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T H E C O N Z E S A G A

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PART I. LIFE AND LETTERS

RTI

Section 1: ~~Part I~~ 1904-1933

This is a brief record of my life, written at your request. It is not an Apology, because so far no Kingsley has yet seen fit to attack me. Looking back on my life I find that it fits me like a kid glove. Perhaps this shows that it has been fairly well spent.

Family Background

I was born on the 18th March, 1904 in Forest Hill, Lewisham, London, directly on the Greenwich meridian, at 3 p.m., which gives me an ascendant of 26 Leo. My father at that time was the German Vice-Consul. The marriage in 1903 between him and my mother had been arranged as a marriage between two factories, and it was a very unhappy one. One of the factories, in Langenberg, was engaged in spinning silk, and the other in dyeing it, and their co-operation was more important than the happiness of mere individuals.

In 1904 a brother of my father was married to a sister of my mother, with equally disastrous results. Like my father this brother of his also did not survive the Third Reich. He was a monarchist, and the Gestapo shot him in his own room.

When I think back to my ancestry I realise that my life had been programmed long before it had started. In particular the unusual combination of political radicalism and piety which characterizes my entire work is due to the difference between my father's and my mother's families. My paternal grandfather was a very devout Christian,- belonging to the "Unified Church", which combined Lutheranism and Calvinism with ardent Emperor worship,- a strict conservative and pan-German. When he heard that I was born on the 18th March, he was distressed because this is the date of the Paris Commune and so he came all the way to London to have me baptized with water from the River Jordan which he had brought from the Holy Land after a visit to that country in the retinue of the Kaiser. He also was a highly

educated man, who knew the entire Homer by heart in Greek and who spent much money in supporting the excavations of Doe pfeld, who tried to prove that Leukas is Ithaca. It is from him that I absorbed my abiding love of the Greek Classics. Together with his numerous children he formed a powerful clan in the Germany of William II, and we were present everywhere in the highest echelons of the administration, of business and of the Protestant Church. By contrast, Julius Koettgen (3.10.1845) my maternal grandfather thought little of Christianity and never went to church because "he could not bear the air". Instead he used to go to "Die Gesellschaft" and drink French wine on Sunday mornings; so the godly were none too displeased when in due course he died from bladder stones. Hehad married a Dutch wife Bertha Sandrine Post, and through her influence on our mother we always took a great interest in the affairs of Holland. Another ancestor, a painter, had been a friend of Engels in the Revolution of 1848 in Elberfeld, and had to flee to England, where his son became a millionaire. Fascinated by the East he built up an export business. Other ancestors had shown great interest in psychic matters or in mystical religion, and the whole family had poetical and artistic gifts. The latent conflict or perhaps tension between our capitalist activities and our Christian professions was never far below the surface. So as to refresh my memory I have lately looked at two family histories*. Among my Koettgen ancestors I find a kindred spirit

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* The one is E. Koettgen, Geschichte der Familie Koettgen, 1632-1910, published in 1911 and financed by "Herrn Gustav Adolf Koettgen in London" a millionaire who saw to it that the tone throughout is ultra-conservative and ultra-patriotic. The other is CONZE. Ein Familienbuch, published in 1931, and written by two lesser intellectuals, a Hauptlehrer and an Archivar, both docile Executors of the wishes of my uncle Wilhelm Conze, manufacturer and pillar of the Stahlhelm.

in Johann Adolf (II) Koettgen (1777/1846) who is described as "intellectually gifted*"and between 1832 and 1834 wrote a short sketch of his life. There he says that "to be a merchant exposes you to many thorns which wound a sensitive heart, and I am quite sure that in heaven nothing will be more out of place than trading and all that belongs to it." ** The Conzes on the other hand concentrated more on the other worldly aspects of the Christian faith, and in 1847 my grandfather was severely reprimanded by his father (p.87) for unsound views on the relation between faith and good works. The same grandfather was a deputy in the Prussian Parliament of 1866 and in view of the events of 1940 it is interesting to find that his Christian charity was not extended to Poles***. But even the constantly reiterated patriotism of the Conze side of the family could not obscure the fact that in some ways the message of the gospel did not go any too well with the way in which we amassed our wealth. An enormous amount of ingenuity was devoted to disposing of the remark about the camel who could not pass through the eye of a needle particularly because it was so obvious to us

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* geistig bedeutendste

**"Er versteigt sich sogar zu dem Stossseufzer: 'Kurz die Kaufmannschaft hat leider so viele Dornen dieser Art, die ein zartes Herz verletzen, dass ich gewiss bin, nichts kann weniger im Himmel betrieben werden als Handel und was dahin gehoert".

***"Mir gegenueber die Polen, - sehen, mit einer einzigen Ausnahme, saemtlich wie Hallunken, Giftmischer und Strassenraeuber aus; die erwaehnte Ausnahme praesentiert sichals Opferlamm".

that we were far more likely to go to the Kingdom of Heaven than the"Godless social democrats" who constituted such a large part of our work force. When we read St. James's resounding condemnation of us and all our works (V. 1-6) we were heartened by Martin Luther who had described his epistle as a work of straw. The news that the early Christians had lived like brethren and had had everything in common was received with the pitying shrug of world-weary men of the world who know more about "human nature" than to believe that to be practical. As for"those who conquer by the sword will perish by the sword", the ruins of 1943, 1944, and 1945 were still a long distance away when I first heard those words.

At that time in Germany the Protestant professional middle classes practised what was known as "the two-children system". When we grew up, we could not fail to notice that also the Catholic judges and so on had no more than two children and we rather irreverently attributed this to the active intervention of the Holy Ghost. Be that as it may, in such circumstances one child used to go with the father, and the other with the mother. It was I who sided with my father and my younger brother Wolf with my mother. Unfortunately it was I who got the worst of this bargain, because my mother was so much the stronger of the two. In fact I was very much reminded of her vicious possessiveness

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when reading what T.E.Lawrence's mother did to him.* I have no doubt that my later devotion to the Mother of the Buddhas had a great deal to do with my disappointment with my earthly mother.

Schools and Dr.Lietz.

After half a year in England I was carted back to Germany and brought up there, first in the Volksschule and then in the Gymnasium where I was always the first in the class, and also the naughtiest. I had a special gift for learning languages, and when I was 24 I knew fourteen. Since I have meanwhile forgotten my Russian and Norwegian twelve should be left. This I clearly inherited from my mother who, when she was seventy, decided to learn Hebrew, and to walk up every morning to the nearby monastery to teach the Father Abbot what the psalms really meant, since the poor man could read them only in Latin. In 1914 my father went to Russia as a captain in the Artillery to defend the fatherland and I proved totally unmanageable. So I was sent to the public schools of Dr. Hermann Lietz, first in the Harz, and then in the Haubinda in Thuringia. Dr. Lietz had been a teacher at a public school in England and had introduced their system into Germany. He was a natural leader of boys, I adored his very footsteps, and he has had a decisive influence on my thinking,- in four ways.

I. The first of these was anti-Semitism. The Free World permits only Jews and their friends to speak freely on this subject and so I pass on. The anti-semites, of course, have so obviously no case at all that all the resources of legal and commercial repression are rightly deployed in preventing them from stating it. This influence was all the more insidious in that it was unperceived. Only last year I saw from a German book that Dr. Lietz did not admit Jews, "or other forms of inferior life", and

* People have told me that I must have meant D.H.Lawrence. This is not so. Here is the quotation, taken from N.Dixon, On the Psychology of Military Incompetence, 1976, p.362. "Lawrence wrote "I have a terror of her knowing anything about my feelings or convictions, or way of life. If she knew they would be damaged, violated, no longer mine."

his successor was Hitler's first Minister of Culture. So in this respect we must think of the well-known Buddhist saying about the Lotus and the mud.

II. There was Socialism and a concern for social justice which came to us by way of Henry George and the Hebrew Prophets.

III. Like my parents before, Dr. Lietz gave me a love and admiration for England and all its stands - or rather stood,- for. The immediate effect was to make me learn English there and then, and I also resolved to go back to England when I grew up. I owe it to him that I could live in England so many years and feel more at home there than elsewhere. As I said, both my parents were strongly Anglophil. My mother had been "finished" in a boarding school in the Isle of Wight. My father on the whole thought little of modern European civilisation as compared with that of Classical antiquity or the Far East, but nevertheless conceded that the English had at least some idea of how to live.

IV. Finally Dr. Lietz taught us the advantages of living a simple life in the country as against the wastefulness of the big cities which he regarded as the graveyards of a nation. This led me later on to avoid contaminating contacts with the Metropolitan intelligentia, at their best a scrofulous and back-biting lot like George Orwell, while in the days of our Imperial decline they have now turned into a pack of precious pederasts. As I grew in experience, this preference for living modestly and quietly at the edge of society or at the very margin of civilisation was re-inforced by considerations of prudence. As R.D.Laing has said so well in his "The Politics of Experience", page 116, when he discusses the grave risks which attend a personal direct awareness of the inner world:

"Those who have survived have had exceptiomal qualities - a capacity for secrecy, slyness, cunning - a thoroughly realistic appraisal of the risks they run, not only from the spiritual realm that they frequent, but from the hatred of their fellows for anyone engaged in this pursuit."

Militarism and Buddhism.

There was, however, a fifth component of the broth on which we were fed, and this I have always resolutely rejected, with the result that I never felt really comfortable in Germany. This was the spirit of noisy, ultra-patriotic Pan-German militarism. To some extent this may have been due to the Koettgen blood of my mother's family. One of the English Koettgens sometimes had to come to business meetings in Langenberg, but always returned by train to Brussels to stay the night, because he could not possibly sleep in a country with so many soldiers in it. Another reason was a deep-seated and instinctive aversion to killing of any kind. On one occasion this brought me into conflict with my father whom I always tried to please in every way. My father was a keen hunter and tried to initiate me into his hunting ways. Once we came quite near a winderful stag. He gave me his gun to shoot it, and with telescopic sights this was easy. I was so appalled that I deliberately shot high into the air, the stag disappeared and my father was very hurt in his feelings.

When I was thirteen I had my first remembered contact with Buddhism. In my father's library I found a copy of a German translation of Lafcadio Hearn's "Gleanings in Buddha-Fields". There in the section about Nirvana each paragraph was prefaced by a question from the Diamond Cutter. When I read these I felt that they represented a truth which I had once known, but which had faded as I grew up. I also felt that this was not exactly what had been said originally, and how right I was, because before me I had a translation of an English translation of a Japanese of a Chinese translation of a Sanskrit original. And so I resolved to gain access to that original one day, and exactly forty years later I published in Rome my edition of Vajracchedika Prajñāpāramitā, which is still regarded as the standard ~~xxx~~ edition of this classical text.

Universities.

The spirit of rebelliousness nevertheless continued to ~~ix~~ me to such an extent that I changed school several times until

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at last I gained my Abitur. After that I went to University, first in Tuebingen where I was forced to Study law, so as to take up the same profession as my father. In order to guarantee an easy advancement in my future career, I was put into the Corps Borussia which represented the plutocracy of the Rhinelands, as against the Corps Franconia who represented the nobility of Wuerttemberg, and it amused me how we used to look down on each other. Life in this Corps did not please me at all. I could not bear the heavy drinking, nor did I want to have my cheek marked with the highly prized cuts from our duels, in view of the fact that I wanted to go to England later. I, however, regained the esteem of my colleagues when at the end of the term I engaged in a public debate with Professor Karl Heim in front of a huge audience about the validity of Christianity. There was the young Stud.jur. Eberhard Conze with the black and white ribbon of the Corps Borussia across his chest, holding his own against a famous Professor and in fact winning the debate in the eyes of the audience because most of my arguments were taken from Houston Stewart Chamberlain to whose ideas the audience was naturally attuned. The study of law bored me unutterably and I moved on to Heidelberg where I studied philology, philosophy being forbidden by my father as being a "breadless art". It was there that I gained once again a powerful impulse to study Buddhism. There was, as you know, Walleser and, in the circle of Rickert, there was great interest in Zen, which at that time led to the publication of Ohasama-Faust,,'The living Buddhism of Japan'. At the same time I also studied the then very popular translations of K.E.Neumann and filled vast sheets with diagrams showing the inter-relation of the various Abhidharma categories. Impressed with a work which Scholz had written on the philosophy of Religion I then moved on to Keel, only to find that Scholz had succumbed to the craze for modern logic, which has dogged my footsteps ever since. When it came to

choosing a topic for my doctoral dissertation I proposed either Schopenhauer or Spinoza. Both were rejected and Prof. Scholz one day emerged with an extremely dusty and mildewed old folio volume, which turned out to be the Disputationes Metaphysicae of Franciscus Suarez S.J. Although Latin had always been my favourite subject at school this scholastic Latin was totally different from that of Cicero and so I was sent to the Jesuit monastery of Valokenburg in Holland, where I was taught scholastic Latin. The Jesuits made a great impression upon me and destroyed any belief I may still have had in the Protestant religion. Through them I also came into contact with theories about the parrisnnk perennial philosophy which probably appealed to me because I myself have a profoundly unoriginal mind and am therefore inclined to agree with Goethe when he said that "Truth has been found long ago and it is the old truth that you should get hold of".

After some time I moved on to Cologne, which at that time had one of the finest philosophical faculties in Germany and where I formed a close friendship with Dr. Diederiche, at present President of the Republic of South Africa. In Cologne we had a man of genius called Max Scheler, to whom I owe more than I can say in a few words. Many of the brightest ideas in my later publications go back to him. In 1928 I became a Ph.D with my dissertation on "The concept of Metaphysics in Franciscus Suarez', which was later on published by Felix Meiner in Leipsig.

