

The Spiritual-Scientific Basis of Goethe's Work

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NOTE. — In the case of the quotations in this paper, the translations of Goethe's works by Anna Swanwick and John Anster and R. Farrie have been used freely. G. Calvert's translation of Schiller's work has also been quoted.

Anthroposophy will only be able to fulfill its great and universal mission in modern civilization when it is able to grasp the special problems which have arisen in every land by reason of the intellectual possessions of the people. In Germany, these special problems are in part determined by the inheritance bequeathed to her intellectual life by the men of genius living at the close of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. Any one who approaches those great minds, Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe, Novalis, Jean Paul and many others, from the point of view of Anthroposophical thought and its attitude toward life, will have two important experiences. The first being that, as a result of this profoundly spiritual attitude, a new light is thrown upon the working and works of these men of genius; the second, that through them Anthroposophy receives new life-blood, which must, in some way as yet not clear, produce a fructifying and strengthening effect in the future. It may be said without exaggeration that the German will understand Anthroposophy if only he brings his mind to bear upon the highest conceptions for which the leading spirits of his land have striven, and which they have embodied in their works.

It will be the task of future generations to reveal the Anthroposophical and spiritual-scientific basis of the great advancement in the intellectual life of Germany during the

period in question. It will then be shown what an intimate knowledge and understanding of the influences at work during this period is obtainable by regarding things from an Anthroposophical point of view. It is only possible on this occasion to make a few references to one man of genius who was the leading light of this age of culture, namely, Goethe. It is possible that new life may be infused into the active principles of Anthroposophy through Goethe's thought and the creations of his mind, with the result that, in Germany, Anthroposophy may appear by degrees to be something akin to the spirit of the people. One thing will be made clear: that the source of the Anthroposophical conception is one and the same as the fount from which Germany's great poet and thinker has derived his creative power.

The most clear-sighted of those among whom Goethe lived acknowledged without any reservation that there was no branch of intellectual life which his attitude toward life and the world could not enrich. But one must not allow oneself to be deceived by the fact that the quintessence of Goethe's mind really lies concealed *below* the surface of his works. He who wishes to win his way to a perfect understanding of them must become intimate with their innermost spirit. This does not mean that one should become insensitive to the beauties of their style or their artistic form. Nor must one put an abstract interpretation upon his art by means of intellectual symbols and allegories. But, just as a noble countenance excites no less admiration for the beauty of its features because the beholder is able to perceive the greatness of the soul illuminating this beauty, so it is with Goethe's art; not only can it lose nothing, but rather will it gain infinitely, when the outward expression of his creative power is illuminated by that depth of conception of the universe which possesses his soul.

Goethe himself often has shown how justified we are in having such a profound conception of his creative power. On January 29, 1827, he said to his devoted secretary Eckermann concerning his *Faust*, "It is all scenic and, from the point of view of the theatre, it will please everyone. More than this I did not wish. If only the performance gives pleasure to the majority of the audience, the *initiated* will not miss the *deeper meaning*." It is only necessary to bring an impartial insight to bear upon Goethe's creative power in order to recognize that it is only an *esoteric* conception which can lead us to a full understanding of his working. He felt within him an ardent desire to discover in all phenomena of the senses the hidden spiritual force. It was one of his principles of search that the *inner* secrets are expressed in *outward* facts and objects, and that those only can aspire to understand Nature who look upon the phenomena as

mere letters which enable them to decipher the inner meaning of the workings of the spirit. The words: "All we see before us passing, Sign and symbol is alone," in the *Chorus Mysticus*, at the end of *Faust*, are not merely to be regarded as a poetical idea, but as the outcome of his whole attitude toward the world. In Art, too, he saw only a revelation of the innermost secrets of the world; in his opinion, it was through Art that those things are to be made clear which, though having their origin in Nature and being active in her, yet with the means at her disposal, she cannot express. He sought the same spirit in the phenomena of Nature as in the works of a creative artist; only the means of expression were different in the two cases. He was constantly at work on his conception of a gradual process of evolution of all the phenomena and creatures in the world. He regarded man as a compilation of the other kingdoms. The spirit of man was to him the revelation of a universal spirit, and the other realms of Nature, with their manifestations, appeared to him as the path of evolution leading to man. All this was not merely a theory with him, but became a living element in his work, permeating all that he produced. Schiller has given us a fine description of this peculiarity of Goethe's mind, in the letter with which he inaugurates the intimate friendship which united them (August 23, 1794):^[1]

