making exaggerated statements without proof, but the fact is that the supplies of all kinds of drugs⁴¹ are not in the slightest affected by many years of extensive police and the Drug Enforcement Administration operations, and the available evidence shows that drugs are getting cheaper (Home Office, 2007) and therefore more accessible to all, including children⁴².

Courts, law, judges and police are frequently unable to prevent harmful activities of many people, because scores of their wrongdoing are not sufficiently precisely defined by the law. In many cases the law is helpless, because it does not keep up with quickly changing economic

conditions and with the development of new technologies, allowing criminals to elude justice. For example, at present, new synthetic drugs flood the markets, but they are legal, because the process of introducing new legislation is not fast enough. However when a drug becomes illegal, it is immediately replaced by a different but legal chemical compound producing similar effects.

The law not only fails to control the flow of drugs, but is also not able to prevent many punishable acts occurring at home, and cases such as, for example, child abuse⁴³, psychological cruelty to spouses, sexual exploitation and others, rarely come to court. Crime at home is much more common than publicly recognized and recent statistical data shows that in the United Kingdom 29 per cent of women and 16 per cent of men have experienced some domestic abuse since the age of 16. These figures are equivalent to an estimated 4.8 million female victims of domestic abuse and 2.6 million male victims in this age range (Home Office, 2011).

At present it is difficult to identify a specific country where the functioning of society is based exclusively on the legal system because in most of the Western countries, large influences of the religious system which were assimilated by their social rules still exist. These rules are still followed by a part of the population and are passed to next generations, therefore they will exert their authority for quite a while, but their effects will diminish with time. This diminishing trend is supported by the crime statistics. For example, in the UK the number of indictable offences per thousand population in 1954 was 9.7 and in 1992 the figure was 109.4, an increase of more than 1000 per cent (Hicks, 1999) however the prison population in this period increased by about 200 per cent. How could such an increase be explained in society, whose standard of living in real terms at least doubled in the same period. One might draw a conclusion that the main increase was in the sector of less serious offences, caused not by professional criminals, but rather reflecting the breakdown of the social fabric. This could indicate the weakening of personal constraints which stop the average person from committing a crime.

Supported by the above shortcomings of the legal system, we might conclude that society, basing its existence exclusively on the provisions of

law, cannot be a healthy one, because an enormous gap exists between a morally responsible life and the behaviors which are appropriate from the point of view of the law. Healthy society observes customary norms and moral principles, which are internalized by its members and in this way become a part of their own consciousness, guiding their behavior. It does not mean that the law is then redundant, however it stops being the only factor enforcing ethical behaviors and concentrates mainly on antisocial and criminal elements.

A world ruled only by the law and judges would be a cruel and barbaric world, because the conduct of some of its citizens would not be based on honesty, ethics and love of one's neighbor, but on making sure that one can escape justice. Human social life is too amazingly rich, unpredictable and complex for the law to be able to control it. The law, at its best, could punish the perpetrators but this does not prevent others from transgression, because the law does not teach people how to behave and does not act as a sufficiently strong deterrent, especially in cases of family offences.

The need for the development of man's consciousness

How Western society will develop in the medium and long term is a very difficult issue, and we can only try to make a prediction based on the trends already observed. At this moment there are three major forces operating, shaping the morals of future society: they are church, family and the media.

Christian Churches have very little chance of again becoming authoritative institutions, having an effective influence on the life and moral bearings of society, and one can assume that their role will continue decreasing. As was mentioned, the effects of religious teachings will stay with us for a while, because its rules were internalized by society and became a part of society's conventions and as such are transmitted to future generations. This transmission is performed mainly inside families, therefore it will be reduced in broken and dysfunctional families.

The most important element which will shape the future of society is family and this institution is in crisis. The latest statistics shows that in

England, at present about 48 percent of marriages end in divorce, before children are 16 years old, while 10 years ago it was 40 percent. The experts say that a child growing up in a one-parent family is 75 percent more likely to fail at school, 70 percent more likely to become a drug addict, 50 percent more likely to have an alcohol problem and 35 percent more likely to be unemployed as an adult (Probert, 2011). Although the latest divorce rates are slightly lower, the number of children in one parent families is growing because, according to research by the Center for Social Justice, in 2010 some 46 percent of children were born to unmarried mothers.

According to new research published in the *American Sociological Review* (Hyun Sik Kim, 2011), children whose parents divorce perform worse in math and have poorer social skills, and they struggle more with anxiety, loneliness, sadness, and poor self-esteem than their peers whose parents are not divorced. They are also more likely to have trouble making friends and maintaining those friendships, expressing emotions positively, and getting along with other kids who are different from them.

How will this changing environment, in the long term, affect the conduct of man? Religions were implemented in order to civilize mankind, to teach people humanitarian values. Along with the disappearance of their influences, we will witness, in a way, a return to uncivilized times. It will manifest itself in human attitudes which are characterized by an unrestrained greed for riches and power, ruthlessness in achieving one's aims, egotistical conduct leading to the breakup of families, and by low culture of behavior. Under these conditions trust in other people disappears, only thing that matters is how to gain fame and wealth.

These changes do not trigger any angry reactions, because they are de facto accepted by a large part of society, although many people still do not support them openly yet. However, observation of the proper norms of behavior, social conventions and ethics is more and more often a manifestation of hypocrisy, because in reality only success counts.

Certainly the legal system, in spite of the increasing number of lawyers⁴⁴, will not improve the situation, because the function of the law is not to guide people but to punish them and in this way prevent further

crime. The element of guiding people which was present in the religious system is missing from present society. This is especially visible in the area of the moral education of young people. This type of education is neither carried out by schools which focus on the instillation of scientific and other knowledge, nor by the parents, especially in broken families. As a result, nobody carries responsibility for the moral education of children, and by default much of this is done by the media.

Media, including television and social networking, took over many guiding and educative functions of churches and family. Their main advantage over religion is that they preach what the audience wants to hear. Since young people spend many hours watching television or using computers, it exerts a great impact on shaping their world view and their morality. Most harmful and regrettable is the fact that expressions of increasingly primitive culture get through to us in the form of brutal and vulgar behavior by the modern heroes of some films and television programs, which creates new acceptable social norms. As a result of this process, individuals who are guided in their conduct by the most primitive instincts become idols and celebrities of young people.

All these factors attest to the fact that we are witnessing a process eventually leading towards degeneration of Western society. This process is very slow and barely discernible, but because it takes place under the banner of progress, it is accepted by the majority of people.

The above painted picture is very pessimistic and some people may find it exaggerated, but the cited statistical data shows the reality of the situation, regardless of whether we agree with it or not. There is no obvious way as to how we might stop this process, and some people might see a solution in better education and improved standards of living, or in harsher court sentences and more effective policing. However it is difficult to see how these solutions would improve the situation because deterioration of standards is visible across all social classes.

We cannot find a solution by improving the external conditions of man, because it has been shown that its efficacy is very limited. In my opinion the only viable long term solution, which could reverse this process, is the change of man himself, meaning the development of

man's consciousness.

Western academic psychology, which grew on the foundation of the Euro-American civilization, disregards the need for the development of man's consciousness, claiming that only one level exists, viz. the awakening state. In contrast, philosophical religious systems of the East recognize the existence of many levels of consciousness. Observations and analysis of the behavior of man point to the fact that not all people possess the same level of consciousness. Diversity of the levels of awareness in man is very significant, and similar to the variability of his intellectual abilities. However, determining the level of consciousness is very difficult and so far no universally accepted criteria or objective tests exist⁴⁵.

At a simple level, one might say that the behavior of man, particularly his attitude to other people, reflects his level of consciousness. And so the majority of people care mainly about themselves and their closest relatives. This level of consciousness is mainly determined by genetically encoded biological functions and differs very little from what can be observed in many animals, which put much effort into providing food and safety for their offspring, sometimes sacrificing even their own life. People on the higher level of consciousness care also about strangers, about helping elderly and disabled persons and they support charitable activities. There are groups which realize how the destruction of the environment affects people's lives, and they try to prevent it. Some individuals do not limit themselves to the support of their own ethnic group or nation, helping to solve global problems.