After some time I moved on to Bonn, where I came into contact with Theosophy and Astrology through Prof. Verweyen who was later killed by the Nazis. I also became very friendly with Prof. Walter Ruben, who taught me Sanskrit in exchange for a training in Marxism.

From Bonn I moved on to Hamburg where I had hoped to gain habilitation under Cassirer. This came to nothing because with the coming of the Nazis Cassirer was removed. Most of my time between 1928 and 1932 was spent on working on my large book about

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the Principle of Contradiction which came out just a few months before the Nazi flood engulfed Germany. In 1924 at the Wembley Exhibition my father had sent me to London to renew my British nationality and I, at that time, swore allegiance to King George V and all his successors. This now stood me in good stead and things came to a head on the birthday of the Führer when I, having a flat with a balcony, was asked to hang out a Nazi flag. I refused and in the ensuing altercation it turned out from my documents that I was born in England. Thereupon the S.A. official spoke the memorable words: "The Führer wants peace with England. You are not worth us getting into trouble with the English. We give you two weeks to clear out." Accordingly I landed in Southampton on the Bremen on June 15th, 1933 with a suit on my back and £4 in my pocket.

The Nazis

My detestation of the Nazis has always been total and again I owed this to a greater extent to my parents than I then realised. My father at that time was the highest judge in the Rhineland and worked in a huge judicial palace which he regarded as his own. When the Nazis put a swastika flag on this building he sent up some underling with the order to take down this rag (Lappen) and then went home expecting to be arrested. Instead he got a letter telling him that his resignation was accepted. My mother reacted violently and quite unexpectedly. First of all she used to engage Jews in conspicuous conversation on the Koenigsallee in Dursseldorf to annoy the Nazis, and then she broke with four unbroken centuries of Calvinism by becoming converted to the Catholic Church and taking up residence near a monastery. One day the S.S. took over part of the monastery as a home for illegitimate children of the S.S. and when they took out the Sacred Host she snatched it away and ran away with it to the great astonishment of the S.S. In fact my aversion to the Nazi system has been so complete that it has coloured my political outlook in many ways since I have regarded anything else as distinctly preferable to that.

Since it was Adolf Hitler who blew my life off course I have naturally often tried to size him up. There are two sides to him, one in the occult, the other in the natural world. As for the first, I agree with Speer that because he himself was nothing he provided room for demonic forces to operate in him. From this point of view he was a manifestation of a force which was not unlike that of Vajrapani, rather a left hand form of him, just as their swastika was a left-hand form. I will leave it at that. On the worldly plain he once again illustrates the danger of allowing the Lower Middle Classes to exercise power. Compared with the Herren Doktoren who ran Germany with some competence he revealed himself as an over-excited philistine* whose up-bringing had given him no experience of how the world runs itself.

My father once took me to a meeting in Duesseldorf at the Industrieklub where Adolf Hitler, at the instigation of Thyssen and Kirdorff, tried to win the support of the rich. When he saw Hitler in his ill-fitting black suit, my father said, "Der Kerl sieht ja wie ein Kellner aus" (This fellow looks like a seedy waiter). Thus he summed up eleven years of German history.

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* The German for this is Ein Wildgewordener Spiessbuerger. So far the English language has no equivalent for this term which indicates the many facets though not necessarily essential side of the great Adolf. Alas, it may be that the English in their decadence are beginning to breed this type now.

Lecture 2:

~~Part II:~~ 1933 - 1948

So this was the first part of the story, covering the first twenty nine years of my life which were spent in Germany. The second part now will show how the ardent young communist of 1933 was transferred into the dedicated Buddhist scholar of 1948. In that year when I was 44 began the third and last part which is still going on.*

First days in London

In 1933 life in London was at first very hard. The man in the street did not welcome us at all, and it seemed to them that the country was already sufficiently stocked with Jews, Socialists and Communists and the severity of the police authorities reflected their attitude fairly well. This did not affect me, however, as to my great relief I soon exchanged my German passport for a British one. A number of Jews and Liberals - like the Samuels and Meynells,- provided accomodation for us in the more agreeable residential districts of Central London and without the generous help of these people who are nowadays contemptuously referred to as 'do-gooders' or 'bleeding hearts' we would not have survived for long. They showed English people at their best. At the same time the universities woke up to the fact that they could pick up at bargain prices the finest products of what had been before the Nazis the finest university system in the world, and the Academic Assistance Council started to funnel us into jobs here or in the U.S.A. For a short time I tried to earn money by giving German lessons. These were not a success, because I had not the remotest idea of German grammar. Asked what the

* As you asked me only about my life up to 1949 (which was the year when we met in Paris), I will not describe it in detail. A few days ago I had a visit from Dr. Snellgrove and we two discovered that the four covers on the Cassirer books undesigheedly indicate its four stages between 1951 and 1976. You may think that at times I have in the second part been rather verbose about events which are of interest only to people living in England. This is because a copy will go to a close friend of mine at London University, who has made the same journey from Marxism to Buddhism and who is therefore interested in my parallel develop-

prefix VER means in VERGESSEN, I would think up ~~thm~~ some kind of theory, only to find that it failed to work with VERLOREN. In addition I met with an obstinate refusal to learn. the mentality of the English is still that of the sailor who said in disgust,- "The French call a cabbage a shoe (choux) why do they not call it a cabbage if they know that it is one?" or, as my second,English, wife put it later when I urged her to learn some German for our visits to Germany, -"I don't care a damn what these bloody Huns call anything". This sturdy and disdainful spirit has helped to make English into a world language and one of the greatest benefits of my return to Englanf has been that I have been able to do my Buddhist work in English and not in German, a language scarcely worth writing in any longer.

Ellen Wilkinson and R.H.Tawney

Before people could, however, see through my incompetence as a teacher of German I had acquired as one of my pupils Miss Ellen Wilkinson, a prominent labour politician who helped me greatly to settle in England. She took me to all sorts of parties and at one of these I met R.H.Tawney (Prof.) who launched me into the Extra-mural Department of London University. I regret to say that I had not heard of him before. There was some rumour of some Englishman's having commented on Max Weber's thesis about the close connection between modern capitalism and Protestantism, but then at that time no German academic would have looked to an Englishman for guidance in scholarship. In those early days I had not got used to the Englishman's habit of making fools of strangers by playing the fool himself, and so I was almost incredulous at the ignorance concerning events in Germany which he seemed to show when he asked me about them, In his words to Ellen Wilkinson: "Conze talked a hole into my stomach"- which was not a compliment because he had been hit by a bullet in his stomach in the First World War and therefore felt less love for

Note cont. from p.9 -ment. As a practised scholar you will have no difficulty in reading this while skipping the inessentials.

Germans than, as a devout Anglican Christian,he should have felt. At our first meeting we clashed fiercely because we are both unbending and ferocious people. But we also discovered that our basic conviction, our outlook on life was the same,- we were both religious socialists, he from an Anglican and I from a Tolstoyan point of view. So he took me under his wing. He was so impressed by my first hand knowledge of German politics that he persuaded Arnold Toynbee to let me talk about the subject at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. In the course of this lecture I predicted the massacre of Roehm and the S.A. leaders which took place a few weeks later and my reputation for sagacity soared. For the Autumn the University of London at Tawney's request then gave me two Tutorial Classes in psychology. A tutorial class is a class for adults which lasts for three years, starts with twenty four people and needs sixteen to continue,- that is to say, great guile is needed to keep these random people together for all that time and that without any monetary reward for them. I was very successful at this game. No class of mine ever failed and this was the main source of my income until 1959 when I finally moved away from the London area. Another incident further endeared me to Tawney. To try me out he had given me a class in Woking which, as he later told me, was the one place in which he himself had failed. This does not surprise me. Woking is a place half an hour away from London which is inhabited by small-timers such as bank clerks and so on who imagine that they are better than the working classes and a miasma of sub-fascist sentiments has been rising from it from the days of Warwick Deeping to those of Edward Martell of the "Freedom Group". There was some hostility from the start and it came to a head in the fifth meeting when some bully complained about my accent and asked me what my nationality was. For some reason I was inspired to give the right answer (the Buddhist term for this is pratibhāna) and I said. "My nationality is that of your Royal family,- British born of German ancestors." The sporting instincts of the audience were aroused. I got tremendous applause and Woking

has been a stronghold of Conzean influence until the very end in 1959. The advantage for scholars of this Tutorial class system was that one could earn enough by lecturing only in winter on four evenings, thus leaving the entire summer and all hours of daylight free for study. Even during the War I could continue this work on a slightly lower scale,- and I spent many happy hours in Bournemouth teaching psychology to the WRENS who were easily the prettiest of His Majesty's Forces. My friendship with R.H.Tawney continued until his death in 1962, and about 1950, when I had been dismissed by the Extramural Department of Oxford University, he destroyed my enemies there with the same ease with which one used to crush a flea between one's nails.

J.P.M.Millar and the NCLC

It was also through Ellen Wilkinson that I met my other good friend, J.P.M.Millar, director of the N.C.L.C. (National Council of Labour Colleges), a Marxist organisation devoted to the education of Trade Unionists, which brought forth such leaders of the Labour Party as Aneurin Bevan and other Leftists. If one excepts the highest ranges of the academic world it can in general be said that Scotsmen are better educated than Englishmen and that is one reason why Germans may find it easier to form an intimate friendship with them. The only barrier between us was his total lack of what one might describe as a sense of humour. I am always full of jokes and he used to tell me that "there is no point in telling these jokes to a Scotsman, they are to us what the German U-boats were to the English during the last War; we cannot see them". He soon set me to work re-cataloguing the library of their London Centre near Hampstead, revising their correspondence courses, re-writing their text-books on psychology and economics and writing two books, one on "Why War?" (1934) and one "Introduction to Dialectical Materialism" (1936). He edited a paper called Plebs for which I wrote regularly and after one year I had stirred up sufficient controversy to be given a special section headed "Conze in the Cockpit". The tone of my writings was anti-Fascist, pro-Socialist, Anti-Imperialist and

Pacifist. All went well until Mr. Ernest Bevin, a very powerful Trade Union boss and a prize bully of the first order, came to hear of it and threatened to withdraw his subsidy of £1,000 a year unless Conze was tamed. But still I went on writing quite a lot until 1939 when freedom of speech was greatly curtailed throughout the country.

Books written with Ellen Wilkinson.

We must now return to Ellen Wilkinson (8.10.1891-1947), who was the fountainhead of all this bounty. She soon lost interest in learning German and had in fact no aptitude for it whatsoever. The only German phrase which she ever managed to memorise was a short verse which I taught her on our early morning rides in her car when she persisted in loudly singing into the morning air. It is Es singt der Frosch sein Morgenlied, So gut er's eben kann. (The frog sings his early morning song as best he can.) She was an undersized fiery red-headed agitator, a British Rosa Luxemburg from the slums of Manchester, who, for a time, had been an elementary school mistress. Her physical courage made me gasp when I saw it in action in Spain*. Her mind, however, was non-existent. I called it a blotting paper mind, because the last impression always showed: by listening to her you always knew with whom she had spoken last. In Mr. Attlee's Cabinet she was the only woman and he skilfully neutralised her by putting her into Education which overstrained her so much that she soon took an

* For instance, in a Square of Toledo we sat in a cafe. Stirred up by officers from the Alcazar a riot developed outside and soon the Guardia Civil sprayed the square with machine gun bullets. All sensible people withdrew; except of course for tiny Ellen who had to rush into the Square to see better and beckoned me to do likewise.

overdose of sleeping pills. She once helped me while she was Minister of Education. I saw her in her office in Berkeley (Grosvenor?) Square and I was sad to see her so harassed and out of her depth.

She was a helpless victim of the English class structure and adored nothing so much as the aristocracy, even if it was only some recently jumped-up Labour Lord like Lord Marley or some Hungarian beauty co-opted as the Countess of Listowel. One of these titled ladies was Lady Rhondda. She was the wife of a Welsh mine owner, and used the money wrought from the stunted bodies of the Welsh miners to patronise the Arts and to edit a Christian-orientated Journal called "Time and Tide". Ellen tried to rope me in as a contributor, and I did a few little bits. All I remember is a controversy with a homosexual Imperialist called John [redacted] Morris who had found fault with a favourable review I had written of Steinilber-Oberlin's "Buddhist Sects of Japan". In it I had referred to Mme. Chrysantheme as an Opera, obviously confusing it with Madame Butterfly. But after a prolonged study in the Reading Room of the BM I could however come up, in the end, with an obscure opera by that title, and honour was thus satisfied. All those connected with the Journal had now and then a dinner, presided over by her Ladyship. I was invariably sat with Winifred Holtby (1898-1935), a Yorkshire novelist who looked like a sea-horse and died soon after. In my scale of values women novelists rate only slightly higher than Jewish Literary critics or, for that matter, native English comedians, i.e. those which are neither Irish nor Jewish. In addition I thought her incredibly boring. She put me into the novel she was writing then, probably South Riding (1936) but I have forgotten as what. Another of these emancipated females was Elizabeth Haldane, the wife of J. B. S. Haldane. She was an

active lesbian, (at least by way of propaganda) and wrote biographies of women who had done men in the eye. Another highly placed female was a rubber fetishist. She spent one whole evening at a party explaining to me the delights of this fad which had even a Journal of its own. People took off their clothes, put on rubber and then did things to each other. For instance, they put oil on themselves and then wrestled, thus giving rise to a lot of funny squish-squosh noises. I tried to imagine what she would be like without rubber, and she failed to win me as a recruit for her cult. A man greatly admired in these circles had lost both his legs in the War, though his artificial ones were almost unnoticeable. He slept with a different female each night, partly because of his satisfactory virility, and partly because they were all interested in the mechanics of intercourse with him. At least that is what Ellen told me. They sure were a ravish lot. They did little to win my heart for "women's rights". They were also a warmongering lot. Their target was not only Germany, but also Japan (Britains other trade rival), and one of their ranks was Freda Utley, a Lancaster female who wrote an almost incredibly vicious book on that country. At that time British gunboats operated freely on the Yangtze River and caused quite some casualties among the local population. When I described this to Ellen as an Imperialist abomination, and said that the people would be better occupied in clearing up her native Manchester, tears came into her eyes and she told me with convincing fervour that, "to me the problems of the millgirls of Shanghai are as important as those of the millgirls of Manchester." I rejoiced at this evidence of socialist internationalism. There was also Naomi Mitchiso with a muddy complexion who felt well only when she was pregnant. Others were Vera Brittain and the most bitter-tongued of them all, Rebecca West. Her photograph shows that

for the greater part of her life she has used her mouth as a vagina dentata. The whole lot of them were filled with a sense of mission and the thought of them still makes me shudder. Thrown so suddenly and unexpectedly into the company of emancipated women I could keep up my morale only by muttering to myself remarks about John Knox's "Monstrous Regiment of Women". Years later I encountered their spiritual children in Berkeley where they were propagating something then known as "Women's Liberation". Some good stories about this will be told in our Chapter on Berkeley.