For a long time I have watched, although from some distance, the procedure of your mind, and ever with renewed wonder have observed the track that you have marked out for yourself. You seek for the necessary (the absolute) in Nature; but you seek it by the most difficult route, which every weaker spirit will take care to avoid. You grasp in your view entire Nature in order to obtain light on her parts: in the totality of her manifestations, you search for the key to lay open the individual. (*Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe, from 1794 to 1805.*)

In his book on Winckelmann, Goethe has expressed his opinion as to the position of man in the evolution of the realms of Nature:^[2]

When the sound, healthy nature of man works as a whole, when he feels himself at one with the world as a great, beautiful, worthy whole, when this harmonious feeling of well-being gives him a pure free delight, then might the Universe, could it consciously feel, deeming itself at the goal, cry out for very joy, and be lost in admiration of the climax of its own development and organization.

It was Goethe's life-work to strive to obtain an ever clearer insight into the evolution of the living world. When, after moving to Weimar (about 1780), he embodied the result of his investigation in the beautiful prose-hymn, *Nature*, we find over the whole a certain abstract tinge of pantheism. He must perforce use words to define the hidden forces of being, but before long these cease to satisfy his ever-deepening conception.

But it is in these very words that we first meet with the ideas which we find later in such perfect form. He says there, for instance:^[1]_[SEP]
Nature! we are surrounded and embraced by her ... Unmasked and without warning she draws us into the circle of her dance and carries us along with her until we are weary and slip from her arms. For ever is she creating new forms; what is, never was before; what has been, never will be again; *everything is new, and yet ever old* ... Each one of her works has its own individuality, each of her phenomena requires individual comprehension, and yet it all makes but one whole ... She has thought, and is for ever meditating; not as man, though, but as Nature. She has her own all-embracing meaning, which no one can learn from her by observation only ... She envelops man in a mist, and is ever spurring him on toward the light ... She creates wants because she loves action ... She has neither speech nor language, but she creates tongues and hearts through which she feels and speaks ... Her crown is love, through which alone she may be approached ... She has isolated everything in order to draw everything together ... Past and future knows she not. The present is her eternity.

When Goethe (1828), having reached the summit of his insight, looked back upon this stage, he expressed himself thus concerning it:^[1]_[SEP]
I would call that former stage of insight the Comparative, which is impelled to express its tendency toward an, as yet, unattained Superlative ... But what is wanting for its fulfillment is the conception of the two great driving-wheels of all Nature, the comprehension of *polarity* and *self-perfecting evolution*, the former belonging to matter, insofar as we call it material, the latter opposed to it, insofar as we call it spiritual; the former is everlastingly attracting and repelling, the latter is ever striving to ascend. But, as matter cannot exist and operate without spirit, nor spirit without matter, even so matter has the power to raise itself, nor can spirit be prevented from attracting and repelling.

It was with such a conception that Goethe approached the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms to grasp the hidden spiritual unity in the manifest multiplicity of sense-perceptible phenomena. It is in this sense that he speaks of *primeval plant*, *primeval animal*. And it was for him Intuition which stood behind these conceptions as the active spiritual force. In his contemplation of things, his whole being strove toward what in Anthroposophy is called *tolerance*. And ever more and more he sought to acquire this quality by means of the strictest inward self-education. To this he frequently refers; it will suffice to quote a very characteristic example from the *Campaign in France* (1792): —^[1]_[SEP]
As I was for the most part almost entirely engrossed by the business and occurrences of the moment, with which kind of life I had reason to be satisfied, of late years particularly, I had the peculiarity of never forming conceptions beforehand of persons whom I expected to meet, or places that I intended to visit, but allowed them to produce their effect upon me without being previously prepared for them. The advantage that arises from this is very great; one does not require to come back

The word. Keep me not from them. Of the laws
Of earthly being they must somewhat know:
Between them I may learn some little; so
Pass into life by their experience wiser.