However the influence of the level of consciousness on our life is much deeper than this simplistic view suggests. The level of consciousness determines whether a given person understands his own and other people's problems, is tolerant, honest, has a sense of justice and ability to take responsibility for himself and others, and it motivates him to take unselfish action for the benefit of society. In practice the true motives of our behavior are largely inscrutable to others, therefore a level of consciousness is a private matter for every man. This fact causes scholars to avoid the topic, because it belongs among the most elusive phenomena. Classifying people according to their level of consciousness

is universally regarded as politically incorrect, as is categorizing them by their level of intelligence.

One should not confuse the level of consciousness of a person with his level of intellect, position, wealth, education or erudition. It is possible to find people with a developed consciousness in all social groups. The most frequent and characteristic trait of such a person is an aversion to being a social climber and a careerist.

The development of man's consciousness was probably planned by the intelligent beings quite early, because the teachings of Buddha or Christ refer indirectly to the need to develop consciousness. Only a man with higher consciousness would be able to follow fully their guidelines. However this process is very slow and depends as much on personal traits as on the suitable education and upbringing of young people, and therefore could only be intended as a very long term activity.

To ensure that this process could advance at all, some explanations and reflection on this subject are needed, showing the necessity of man's development. When these notions are approved by a significant part of society, the development process could be included in the education program. But theoretical considerations will not be sufficient. A practical approach is also needed to achieve these objectives, by establishing appropriate guidelines for the development of man's consciousness. Introducing them into society would require instructors, teachers, writers and journalists who would popularize and spread these teachings. I believe that the philosophical foundations substantiating the need of creating higher consciousness was developed by Friedrich Nietzsche, however the practical method of the development of consciousness was prepared by George I. Gurdjieff. Both thinkers belong to the most important precursors of the development of man's consciousness in the West and their activities are described in the next chapters.

CHAPTER 26

Friedrich Nietzsche

Friedrich Nietzsche belongs to the least understood, and because of it, to the most controversial thinkers of the 19th century in Europe. He was born in Saxony in 1844, in to the family of a Lutheran minister. During his childhood he was very pious and serious, for his age. In 1864 he entered the University of Bonn to study theology and classical philology. The following year, at the University in Leipzig, he enrolled for doctoral studies in philology, which he did not finish. In 1869, at the age of twenty four, on a recommendation of his friend, he was appointed professor of classical philology at the University of Basel, where he taught for the next ten years. At that time he studied philosophy, mainly of Schopenhauer and became interested in music, above all of Wagner. In 1872 he published his first major book *The Birth of Tragedy* which brought him some recognition. Owing to chronic ill health he resigned from his professorship, but still continued writing. He led a very lonely life and had nobody with whom he could share his ideas.

In 1882 he met Lou Salome⁴⁶, who although only 21 years old, appreciated the depth of his thought. Nietzsche fell in love with her but unfortunately his offer of marriage was rejected and in 1883 came to a dramatic separation which caused his breakdown. Perhaps as a result of the sustained shock, in a period of two weeks he wrote the first part of his the most controversial work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. This book was finished in 1885, but published only in 1892. His writing effort did not

decrease and soon several of his important works such as *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Antichrist* came out. In 1889 Nietzsche collapsed on a street in Turin, and from that moment he rapidly descended into insanity. For the next 10 years he vegetated under the care of his mother and sister. He died in Weimar in 1900.

During his life he did not find recognition and hardly anyone was interested in his ideas. Only about 10 years after his death did an interest begin to grow in his philosophy. Nietzsche had not created a philosophical system explaining everything, the way Kant, Hegel or Schopenhauer tried to. His contribution consists mainly of presenting new ideas and an original outlook on the world.

Evaluation of the situation

Nietzsche, having since childhood a close and deep relation with religion and being gifted with an inquisitive mind, reaches a conclusion, that “God is dead”, meaning God does not live in the hearts of the faithful. Nietzsche had already clearly seen then something the majority of people are not aware of even now, that orthodox Christian theology is dead, that it does not mean anything to people.

The result of intense economic development and the rapid progress of science was that in the second half of the 19th century Western European and North American society felt confident, for the first time in the history of humanity, that they could control their own life. It was the result of belief in the power of the human mind and the unstoppable technological progress and the growth of the economy. This caused the Christian Churches to start losing the position of authority they had enjoyed up to then, and religious issues started fading away into the background. The faithful still recognized the teachings of Christ, but many, especially from the privileged classes, hardly acted according to them in everyday life. Externally nothing had changed and the majority of people still attended church and perfunctorily observed its commandments, but in the hearts of many people egoism settled for good and destroyed other feelings. As a result, the situation of the poor, especially children, was tragic and incomparably worse than in the period

preceding the industrial revolution. Becoming aware of this state of affairs was a crucial moment for Nietzsche (1995, p. 13): “Is not your soul poverty and filth and wrenched contentment? Verily, a polluted stream is man”. Nietzsche had seen through people and harbored no more illusions. He did not belong to writers who cautiously chose words in order not to hurt readers. He always called a spade a spade, regardless of the consequences: “Lascivious greed, galled envy, aggrieved vengeance, mob pride: all that leaped into my face. It is no longer true that the poor are blessed”. He does not also spare the rich: “By the convicts of riches, who pick up their advantage out of any rubbish, with cold eyes, lewd thoughts, by this rabble that stinks to high heaven; by this gilded, false mob whose fathers have been pickpockets”. It is no wonder that after such a portrayal of contemporary society, Nietzsche was not and still is not a popular author.

Concept of the overman

If God is dead, what is the way out of the situation? What is the future of mankind? The old concept of man who is guided and taken care of by God is no longer valid; man is alone, left to his own fate. The above questions, which Nietzsche asked, were essential then but they are still very relevant, if not more important, now. He proposed a simple, logical solution. A new concept of man must arise, based on different assumptions. And so Zarathustra proclaims: “Away with such a god! Rather no god, rather make destiny on one’s own, rather be a fool, rather be a god oneself!”(Nietzsche, 1995, p. 262).

So man must take over the functions of God, must gain the divine features, therefore the overman must come into existence. Of course Nietzsche did not mean gaining the supernatural features of God, but rather His functions as the legislator and the enforcer of laws determining the existence of man. Some critics of this philosophy believe that the overman is above the principles of morality, and does not have to follow them. In such an interpretation there is a certain truth, but different from that of these critics. Since current human morality is rotten and corrupted, the overman must abide by the principles of a new,

higher morality.

Contemporary man resembles an actor playing certain roles in life. When the role changes, his morality changes along with it. Man's moral behavior is full of hypocrisy, because his objective is to demonstrate to others his own goodness, and in this way showing one's own superiority and winning approval from others. These are not deeds resulting from genuine convictions and beliefs originating from the heart.

However the new morality is supposed to be divine, absolute and uncompromising. It has nothing to do with beliefs – how Nietzsche calls mankind – of the mob and rabble. Overman is not simply a contemporary man, but a transcendental man. It is not possible to compare him either to anybody living at present, or to a historical figure, although the philosopher indicated that such personages as Christ or Goethe could belong to this group.

The idea of the overman was presented in a book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. (Nietzsche, 1995) The hero of the title, as a historical figure, is regarded as the creator of the Zoroastrian religion which was based on rational principles, and therefore Nietzsche chose him to present his own views, emotions and rational ideas. Zarathustra, who spent 10 years meditating a long way from people, decides to come down from the mountains and to start teaching them. On the way he meets a saint hermit who tells him:

“Zarathustra has changed, Zarathustra has become a child, Zarathustra is an awakened one; what do you want among the sleepers? ... Zoroaster answered: I love man. The saint said: Man is for me too imperfect a thing. Love of man would kill me. Zoroaster answered: Did I speak of love? I bring men a gift. Give them nothing! – said the saint – [...] and if you want to give them something, give no more than alms, and let them beg for that! They are suspicious of hermits and do not believe that we come with gifts” (Nietzsche, 1995, p. 11).