For a while Ellen and I were fairly useful to each other and that kept us together. The first fruit of our labours was "Why War?" which came out in July, 1934, barely a year after I had landed in England. It

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sold very well and caused a great stir at the time and that for two reasons. The one was that the sub-title called it "A Hand-book for those who will take part in the Second World War". This prophetic statement shocked those who believed that they had won eternal peace in 1918. The second was the thesis, which I had imposed upon Ellen, that this War would be just an ordinary Imperialist war, and that no self-respecting Socialist would have anything to do with it. She went back on this later on and became one of the most vocal Labour War-mongers and was heard to say in September 1939 how happy and relieved she was that War had been declared at last. Next we did "Why Fascism?". I have no copy of the book in the house and so do not know when exactly it came out. At that time the problem was that Nazism was represented as a farrago of monstrous absurdities and people wanted to know how the highly educated Germans could have fallen for such a nonsense. Our answer was that (1) in 1933 Nazism was the least of all possible evils and (2) that it was quite a sensible system if one assumed that it existed to undo the defeat of 1918 by a new War. This raised a terrible outcry and led to my expulsion from the Hampstead Labour Party which even Ellen's eloquence could not prevent. We had planned a third volume, to be called "Why Socialism?" Nothing came of it because we could not agree on anything and she also had increasingly to consider her job as an Organiser of the N.U.D.A.W. who were none too enamoured of this German intellectual who put all those strange ideas into her head.

"Spain to-day"

In May 1936 I went to Spain on behalf of the publisher Warburg because I felt that the situation there was on the point of boiling up. This was the end of my political involvement. Ellen Wilkinson, who came down to drive me about in her car, later on told me that I never once smiled or laughed during my entire visit. This is most unusual, because generally I am full of fun and games. From the very start I saw clearly that a huge senseless tragedy was shaping itself, that many people (two million by

the end) would be killed for nothing whatever and that no-one would gain a thing from all this turmoil. My excellent introductions gave me access to everyone on the Left but the only pople I really liked were the anarchists. Joaquin Maurin of the P.O.U.M. was a bigot of inhuman purity. Andrade, his right-hand man, an amicable but woolly ideologue, Ayaña and the others were just fatties, typical of freemasonry in the Catholic countries of the Mediterranean. For several weeks I stayed in Barcelona, and the anarchists were already sufficiently influential to make it clear to everybody that theirs was not a movement to run an industrial Society but to stop it in no time. Not that this would have greatly bothered me. In rural Spain ~~at that~~ I caught a glimpse of pre-Industrial man and I realised how much we have lost. This has been written about much better by Coomaraswamy and other followers of the perennial philosophy. In Spain I had several brushes with the Communists who later on in England pursued me with their hatred for many years. They had told the gullible English ~~xhx~~ public that the Civil War was ~~a~~ one between a few feudal officers and their Moors on one side and the Spanish People on the other. My book "Spain Today" had given the election figures which showed that the Right had had a mojority of the popular vote which was turned into a governmental minority only by the defection of the Basques. Quite a campaign was mounted against me, and Sylvia Pankhurst, whom I had irritated by my comments on the democratic credentials of Ethiopia, petitioned the House of Commons for my expulsion from the country. But British born citizens cannot be expelled, as she discovered to her furious regret. The Daily Worker once got a screaming fit and told everybody that this Trotskyite spearhead of the bourgeoisie had, under the Weimar Republic, been a social Fascist (which is double-think for democratic socialist) and in the Kaiser's Germany a Right Wing Social Democrat of the Noske faction. Ellen Wilkinson made them print a reply pointing out that in 1914 I was only ten and that Noske could derive little benefit from my alleged support. So a good time was had by all!

Reasons for quitting politics

So often have I been asked why after only three years in England I should have turned my back on politics, that I will say a few words on this. First of all the communists I met were completely different from those I had known in Germany. They were a lot of silly twerps from Public Schools who harboured obscure resentments about their parents, headmasters and O.T.C. Since those days I have met many public school boys and felt that they must have greatly changed since the days when Dr. Lietz knew them. In my current view they contributed as much to England's decline as anyone else. In fact their training seemed to be mainly designed to make it impossible for them to communicate with anyone else on equal terms, and the Suez debacle in 1956 was a fitting result of their self-absorbed isolation from the rest of mankind. The only brain in the party was an Indian by the name of Palme Dutt. He issued a journal called "Labour Monthly" and in it he soon, i.e. in November 1934, proceeded to take the strips off my back for having suggested in a review in Plebs that the capitalists might quite well destroy mankind before they could be superseded by socialism. This was quite a well-known commonplace in the thoughtsof Rosa Luxemburg whose interpretation of Marxism always appealed to me because her motivation was similar to mine *. Like her I see socialism as the restoration of the prehistoric innocence and brotherhood of the human race which in her thinking appeared as "primitive Communism"

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* ~~5.3.1871 Sun Pisces Moon Leo; 1 Mercury 26 Aquarius whereas mine is in 21 Pisces.~~

(Ur-Kommunismus*) and in mine as the "Perennial Philosophy". Our thesis was, however, against the Canons of Soviet determinism and the naive Soviet belief in the inevitability of progress**. In the June issue of Plebs I had reviewed a pamphlet on "Dialectical Materialism and Communism", written by L. Rudas of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow. This led to a fierce ten-page reply from Mr. Rudas himself in the September issue of The Labour Monthly (XVI, 11, 563-572) followed by a further exchange of pleasantries in the November issue

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* This indicates one way in which Marxism is a secularised form of Christianity with its four phases:

(1) Adam and Eve in Paradise = Primitive Communism.

(2) The Fall of Man = Private Property and War.

(3) The Redemption of Man on the Cross = the Proletarian Revolution.

(4) The Second Coming of Christ = the Withering away of the State.

Both have got stuck a bit between (3) and (4).

** This led, among other things to the excision from F. Engels Dialectics of Nature of a remark illustrating the unity of opposites from the English Edition of the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954. In the original German Edition of 1932 (?) Engels had stated expressly that each progress in one direction must involve a regress in another.

(692-695). What I had said was:

"Two things may be the outcome of the breakdown of capitalism. Decaying Capitalism either results in Socialism or in chaos and in barbarism."

To this L.Rudas triumphantly replies: (p.571):

"But what does barbarism mean? Barbarism means (in the exact sense of the word and not as a metaphor) the disappearance of large scale production, the return of small scale production in consequence, the disappearance of all those millions and hundreds of millions of population which inhabit the globe today, the disappearance of the entire modern proletariat and peasantry. Is this possible, is this even conceivable? No, it is not possible. People who speak glibly of the eventuality of barbarism have very little power of imagination, they do not know what they are saying. The proletariat will resist to the utmost this attempt to extirpate it. It must resist to the utmost. The mere fact of its existence will force it to resist. This is what I meant when I spoke of the inevitability of our victory when I spoke of dialectics as the guarantee of our victory. For the highly developed productive forces of modern society and the mere existence of a multi-million proletariat make any return to "barbarism" impossible. The imminent laws of modern society compel the proletariat to fight till it is victorious. Death or victory - this is the only alternative for the proletariat. But death is impossible for thousands of millions, not to speak of the existence of the Soviet Union which I referred to as a proof of the inevitability of our victory."

Thirty years later I can only say: "Ha! Ha!" Of course it would be a mistake to say that at that time I was aware that our highly gifted physicists were beavering away in laboratories in Goettingen, Copenhagen and Harvard to find a means of enabling mankind to terminate its existence. Nevertheless, in my reply (on pp. 693-4) I do not do too badly.

"Cicero could as little imagine the disappearance of millions of slaves, as Mr. Rudas can that of millions of proletarians. The process can be very slow. It may operate not only through drastic methods of modern warfare, with its possibilities of spreading epidemics, but also through the gradual lowering of the birth rate."

On his side Rudas concluded the debate by saying that:

"I must renounce the pleasure of entering into a discussion with Mr. Conze on philosophical questions, or on the scientific work going on in the Soviet Union, or on anything else whatever." (p.695)

So be it. The incident did nothing to increase my respect for the intellectual level or even the integrity of comtemporary Marxism. In the hands of uncultured hacks the dialectics cannot do much good.

Through Ellen Wilkinsoh I became acquainted with most of the top leadership of the Labour Party and there was no one among them who showed nobility of the spirit or magnanimity of the soul, except George Lansbury who was soon to be pushed out by Ernest Bevin for his unwavering Pacifism. In England most people in their attitude to Pacifism take their cue from the Archbishop of Canterbury, - while there is peace he is all for it, but as soon

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as he sees the chance of a War he is prepared "with a heavy heart" to find a godly reason for it.

Now as to these Labour Politicians, I thought them intellectually contemptible and morally reprehensible, one like the other. Once I went with a number of top Trade Unionists to Wales. In a slate quarry one of them asked me,-"R.C. Do you know our definition of a worker?" and then added, "He is the man who does the kind of work which we will never go back to, whatever happens". This hurt me greatly.* I had been brought up among a ruling class which had not done any too well, and so the prospect of this lot ruling England deemed none too appetising.

But the worst shock came from my contact with the leaders of the India League, Krishna Menon (an exceptionally poisonous piece of work) and especially Nehru, whom I often met in Ellen Wilkinson's flat in Guildford Street. He seemad to me a man of incredible ignorance and conceit, all vanity on the outside and all hollowness inside. He clearly knew not what matters in life, treated the half-baked notions of Kingsley Martin and the "New Statesman" as a new VEDA, and spoke of his countrymen in their actuality in such a way that he was unlikely to do them much good. When I compared his bearing with that of my own forefathers I saw that in the Imperial structure he fulfilled the role of either a pukka sahib,- only slightly off-white- or of the typical WOG, the Worthy Oriental Gentleman who had swallowed the values of his white masters hook, line and sinker. No wonder that power was fifteen years later handed over to t is betrayer of the ideals and injunctions of the Mahatma - each one of them! It was fitting that his rule should begin with a magnificent massacre of Indians by Indians, and should be followed by a goodly number of further 'Just Wars', by a temporary intellectual

* Now and then, when my mother was particularly fed up with me, she used to call me 'l'incorruptible' after Robespierre, and in the C.F. I was a proper Strelnikow.

and cultural collapse in the early years of Free India and then by the large scale torture of political opponents, by the export of innumerable monkeys for the delectation of vivisectionist (according to Time magazine the noble pandita liked to stage fights to the death between a mongoose and a cobra for foreign visitors), by sterilisations on an almost Hitlerian scale and so on and so on..... Jawaharlal, Indira, Sanja,...a mere 30 years have proved enough. All this lay in the future and could only vaguely have been foretold from the bland unlined beautiful features of this self-infatuated darling of the Gods. What then and there horrified me in my encounters with Nehru and other Congress Hindus was to find that they were zombies who, unbeknown to them, had lost their souls to their conquerors. People who have a purpose in life are often prefigured in mythology. I myself am a manifestation of Ulysses. The goddess Kali obviously animates all that Indira does, and her darling son reminds me of the Kutumbana demons. When reading through the Mahabharata in Van Buitenen's translation I wonder when I will come across Pandit Nehru. Having been the object of so much adulation from his countrymen he must have stood for something in them. I mention all this here because it has had a decisive influence on my life. Once, after a long discussion with him, I became so depressed that I did something which I have done rarely in my life,- I got drunk in public, thereby disgracing Ellen and myself.

The final demolition of my commitment to politics was carried out by my friend F.A.Voigt, a journalist of German origin on the 'Manchester Guardian'. There he showed that any political movement based on violence must produce the very opposite of what it had intended to do. This was made clear from the English Revolution and French Revolution, and from what was happening in Russia under our very eyes, especially when compared with 'State and Revolution'.

So at 35, in the middle of my life I had, as Dante would have it, 'lost my way in the middle of a dark wood'. All my previous convictions had collapsed and lay around me shattered to

My first Marriage

At the same time my private life also reached an all-time low and I must now turn to the painful subject of my first marriage. Between 1929 and 1933 I had lived in Germany with a very Jewish Jewess from East Prussia and when I left for England she was expecting our child, i.e. our daughter Jane, who was born on March 2nd and is now happily married with two children to a Dr. Adam who lives in Banbury just north of Oxford. Among other things she fylfilled my wildest dreams of rebelliousness against my family. She could never be even mentioned, except briefly as das kleine Juedchen, she just did not exist. When I joined the Corps Borussia in Tuebingen I had been invited to a secret meeting and was asked to assure them on my word of honour that there had been no Jewish blood in the family for the last, I think, three generations. I confidently gave this assurance because the family history went back to the sixteenth century and no Jew occurred anywhere at all. Now I know that this confidence was misplaced because in the continuation, so far only in typescript, there is no London marriage with Thea Finkelstein in 1933, but only a Vancouver marriage with Muriel Green in 1967, and my daughter Jane will remain unknown to future Conzes. There had always been many jokes about my mother's having a Jewish nose, particularly because she had what was known as ein Juedisches Koepfchen, but these jokes were only possible because the thought of this as a reality was so unutterably horrible as to be just unthinkable.