Part ii, Act ii.

The Nature of Homunculus becomes quite clear in the light of the following lines which refer to him:^[1]_[SEP]

Thales: He wants your counsel — has come a long distance:
His object is to get into existence.
He is, by what he told me of his birth,
Miraculously come but half to earth:
A lively spark — has every mental quality,
But, luckless fellow, 'twas his strange fatality
An active, naked spirit, all alone —
Without a shred of body, blood, or bone,
Into the world to be at hazard thrown —
His glass is all he has to steady him:
He wants and wishes body, life, and limb.

Part i

The following words are also added, “He is, methinks, Hermaphrodite.” Goethe here intends to represent the astral body of man before his incarnation in mortal (earthly) matter. This he also makes clear by endowing Homunculus with powers of *clairvoyance*. He sees, for instance, the dream of Faust in the laboratory where work is going on with the help of Mephistopheles. Then in the course of the classical *Walpurgis Night* the embodying of Homunculus, that is, the astral man, is described.

He is sent through the realms of Nature to Proteus, the spirit of transformations.^[1]_[SEP]

Thales: Away to Proteus! Question the magician
As to the spark's proposed change of condition.
You thus may learn what transformations he
Must pass through to be anything — to BE.

Part ii, Act ii.

Proteus then describes the road which astral man has to take through the realms of Nature in order to arrive at an earthly incarnation and receive a physical body.^[1]_[SEP]

Proteus: ... In the broad sea thy being must commence;
On a small scale one there begins,
Well pleased the smallest to devour;
Till, waxing step by step, one wins
A loftier achievement, ampler power.

The passage of man through the mineral kingdom is then described. Goethe makes his entrance into the vegetable kingdom particularly contemplative. Homunculus says:^[11]_[SEP]

A tender air is wafted here;
Dear is *the greenness*, and the fragrance dear.

The philosopher Thales, who is present, adds in elucidation of what is taking place:^[11]_[SEP]

Thales: Obey the noble inspiration,
And at its source begin creation.
Make ready for the great emprise!
By laws eternal still ascending,
Through myriad forms of being wending,
To be a man in time thou'll rise.

The moment, too, when the asexual being has implanted within him the double sex, and therewith sexual love, is also represented:^[11]_[SEP]

Sirens: And all things are gleaming by fire girt around,
Prime source of creation, let Eros be crowned.

That the investing of the astral body with the physical body, composed of earthly elements, is really meant here is expressly stated in the closing lines of the second act:^[11]_[SEP]

All: Hail each softly blowing gale!
Caverns rich in marvels, hail!
Highly honored evermore,
Be the elemental four!

Goethe here makes use of the evolution of beings in the course of the fashioning of the earth in connection with the incarnation of man as a special being. The latter repeats as such the transformations which mankind has undergone in reaching its present form. In these conceptions, he was in line with the theory of evolution held by spiritual science. His explanation of the origin of the lower forms of life was that the impulse which was aspiring to a higher grade had been stopped on a certain level. In his diary of the *Journey through Switzerland*, of 1797, he noted a conversation with the

Tübingen professor Kielmeyer, which is interesting in this connection. In it, the following words occur, "Concerning the idea that the higher organic natures in their evolution take several steps which the others behind them are unable to take." His studies of plants, animals, and of man are entirely pervaded by these ideas, and he seeks to invest them with an artistic form in the transformation of Homunculus into a man. When he becomes acquainted with Howard's theory of the formation of clouds, "he expresses his thoughts concerning the relation of spiritual archetypes to the ever-changing forms in the following words:^[1]_[SEP]

When the deity *Kama-Rupa*, high and sublime, wanders, wavering, on the breeze, light and heavy, gathers together the folds of his veil, shakes them out again, rejoicing at the variety of forms, remains now motionless, and now disappears as a dream, we are amazed and scarce believe our eyes.