This quotation shows clearly that Nietzsche realized the thankless task which was in front of him, but his motivation is the love of people whose he wants to rescue.

Zarathustra arrives in a small town and tells the people:

“I teach you the overman. Man is something that shall be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?”

All beings so far have created something beyond themselves; and do you want to be the ebb of this great flood and even go back to the beasts rather than overcome man? What is the ape to man? A laughing-stock or a painful embarrassment. And man shall be just that for the overman: a laughingstock or a painful embarrassment.

You have made your way from worm to man, and much in you still worm. Once you were apes, and even now, too, man is more ape than any ape”.

In the same way that man had developed from the lower forms, the overman must rise from man. But the overman will not appear spontaneously in the process of evolution as a result of the passage of time. While man so far had developed as a result of the collective evolution, his further development will come from the work of individuals, which requires personal effort. However, the former man must be defeated first. Zarathustra asked people: “what have you done to overcome him?”, namely to overcome oneself, one’s own egoism, greed and hypocrisy. Man must start to despise oneself, must be dissatisfied with himself, must see how low he has sunk and only then will he start rising above himself in order to become someone greater, better and nobler. Nietzsche compares the transformation to the overman to travel above a chasm: “Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman – a rope over an abyss. A dangerous crossing, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous shuddering and stopping”.

What kind of man can transform into the overman, what qualities must he possess? Let’s allow Zarathustra to speak:

“I love those who do not know how to live, except by going under, for they are those who cross over.

I love him who lives to know, and who wants to know so that the overman may live some day. And thus he wants to go under.

I love him who works and invents to build a house for the overman and prepare earth, animal, and plant for him: for thus he wants to go

under.

I love him who makes his virtue his addiction and his catastrophe: for his virtue's sake he wants to live on and to live no longer.

I love him whose soul squanders itself, who wants no thanks and returns none: for he always gives away and does not want to preserve himself.

I love him who is abashed when the dice fall to make his fortune, and asks, "Am I then a crooked gambler?" For he wants to perish.

I love him who casts golden words before his deeds and always does even more than he promises: for he wants to go under.

I love him whose soul is deep, even in being wounded, and who can perish of a small experience: thus he goes gladly over the bridge.

I love him who has a free spirit and a free heart: thus his head is only the entrails of his heart, but his heart drives him to go under" (Nietzsche, 1995, p. 16).

We can see that in order to for a man to "cross to the other side" and to become the overman he must have exceptional qualities of his soul and of his mind; must see further than his nose; must sacrifice his life for others; must give generously and not to gain any benefits or satisfaction from it; must search for knowledge about oneself; must discover and create; must be modest, moral and brave. This is not an image of a conceited superman, a genetically perfect conqueror of the world, despising moral principles. It is rather an image of a modern "saint" and resembles such figures as Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer or Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Nietzsche believed that the overman could appear only after several generations and only a few persons will be able to reach this level.

Development of man

The inner strength of man, enabling him to defeat himself and to mould into a new person, Nietzsche calls "the will to power". This notion, likewise the concept of the overman, is frequently wrongly understood, and was even used for supporting Nazi theories. This expression does not refer to political or military power, or to the power over other

people, but to the higher and greater form of existence. The will to power is needed in order to achieve a fuller, nobler, higher quality and perceived in another realm of life. It serves above all for transforming man into the overman, because this activity requires a superhuman effort, perseverance and concentration, as well as large amounts of time and patience.

Nietzsche postulated the necessity of further development because he realized that man cannot live without God and his laws. An average person needs the power of a strong authority to keep him on the road of humanity, otherwise he will regress to the original primitive level. Since such a strong authority does not exist anymore, the rise of the overman is the solution suggested by Nietzsche.

How might the overman be defined? He is not, after all, an individual with specially selected genes, having exceptional physical and intellectual features. The simplest answer would be that the overman is a normal person with higher consciousness, who having realized, at first, who he really is, was able to overcome himself thanks to his own will power. He perceives clearly the reality of life, knows what is true and important, does not chase after fortune and fame and does not listen to false prophets; he is able to love his own enemies, helps others without expecting praise and reward; is just and understanding and abhors any acts of cruelty; knows what is the right thing to do and does it; is not driven exclusively by emotions or by intellect, but can see the wholeness of every situation, of every problem; knows himself and his own value, has an unchanging "I" and does not identify himself with other popular heroes of the masses; imitates and flatters nobody, and therefore is truly free and independent.

Introducing a notion of the overman is a very important step in the development of mankind. It shows the path which man must follow, if he wants to overcome the regression leading to degeneration. This is an individual development, aiming to increase the level of man's consciousness. Only achieving a high level of consciousness could free mankind from suffering, because its source will be known, and therefore man will learn how to avoid it. He will also understand that he must not cause others to suffer.

Such a man does not differ from the followers of Christ, Buddha or Muhammad, only those who truly understood their teachings. In such a case one could say that, in a way, the overman is a man, who consciously and judiciously obeys God's commandments. This seems strange, taking into consideration Nietzsche's hostility to religion, but we have to remember that he came from a deeply religious home and he knew the contemporary Protestant Church, and this Church failed him. He could see that the Church follows an easy way using all means to hold on to the faithful, instead of caring about their moral and spiritual development. However the problem lies not in the conviction that the old religious teachings are bad, outdated and false, but in the fact that nobody, including the clergy, follows them. Nietzsche knew that it was too late to convince people to accept religious dogmas, therefore he stated: "God died of his pity for man".

Analyzing Nietzsche philosophy one could come to conclusion that the concept of the overman is not new. It was introduced by such great teachers as Buddha.

"Who is one's worst enemy? One's worst enemy is oneself. So that's the enemy you really have to overcome, and he who conquers himself has the more glorious victory. Though one may conquer a thousand men, a thousand times in battle, yet he who conquers himself has the more glorious victory". This statement could be written by Nietzsche, but they are the words of Buddha.

Nietzsche was interested in Buddhism, however he thought that it propagates nihilism and passivity, because nirvana, that is the highest state man could achieve, is a non active state. This interpretation results from the lack of deeper understanding of Buddha's teachings, because achieving nirvana requires immense effort, strong will power, continuous fighting against oneself, a state which is practically unattainable by the average man. Therefore the road leading to achieving nirvana is also the road of the overman. Buddha did not preach escape from life, on the contrary, he believed that only through functioning amongst people, through intentional suffering would it be possible to find the right way to oneself. It is the road of action, rather than passivity. So we could conclude that in spite of superficial differences, Nietzsche unwittingly

followed Buddha's teachings.

The German thinker created the philosophical foundations of the development of man's consciousness, but he did not provide instructions on how this state could be achieved. This work belonged to G.I. Gurdjieff.

CHAPTER 27

George I. Gurdjieff

The first thinker in the West who not only promoted the need of the development of man's consciousness, but who also provided practical guidelines as to how to do it was George I. Gurdjieff. He is a little-known and still less understood figure because of the inaccessibility of his philosophy and his unusual teaching methods.