Throughout my life I have usually done pretty well what I wanted to do, but with the arrival in London of Dorothea I was for once deprived of all possibility of a choice. I knew that a marriage outside Germany could not possibly work, but she had permission for only three months in England and would then have had to go back, where, with her name and physical appearance, the nazis would soon have bumped her off. So we got married in August 1933, and, as she later became converted to the Catholic

Church, she could resist divorce until 1967 when I at last got the better of her, paid hq £5,000 and so managed to undo what had been a mistake from the first.

The importance of Jews in my life

In this context I should draw attention to the great importance which Jews have had in my life. My very first publication, in 1927, had been an annotated Bibliography of the Durkheim School in Von Wiese's Zeitschrift Fuer Sociologie. I had discovered Durkheim and his school on a lengthy visit to Paris in 1926, and, as you will know, Durkheim as not only Jewish, but as the descendant of eight generations of rabbis he represented the very quintessence of Jewishness. My work on the Principle of Contradiction was, of course, a contribution to the Marxist Dialectics. What in my first years in England I taught as 'Psychology' was largely Freud, Oedipus complex and all. Warburg and Cassirer were among my first publishers. My 'Buddhism' book, which first gave me a reputation as a Buddhist, owed its existence to three Jews: to William Cohn who had planned it as a book on Buddhist art and who was easily the nicest Jew I have ever met; the publisher Guenther Hell (Hill) a son-in-law of Bruno Cassirer of Berlin; and Arthur Waley who had spent his first thirty five years on earth as David Arthur Schloss; he was a German Jew from Tunbridge Wells and on balance one of the most odious characters I have so far come across. Later on in America the entire Bronx seemed to have migrated to the campusses and so on and so on. This Jewishness of my intellectual surroundings has always puzzled me, particularly because it has not in any way modified the views which Dr. Lietz implanted into me in my x youth. On the contrary, these views have been strengthened year in and year out and almost from day to day, by what I see going on around me. This is just only one of the many contradictions which are contained within me and it is almost the only one which at times bothers me a little. When in 1932 my mother was shown a copy of my Der Satz vom Widerspruch she exclaimed immediately,- "No wonder Eberhard has written a book like that. He himself is

nothing at all, just a bundle of contradictions".* Nor was she so far off the mark. For who were the other people who took my fancy in Paris in 1926? The Action Française and especially Barrès with his Métèques.

Women in my life

At this point I had intended to insert for the American market an entertaining chapter on the subject of Dr. Conze and women. It would have given a more or less truthful account of my sex life, beginning with my initiation into the facts of life at the age of fifteen on a polar bear in my parents' bedroom by a lusty blonde servant girl called Anna, up to the days of my dotage where I am a bit like the American who went to his psychiatrist and said to him,"Doctor, in my younger days I used to run after the girls, but now I cannot even remember why I did so. Can you help me?" The answer to this is "No", and I have on balance decided to cut out this section. All I need to say is that I am one of those unfortunate people who can neither live with women nor without them. The subject matter of these notes is my intellectual development and their influence on that has been negligible. There is no point in encouraging the Eriksons of this world to produce some silly theories about my deeper motivation, theories which are all equally futile because they invariably omit two decisive factors,- the pre-natal dispositions and the celestial constellation at birth.

The rediscovery of Buddhism

What pulled me out of the mire at that time was my rediscovery of "Buddhism", and this was connected with three people. The first of these was Daisetz Taitaro Suzuki. I have written about this in my Personal Tributes (m.w.) to him in the "Eastern Buddhist" of August 1967. I do not need to repeat myself here.

* In this context we may recall Scott Fitzgerald's remark in Crack-up that "the test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time and still continue to function".

The second person was Har Dayal whose 1932 book on the Bodhisattva Doctrine you will know well. I met him through the W.C.L.C. for which he gave classes and he wrote articles for Plebs on the history of European Socialism. I spent much time in his house in Edgware. In 1975 Emily Clara Brown wrote an informative biography of Har Dayal for the University of Arizona Press. The best I can do is to quote what I had written to her: "I often saw him, but we were somewhat at cross purposes all the time. I was slowly moving in the direction of Mahayana Buddhism to which I have devoted all my energies after 1938 or 1939 and turned to him for information on this subject which by that time had failed to interest him very much. On the other hand he expected to learn from me about the various trends in European Socialism in which I myself became increasingly less interested. I cherished him as a truly lovable person who befriended me at a time when I was a rather bewildered refugee in the huge city of London."

The third person was Dr. Graham Howe, a psychologist living near Harley Stree. He produced a psychological doctrine which combined the terminology of psycho-analysis with that of the religious texts of the East, be they Buddhist or Taoist. This appealed to me very much at the time. I met Dr. Howe at the Buddhist Society, where I also became acquainted with Christmas Humphreys, its President. He and I have known each other now for more than forty years, but we have never got on well.

The discovery of Astrology

Another discovery which helped me greatly was that of Astrology. This art had been revived in the nineteenth century by the theosophists. The Conze family had always harboured a number of theosophists though they were usually of the Rudolf Steiner persuasion. When I was once ill as a boy one of my aunts gave me a copy of Annie Besant's translation and explanation of the Bhagavad Gita and I remember that I was terribly excited by it. But as far as Astrology is concerned, I knew like every other educated person all the arguments against it and deemed it generally unworthy of my consideration. Now fate took a hand

to change all this. Since my marriage had practically ceased to exist, I looked for a replacement for my wife, but decided that this time I would try things out before tying myself down again. In 1939 I took a girl called Vera for a few weeks to Fécamp in Normandy. One day we had an outing to a museum which, as so often, turned out to be closed on that day. In the village street we saw in a shop little booklets on Astrology (by Nicholas Fauvel "Votre Horoscope") one for each month and so we bought, just for fun, the issued for January and March. I had already known before that what my wife and all her attempted replacements had in common was that they resembled my mother too much for my comfort. Now I found a second similarity - they were all Capricorns! The reason for this is obvious,- I did not want a wife at all, but a servant who would look after me while I was doing my scholarly work. If it had not been for the servant shortage which set in after 1918, I would never have had any motive to marry at all, like Michaelangelo or Schopenhauer before me. Be that as it may , I became curious about Astrology, studied it, learned to do and to read horoscopes and this has wrought a great revolution in my thinking. This interest was soon after reinforced in Godshill where there was an educated community unaffected by the mephytic vapours of the Metropolis and in which astrology was practised as a matter of course as one of the basic skills of life. Astrology has set me inwardly free from the claims a technological society can make on my allegiance. I feel that now I can spit happily into its face. Astrology has convinced me that Science, its basic ingredient has little cognitive value, but is just a bag of tricks invented by God-defying people to make life increasingly unbearable on Earth and finally to destroy it. Because if Scientists are right, astrology is just poppy-cock. On the other hand, in the last thirty eight years I have never yet found an instance in which it did not work (even you fit in very well although you will not have it).

The psychology of mass propaganda

Three years of political experience had left me with the conviction that there must be something definitely wrong with a person who goes into politics. This is partly confirmed by a book which Lucille Iremonger, wife of a Tory M.P. recently wrote about British Prime Ministers*, showing that all of them were at least psychological cripples. Doubters are advised to read the third volume of Gilbert's large biography of Winston Churchill, showing how these people mismanaged the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915. And indeed, thinking back today, I had really known all this before. After 1918, we were amazed to learn how our glorious German Empire, of which we had been so proud, had been run under William II. I had first heard of these things from one of my uncles, who had been Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and later on our eyes were opened by the truly hair-raising memoirs of Grand Admiral Von Tirpitz and others. Or, as we had been taught at school, Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi.

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* The Fiery Chariot - A Study of British Prime Ministers, 1970. When one applies the principles of de Toqueville to the history of mass democracies, one finds that their leaders are of three kinds.

(1) Hopeless non-entities who can be regarded as convincing replicas of the average man and cause no envy in what is known as the average decent votes. Such as lately Harold Wilson and Edward Heath, not to mention the Grocer's Daughter and the Grinning Peanut.

(2) Homicidal maniacs, such as Lincoln (618,000 corpses) Winston Churchill (millions) Robespierre (a few thousand) two Roosevelts (thousands and millions respectively) Stalin (millions) and such like.

(3) At a later page (p.262A) we will deal with the third kind, i.e. certifiable lunatics in the last stages of GPI, such as Woodrow Wilson, W. I. Lenin, and Lord Northcliffe.

At that time , however, I tackled the problem from another angle. It was obvious that these madmen could do their work only if they had the willing collaboration of their subjects and so I wrote a book for Secker and Warburg on the "Psychology of Mass Propaganda". In the end the manuscript was never published, because Mr. Warburg objected not only to my thesis that, psychologically speaking, the appeal of Russian Communism was no different from that of German Nazism or Italian Fascism, but also to something I had said about the delicate subject of anti-semitism. So we agreed that I should keep my advance and he would be spared the difficulty of blotting his copybook by publishing a book of this kind. The manuscript which I submitted to him seems to have been lost and all I appear to have left is a retyped 1939 version of 322 pages, in which I greatly developped that aspect of the subject which appealed to my psychological and Buddhist interests, i.e. to what I call there, "the veils which hide the truth", which is a long meditation on the Buddhist theory of self-deception(Moha

Three years of political experience had left me with the conviction that there must be something definitely wrong with a person who goes into politics. This is partly confirmed by a book which a woman called Iremonger, wife of a Tory M.P. recently wrote about British Prime Ministers, showing that all of them were either raving lunatics or psychological cripples. Doubters are advised to read the third volume of Gilbert's large biography of Winston Churchill, showing how these people mismanaged the Gallipoli Campaign in 1915. And indeed, thinking back today, I had really known all this before. After 1918 we were amazed to learn how our glorious German Empire, of which we had been so proud, had been run under William II. I had first heard of these things from one of my uncles, who had been Under Secretary of State for the Colonies and later on our eyes were opened by the truly hair-raising memoirs of Grand Admiral Von Tirpitz and others. Or, as we were taught at school, Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi.

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More work on philosophy

When you destroy a spider's web it will soon build a new one. Der Satz vom Widerspruch had been a catastrophic failure. It had been sold by subscription to 130 subscribers. 500 copies had been printed and most of these were lost, some on the bonfire by which the S.A. in Hamburg testified to their devotion to German culture. My father, at some risk to himself, sent me a few copies which I distributed among English libraries, or to friends like Prof. Laski. For the rest, the book was still-born, except for a review from Prof. Marcuse in 1934. To my great surprise the book was re-printed in 1976 by the Verlag Neue Kritik, in 600 copies, with a silly postscript by a man called Joachim Schumacher and a cover speaking untruthfully about my relations with the C.P.

In England this book formed the basis of three articles which I reprinted in 1975 on pp. 56-112 of "Further Buddhist Studies", of a text-book for students of the N.C.L.C. and of a book for the general public, called "The Scientific Method of Thinking. An Introduction to Dialectical Materialism" published by Chapman and Hall in 1935.

In Der Satz vom Widerspruch I had preached the primacy of practice over mere facts and concluded that the question "What is Truth?" could be resolved by finding out what kind of people were able to get at the truth. In other words, what had to be done was to discover a disinterested truth-bearing section in Society. This was, as I said then, the revolutionary proletariat represented by the C.P. trained in Scientific Socialism. In retrospect this seems to be an extraordinary statement to make, but, at that time, my conviction was shared by many and in spite of the shrill noises of the capitalist propaganda machine it has spead further over large areas of the earth since then. In the "Scientific Method of Thinking" I spelled this out for practical Englishmen by saying that mankind was doomed unless we could apply to the ordering of Society the same kind of Scientific Method which had led to all these discoveries in the natural Sciences and that

dialectical materialism provided that method. My later views can easily be deduced from this starting point.

At that time the capitalist world was in the throes of the crisis which began in 1929. A capitalist crisis is due to the inability to find a profitable market for many products, so that many workers have to be laid off. The only scientific solution is to blow up both surplus products and surplus workers together in some righteous war and this is precisely what the capitalists proceeded to do. (The same scenario is once again being enacted in 1977, probably for the last time.) The dialectics, or was it Asiatic cunning, allowed Comrade Stalin to deflect the fury of this War from himself, the natural target, unto the low-born part-German clown from Braunau in Austria whose behaviour was so atrocious that the entire world rose up against him; he became the chief victim of the holocaust and the dialecticians came out on top. But, and here was the rub, in order to achieve this result they resorted to measures which were as far from being scientific or even rational as they could be. In fact the longer one looked at them the more they resembled the doings of the devil incarnate, Adolf Hitler himself. In spite of this I have myself shed at no all my allegiance to Marxism-Leninism; and I have always regarded Comrade Joseph Vissarionovich (whom I served faithfully up to June 13th 1933 and a few weeks beyond) as the greatest man of his time, because he was the only one base enough to grasp its needs. He reminds me of a verse in a Russian poem in which the Starets comes across the man who will steal the people's liberties; when he sees him sneaking across the corridor of the monastery 'he lost his sight instantly'. Hitler tried his best to emulate him, but contact with German Kultur, however slight it was, spoilt him. Oxford and Cambridge, Rome, Florence and Paris are still standing, but not so Dresden and Nuernberg.