In *Faust*, we also find represented the relation of the imperishable spiritual man to the mortal envelope. Faust has to go to the *Mothers* to seek for this imperishable essence, and the explanation of this important scene is developed quite naturally in the second part of the play. Goethe conceives the real being of man as a trinity (in accord with the Anthroposophical teaching of Spirit-self, Life-spirit, Spirit-man). And Faust's visit to the *Mothers* may be termed in Anthroposophical phraseology the forcible entry into Devachan. There he is to find what remains of Helena. She is to be reincarnated; that is, she is to return from the realm of the *Mothers* to the earth and, in the third act, we really do in fact see her reincarnated. In order to accomplish this it is necessary to reunite the three natures of man: the astral, the physical, and the spiritual. At the end of the second act, the astral (Homunculus) has put on the physical envelope and this combination is now able to receive within it the higher nature. Such a conception introduces an inner dramatic unity into the poem, whereas with a non-occult *forcible entry* the individual events remain a mere arbitrary collection of poetical incidents. Without taking into account the spiritual-scientific foundation of the poem, Professor Veit Valentin, of Frankfort, has already drawn attention to the inner connection of Homunculus and Helena in an interesting book, *Die Einheit des Ganzen Faust*, 1896. But the contents of this work can only remain an intelligent hypothesis if one does not penetrate into the spiritual-scientific substratum underlying it all. Goethe has conceived Mephistopheles as a being to whom Devachan is unknown. He is only at home on the astral plane. Hence he can be of service in the creation of Homunculus, but he cannot accompany Faust into the realm of the Mothers. Indeed, that plane is to him *Nothingness*. He says to Faust, in speaking to him of that world:^[1]_[SEP]

Mephistopheles: *Naught*, in the everlasting void afar,
Wilt see, nor hear thy footfall's sound,
Nor for thy tread find solid ground!

Part ii, Act i.

But Faust, with his spiritual intuition, at once divines that in that world he will find the real essence of Man.^[L]_[SEP]

Faust: We'll fathom it! Come on, nor look behind!
In this thy *Naught*, the All I hope to find.

In the description which Mephistopheles gives of the world which he dares not enter, one understands exactly what Goethe means to express.^[L]_[SEP]

Mephistopheles: Sink then! Arise! This also I might say: —
‘Tis all the same. Escaping from the real,
Seek thou the boundless realm of the ideal.
Delight thyself in forms long past away!
The train-like cloud-procession, glides along:

* * * * *

A glowing tripod teaches thee thou hast
The deep attained, the lowest deep, at last;
There by its light the Mothers thou wilt see;
Some sit, while others, as the case may be,
Or stand, or walk: formation, transformation
Of mind etern, eternal recreation!
While forms of being around them hover.

Only by means of the archetype which Faust fetches from the devachanic world of the Mothers can Homunculus, the astral being who has assumed physical form, become a spiritually-endowed entity, *Helena* in fact, who actually appears in the third act. Goethe has taken care that those who seek to penetrate the depths shall be able to grasp his meaning for, in his conversations with Eckermann, he has lifted the veil as far as it seemed to him practical to do so. On December 16, 1829, he said concerning Homunculus:^[L]_[SEP]

For such spiritual beings as Homunculus, who have not yet had their powers obscured and confined by becoming completely human, were reckoned as among the demons.

And, on the same day, he points out further how Homunculus is still wanting in Mind: “*Reasoning* is not his concern, he wants to act.”

The whole of the further development of the dramatic action in *Faust*, according to

this reading, follows easily on the foregoing. Faust has become acquainted with the secrets of the *three worlds*. Henceforth, he looks at the world from the point of view of the mystic. One could point out scene after scene which bears this out, but it will be sufficient to draw attention here to a few passages. When, towards the end, *Care* approaches Faust, he becomes outwardly blind but, in the course of his development, he has acquired the faculty of *inward sight*.^[11]

Faust: Deeper and deeper night is round me sinking;
Only within me shines a radiant light.