Biography

Gurdjieff was born in 1866 in Alexandropol in Russian Armenia, from a Greek father and Armenian mother. His father, by vocation, was a bardic poet and loved telling old local myths and legends. In 1877, when Tsar Alexander II won the war over the Turks, the entire family moved to Kars (at present in Turkey) where they lived in very modest conditions. The exceptional abilities of the young Gurdjieff were noticed by the dean of the Russian Orthodox Church and thanks to that he had private tuition provided by the church deacons. In 1883 he moved to Tbilisi, where he probably attended a seminary. There is a lack of independently confirmed information about his life from early youth until his arrival in Moscow in 1912. He probably traveled widely all over Asia, where he searched for esoteric knowledge about man. It has been suggested that for some time he stayed in Tibet and had close contact with the Dalai Lama, but no documents confirming these stories exist. After his arrival

in Moscow as a rich man, he married a Polish girl, Julia Ostrowska. During this time he started teaching his ideas, attracting many followers. The most prominent was Peter Ouspensky, a well-known writer and publicist who joined his group in 1914.

At the beginning of the revolution, in 1917, Gurdjieff went with his pupils to the region of the Caucasus Mountains, and then to Georgia, where he founded the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man. Escaping from the Red Army with his pupils, he reached Constantinople in 1920, and then moved through Germany to France, where he arrived in July 1922. He settled in Fontainebleau, near Paris where the works of the Institute continued. In 1924 he went to the United States, where he was able to recruit many new pupils and to obtain financial support for his Institute. In August 1924, after a serious car accident, he reduced his works at the Institute and began writing his most important work *Beelzebub's Tales* (Gurdjieff, 1992). During the following years he continued his work with chosen students, as well as visited the United States several times. In 1932, after the bankruptcy of the Institute, he moved to Paris, where he lived for the rest of his life. In this city he survived through the war period without any significant problems. After the war many new students from England and America started coming to see him in Paris, where interest in his teachings grew. Gurdjieff died on 29 October 1949 just before *Beelzebub's Tales* was published.

Objectives of Gurdjieff's teachings

What makes Gurdjieff different from all other reformers of all epochs is the fact that his aim was to help man to achieve the highest possible freedom – freedom from beliefs, freedom from superstitions, from internal and external pressures, freedom from himself. Gurdjieff explicitly stated that he did not want to start a new religion, sect or a new school with a new set of "truths" influencing people, forcing them to obey new gurus or masters. According to Gurdjieff true freedom can only be achieved by developing a higher level of consciousness through individual effort and will-power. The level of man's consciousness is not

only responsible for wars and other kinds of suffering, but it is responsible for the totality of his life. The entire life of man, including his beliefs, activities and work, everything he has built up for himself, our whole civilization depends on his level of consciousness.

According to Gurdjieff, man possesses mental abilities well above the level needed for his biological life and he is completely unaware of his incredible potential. These possibilities are lying dormant in man and without proper effort and understanding cannot be released and utilized. Modern man is developing his intellect, is gaining scientific and technical knowledge, is improving his standard of living – and this means that he is concentrating on his external development. But what is most vital for him – his morality, attitude to other people and to himself, depends on his own consciousness, and this however remains at a very low level.

Gurdjieff frequently stated that he had not invented anything new, but that his teachings were based on the esoteric knowledge that has been in existence for thousands of years. This knowledge is invisible to the average man and is completely misunderstood and disregarded by the contemporary religious and scientific world.

It is not certain from which sources Gurdjieff obtained his information, but it is known that he held Christian teaching in the very highest esteem. He believed that the teaching of Christ contained a great deal of esoteric information, but that information was not understood by his followers. Gurdjieff considered that the commandment "Love your neighbor" was the most important, but unfortunately the least practiced Christian commandment.

Main elements of the Gurdjieff philosophy

States of man's consciousness

It is generally believed that, with the exception of such conditions as addiction and mental illnesses, man functions in two states of consciousness: sleep and awakening. Gurdjieff maintained that there are more states of consciousness than is widely recognized, and distinguished four states of man's consciousness: sleep, awakening, self consciousness,

objective consciousness.

Western psychology, contrary to Eastern psychology, states that man in the awakening state is fully conscious and that there are no other states of consciousness. Psychologists consider that in this state we can control our attention and direct it where we want – outside or inside; that we have free will and do what we wish. However Gurdjieff claimed that what we call awareness was not the only consciousness man could attain. In the awakening state man can be aware of his emotions, thoughts or physical movements, but the awareness of these functions is very faint and changeable. Most of man's functions are carried out automatically and he is often not aware and does not understand why he is saying or acting in a particular manner.

Gurdjieff maintained that most people are living as if suspended in a light hypnotic "sleep" and spend their life in a state of minimum attention. If a man's consciousness is not awakened, Gurdjieff describes this man as being asleep. To prove this condition he uses a very convincing argument: how could it have been possible for fully conscious people to kill each other during the both World Wars to achieve some trivial and illusive aims. Only sleeping people would have been able to do it.

The concept of the state of self-consciousness was introduced for the first time in the West by Gurdjieff. This state has not been studied by academic psychology yet because it manifests itself in man very rarely and only in exceptional situations. It might appear when we are in great danger, in completely new and difficult circumstances, during challenging experiences and in a state of great stress. During such moments we start to realize that we truly exist, that life is precious, that material things do not matter. These flashes last only a very short time, but they put us in a state of euphoria and deep satisfaction.

In practice only a few, specially predisposed individuals can spontaneously achieve the state self-consciousness. However, for most people this access is not completely closed. Gurdjieff maintained that through continuous self-development we could attain moments of self-consciousness, but this would require a great level of concentration and a great deal of effort. Achieving this state should be the first and most

important step in man's development.

The fourth level of consciousness is the highest level man could ever reach. This level is comparable to divine consciousness. Man who attains it has one undividing and unchanging "I" that governs his life. He possesses free will and knows what he is supposed to do. In this state he is able to see reality as it truly is, he can ascertain the objective truth about everything, and his perception of the world around him is not influenced by any subjective elements.

Centers of man

According to Gurdjieff, several independent centers exist in man and each of them is responsible for a specific activity and has a unique way of working. They can work completely independently of each other, or can communicate with each other. The centers could be analogous to independent computers that are fully responsible for man's psychological states and the control of all his functions. These centers act on three levels; on the highest there is the intellectual center, in the middle there is the emotional center and on the lower level there are the moving, instinctive and sexual centers. These centers perform the following functions:

The intellectual center is responsible for creative, analytical and logical thinking, scientific discovery and inventions.

The emotional center is responsible for feelings, for artistic reception and creation, aesthetics, moral and religious emotions.

The moving center is responsible for the control of body movements, e.g. sporting activities, dance and physical work.

The instinctive center controls the functioning of man's internal organs, is a source of intuition and drives instinctual behavior.

The sexual center is responsible for sexual behavior, attraction, desire and gratification.

Typology of man

Depending on the relative importance and dominance of each center as regards the behavior of man, Gurdjieff distinguishes three types of man

(Ouspensky, 1949):

The first type of man is controlled mainly by his moving and instinctive centers, which determine his behavior and conduct. On the intellectual level he will memorize information and use other people's opinions and judgments. In daily life he will quickly make up his mind using his intuition rather than intellect. Professionally he could be successful in sports, business or the army.

The second type of man is directed by his emotional center. On the intellectual level he tends to separate knowledge and information into two groups: what he believes in and what he does not believe in, without analyzing the facts. He has very strong religious, political and racial convictions that might lead to intolerance. He tends, in his everyday life, to make decisions based on feelings and emotions. Professionally he could achieve success in arts, politics or the church.

The third type of man is mainly under the influence of his intellectual center. He has the ability to think logically and analytically, and prefers the literal interpretation of facts. He excels in abstract and theoretical work. He will make decisions following long analysis of all information. Professionally he could succeed in the sciences, engineering, medicine and law.

These three types present a very simplistic picture of man. In real life man uses all three centers to different degrees. Moreover the level of activity of each part of a center is changeable. The true model of the functioning of man is much more complex than presented in the above typology.