It was in the shadow of the great historical events of the thirties that I had my Āśraya-Parāvṛiti, or spiritual rebirth, I shifted my truth-bearing section of Society from revolutionary

commisars to contemplative Buddhist monks and so my later work is directly continuous with my earlier one. I have been asked about this so often that I may be excused from explaining this here. And, of course, to my mind both virtuous commisars and virtuous monks are derived from the godly men who ruled Calvin's Geneva.

Never one to be idle, I now re-wrote my Der Satz vom Widerspruch on the basis of these new insights. Soon my work had reached nor that 1000 typed pages, though I realised that it was threatened by a looming catastrophe just as the previous one was,- this time by the coming War, as last time by Hitler's coming to power. So I summarised my results in 1939, in a pamphlet of 32 pages called "Contradiction and Reality". This was again printed privately, this time at the expense of the girlfriend Vera and with the help of a printer who had been a student. This printer called Child is the reason why this account of my life is more scrappy than it ought to have been. For when I left London for Godshill I sold all my books, furniture, carpets and so on. He bought some of these and I stored with him a box containing my most precious books and documents. In a fit of pique, he gave these away as waste paper to one of the salvage drives so popular in Wartime and in this way I lost for instance the numerous reviews of my doctoral dissertation and the lengthy discussions which broke out about the views of the Révérend Père Conze on the role of F.Suarez, between Dominicans andJesuits in the Prence theological journals. I had hoped to have the pamphlet re-printed in 1975 in "Further Buddhist Studies" but in the moment my publisher threw it out as uneconomical ballast. Few people know that one can get it from University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106, U.S.A.: 18 Bedford Row, London W.C.1 R 4 E.J. Op11094. 00033. $ 6.00 and £ 10.00. After the War I produced a greatly expanded version, though only one other person in Woking has seen it and he is dead.

Move to Godshill

The War did great herm to my evening classes. There was an upsurge of patriotism. One class refused to be taught by a Hun.

strange to say they were appeased by a sight of my birth certificate which showed that I am technically a Cockney. Much worse was the effect of the black-out. It was very hard to travel in the dark and the blacked out rooms were often too airless for either teaching or learning. Also many of the best students, both men and women, had disappeared into the orces. So it became increasingly difficult to maintain life in London on my earnings, and I moved on to a place called Godshill in Hampshire which has been ~~xx~~ so important in my life that I must say a few words about it.

Apart from a few disapproving rustics the population of Godshill consisted of four kinds of people:

1. The shattered remains of a Tolstoyan settlement which had failed in the Cotswolds.
2. Dr. Aubrey, a Quaker, with his Woodcraft Order which was devoted to Social Credit and the cultivation of Ancient British Magic round camp fires. He owned a large wood called Sandy Balls where he gave me shelter for some years. It even had herons in it at that time.
3. Among other things this wood contained twelve wooden huts which now and then were inhabited by various eccentrics. One of them who walked about in a leopard skin and was known as the 'leaping leopard', got me into serious trouble soon after my arrival although I had never met him. But more about that later.
4. Gypsies who lived in a quarry and who, after some hand-reading treated me as one of their own and even stopped stealing my boss's eggs. Later on in Ewelme they even sold me one of their traditional caravans to live in, although they usually burned them at death.

Going back to these Tolstoyans, they made the spiritual atmosphere just right for me and in meeting them I had in a way come home. Here I must recount an event from my life in Germany which might well have been included in the first part. As an adolescent I became increasingly unhappy at home. The constant war between my parents had gone beyond the stage of incessant bickering

and each one had taken in someone else, my mother a painter and my father a schoolteacher? This schoolteacher was as stupid as my mother was intelligent. My mother explained her attraction for my father by saying that to him she was like an umbrella in an umbrella stand, always ready when he wanted her. So in the evenings we had to sit with a foursome, not of our choosing and this put a great emotional strain on both my brother and myself, he being jealous of the painter (he still gets spasms when he speaks of him this) and I being ashamed for my father.
Several times I ran away from home but could not stay away for long, partly because I had nowhere to sleep and partly because the German police was, as you know, geared to catch up with people through the system of Universal Registration and Identity Cards.* But then, when I was 18 my parents went to Capri with their respective Cicisbeos and I ran away for good. First of all I went to a Tolstoyan settlement in the Taunus Mountains run by a man called Eberhard Arnold. They called themselves 'Christian communists' and their aims were threefold:

1. Return to the land.
2. Communal ownership of everything except for a few private possessions like toothbrushes and so on,
3. The practice of the Biblical saying: 'Do not resist the Evil'.

At that time these people were none too experienced in the cultivation of the land and largely subsisted on money given by a Jew in Frankfurt. But later on, when Hitler drove them out and they came to England, they became so efficient that they aroused the jealousy of their farming neighbours and had to move on to Canada and Brazil. They, and so did I, interpreted the teachings of Christ according to Tolstoy's 'translation' of the New

*Once, early in 1933, when in Muenster the Gestapo was close on my heels, just a few yards away, I saved myself by the unutterably brilliant device of going into the local Mental Hospital as an amnesia case. There I went to ground until the dogs had lost their scent. This shows that I deserved my nickname at school which was 'the Fox',- later on updated to 'Doctor Foxie'. The other two incidentally were 'Der Herr Graf' (the noble count, or His Royal Highness or Little Lord Fauntleroy and 'Der Bonze' (Buddhist priest known for his aloofness from the cares and concerns of other

Testament* which was much better known in Germany than it is in England, because it had appeared in the 'Reclam' Library. After I had left that settlement, I made some further attempts to live like Jesus Christ, which came to an end when in Bremen I was arrested on suspicion of having killed Rathenau and sent home ignominiously under police escort. This story is only brought in to show that when I met the Tolstoyans in 1940 they awoke memories of having lived with them in 1922.

Trouble started soon after I arrived. The country was in a state of mild hysteria expecting a German invasion at any time. The leaping leopard had by some chance left the same day that I arrived. He was apparently a kind of journalist who used to hang about in the "Fighting Cocks", the local pub, writing down what people said. When I took his place all thinking people knew that Hitler had sent one of his best agents, a particularly 'long-headed' man, a real doctor, commensurate to the importance of Godshill in the scheme of things. For was it not exactly the Avon Valley up which Hitler's tanks would roll to reach Salisbury Plain, the heart of the British Military Establishment and had not this Herr Doktor taken up a strategic position in that hut, which would enable him to decide when the ground would be firm enough for the heavy tanks of the Wehrmacht? These profound thoughts first of all led to several visits from the police. These alarmed me because I felt that the mentality of the populace began to resemble that of the Germans in 1933. So I got into contact with a friend of mine who was the second-in-command in the Home Office. He told the Police that (i) Dr. Conze was above suspicion, that (ii) he had done a lot of harm to the Nazis and that (iii) he had been honoured with a special decree which had declared him to be an Enemy of the State, and had deprived him of his nationality, his money and his doctoral

* I cannot identify the English equivalent from the current edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

degree. He could not yet add the further piece of information that at that very time I was put on a Gestapo list giving those people who should be arrested immediately in case the invasion succeeded. The entry in the Sonderfahnungsliste is really quite amusing. It says on p.33 No.67 (just in front of the Head of MI5) Gonze, Edward, Dr. 1869 (my birth year!) Prof. London,R.S.H.A. IV.E.4.*

In any case there was no further trouble from the police after that. In fact, so as to console me, a policeman told me that I should not be unduly worried because there was not one house in the village which had not been denounced by its neighbours to the police as harbouring German agents. This, I thought, threw a curious light on what in Germany we had been taught to consider as an'organic community'.

But the local population knew nothing of all this. They were so incensed that they tried to burn down the wood. The flames were soon put out, but the fire went into the peat and smouldered on for weeks. That Dr. Westlake stood by me and let me stay, borders on the heroic and can never be forgotten. After a time the locals formed a Home Guard and were issued with rifles. They used these to shoot the herons and when I told them to stop that, they threatened me with their guns. If they had been Italians they would have shot me in the back. As they were just ordinary English yokels they were content to bluster along and to slink away when I told them that they were a lot of louts. Having escaped so many dangers, I began to feel that I was being preserved for a great purpose.

* This is the number of the Gestapo file. At times I would rather like to know what is in it. The Americans have got microfilms of all these files and mine seems to have given the State Department a somewhat exaggerated notice of my importance in the C.P. Nor can it have a complete or even tolerably competent file, for it did not contain my party name. Since I refused to give it them the American Secret Service spent more that five years finding it. The official who proudly told me so, added reproachfully that it had cost them a lot of money; to which I replied that I could well believe it because the dollar had been pretty weak lately. In any case they got it right. It thrills me to think that there

cont. p. 32

What was most unpleasant was that nobody dared to give me a job. I was in the habit of playing chess with a man who ran the Labour Exchange in Fordingbridge and he got me a job as a gardener with a maiden lady who had just fired her gardener because he had spent an hour talking over the fence to the neighbouring gardener about the intricacies of the situation in Yugo-Yugoslavia (that must have been in April 1941). After a time she convinced herself that I was a male witch and one day confronted me underneath a tree and showed me a dead bird which I had caused to fall down when it flew over her garden. In fact ever since I had come all the birds who flew over her garden were brought down by the force of my magic. When asked for the remaining dead birds she seemed to think that they had been eaten by the mice. So she fired me and also denounced me to the appropriate authorities for evading Military Service.

This led to some correspondence. There was really no issue. I had a double hernia which the doctors pronounced to be inoperable; in fact, when it had to be operated on in 1969 I nearly died. So Military Service was out of the question. But if I became subject to Military Law they could force me to work in the B.B.C. telling lies to my former countrymen. This seemed to me to be a dishonourable thing to do.

Work as a Conscientious Objector

So I chose to be a Conscientious Objector and after a time had my Tribunal. Its Alice in Wonderland atmosphere makes England such a pleasant place to live in. There were three judges: a local magistrate; a Professor from Cardiff who had written on Plato and was friendly; and a Trade Unionist who was not only unfriendly, but positively vicious. He had been greatly annoyed by "Why War?" and was determined to take revenge

*(cont. from p.31) may well be another Gestapo file floating around with the name of Grosse Ackermann on it. That might be even more interesting than the Conze one.

for it. So the cross-examination proceeded ~~xxxxxx~~ and I took my stand on the Buddhist prohibition of killing. The Trade Unionist pursued the subject to the bitter end and finally said: "Now suppose, Mr. Conze, that you had lice. They are not only unpleasant to you, but also dangerous to other people, for whom as a Buddhist you must surely feel responsible. What would you do?" A man from the back of the hall shouted: "The Germans are not lice", but I was fed-up by then and declared haughtily, "What I would do would be to take a swim in the Avon and hope that they would go." In defiance of all logic, the Chairman at once intoned, "There is no doubt that his is a case of genuine Conscientious Objection and I unconditionally exempt the applicant from Military Service." So I had to explain that this would condemn me to starvation and that I wanted to be made liable to do agriculture. In the end the Tribunal agreed. The expenses of myself and the family had nearly swallowed up all our possessions and at the time we were living on the money from my wonderful collection of Japanese stamps. A job had thus become vitally necessary.

Luck was with me and the Labour Exchange got me a job with a Mrs. Toffanelli, an ex-actress very keen on Astrology, who used me to do the horoscopes of her friends whom she invited to tea. Her husband was a gold-braided commander in the Navy, stationed in Colombo. When on leave he inspected what his wife had acquired and only commented that he had always had a high opinion of Buddhist non-violence in view of the fact that Ceylon had the highest murder rate in the world. He also was a much better gardener than I was. At first I supplemented my income by teaching psychology to the artillery in Ringwood. One day we had a discussion on whether Hitler was mad and I had to say that he clearly was not. This was obviously high treason and when it came to the ears of the Commanding Officer he promptly sacked me, had my hut searched and tried to have me arrested. No one has yet succeeded in finding an outer limit to the stupidity of the British Military caste. Soon the row blew over and I moved on to the more congenial WRNS in Bournemouth. The trouble with that was at first that the buses to

Bournemouth were now and then machine gunned by the Luftwaffe, but after a time this nuisance subsided. I needed a pass to top secret parts of the coastline, but had no difficulty whatever in getting that.

These little anecdotes throw perhaps some sidelights on the way the English faced their greatest crisis and also show the difficulties I had in gaining the seclusion fxmm for my task. One day the Luftwaffe did its bit to isolate me from others. That evening I had a clear vision of my father appearing in the top left hand corner of my hut and telling me to go fire-watching. A few months before the Germans had thrown lots of incendiary bombs which, however, fizzled out harmlessly in the water meadows down below in the Avon Valley. Nevertheless we thought how unpleasant it would be if such bombs were to fall among the thick century-old layers of line needles which covered vast tracts of the wood. So we were issued with tin hats and binoculars and some of us stayed up each night. On that day it was not my turn to go out and I was inclined to ignore the warning. What puzzled me particularly was that I had clearly recognized my father, but that I could not recall one single detail of his visual appearance and that I had clearly understood the message but could not remember whether he had talked to me in English or in German. After some hesitation I took my tin hat and binoculars and went up to Good Friday Hill quite nearby, where the fire-watchers used to be. We talked and I watched the astrologically more interesting constellations,- and then one or two hours later the bomber came. He dropped five explosive bombs, two very near the hut and then went off. The bomb disposal squad came up, decided that the Germans always threw down six bombs of this particular type, that as a methodical action they would have done so also in this case and that therefore there must be an unexploded bomb about. Since they could not find even a trace of one they scattered big notices "AT LEISURE! UNEXPLODED BOMB" all over the wood. I removed two of these and put them into the approach to my hut,

thereby deterring casual intruders.

Everything was now set to enable me to meditate single-mindedly and to practise the spiritual life with the required ruthlessness. I experienced a great elation of the spirit and there is no point in gushing over this. Some of what I learnt in those years I have told in my many books. Other things have been left to private talk and others again I have kept to myself.