Part ii, Ac

Goethe once, in answer to the question, "What was Faust's end?" replied definitely, "He becomes a mystic in the end," and the significant words of the *Chorus Mysticus*, with which the poem closes, can only be interpreted in this sense. In the West-East *Divan* he also expresses himself very clearly on the subject of the spiritual *development of man*. It is to him the union of the human soul with the higher *self*. The illusion that the real man exists in his outward body must die out; then *higher man* comes into existence. That is why he begins his poem *Blessed Longing* with the words: "Tell it to none but to the wise, for the multitude hasten to deride. I will praise the living who longs for death by fire." And, in conclusion, he adds: "And as long as thou hast not mastered this; dying and *coming into existence*; thou art but a sad and gloomy guest on the dark earth."

Quite in harmony with this is the *Chorus Mysticus*, for its inner meaning is but this: The transient forms of the outer world have their foundation in the imperishable spiritual ones to which we attain by regarding the transient only as a symbol of the hidden spiritual.^[12]

Chorus Mysticus: All of mere transient date
As symbol showeth.

That to which reason, appointed as it is to deal with the world of the senses and its forms, cannot attain, is revealed as an actual vision to the *spiritual sight*; further, that which this reason cannot describe is a *fact* in the regions of the spiritual.^[13]

Chorus Mysticus: Here the inadequate
To fullness groweth.

In harmony with all mystical symbolism, Goethe represents the higher nature of

man *as feminine*, entering into union with the Divine Spirit. For in the last lines:^[1]
The eternal feminine
Draws us upward.

Goethe only means to characterize the union of the purified soul drawing near to the Divine. All interpretations which are not made in a mystic sense fail here.

Goethe considered that the time had not yet come when it was possible to speak of certain secrets of our being in any other manner than he has done in some of his poems. And, above all, he felt it to be his own mission to furnish such a form of expression. At the beginning of his friendship with Schiller, he raised the question, "How are we to represent to ourselves the relationship between the physical and the spiritual natures of man?" Schiller had tried to answer this question in a philosophical style in his letters *Concerning the Aesthetic Education of Man*. To him, it was a question of the ennobling and purifying of man; to him, a man under the sway of nature's impulses of sensual love and desires appeared impure; but then he considered just as far removed from purity the man who looked upon the sensual impulses and desires as enemies, and was obliged to place himself under the rule of moral or abstract intellectual compulsion. Man only attained inner freedom when he had so absorbed moral law into his inner being that he desired only to obey it. Such a man has so ennobled his lower nature that it becomes by itself an expression of the higher spiritual, and he has so drawn down into the earthly human nature the spiritual that the latter possesses a direct sentient existence. The explanations which Schiller gives in these *Letters* form excellent rules of education, for their object is to further the evolution of man so that he may, by absorbing the higher ideal man, come to contemplate the world from a free and exalted point of view. In his way Schiller refers to the *higher self of man* thus:^[2]
Every individual man, one may say, harbors within him, according to his character and type, a pure, ideal man, with whose unalterable unity through all changes it is the great task of his life to harmonize himself.

All that Schiller says in this connection is of the most far-reaching significance. For he who really carries out his injunctions accomplishes within himself an education which brings him directly to that inward condition which paves the way for the *inner contemplation* of the spiritual. Goethe was satisfied, in the deepest sense of the word,

with these ideas. He writes to Schiller:^[1]_[SEP]

I read the manuscript you sent me at once with the greatest delight; I swallowed it at one gulp. Just as a delicious drink, in sympathy with our nature, slips down willingly and, while still on the tongue, shows its wholesome workings in a pleasant harmony of the nervous system, so were these letters highly pleasing and beneficial to me; and how could it be otherwise, when I found set forth therein so coherently and nobly what I had long recognized as right, what I partly carried out in my life, and partly wished to carry out?