Apart from these three basic types, four more advanced types of man exist, each having a higher consciousness:

The fourth type of man has balanced centers of functioning which start cooperating with each other. He begins to absorb real knowledge and commences to free himself from subjective elements. He is able to look critically at himself, to recognize the different parts of his personality and his internal contradictions. He understands a lot about his life, and this helps him to understand others and not to judge them too severely. People belonging to this group are able to understand each other, and try to avoid the use of force and violence in human relations.

The fifth type of man has attained internal unity by developing one, permanent and unchanging “I”. Man on this level is completely different from ordinary people because he possesses profound knowledge and his functioning is based on true understanding. People on this and higher levels understand each other and never use force.

The six and the seventh types of man have attained the highest possible level of development for man and have acquired all the special qualities that man could ever possess such as free will, full consciousness, permanent “I” and distinctive individuality. They have achieved the highest Objective Reason on a divine-like level. Men of these types are at the apex of the pyramid of the development of humanity. Attainment of these levels should be the ultimate aim of man. The sixth type of man possesses the same attributes as the seventh type of man, but some of his qualities are not yet permanent.

Ways of man’s development

Gurdjieff presented a new way of the development of consciousness and called it “the Fourth Way”. It differs from three traditional methods of the development practiced by all sorts of religious schools, such as the way of the fakir, of the monk and of the yogi. Gurdjieff rejects these methods, because they lead to unbalanced development, involve huge personal sacrifice and cause great suffering, and above all they require isolation from society. The main drawback of “the Fourth Way” lies in that, it is not explicitly defined or described and everyone must discover it individually. It does not require renunciation of the world and it should be practiced under normal living conditions, however this does not mean that it is an easier method. On “the Fourth Way” everybody works individually on what he needs, and using his own assessment he rejects or applies the elements of tradition of other schools.

Novices must practice self-observation, which in the initial phases is limited to the observation of one’s own moods, feelings and activities, without any attempts to analyze them, such as why do we think or act this or that way. They must stop identifying with themselves and with their own problems, and also they have to try to control their imagination

and to work on their own “I”. Among the most important tasks, which must be worked on from the beginning, is a fight against negative emotions, which dominate the everyday life of man. Gradually a student starts experiencing gleams of the higher state of consciousness, which Gurdjieff calls “remembering oneself”.

During the next phase of the work, students start putting in to practice what they have learned at the earlier stage in relation to other people. The most important objective is not expressing negative emotions in our relationships with others, but this does not mean that we have to suppress spontaneous feelings in ourselves. It is very important to understand the importance of enduring suffering in man’s development, especially intentional suffering. The subsequent phase includes further work on oneself in combination with work for others. In order that this work is beneficial to our development, we must not expect to receive any benefits and rewards, or even any personal satisfaction.

Who was Gurdjieff?

The life of Gurdjieff is shrouded in mystery, because he did not usually talk about himself, but even if he ever mentioned something about his life, it was done in a hinted fashion, leaving a lot of unanswered questions. Even his book , *Meeting with remarkable men* (Gurdjieff, 1985), which describes the early period of his life, cannot be treated as an autobiography, because it was written for teaching purposes. His early life story reminds us in many details of the exploits of, a well known in Russia and Tibet adventurer and traveler of Buryat Mongol origins, Agwan Dordjjeff⁴⁷. It is most likely that Gurdjieff knew Dordjjeff and supposedly met with him for the last time in Russia in 1935. The fact remains that there are no independent proofs available confirming Gurdjieff’s activities from his childhood until his arrival in Moscow in 1912. Frequently he spread implausible information about his early life, trying to hide his past. This triggered many rumors and preposterous stories about his life, which he never denied. He tried to disguise his origins, because he did not want to or could not reveal the truth.

Once, Gurdjieff, in encrypted language, told Bennett who was one of

his close aides: "I can write a check with seven zeros, something even your king cannot do". What message did he want to pass to him? Certainly not that he was a millionaire, but a man of the seventh type, having objective knowledge and reason.

Gurdjieff possessed a huge accumulation of knowledge and information which were not widely available in his times. What is even more interesting is that his helpers and pupils do not recall that he read any books or scientific magazines. In spite of the lack of academic education he drew to himself many outstanding, unusually intelligent and well educated people. So what was the source of his knowledge? This will remain a secret.

From the analysis of known events from Gurdjieff's life, from his teachings, as well as from the information which he spread about himself, we could assume that he was also a messenger, similar to Buddha or Christ, who appeared on earth in order to show man how to develop his consciousness.

CHAPTER 28

The new role of mankind

Significance of the Fatima apparitions

The events in Fatima were needed in order to help the inhabitants of Portugal, but they also have a vital importance for mankind. Regardless of whether we are followers of any religion, atheists or agnostics, for the first time we have at our disposal credible evidence that, apart from us, somebody exists in the Universe who is not indifferent to our fate.

These apparitions differ from any others because they were prepared, above all, for nonbelievers in order to convince them about the existence of higher powers. For the first time in history, besides the visionaries, these events were observed by thousands of witnesses, who confirm their authenticity and therefore it is not possible to reject the display in the sky as a product of anyone's imagination. The earlier analysis provided of these events shows that they were physical phenomena.

Based on this analysis we can assert with a strong conviction that the events in Fatima were prepared by intelligent beings of extraterrestrial origin. This fact should wield an enormous influence on the entirety of our lives, should lead to the revision of existing beliefs, and result in the re-appraisal of the two world views which dominate at present, which

could in turn help to remove the source of conflict between believers and atheists.

Two world views

At present mankind is divided into two camps having extremely opposing and impossible to reconcile world views. The religious outlook states that we are beings completely dependent on higher powers originating from God. God, according to religious theology, is almighty and absolute, which means that he is not subjected to the passage of time and can function above the laws of physics ruling the universe, which he created himself. He knows about the life of every man and can control his future – salvation or damnation. God listens to human requests and prayers, but demands faith and obedience. According to some theologies, man is almost helpless and can himself do very little.

The notion of an absolute God is often the subject of attacks by unbelievers. If God is almighty and merciful, why is there so much suffering on earth? Why do good people endure a hard life, but the ruthless and cruel frequently win? The explanation that God puts us to the test is not convincing, if we consider the suffering of small children dying from hunger in Africa or from incurable diseases. It would be difficult to regard a God exposing people to such an ordeal, as merciful. Condemning for eternity souls to hell, so they will endure never-ending agonies, could be considered a cruel act. This theology is not in accord with the teachings of Christ, who preached forgiving and loving one's enemies. At present in many civilized societies even the worst criminals leave prison after many years. Does it mean that man is more merciful than God?

Along with the rejection of belief in God is the arising of the second word view, which is called scientific, although frequently it has little in common with true science. Its paradigm could be reduced to a statement that all around us is the result of pure chance. Such events as the coming into existence of the universe and life on earth, the laws of physics⁴⁸, the evolution of plants and animals and finally the appearance of Homo sapiens are fortuitous. The hypotheses of the origins of life and its

subsequent evolution are presented by the academic world as proven scientific facts, although in reality they would not pass proper scientific scrutiny. These hypotheses propose highly improbable solutions, but they do not attempt to estimate their probability, or even to provide an approximate mechanism of their operation. As a result we have rather a “story” of evolution than a theory of evolution.

In spite of almost one hundred years of experiments, biologists have not managed to create in laboratory conditions new permanent genetic structures or any new species of living organisms. The mechanisms of evolution are not able to explain in a rigorous way the origins and development of complex biological forms. They propose solutions having so infinitesimal probabilities that they could just as well belong to the domain of miracles.

The scientific world view does not deliver satisfactory, truly scientific explanations and, what is worse, describes these phenomena using almost religious phraseology. If we want to describe how some new species came into existence, we simply replace the word “God” in the traditional explanations with the word “evolution”. Because science does not have strong proofs of these events, it creates beliefs which are a part of the new “scientific religion”. Because of the lack of evidence of how life on earth started and evolved, both the scientific and religious explanations are based on the faith and the conviction of its followers, rather than on verified arguments. Some proponents of the atheistic approach, like Richard Dawkins (2006), resemble preachers more than scientists in their manner of arguments.