It is my opinion that one gets as much out of the spiritual life as one puts into it, that comfort is a deadly poison and that asceticism is of the very essence of the spiritual life. So during my brief heroic period I tried to live up to these ideals at great future cost to my health. In spite of Westlake's warning that no-one had ever lived in these huts in winter and that he was quite willing to install some heating, I insisted that the French contemplatives never heat their buildings and that I had no intention to be any softer than they were. Throughout my entire life I have been a proper Don Quichote and attracted by the heroic and the extraordinary. From early youth onwards I have derived inspiration from Plutarch's "Lives". At the University one of my favourite books was Carlyle's "On Heroes and the Heroic in History". Carlyle is much better known in Germany than I later found him to be in England, partly because his craggy style is less offensive in translation and partly because his admiration for Frederick the Great and his detestation for democracy are more welcome there. Nor must I forget the example of my father whom I have tried to emulate. He was so appalled by life in the Third Reich that he tried to go to Holland. The Nazis at that time bribed bank clerks in Holland to reveal to them accounts of German Nationals. So he had to follow his money back to Germany. He had always seen himself as one of those Stoic administrators of the Roman Empire whose fortitude kept things going in spite of everything. Following a long established pattern he underwent the endura of the perfecti and he refused to eat until he died on March 6th, 1935, in his 61st year, in Bonn, in the very same hospital in which I nearly followed him 34 years later. In view

of such an example I could not falter just because of a few cold nights,

So I was very cold indeed, especially in the winter of 1941 when so many of my countrymen died in the snows before Moscow. By some chance I heard of St. Bernard of Clairvaux,- I think it was he- who had feasted most valiantly in his youth and that in his old age his digestion had been so badly ruined that he crept into the kitchen at night to pinch some chicken legs. I felt that something like this would happen to me also,- and it did. In my seventies I now suffer from angina and bronchitis to such an extent that all I can do is to sit cowardly in a temperature of 70°, shudder at the slightest breath of wind from the East or North and soak myself in Amontillado sherry. I must, I am afraid, also admit that I could sustain my tireless activities only by ceaselessly smoking for fifty years between 15 and 65, mainly cigarettes.*

Psychic, and other, faculties

Unbidden, several psychic faculties came my way. Some of them were quite useful. For instance I knew telepathically whether someone was at the gate of the Sandy Balls Estate, or in the pony shop which Westlake's father-in-law, known as Grandpa, kept just inside that gate. This allowed me to see people without their visiting my hut. Grandpa, incidentally an entirely self-educated person, was a wizard for languages. He deduced from my English accent where in Germany I came from. He said Hagen which is very near indeed to the Hasendenn, a remote farmhouse where

* If I had not smoked I would not have known how much the villagers of Godshill had accepted me by 1942 as one of their own. For the village shop sold me cigarettes under the counter! One day when I had just got several packets of Players, who should come in but my old adversary with the birds and mice. She was told that there were no cigarettes, that for weeks there had been none and that there would be none for quite a time. "Perhaps you can come back and ask at the end of next month." When she had left I asked why this was so and was told,"Well, doctor, we all know that she is a witch and we do not want to have anything to do with the likes of them." In this way also the righteous among the early Christians were vouchsafed a triumphant view of the torments of their fallen foes!

my family have lived for five centuries, with no other company than God above and the hares frolicking around on the Denn.

Another was less useful but more startling. On June 21st 1941 I ran into Dr. Westlake walking in the wood late in the evening. He told me that the stars seemed to show that Hitler would attack that very night. I agreed that with all these planetary conjunctions, especially those of May 10th, that was very likely and added that he would not at ack us, 'in fact, I hear thousands and thousands of planes flying to the East.' Westlake said, "Well, we will see. In any case I hear nothing at all." I listened intently and could not hear anything either. Nevertheless - I had said it, - and the following day we knew that it was true.

This example of clairaudience was further coupled with a spontaneous prophecy because I further said, "Anyway, it will be the Halys river all over again." People with a classical education will know what I meant. Others will not believe the story anyway.

So my mind was stretched in all directions, more than it has been stretched before or since. After a time a man by the name of La Roche, came tothe wood out of the blue, told me that I should not hide away from the world in such a miserly and mean-spirited way, but that I was a Bodhisattva, a princely man who had been sent into life with a mission which he seemed to have forgotten. I also felt that I had gained as much insight as I could bear in my present body or realise in our present social circumstances. In addition my health had been affected by the privations and hardships. The bad food gave me uncontrolled diarrhoea which Westlake cured by making me eat horrible cooked sheep's hearts. I also got trench mouth, an unpleasant and debilitating scorbutic degeneration of the gums which in due course cost me all my teeth.

Move to Oxford

Unfortunately, I am quite incapable of doing anything practical for myself and it remains undone unless a woman does it for me. Miraculously my wife came to life again, asked me to go back to her for the sake of our daughter Jane, and through the good offices of a Quaker friend called Gillett, offered quite a presentable house in Oxford in 26 Plantation Road and a job in the Agricultural Research Institute where I could do my agricultural work by calculating for the Ministry of Agriculture how much subsidy the farmers of Berkshire needed to carry on their food-producing activities. This job was a mere sinecure and the office combined the slovenliness of the Civil Service with the leisureliness of academic life. On the first day I was given a number of large forms from which to calculate the subsidy. Although I had never seen the forms before, I returned an hour later with the results. I was told that I could not possibly have done the work properly and that this was what should have occupied me for the entire day. So I saw the light and spent most of my time in the Bodleian which is just 200 yards away. The Extramural Delegacy of the University were delighted to have such an experienced tutor at their disposal, and I soon did four classes as before. On August 6th 1945 I came back from a class for some troops in Reading. In the train I heard of the atomic bomb. I have a very deep stomach and normally cannot be sick. But on this occasion I vomited straight out of the window. This was again prophetic insight, but this time not of the magical but of the spiritual variety. For at that moment human history had lost its meaning.

Change of wife

Things went fairly well for me at that time, except that I just could not manage to establish tolerable relations between myself and my wife Dorothea. I worked very hard at it, but all I got was a reproduction of the constant bickerings which had marred the lives of my parents. As she grew up our daughter Jane became a perpetual bone of contention. As we grew poorer

and poorer, Dorothea, always anxious about her social position, was increasingly irritated by my unshakeable belief that the Lord will look after his own. True to precedent I escaped into various love affairs which later on figured in my unsuccessful divorce suit of 1962, causing great hilarity in Court and unfavourable comments in the National Press about my allegedly 'Buddhist' attitude to marriage. There was for instance a girl called 'The Logical Blonde' because I taught her logic for her Oxford exams and a girl called Mary with whom I was discovered in flagranti delicto and who thus did me the service of ridding me of the incubus of my marital relationship. Dorothea and I moved on from place to place. First to Dorchester, to a house opposite my future wife. Then we split up and gradually lost sight of each other. For £105 (paid in cash to save Income Tax for the Vendor) I bought an old wooden gypsy caravan, beautifully decorated and placed it into the garden of my bee-keeping friend Tony Howse next to a stream full of watercress belonging to a house suitably called Saffron Close. There I resumed my Godshill way of living but was rather disturbed by the "Queen's Flight" who flew over the caravan and made it vibrate like a violin. In the end I moved on to a field in Drittwell Salome where I was again surrounded by hares in the morning, as my forefathers had been for so long. Unfortunately the water, which came from a hyd hydrant, was suspect and full of frog spawn. When I mentioned this to an Oxford student of mine he told me that I could move the caravan into his father's garden in Dorchester. I did so and there I met his sister Muriel from whom I got my milk supply. On August 8th, 1948 I had a vivid dream which told me that a new woman would enter my life who would rescue me from all my woman-troubles. In the evening of August 9th, we had a walk to Wittenham Clumps (where my ashes will be scattered), we held hands at a stile and we have been together ever since. She it was who gave me the material stability needed to do my extensive Buddhist writing.

Work in Oxford

Work-wise I spent a great deal of time in the Indian Institute and the Bodleian Library. There I was helped by my friend Stooke and also formed a life-long friendship with Arnold Kunst and his wife. He is, as you know, a member of the Polish School of Buddhologists which prospered so well before the War. He had come to work with Prof. Johnson but lost him soon when Prof. Johnson had a heart attack when cycling in 1940. I also struck up a friendship with Prof. F.W.Thomas, a wise old man and a single-minded scholar after my own heart. He had forgotten nearly everything except his Sanskrit which he knew so well that he disdained the use of a dictionary. The Second World War had never reached him, but he was still full of the menace of the German Navy in the First. He could not understand why he could find no-one to mend his lawnmower. In spite of his deafness, he was annoyed by the American planes which buzzed from Brize Norton over his roomy house in Bodicote near Banbury. The only conclusion he drew from this was that they proved against Kant the realistic theory of space - since his ducks looked for the planes in the same direction in which he did. Truly a lovable man without a false or mean thought in his head. He was much more interested in Jainism than in Buddhism and he asked me to collaborate with him in 1946 on a translation of Mallishena's Syādvādamañjarī which appeared in due course in the Akademie-Verlag, Berlin in 1960. More about this can be seen from my prefatory note to that publication. Prof. Thomas died in 1956 and as his literary executor I also published in 1963 for the Royal Asiatic Society his Indices to the Tibetan texts concerning Chinese Turkestan. This collaboration greatly improved my understanding of Sanskrit philosophical terminology. At the same time I took Sanskrit lessons from Prof. Burrow. He is one of those people who are interested in the language as such and who deplore that it should have been used to express so many ideas which are not worth considering. He tried to teach me how to translate from English into Sanskrit. My talents do not lie in

that direction and the pages came back one sea of red ink. This may explain some of the howlers in my later publications which nearly always concerned Sandhi or Elementary Grammar. Other friends were found among the 'Black Friars'. They are so called because they are Dominicans who wear white robes. Some of them were interested in some kind of synthesis between Buddhism and Catholicism ('we must absorb Buddhism just as St.Thomas absorbed Aristotle'), and in this way I was brought back to the days of Suarez and the perennial philosophy. I saw much also of the Sinologue Hughes - who by his example showed me how not to translate Oriental texts,- and of William Cohn who had come from Berlin only shortly before the War. He was a truly delightful man and had none of the traits which make the chosen people so hated wherever they go. He had just had a big success with his book for Phaidon, on Chinese Art, and he attempted to persuade the Ashmolean Museum to open a section on Oriental Art. In the end the charm of his personality prevailed over the hide-bound Provincialism of Oxford which believed that there could be no art outside Greece and Rome and their derivatives.

The gestation of "Buddhism"

As our friendship deepened Dr. Cohn suggested that I should write a book on "Buddhist Art" and a contract was signed with Bruno Cassirer on April 14th, 1948 for a book on'The Evolution of Buddhist Thought and its Reflection in Art'. The production of the book was greatly furthered by my meeting with a girl student called Juliet Bolton whose horoscope harmonised with mine in everything except the Venus. So we could sit up until the early hours of the morning in the room in Wellington Square which I had inherited from the 'Logical Blonde', and that without distractions or complications. After the usual delays the book appeared in October, 1951 and there endeth the second part of this story.

Reflections on my life so far

Some time ago I copied out a short poem by Yeats which admirably describes the way I look back on my life at the age of 73. Here it is:-

"The work is done," grown old, he thought,
According to my boyish plan,
Let the fools rage, I swerved in naught,
Something to perfection brought;"
But louder sang that ghost,
"What then?" "

In other words I feel like the cat who has eaten the canary but who has same vague forebodings about what will happen when the master comes home.

To sum up,, my account of the years beteen 1904 and 1949 is truthful in the sense that it contains no statement which I know to be factually untrue. I may be weak on some dates, but the essence is always as accurate as I can make it. At the same time I have left out all the details of my political activities; all the more or less stirring incidents of my love life; the two events in my life of which I am still ashamed; and a description of the steadying effect of my hobbies, such as gardening, walking and stamp collecting. Out of deference to your rationalist convictions I have also left out the astrological background which would reveal this medley of apparent chance occurrences as an intricate and harmonious filigree pattern.

When I try to think of the factors which enabled me to become a Buddhist scholar I find the following: Unusual innate intellectual ability is only part of the story. I have also had the good fortune to be able to devote my entire life to continuous and almost unbroken studying and have kept up my one-man monastery through thick and thin. Material help has always emerged when it was needed. Pressure from outside has invariably made me more obstinate. As my mother used to say: - Mit Dem Kopp Durch Die Wand. As the son of a rich family I have been indifferent to money. To my

surprise there has always been enough of it. As the son of a good family (kulaputra) I have never bothered about public opinion, which, as the voice of the Canaille seemed unworthy of attention. As the son of a powerful family I have always shunned the contamination of power and tried to make myself small. This had the disadvantage that some people thought that they had to deal with a contemptible rabbit and acted accordingly. They soon found out that it would have been ~~mmmmm~~ wiser to tread on a cobra hatching her eggs. The downfall of one of them, Mr. Hodgkin, head of the Extramural Delagacy in Oxford, one of the Oxford Mandarins, who wilfully tried to crush me, began one day when the War Office enquired of Oxford University why he had sent Communist Sympathisers as teachers to the Sudan. By no stretch of the imagination could he have connected this enquiry with this ex-Polshie, ex-Gonchie, ex-Hun victim of his. In due course he found all his avenues closed and had to leave England and go to his friend Nkrumah in Ghana. Nor has he been the only one. Mañjuśrī, as you know, does have his sword,- and at times he needs it!