Goethe now endeavored on his part to set forth the same idea from the depths of his conception of the world — but veiled in imagery — in the problem-tale of *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*. It is placed in the editions of Goethe at the end of the *Conversations of German Emigrants*. The *Faust* story has often been called *Goethe's Gospel*; this tale may, however, be called his *Apocalypse*, for in it he sets forth — as a fairy-tale — the path of man's inner development. Here again, we can only point out a few short passages, it would need a large book to show how Goethe's spiritual insight is concealed in this tale.

The three *worlds are here* represented as two regions separated from one another by a river. The river itself stands for the astral plane. On this side of it is the physical world, on the other side the spiritual (Devachan), where dwells the *beautiful lily*, the symbol of man's higher nature. In her kingdom, man must strive if he would unite his lower with his higher nature. In the abyss — that is, in the physical world — dwells the serpent which symbolizes the self of man. Here too is a *temple of initiation*, where reign four kings, one golden, one silver, one bronze, and a fourth of an irregular mixture of the three metals. Goethe, who was a freemason, has clothed in freemasonic terminology what he had to impart of his mystic experiences. The three kings represent the three higher forces of man: Wisdom (Gold), Beauty (Silver), and Strength (Bronze). As long as man lives in his lower nature, these three forces are in him disordered and chaotic. This period in the evolution of man is represented by the mixed king. But when man has so purified himself that the three forces work together in perfect harmony, and he can freely use them, then the way into the realm of the spiritual lies open before him. The still unpurified man is represented by a youth who, without having attained inner purity, would unite himself with the *beautiful lily*. Through this union he becomes paralyzed.

Goethe here wished to point out the danger to which a man exposes himself who would force an entrance into the super-sensible region before he has severed himself from his lower self. Only when love has permeated the whole man, only when the

lower nature has been sacrificed, can the initiation into the higher truths and powers begin. This sacrifice is expressed by the serpent yielding of its own accord, and forming a bridge of its body across the river — that is to say, the astral plane — between the two kingdoms, of the senses and of the spirit. At first man must accept the higher truths in the form in which they have been given to him in the imagery of the various religions. This form is personified as the *man with the lamp*. This lamp has the peculiarity of only giving light where there is already light, meaning that the religious truths presuppose a receptive, believing disposition. Their light shines where the light of faith is present. This lamp, however, has yet another quality, “of turning all stones into gold, all wood into silver, dead animals into precious stones, and of destroying all metals,” meaning the power of faith which changes the inner nature of the individual. There are about twenty characters in this allegory, all symbolical of certain forces in man's nature and, during the course of the action, the purifying of man is described, as he rises to the heights where, in his union with his higher self, he can be initiated into the secrets of existence. This state is symbolized by the *Temple*, formerly hidden in the abyss, being brought to the surface, and rising above the river — the astral plane. Every passage, every sentence in the allegory is significant. The more deeply one studies the tale, the more comprehensible and clear the whole becomes, and he who set forth the esoteric quintessence of this tale at the same time has given us the substance of the Anthroposophical outlook on life.

Goethe has not left the source uncertain from whose depths he has drawn his inspiration. In another tale, *The New Paris*, he gives in a veiled manner the history of his own inner enlightenment. Many will remain incredulous if we say that, in this dream, Goethe represents himself just at the boundary between the third and fourth sub-race of our fifth root-race. For him, the myth of Paris and Helen is a symbolic representation of this boundary. And as he — in a dream — conjures up before his eyes in a new form the myth of Paris, he feels he is casting a searching glance into the development of humanity. What such an insight into the past means to the *inner eye*, he tells us in the *Prophecies of Bakis*, which are also full of occult references:^[1]
The past likewise will Bakis reveal to thee; for even the past oft lies, oh blind world, like a riddle before thee. Who knows the past knows also the future: both are joined in To-day in one complete whole.