To sum up it is possible to say that the conflict between creationists and evolutionists is similar to the disputes carried out by the followers of two hostile faiths, and therefore it has not been settled so far. As a result of this conflict, such a deep abyss exists between believers and atheists that any real dialogue seems impossible.

The new scientific world view

Conclusions drawn from the Fatima events, particularly the one proving the existence of intelligent beings, could wield significant influence on the

relationship between believers and atheists. Since the phenomenon of the display in the sky is very well substantiated, it should be analyzed by independent experts enjoying the highest authority in the scientific world. If the Fatima events were accepted by such experts as authentic, it could change the entire philosophy and methodology of sciences. We do not suggest the rejection of the materialistic approach, but only the acceptance of the fact that the beings who established contact with us are the representatives of a much higher civilization than ours, perhaps even existing for billions of years. Such a civilization could have contributed to the origins and the development of life on earth.

Accepting the existence of the intelligent beings could exert an influence on the current theories of the origins of life and its evolution. It could open the door to accepting interventions in our approach to the history of mankind. Life on earth could have begun as a result of bringing suitable biological and genetic material to our planet when the climatic conditions were ready for it. This would explain the almost instant arising of life on earth. We know that life evolved over billions of years, but we do not understand the true mechanism of this evolution, which is probably much more complex and sophisticated than the theory proposed by Darwin.

The causes of certain stages of evolution, such as very long stagnation and accelerated development periods, are beyond our present understanding. Such events as the sudden arrival of flowering plants about 140 million years ago and their proliferation to 300,000 species was called by Darwin an "abominable mystery". If we take into account the limited mobility of the plant germs, it is difficult to explain the appearance of so many different species as a result of random mutation of their genes.

Accepting the intervention hypothesis would completely change our attitude to prehistoric events such as the development of agriculture and the development of the first civilizations. We would have to abandon improbable explanations that this most critical milestone in the development of mankind came as a result of the separate actions of hundreds of specially gifted individuals operating independently at the same time in particular parts of the world. The appearance of new

religions would have to be put into a new perspective, because there is some evidence that unknown powers contributed to its origins. There must be a reason why several billions of faithful are convinced that religions originated as a result of divine, extraterrestrial intervention.

Theories of the development of man, his intelligence and consciousness, should take into account this new paradigm. It would help to explain many events from the history of humanity in a more intelligible, logical, but above all, more plausible way.

Acceptance of the existence of and interventions by the intelligent beings does not solve, of course, all the issues concerning the scientific cognition of the universe and the origins of life. It opens only new research horizons, which at present are unattainable to us.

New concept of God

Recognition of the existence of the intelligent beings could exert great influence not only on the changes of the scientific world view, but could also contribute to the change of the religious world view. Faith in the absolute God remains the essential canon, because the existence of the intelligent beings does not preclude the existence of a higher power responsible for the creation of the universe. We can call this power the Creator.

The Creator did not create individual cosmic elements or life forms. He created the mechanisms and the laws ruling the arising and evolution of matter in the cosmos, which resulted in a phenomenon which we describe as the Big Bang (Hawking, 1988). Stars appeared and inside them at the end of their lives were created the elements needed for biological life. Life arose many billions of years after the Big Bang, and then intelligence and consciousness appeared. Perhaps the origin of life was a special and unique process, the secrets of which we will not uncover for quite a while, if at all. As a result of this process, intelligent beings came into existence, whose long term task has been to secure the continuation of life and to preserve intelligence and higher consciousness in the universe.

The Creator is a completely different phenomenon than God who is

an object of current religious beliefs. He does not require sacrifices from people, suffering and mindless prayers, idolatrous adoration, canticles and incense. Nor does he need masses of priests, wonderful temples and theatrical ceremonies. He is not concerned with the fate of individual people and does not control natural events such as floods, droughts, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the like. He does not interfere in the problems and conflicts of mankind, for example wars, starvation and other suffering. He does not defend the innocent and does not punish perpetrators, does not heal the sick and does not protect even the most righteous persons from suffering and premature death. One could say that he interferes neither in the fortunes of humanity nor in the fate of the universe.

Intelligent beings, who look after mankind and direct its development, fulfill the role of the God who is worshipped by the present religions. It is they who introduced civilization and established religions, sending messengers who implemented new principles for the coexistence of people. It is they who intervene, providing help in critical moments for mankind, but as we mentioned earlier, they have very limited means of influencing human life.

This new concept of God should not undermine faith in the absolute Creator, but could have an immense influence on theology and all aspects of religious practices, since in the proposed new religious system there is no place for heaven and hell and the leading role of the Church. This system could be accepted with discernment by people who have already achieved a certain level of consciousness and do not have to be guided by priests. The new concept of God could be more acceptable to many atheists, ending in this way a deep division in society.

The new role of mankind

The most important and intriguing issues still prompt questions: Why would the intelligent beings look after people and be concerned about their future? What are the true motivations of their action?

Hypotheses have been proposed to the effect that cosmic travelers discovered the planet Earth by chance and then, for their own

entertainment, started experimenting with *Homo sapiens*, passing over knowledge to our kind. These explanations do not sound very convincing, assuming the travelers came from a very advanced civilization and did not need any such amusement.

However, we know that everything that happens on earth and therefore in the universe has some reason. Nobody invests an immense amount of energy and effort into unnecessary actions. If we analyze the entire development of mankind, from the formation of *Homo sapiens* through the development of civilizations and all the way to the rise of consciousness in man, we will see consistent and purposeful activity by intelligent beings. Each of these stages of the development of mankind is full of mystery, which nobody so far has been able to explain convincingly.

For example, the development in a very short time⁴⁹ of a human brain able to perform such extraordinary functions as creating wonderful music, poetry, higher mathematics, abstract thinking, as well as development of consciousness, cannot be explained by evolution and natural selection, because it is highly improbable that these features could increase man's reproductive abilities. It is believed that the abilities of the human mind are enormous and very much exceed the needs associated with the biological functioning⁵⁰ of man.

The coming into existence of the first civilizations is also hidden under the veil of mystery. It is impossible to accept the incredible official explanation that suddenly, after two hundred thousand years of existence, people "woke up" one day and without any reason started creating a completely new society and developed their own consciousness. The origins of the main religions provide further evidence for their unusual arising, because at least we know that they came into existence as a result of the activities of certain individuals who received their guidance in the form of personal revelation.

I believe that the key to the discovery of the role of the intelligent beings in human affairs lies in the development of man's consciousness. One could argue that, while the introduction of civilizations and religions advanced people's lives, the development of consciousness does not necessarily contribute to an improvement in the welfare of man. It is

reasonable to presume that people on the lower level of consciousness ask fewer questions, analyze their life less, are more sure of themselves, and therefore have fewer problems and lead an easier life, while others, on a somewhere higher level, but far from the acme of development, have many more difficult personal dilemmas to solve. Gurdjieff (1992, p. 227) said: "Blessed is he that hath a soul; blessed also is he that hath none; but grief and sorrow are the lot of him who hath in himself only its conception". In this context "soul" means consciousness of man.

The belief that the intelligent beings advanced the development of man's consciousness leads us to a hypothesis that mankind has some objectives which could be fulfilled only when it achieves higher consciousness. Such an aim would include achieving a level of consciousness comparable with the level which had been reached by the intelligent beings. This objective was set by the intelligent beings perhaps because their existence is somehow or other endangered, and their current civilization at some time will cease to exist, for example, as a result of the loss of their sources of energy. As we mentioned, the intelligent beings are responsible for the dissemination of life, intelligence and consciousness in the universe. If in the future they would not be able to perform this task, they must prepare their successors for this role.