Another priceless asset has been that no one who sees me ever believes that I can possibly mean what I say. Once in Bonn I overheard a conversation in a neighbouring Seminar room. They were talking about me, saying how intelligent I was and how unbelievably learned, but that all this was spoiled by an incurable frivolity. They concluded that I could not be taken seriously, that I told far too many jokes all the time and seemed to laugh at everything and everybody. Such instinctive self-effacement has some survival value and may have had something to do with my ability to tell this story now. On the other hand it also has its disadvantages. In 1946, when materially I was at a very low ebb, I was in Oxford invited to tea by Mr. Spalding who wanted to found an Oriental library and thought of employing me as one of his the Librarians. During the conversation he assured me that the English as a nation were morally very superior to the Germans as a nation. I let that pass but he insisted on my specifically

agreeing to this thesis asa condition of the appointment. So I looked at him and thought of the nobility of my father,- a German,- compared with this rich hypocritical toad who tried to gain some significance from his ill-gained money by buying people intellectually superior to himself. Later on Mr. Henderson, the administrator of the Spalding Trust, told me that Spalding before his death had put a clause into his Will that under no circumstances should the Trust give any help to Dr. Conze, because his interest in Buddhism was not a serious one. The world knows otherwise.

More important still, non-attachment was fostered by various causes. A Tibetan proverb tells us that if you want to know the meaning of non-attachment you should grow up in one country and live in another. This was brought home to me in England again and again, particularly in Oxford. In that University Jews with German names are easily accepted, but actual Germans have a thin time. The only two who made a success of it owed it to outside influence, Max Mueller to thePrince Consort and the Court of Windsor, Lindemann to Winston Churchill. The previous account of my life also shows that I have never been allowed to settle down anywhere and that again and again some catastrophe has pulled up the ground from underneath my feet. The first catastrophe was the Inflation which ate up all the money which my grandparents had put into War Loan so as to enable me to lead an academic life free of financial cares and to subsist as a Privat Dozent (then unpaid) for any length of time. The second was in 1933 when by going to England I lost everything. . The third was in 1941/42 when I again lost everything. And even now that I live in comfortable retirement in Sherborne, I am faced by a double catastrophe, first a galloping inflation and then the imminent Nuclear War. When I think of President Carter I sigh for the Emperor Caligula. Less moral, he was also less powerful. The very same people who at that time longingly raved for the destruction of the world by fire have now perfected the material means of bringing it about. Their odium generis humani will swallow us all. And who will

then read all the clever books I have written in my long life?

In some ways I have been like the chkravartin who moves across the earth without ever touching it at any place. Throughout my life I have been a stranger on this earth and never felt at home anywhere. Nor have I ever found anyone who was completely congenial or whom I could trust altogether. It may be that I am just a misfit and have failed to become socially integrated. But then I do not feel a misfit and the people who are socially integrated do in my mind sometimes resemble pigs in a pigsty chumming up with other pigs. From early times onwards it has been my conviction that I have come from a higher realm, that my great knowledge of Mahayana cannot be explained by what I could study in this life, but is based on my memory of what I learnt before and that I was sent to the Western barbarians so as to soften their hearts by teaching them the Holy Prajñāpāramitā. Whether I was sent here because I was particularly naughty or particularly tough, I could not say. It is obvious that I will not live very much longer and that soon I will know whether there is nothing at all after death or whether I will re-awaken to some angelic realm which I had to leave I do not know why. This kind of reasoning may seem to you to be totally absurd, but it has been my principal conscious motive in taking up Buddhist studies and persevering in them through untold difficulties. I leave it to a future positivistic and reductional biographer to find the requisite disreputable motives for my deeds and am content to refer you to what I have said on this in "Buddhist Thought in India" (pp.45-46). We have heard of Conze; we have heard of Ackermann; but was there perhaps a third name, like Ston-Pa-Ñid-La Mos-Pa, that is what we would wish to know, Sapienti Sat.

Those who have seen how this saga unfurls
Now know how the oysters give birth to their pearls.

d. First contact with Marxism, and later doubts about it.

My first contact with Marxism happened quite "by chance". In our Duesseldorf gymnasium the top form had been divided into two streams, called 'A' and 'B'. The 'A' stream contained the sons of good families, the 'B' stream the children of the lower middle classes, whom the new Republic, with the help of Government grants, wished to partake of a higher education. I was tolerably happy in 'A' where five of us formed a gang who usually walked and acted together (a boy called Neese was the one I liked most). In those days you were seated according to your grades, and I always sat at the farthest end of the room in either the first or the second place. The spirit of rebellion, constantly nourished by the emotionally intolerable home atmosphere, often made me kick over the traces, and the tolerance of my teachers was greatly strained. One day I went too far. It was a Latin lesson; everything taught was known to me, and I got bored; so I read surreptitiously the "Decameron", which was underneath my Latin text. In itself this might have passed unnoticed if I had not felt impelled to tell my neighbour about a particularly wtriking passage. Suddenly the teacher came up to me, snatched up the book and told me that I was herewith expelled from 'A' and would have to go to 'B'. Thinking of all the good friends I was about to lose I wept profusely. In a way this began my expulsion, and separation from my social class which has remained permanent.

In the new 'B' stream I found myself in company of all sorts of rough characters with whom I had nothing in common. Though I still remember a tall lanky boy called Jaeschke who was good at physics and whom we all teased and cuffed because he never washed his neck. He later on became prominent in the Gestapo in Paris, and I was glad that I had gone to England.

The whole episode was so distasteful to me that it is almost a complete blank in my memory. Except for Pritskoleit, who radically changed my outlook on life. He was the son of an elementary school teacher and a Marxist*. In Duesseldorf the different classes of Society lived in different quarters of the town. We in what is known as a Villenviertel, and the others somewhere else. Normally we saw none of the poor in their homes. This was partly because our mother forbade all close contact with children who spoke badly, had deplorable habits, and harboured fleas, lice and manyfold infectious diseases. It was also because it never occurred to one to go into working class quarters. Whatever for?** Nevertheless Pritskoleit once or twice took me home, and I was really shocked how bare everything was, how poorish the furniture and food, how deprived the whole life-style, how lean, embittered and depressed the father and mother. It was he who introduced me to the basic ideas of Marxism, and they have never left me. It is not that I have particularly welcomed them as seemingly perpetual tenants within my head, and it may well be that they cling to me like so many limpets. But without them I would not be the man I have been, nor would I have done the work I have done, or understood

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* He may well have kept this up later on if he is the Pritskoleit who after the War wrote a book about the distribution of wealth in Germany, probably complaining about it. The name indicates that he belonged to one of the Slavonic minorities left behind in the East of Germany by the Teutonic advance (like the Kaschuben) and that in itself would give him a chip on the shoulder.

** Later on in my Der Satz vom Widerspruch, I formulated a theory of Social Blindness to indicate that one class of the population has not the remotest idea of how the other lives, thinks, or feels, and fills the vacuum with totally unfounded imaginations. I regarded this as an important contribution not only to sociology, but also to the elucidation of the Buddhist concept of ignorance, and I regret that so far it seems to have passed unnoticed.

the historical developments of my time as well as I did, foreseeing everything correctly before it happened and that is why in my Memoirs I must speak about my attitude to Marxism. Some time ago I had a visit from Prof. Trevor-Roper of Manchester which at last made this issue clear to me: Like many other widely used words "Marxism" has acquired quite a number of distinct meanings. Two, in particular must be clearly distinguished:

1. Marxism as the scientific discovery of the mechanisms, or rather the dialectics, of Capitalist Society. Here a parallel from the natural sciences may help. One hundred years after the publication of Galileo's Due massime sistemi (1632) it was generally recognised by the more intelligent people that he had discovered the basic laws of mechanical movement, and the result was known as "mechanics" and not as "Galileism". There was an Aristotelean rearguard who complained about unfair infiltration by new and subversive ideas, and muttered into their beards about the bad personal character of Galileo and his vicious behaviour to all and sundry. They also pointed out that all his ideas without exception were unoriginal and borrowed from others, going back as far as the Paris Nominalists of the Middle Ages. But irresistably it became clear to everyone in the end that Galileo had made a positive addition to human knowledge which nothing could take away again. It is the same with the social sciences ~~essentially~~ a century after the publication of Das Kapital (1867), and I have no need to labour the comparisons.

2. Marxism as a surrogate (see Rogers) for religion. Going back to 1732 we find that a number of ideologues have taken hold of these discoveries so as to build up a Weltanschauung which explains all the riddles of the Universe to their own satisfaction. They used the mechanical model for the purpose of making confident statements about the living body, the human

soul, and the social system. This is just so much froth. The same thing has happened to Marxism. My allegiance is to the scientific discoveries alone which have become part of the knowledge accepted by all educated people everywhere, whatever the Birchites may say, or the blue-painted daughters of grocers. As a result I have always forseen everything which happened during my life and have swum with the current of history.

If I were asked whether my "chance" encounter with Fritsko-leit has diverted me from my predestined course I would answer with an emphatic "no". Like most other "chance" events it has kept me on the path I was meant to take. Because, if I was meant to help in the introduction of the Mahayana into the West, then I would in Bolshevism have found a movement very much akin to the Mahayana, - in its concern for the masses, in the dialectical nature of its thinking, and in its desire to perform heroic deeds which have miraculous results*. In addition many upper class Germans flocked into the CP at that time without having heard of Fritz Kolbe. To join the party was like shooting partridges in England. In 1932, on the very same day that Von Hammerstein-Equord was appointed chief of the Reichswehr, two of his children conspicuously

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* The Mensheviks, especially Martov, continually complained that the Bolsheviks acted against the basic tenets of Marxism. According to them the political organisation of a country is a weak superstructure dependent on the economic basis of that country. If Bolsheviks now tried to change the fundamental character of the economy by political decisions that was just impossible. Bukharin conceded the point, but added, - "We will do it just because it is impossible. What we will do is to perform miracles", and that is what they have done. Likewise we read in the Abhisamayalankara that it is impossible for anyone to combine compassion and wisdom in equal proportions. The text adds, - and that is why the Bodhisattva will do it, because he is an heroic spirit who can work miracles.

joined the CP. In 1929 in the District Leadership in Cologne everything was done by the sons of the bourgeoisie. One of us, an unusually haggard specimen who had some kind of lung disease, came from a coal-owning family in the Saar, and during hunger demonstrations could be relied upon to be in the forefront showing how the bourgeoisie treated their starving workers. Our only two proletarians were called "Sommer" and "Winter", - they had to go to gaol for the indiscretions of our newspaper, the one in Summer and the other in Winter.

So I moved into Marxism at a time when it was a fashionable thing to do. The difference is that I did not leave in the late 40's. At that time a lot of Jews rose up like a flock of noisy rooks croaking along and telling us that their God had once again failed them. They are not as representative as they wish us to think. If they could be prevailed upon to speak and write in Hebrew only, the rest of us would have an occasional chance of being heard. For the rest I know only too well that my political views, though well-informed, well-expressed and well-argued are not worth very much, because they are largely inspired by contraryness, a very basic character trait. At present I have to listen each day to unceasing prattle about the virtues of democracy which reminds me of nothing so much as the beating of the war drums*. In consequence I took great delight in a recent heading in The Times, i.e. "Mental Patients As Capable of Voting as Ordinary Electors Government Told". In 1918 when I was in a school run by a Dr. Stoy in Jena, my environment would have been

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* Compared with the Goddess of Democracy the Carthaginian Moloch almost resembled an inoffensive vegetarian swamin.

definitely anti-democratic. In consequence I must have argued in favour of democracy, as shown by the following incident. In the French Class a grammatical point was discussed; there were two possibilities and everyone was asked what they thought. Only Eberhard Conze and no-one else got it right. Whereupon the teacher triumphantly addressed me and said, "Herr Conze, now you see where you get with your democratic ideas of One Man One Vote". I was abashed and still am.

I will now tell of the four incidents which undermined my faith in Marxism to such an extent that after 1933 I did little to promote it. Why I did nothing against it will become clear when we come to my American adventures (see esp. II 1 e).

(1) The first doubt arose in 1929-30 in connection with the theoretical basis of Marxist economics, i.e. the Labour Theory of Value. It was implanted into me by Prof. Joseph Alois Schumpeter, a world famous economist at the University of Bonn. He was a quite unusually intelligent man from Moravia. Since he had some Jewishness about him he was wise to move on to Harvard as early as 1932. He befriended me, enjoyed putting fleas into my ears, and also liked to hear from me what contemporary Marxists thought about things. He drew my attention to a serious weakness in the Marxist explanation of surplus value, i.e. : The profit of the entrepreneur contains some element of wages, however small it may be. Though he may do little, he at least does something. Engels, who had toiled for many years at Ermen & Engels in Manchester shrugged off the problem by saying that everybody could do this kind of work and that it amounted to almost nothing. Schumpeter now argued that only very few people had the gifts to be entrepreneurs and that their remuneration had therefore to be very high because the price of rare commodities bears no real proportion to that of commodities which can be reproduced at will by expending

human labour. The price of zinc is largely determined by the cost of the labour needed to produce it; butnot so that of a painting by Rembrandt. He concluded from this that we would never be able to keep up our virtuous practice according to which even the highest functionary in the Party could be paid no more than, I think, double (or three times?) the wage of a skilled worker. As soon as we really began to understand the problems of running a modern economy we would be forced to pay enormous differentials so as to get those few who had the peculiar gifts needed for managing industry. By 1960 this had clearly happened in the Soviet Union. When in Moscow I wanted to visit a particular district I was told that this would be inadvisable, because it was 'they' who lived there, and 'they' did not like people to snoop about where 'they' lived. So this was the Villenviertel of my younger days, only in 'proletarian'.