Much, too, might be quoted to show the underlying elements of spiritual science in the fairy tale, *The New Melusine, a Pandora-fragment*, and many other writings. In his

novel, *Wilhelm Meister's Traveling Years*, Goethe has given us quite a masterly picture of a *Clairvoyante* in Makarie. Makarie's power of intuition rises to the level of a complete penetration of the inner mysteries of the planetary system:^[1]_[SEP] She stands with regard to our solar system in a relationship which one hardly dares to express. In the spirit, of the soul, of the imagination, she fosters it, not only gazes at it, but at the same time forms part of it; she sees herself drawn on into those heavenly circles, but in quite a peculiar way; she has wandered since her childhood round the sun, and, in fact, as has now been discovered, in a spiral, circling ever further and further from the center towards the outer regions. If one may assume that beings insofar as they are embodied strive towards the center, but insofar as they are spirits strive towards the periphery, then our friend belongs to the most spiritual; She seems to have been born only to detach herself from the earthly and to force her way into the nearest and furthest realms of existence. This quality, glorious as it is, was laid upon her from her earliest years as a difficult task. She remembers her inner self penetrated, as it were, through and through by shining beings, illuminated by a light which not even the brightest sunlight could rival. She often saw two suns, one, that is, within, and one without in the heavens, two moons, of which the outer retained its size through all its phases; the inner ever more and more decreased.

These words of Goethe's prove clearly how intimate he is with these matters, and whoever reads through the whole passage will recognize that Goethe so expresses himself, albeit with reserve, that he who looks beneath the surface may feel quite certain of the spiritual-scientific foundation in his being.

Goethe always looked upon his mission as a poet in relation to his striving toward the hidden laws of Life. He was often forced to notice how friends failed to understand this side of his nature. He describes thus, in the Campaign in *France* in 1792, how his contemplation of Nature was always misunderstood:^[1]_[SEP] ... the passionate earnestness with which I addicted myself to this (the study of natural philosophy) seemed inconceivable to all, nobody observing how it sprang from my innermost being itself; they considered this laudable pursuit as a whimsical mistake; in their opinion, I could do something better, and leave my abilities to work in their old direction. They felt the more entitled to do this as my way of thinking did not agree with theirs, expressing rather, in most points, exactly the contrary. No more isolated being can be imagined than I was then, and for a long time afterwards. The Hylozoism, or whatever it may be called, to which I was attached, and the deep foundation of which I left untouched in all its sacred dignity, made me unsusceptible, nay, intolerant, toward that way of thinking which set up as an article of belief the existence of matter as a dead thing, in whatever way it may be supposed to be stirred up and put in motion.

Goethe could only understand artistic work when based on a profound penetration of the truth. As an artist, he wished to give utterance to that which in Nature is suggested without being fully expressed. Nature appeared to him as a product of the

same essence which also works through human art, only that in the case of Nature the power has remained on a lower level. For Goethe, Art is a continuation of Nature revealing that which in Nature alone is hidden:^[1]_[SEP]

For in that man is placed as the peak of Nature, he perceives himself in his turn as a complete nature, which, in its turn, has within himself to produce a peak. With this objective in view, he raises himself, striving to win his way by all perfections and virtues. Selection, order, harmony, and purpose he calls to his aid, until finally he rises to the production of a work of art. (Winckelmann.)

To understand the world is to Goethe to *Hue* in the spirit of worldly things. For this reason, he speaks of a perceptive power of judgment (*intellectus archetypus*), through which Man draws ever nearer to the secrets of our being:^[1]_[SEP]

If, then, in a moral sense, we are, through faith in God, to attain to youth and immortality in a higher region, and are to draw near to the Most High, it should surely be the same in an intellectual sense, that only by the contemplation of an ever-creating Nature, we shall become worthy of spiritual participation in her productions.

Thus did Goethe represent to himself Man as the organ of the world, through which its occult powers should be revealed. The following was one of his aphorisms:^[1]_[SEP]

For this has man been placed so high that what must otherwise have been unmanifest might manifest through him. Truly may we say: What are even the workings of Nature's elements in comparison with man, who, that he may in some degree assimilate, must first control and modify them?