The intelligent beings already in the distant past knew, as we know now, that life on their planet must at some time disappear. Perhaps mass emigration turned out to be impossible, only because they are not adapted to living on other planets. What must migrate at all costs in order to survive are genes and consciousness.

We can assume that the genes of the intelligent beings had already been handed over to people, but the higher consciousness can only come into existence as a result of the work of man alone, and this takes time. We can draw this conclusion because the development and preservation of man's consciousness was the main aim of all interventions by the intelligent beings, as it was in the case of establishing the first civilizations and the emergence of the main religions.

Also needed to facilitate the development of consciousness are adequate material conditions to secure a good standard of living, and a certain level of knowledge. Man, to develop his consciousness, needs

time to work on himself and therefore he should not concentrate exclusively on the material aspects of life. The development of science and technology was necessary initially to secure appropriate living conditions. But the development of sciences is also needed for humanity to gain the knowledge and understanding of the world and to free itself of superstitions and beliefs in the supernatural. Only a rational man can become a fully conscious man. At present, mankind is on the right track in order to meet these conditions enabling achievement of the ultimate purpose.

When man fully develops his knowledge and consciousness he will become equal to the intelligent beings and then will be ready to continue their work. Then responsibility for the dissemination of life and consciousness in the universe will rest with him. Perhaps after a billion years it will be our responsibility to find a new solar system necessary for the further continuation of life and consciousness in the Universe.

Appendix

Additional information on optical techniques used in Fatima

Estimation of the distance of the source of light from Fatima

Normally the diameter of a laser beam increases with the distance from the source of light due to the phenomenon known as light diffraction. The size of the laser beam on the target depends on the diameter of the outgoing beam and on the distance from the source.

Divergence of a laser beam of Gaussian intensity profile is defined by the equation:

$$\alpha = 4 \lambda / \pi D$$

where α is the beam divergence angle in radians

λ is the wavelength of the light (0.5 microns)

D is the diameter of the original beam

The relationship between the diameter of the beam S after travelling distance L is given by the equations:

$$S = L \times \alpha, \text{ and } L = S / \alpha$$

The values of distance L for different values of parameters D and S are given below:

For D= 0.1 m, S = 1 m, L = 160 km.

For D= 0.1 m, S = 3 m, L = 480 km.

What diameter of the laser beam should be used for the optical projection of the image of the Madonna? Since the figure was about 1.10 m high and assuming that in order to send the image without distortions using a beam having an angle of incidence of 45 degrees, the diameter of

the beam should be at least 1.0 m, but we know that the circle of light which was observed in the vicinity of the visionaries was about 2 to 3 meters in diameter.

If we assume that the diameter of the original beam was 0.1 m, and the target diameter was 3.0 m, the maximum distance of the laser from the target could be at most 480 km.

Configuration of the optical screen

Since the visionaries could see that the figure was appearing and disappearing in the east, they had to be facing the east. So the laser beam came from an easterly direction, therefore the optical projection was not as in the cinema from the front, but was from the back. This means that the source of light was behind the screen, but the image was visible from the front of the screen. It is possible to achieve this when the screen is partly transparent. The fact that the light intensity received by the visionaries was very strong attests to such a configuration of the projection screen. The light was scattered forward by the cloud suspended above the tree.

Reception of the sound by the visionaries

Transmission of sound to Lucia and Jacinta was very directional, because Francisco standing near them could hear nothing. In order to achieve such selective reception, invisible laser beams could be modulated by sound waves and directed only to the selected visionaries. These modulated laser beams could cause vibrations of some parts of the human head and in that way sound could be received by the brain.

High frequency sounds, described as the buzzing of a bee, which were heard by people standing near the visionaries, would indicate that the process of mixing of two waves having frequencies f_1 and f_2 was used. As a result of the mixing, two new waves having frequencies $f_1 + f_2$ and $f_1 - f_2$ were generated. When the difference of these frequencies fell within the acoustic range, the signal could be heard by the visionaries, while the sum of frequencies was received by others as distortions.

Some researchers postulated that for the transmission of voice

modulated microwaves were used. However directionality of microwaves is not as good as of light waves, therefore other people standing nearby would have been able to receive the sound.

Transmission of Lucia's voice

Various techniques could have been used for the transmission of Lucia's voice. A laser microphone which is widely used by spy services is the most likely solution. It is based on the principle that sound waves transmitted by a person cause vibrations of objects which are in his vicinity, for example window panes. A laser light beam is directed to such an object and it measures its vibrations using a method based on the Doppler effect. The light reflected from the vibrating object changes its frequency and in this way enables the detection of the voice causing these vibrations. The sound waves produced by Lucia could have caused vibrations of the leaves of the tree, or droplets of water in the cloud above the tree, or even vibrations of certain parts of her head. The laser light scattered from such an object was picked up by a special optical receiver which demodulated the light and reproduced the original sound.

Range of the laser microphone

In order for the optical signal to be useful, it must have sufficient power for its signal to noise ratio to be at least 10.

In optical receivers the signal to noise ratio is calculated from:

$$S/N = \eta P / h\nu B$$

where η is the coefficient of optical efficiency, P is the power of the light, h is the Planck constant, ν is the frequency of the optical signal and B is the bandwidth of the acoustic signal.

For typical parameters of the receiver to ensure that the signal is 10 times bigger than the noise, the received optical power, P should be at least 10 nW.

After travelling a distance L from the transmitter, light from the laser will illuminate an area, A on the earth. However only light scattered from

the vibrating surface will be used to create a signal.

The power of useful light scattered from the vibrating surface is given by:

$$P_s = P_T \times K_M \times A/a$$

where P_T is the power of the light transmitted from the laser, A is the area of the laser beam on the earth, and a is the vibrating surface area, and K_M is the coefficient of the modulation depths.

Only a very small fraction of the light scattered from the vibrating surface will reach the optical receiver placed at a distance L and it is possible to calculate it from:

$$P_o \approx 0,1 \times \rho \times P_s \times Z/L^2$$

where: L is the distance of the receiver from the source of the signal, Z is the area of the receiving aerial, P_s is the power of the scattered light and ρ is the Lambert coefficient.

Example of calculations:

In order to receive 10 nW of a light signal from a distance $L = 160$ km, using an aerial having an area of 1 m^2 , the power of light scattered from the vibrating surface P_s should be about 2.5 kW.

In order to ensure such a power of light scattered from a surface, $a = 10 \text{ cm}^2$, for $K_M = 0.1$, $\rho = 0.3$ the peak laser power reaching the earth must be about 0.1 GW.

In order to obtain this peak power, it is possible to send short, 1 picosecond light pulses 1000 times per second, which will result in an average optical power of about 0.1 W. This light falling on an area of 1 m^2 will give light intensity of about 100 mW/m^2 . This level of intensity is lower than the safety limit of 167 mW/m^2 provided by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI 136.1)

Passing of the laser beam through the atmosphere

The earth's atmosphere is subject to constant heating and cooling cycles and therefore has an uneven distribution of temperature, pressure and density. Cold air has a greater density than warm air. Air of variable density bends the light as a thin prism and causes its shift. The coefficient of light refraction depends on its wavelength. As a result of the uneven heating of the air laser beams of different colours, superimposed on each other after passing through the same layer of warm air, are differently refracted and shifted with reference to each other and therefore cannot again be superimposed on each other. Since the warm air layers are moving all the time, this causes the laser beams to move or shake irregularly.

Colorful patchy illumination of the scenery

The colorful patchy illumination of the scenery which was observed by the witnesses in Fatima can be explained by the properties of the laser light. Coherent monochromatic light scattered from the screen and falling on the scenery does not illuminate this environment evenly the same way as white light from a light bulb does, but creates bright and dark patches.

Since laser light is coherent, therefore its original amplitudes of light on the screen are in phase. However the light beams falling on the specific target originate from different parts of the screen, therefore they travel different distances. As a result of the interference between these beams, when their amplitudes are in phase they add to each other and create a bright spot, when their amplitudes have opposite phases, they subtract from each other and create a dark spot.

Notes

1. For projection of an image there is no need for a visible cloud, but a certain amount of water vapor in the air could be sufficient.
2. First a laser beam moves across the field until it finds the target. Then the beam is locked on the target and a bomb following the laser beam is sent to the target.
3. Assuming that the image of the disc in Fatima could not be placed further than 1.2 miles (2 km) from Cova da Iria, and not higher than 1.2 miles (2 km) above the ground, to be seen in the position of the sun 43 degrees above the horizon.
4. Radar receives signals reflected not only from aircrafts but from all objects within its range such as houses, trees, cars, motorcycles and from flying objects such as birds, balloons, swarms of bees, hail and rain. Signals received from permanent stationary objects are removed, but moving objects such as swaying trees can provide false readings
5. According to a NASA estimate, it would take 7×10^{19} Joules of energy to send the current space shuttle on a one-way, 50 year journey to the nearest star, and it would require to burn about 1 billion tons of Hydrogen
6. Jung proposed that there is a link between UFOs and psychological states. Hynek considered treating these sightings as psychic phenomena.
7. A hypothesis about the extraterrestrial origins of the Fatima events was proposed by P. Misraki, (1962).
8. During a TV program broadcasted on the Discovery Channel, in May, 2010.
9. The Times, 26 and 27 January 1938
10. Prophet Muhammad after the first apparition thought that he had lost his mind.
11. Agriculture reached Turkey about 7000 BC, Greece 5200 BC, Germany 4000 BC, and France and England 3000 BC.
12. The latest climate and archaeological research results show that the

- climate in the northern hemisphere changed rapidly as a result of the change of the inclination of the Earth's axis from 24.14° 9000 years ago to 23.45° at present, and the changes to the Earth's orbit around the Sun. This caused a significant reduction in rainfall in the region of the Sahara and the Arab Peninsula, changing them into deserts.
13. From this period originated the first Uruk temples and the first pictorial writing.
 14. The use of the wheel for transport was invented in Sumer.
 15. In ancient Greece and Rome women did not have these rights. Such rights were introduced in England in 1870, but in the USA in 1913 married women did not have the right to own property in 20 states.
 16. A list was discovered of first principalities corresponding to the later administrative regions in the united Egypt. Archaeological research confirms the existence of 4 independent city-states: Hierakonpolis, Elkab, Abydos and Naqada.
 17. Hyksos in the 17th century BC conquered and ruled northern Egypt during several dynasties.
 18. The founder of the 25th dynasty in the 8th century BC.
 19. Human sacrifices were very common and survived in the customs of the Chinese, Hindus, Egyptians, Hebrews, Greeks, Romans and many other groups; and with primitive African and Australian tribes until present times. The Bible confirms acceptance of such sacrifices, God asking Abraham to kill his son Isaac did not cause revolt or surprise. In Luhansk in the present Ukraine, burial mounds with thousands of victims ritually killed in a period from the 30th century BC until the 10th century BC was discovered.
 20. The upper classes in Egypt called themselves *Patu*. The rest of society belonged to two groups: *Henemmet* - which was the indigenous population of Upper Egypt and *Rekhyt* - the indigenous population in the Nile Delta.
 21. Haplogrup has specific genetic characteristics common for a group of people. These characteristics stay constant for many generations and are used to determine the origins of a given group and its migration.

22. Haplotype K (K1a1b1a, K1a9, and K2a2a) is very rare in any ethnic groups except Ashkenazi Jews, but is also found in Druids(16%) who originated from Egypt.
23. According to the Jewish tradition, Cohanim originated from Aaron, the brother of Moses. Historians Manetho and Josephus believed that Moses was a high Egyptian priest, therefore had connections with the Egyptian elite and the dynastic race.
24. This coefficient for Jews is 0.06, while the average for non Jewish population is 0.3.
25. Jaynes believed that the evolution of the bicameral mind in Egypt took place as a result of revolutions during the First and Second Intermediate Periods. According to the Author, revolutions in Egypt resulted from the arising of consciousness in the populations.
26. Alexander the Great, after conquering Persia to establish permanent Greek influences (genes) there, bought about 10,000 Persian women for his soldiers and arranged mass weddings in the town of Susa.
27. It is well documented in the case of the prophet Muhammad, because his family was present during such events.
28. Konrad Lorenz, in his book *On Aggression*, describes how Native American Indians from the tribe of Utes had to commit suicide if they killed a member of their own tribe.
29. Other legend states that during a war with the Turanians, an enemy soldier found the seventy-seven year old prophet tending the sacred flame in a fire temple and killed him.
30. Introduced to Judaism in the 2nd century BC, belief in an afterlife was not accepted by all Jews. Afterlife was expected to take place after the end of the world and the Last Judgment.
31. Arians were a Christian movement started in the 4th century by Arius from Alexandria, who denied the divinity of Jesus Christ. Arius taught that God had not been born and did not have beginning. The Son was born by the will of the Father and did not exist from eternity, therefore cannot be equal to God.

32. Reports by the Roman administrators of Judea from the period of Christ's crucifixion were probably destroyed during the reign of Theodosius I. Copies of various Gospels not recognized by the Church were also destroyed. The earliest copies of the Gospel are dated after 350 AD.
33. Critical mass is the amount of Uranium needed for spontaneous explosion. The operation of the atom bomb is based on reaching the critical mass in a very short period of time by joining two or more parts of material together.
34. The bomb dropped on Hiroshima weighed more than 4 tons and contained only 60 kg of Uranium.
35. His mistake was not including the secondary neutrons, which scattered back into the uranium mass cause further reactions.
36. Statement of Rudolf Hess quoted in (Jeffrey 2011).
37. In the 1950s out of 200 million people, only 7.2 million (3.6%) belonged to the party. In the 1960s the membership increased to 10 million.
38. The official western version of these events presents the Cuban crisis as a victory for the US, because Russia withdrew its missiles from Cuba. It came as a result of an agreement in which the United States undertook to remove its missiles from Turkey under condition that this was kept secret.
39. Canon law, developed from Roman law, was unified only in 1580, and modernized in 1917, but the most recent changes were introduced in 1983, so it reflects new social and political developments.
40. In 2010 some 4.159 million offences were recorded by police in England and Wales, but only 1.6 million offenders were punished. About 32% of all offences were never investigated due to a lack of sufficient evidence to be presented in court.
41. The UN report, issued in Stockholm, said the global drug trade generated an estimated \$321.6 billion in 2003. Other estimates provide numbers as high as \$500 billion.

42. Among young people aged between 10 and 25 living in England and Wales in 2004 who had used drugs, almost half (48 percent) reported first using a drug between the ages of 10 and 15. The Information Center *Statistics on Young People and Drug Misuse: England 2006*. NHS Report.
43. In England, in 2011 there were about 39,000 cases of parents severely maltreating their children registered with social services, and 54 of the children died during one year. (Interview on Radio 4, on 27 May 2011 with Sharon Shoesmith, a director of children's services at Haringey).
44. The number of active lawyers in the USA is well over the 1 million mark.
45. There is the so-called Turing test which is used to determine if answers were provided by man or computer.
46. Lou Andreas Salome was an extraordinary woman, writer and publicist. In a later period she had close relations with a famous poet, Reiner Maria Rilke, and a psychologist, Sigmund Freud.
47. Some writers identify Gurdjieff with Dordjieff because of the similarities of their names and certain events in their life stories. However analysis of their photographs does not support this theory.
48. Some astrophysicists came to the conclusion that in order for life to emerge, the value of many physical constants must lie in a specific, very narrow range. The whole mechanism of the Universe is very precise and could not originate by chance.
49. Homo sapiens has existed for only about 200,000 years, but these functions appeared no more than 10,000 years ago.
50. Scientists estimate that we use only about 10% of our brain power.

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