Schumpeter's arguments, which strike at the very foundation of Marxism, appealed to me not so much because they were logically conclusive. I have never paid much attention to logical reasoning but prefer direct observation, and here my social background provided plenty of evidence. The Conzes, Colsmans, Koettgens, Schniewinds, Seyfferts, and so on, among whom I grew up, did their business through family firms which are in Germany called Kommanditgesellschaften. They have great advantages; for instance profit is taxed only once, whereas in Limited Liability Companies the State first taxes the company for the profit and then the shareholder for the dividend. There are, however, two disadvantages; the owners are liable for losses with their private fortune, and they must be members of the family. This system soon revealed that many of our relatives, however gifted they might be in other ways, were catastrophic business managers. One could see this in the silk-dyeing business of my maternal

grandfather, who had in my boyhood played now and then with the idea of training me to take over the business, but soon decided that I was unutterably hopeless. When he died no-one could be found, but a relative who had gone bankrupt in England. He, in turn, had two sons. The brighter of the two set himself up in a garage in Bochum and prospered. A few years after the other had taken over the firm it went bankrupt. I remember clearly the state of affairs when I stayed in the Quellenthal (then largely commandeered for refugees) shortly after the War. The young Koettgen was stupid, cowardly and, worst of all, he had no judgement. He was afraid to go into the factory because the workers were cantankerous. The very sound of my mother's voice reduced him to pulp. And he had just been persuaded by distant relatives of ours, called Von Waldthausen, to buy a coal mine. He regarded this as a real master stroke, because at that time there was a shortage of coal. Everybody with the slightest common sense, including myself, pointed out to him that, Germans being Germans, there would soon be plenty of coal and that also the 'Von' in one's name did not necessarily guarantee that there would be much coal left in this particular mine (and so it turned out). This is just one of countless examples which shows that entrepreneurs, though perhaps not quite as rare as Rembrandt's paintings, are at least as rare as the paintings of the masters in general. If one has a Society which requires their peculiar talents one has to pay for them through one's nose. The anarchist streak in my nature is inclined to add that in that case it might be better to think up a different kind of society altogether.

(2) After this doubt I will mention a shock which happened at about the same time. I then was the boss ('Political Leader') of the Bonn Party. One evening we had assembled, found the agenda was over in no time, and had nothing to do. So I

proposed that we should discuss what life would be like under socialism. This was strictly 'verboten', because it came under the heading of "Utopian Socialism" which had been refuted (Ueberwunden) by Marx and Engels eighty years ago. Nevertheless I did, as usually, what I had been told not to do, and I have never regretted it. The debate proceeded rather sluggishly, resembling only the difficulties which Buddhists have in discussing Nirvana, incidentally another forbidden topic! So to inject some life into the discussion I referred to a well-known passage in Engels Antiduehring, and said that we would try to do without luxuries, so that people should spend as little time as possible on soul-destroying toil, and have more leisure for the cultivation of their minds. "What we plan to do is to reduce the working day to two hours". Well, this was the spark that lit the flames! A woman functionary asked pointedly whether there would be any silk stockings in the Socialist Society. Now this was for once a remark anyone could understand, and everybody became visibly interested. One must remember that while we were definitely eager to carry out the wishes of the working people, we effectively prevented them from speaking their minds by using a phraseology in which no working man could feel at home, full of such terms as "the Contradictions of Capitalism", "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat", "Lumpenproletariat", or "Democratic Centralism". As compared with all that one at least knew where one was with the subject of 'silk stockings'. Unaware of the peril I was in, I replied to the girl, "No, under Socialism there will be no silk stockings". Before I could substantiate this decision she angrily burst out "So that is what we get from having intellectuals like you telling us all the time what to do! There you are, thinking you are God knows who! And why? Because your family have sweated the workers to make for them

these very silk stockings which now suddenly we no longer want. The Herr Doktor brings along silk stockings and gives them to his mattresses* for services rendered. And when the time comes when at last we all can get such things as silk stockings (so far confined to your relations and harlots) people like you decree that there will be none. If that is Socialism I want to have none of it**" With that the dams burst and for once I heard our working class members speaking their minds. What they wanted was what the bourgoisie had always had - fine food, fine houses, fine clothes, fine cars, fine everything. "You, Comrade Conze, have always had these things and we can well understand that you have got bored with them; but we have never had them and we want to get them. That is what we mean by Socialism." This evening was not easily forgotten.

Thirty years later, in Moscow, I had another instance of this tension between the intentions of the Communist elite and the aspirations of actual working people. A Member of the Polit Bureau had visited the Embassy of Ceylon. All I remember of him is that in some way he was the thirteenth, that he represented Kazakstan, and that he was fired a few months later for some untoward happenings in his fief. Since I had

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* German: Matratzen. This is working class German for Maitressen, mistresses. There had been indeed one or two cases of such gifts to deserving Party workers, but not to her. She did not have the special qualifications required.

** This reminds us of Arthur Scargill after a visit to Bulgaria, saying, "If this is Communism, they can keep it!"

to go to the Institute of Asian Studies in the Armyansky Per which was on his way back to the Kremlin, he was asked to take me with him. With the hammer and sickle fluttering in front of us we roared in his chauffeur-driven car across some very wide roads (which seemed less impressive later on after I had been to Chicago and San Francisco), on a special lane where the milizia saw to it that we did not have to wait at traffic junctions. He spoke excellent German and since I still knew how to use the Marxist jargon we got on well. He asked me the usual question of what I thought of "The Socialist Achievements of the Soviet Union". I gave the by then usual reply that I was kept too busy at my Orientalist Congress to have had time to study those "Socialist Achievements of the Soviet Union". He then reminded me that we were given plenty of opportunities to study scheduled hospitals, schools, factories, and what not. I considered this remark an insult to my intelligence, and looked out of the window of the car. He asked, - "I hope that you like our wide roads"; to which I said, "Yes, I think they are very admirable. And what I particularly like about them is that there are no bloody cars on them." This hit him unintentionally on a weak spot, because he himself had told me that the USSR would "overtake the USA by 1965", "If they did not attack us first", and this desire to produce more junk than even the USA seemed to have taken the place of the aspirations which had once led me into the CP. So, insensitive to irony as most people seem to be, he told me that "we could have as many cars as the USA, but we do not want to have them. We have been to the USA where everybody is dashing about from place to place, making a frightful noise and stink in the process. We think people should learn to stay at home and be content with what they have got", and to his great surprise I gave my hearty blessing to his point of view. In fact the

patron saint of our house in recent years has been Sheikh Yamani. But what has happened? The virtuous commissars have been overruled by the people they rule over, and Fiat is spewing hundreds of thousands of cars each year into the Soviet economy. And why? Because the despotism of Stalin's days has been relaxed. This shows to me that, as I had thought originally, Socialism requires the despotic rule of a virtuous and disinterested elite. There can be no democratic Socialism because there is no limit to the greed and improvidence of the masses. To some extent this has been our difficulty in England, and also in China the problem has remained so far unsolved.

(3) Next we have the story of how I helped to abolish the Municipal Brothels in Cologne. Chronologically this happened before the other two events, but the message took longer to sink in. At that time I was an Agit Prop and occasionally went to help out in our newspaper. One morning I was dreaming away at my desk when a Comrade showed me a report from Russia sent by a technician who had gone to work there,and asked me what I thought of it. I glanced through it and told him that it seemed to be alright, and that it was in any case favourable enough to be printed. He drew my attention to the kilos of meat which this man and his family allegedly consumed per month and pointed out that divided by thirty that would give about 2.8 kilo of meat per day per person. So I told him to find out how much meat a person can eat per day, to subtract 20% and to put in that new figure. Nevertheless the incident left a bad taste behind and I could not shake off the feeling that this man (familiar with illegality) intended to tell us something which was probably none-too-pleasant. These thoughts were cut short by a young woman coming into the room and

flinging on to my desk the belt of a Nazi Storm Trooper, adding a watch rather more gently. She turned out to be a prostitute and these were the belongings of Dr. Ley who had some days ago left them as security for the payment which had failed to materialise. Dr. Robert Ley (1890-1945), was, of course, the boss of the Nazi Party in Cologne and quite high up in Hitler's gangsterdom. I accepted this gift with mixed feelings, sent her off and called a meeting to discuss what to do. Some of the comrades were not at all keen on doing anything, and felt that we had no reason to act as the guardians of bourgois morality. Others feared that this was some kind of trick which might harm us in due course. But the vast majority thought that this was an absolute God-send. And that for two reasons: (1) The Nazi paper the Westdeutsche Beobachter had for weeks conducted the most fascinating campaign against a Jewish Butcher's shop in the centre of Cologne who also ran a restaurant. They had told many tales of filthy and unhygienic conditions and just at that time had scored a hit with the story of a popular boxer, - it may even have been the great Max Schmeling - finding half a mouse in a pie he had been offered in that restaurant. Now at last we had something equally newsworthy. And so it turned out, because when some time later we brought out our paper with the gigantic headline "Dr. Ley Im Puff"* our sales soared astronomically and continued to do so for weeks as we developed the various aspects of this non-event which soon overshadowed Max Schmeling's half mouse. (2) And secondly, in Cologne the votes of male and female voters were recorded

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* Dr. Ley in the Bawdy House". The last word should be monosyllabic but in Rogets I can only find "stew" which would be too ambiguous.

separately and showed that the Centre Party and the Nazis got more women than men, whereas we got very few women indeed. So we thought that this imbalance might be to some extent corrected if the women voters knew what this Dr. Ley thought about the "sanctity of the family".

Accordingly we decided to take action, but first to find out what the actual facts were. I was one of those detailed to ascertain them. I had never so far bothered my head about the brothels of Cologne, because in these matters I preferred to rely on enthusiastic amateurs who were certainly cheaper and healthier, and also probably more satisfactory. What I now saw was a short street of old houses in the Old City near the Rhine (it must have been flattened out in the air raids) which were entirely given over to prostitution. We soon made friends with everybody and joined in the drinking of bottled beer and the playing of Skat with a few of the girls who were off work, and with the policemen who were somehow hanging about the place. We goton very well with everybody until one day I made a mistake. Dr. Ley had sued us and I had brought a girl secretary along to take down depositions of witnesses. This was distinctly naive. The moment she appeared there were violent hoots and jeers from all windows at the same time, and I was told that this was just not done. With some difficulty I found a man who could take shorthand.

As Marxists we were of course trained to look everywhere for the property relationships, and while we were chatting along we found out that these brothels belonged to the Municipality of Cologne, popularly known as Holy Cologne (Das Heilige Koeln). This caused us unmitigated joy because that Municipality was

firmly controlled by the Centre Party and its pious Roman Catholic priests. Our CP Councillors had so far mainly obstructed everything by throwing ink bottles or banging with the tops of their desks. Now they were given the task of wooing the women's vote by demanding the abolition of these brothels. It took some time to find out the actual facts which were as successfully hidden in the Budget as later on the facts about Vietnam in the Budget of the USA. Through my work on scholastic philosophy I knew some of the Roman Catholics personally, and they tried to persuade me to desist, by telling me that most of the proceeds of these lucrative enterprises were used for cultural purposes such as the building up of libraries. Not only was I under Party discipline, but I actually thought that I was doing good because I had become really incensed at the way in which these poor girls were pushed around by everybody. In the end we forced an open vote in the local Parliament and the City decided to close its Municipal brothels.

As I should have known if I had been older, and more experienced, the results were none-too-good. In their brothels they had twice weekly been examined for VD. Now that they had been scattered all over the place, this could be done only if and when they were arrested. In consequence many people got VD who would not have got it otherwise. As for the dignity of these females which so much agitated my heart, they were no longer the victims of brutish and unimaginative small-time officials, but instead they fell into the hands of pimps and rapacious landladies. As I have said before, at that time I still studied with Prof. Max Scheler whom I greatly admired. One day we were walking along the Hohestrasse where we were constantly accosted by hungry tarts. After a time he turned to me, and said, "I hope Herr Conze, that you are pleased with

your handiwork". Coming from such a source this remark has burnt itself into my mind until this very day.

It had been one of the attractions of Marxism that, "so far philosophers have only re-interpreted the world ~~in different ways~~, whereas the real task is to change it". It gave one the impression that one was doing something. In the intervening years it has become increasingly clear to me that it is very difficult to do anything whatsoever without doing some harm at the same time. Even the best of intentions do not protect you from causing mischief as became clear from my Cologne activities. In my Tutorial Classes I used to ask the students whether they could think of any action that was indubitably beneficial. As good Britons they invariably mentioned Florence Nightingale. They were dismayed to hear that the effect of Florence Nightingale's work was to make Wars last longer until the Nations nearly fell to pieces (as in 1918 and 1945). Before her 'reforms' Armies melted away from epidemics and soldiers could fight only once! Now one could no longer rely on the germs and surgeons to remove them, but had to wait for the bullets of the enemy. And many of the wounded could be patched up to fight another day. In consequence Wars became more disastrous than before. Even the achievements of a man like Pasteur have now become questionable. Before his days we dealt with germs by surrendering a number of our people and developing anti-bodies which gradually tamed them. Now we just kill, and this war on the germs will cost us dearly. There are far too many of us, and some truly grand culling will have to take place. In addition once the defences have broken down the effect of the germs will be as devastating as the smallpox was on the Red Indians, or the common cold on the Polynesians. We

no longer know where we are, and it is difficult to rejoice in the Marxist conception of social engineering and the idea of treating vast masses of people as the "raw material of history". Increasingly by prolonged meditations on the first precept I have come to the conclusion that one must at all costs try to respect the right of everything to be what it is, and that interference of any kind is paid for heavily in the end.
(4) This leads me to my fourth point, - the conclusion which I drew from my visit to the Soviet Union in 1960. I had seen and experienced so much that on my return I knew no more what to think. My main reaction was that of one vast sadness and a deep feeling of sympathy with the Soviet people. When reporting to Mr. Sutton of the IOL, who had sent me as a delegate, I said in passing that "in any case I think that Socialism in the Soviet Union is as dead as mutton". A few days later he rang me to say that he had mentioned this remark to a friend in the MI5 who would like to see me and whether I would be willing to tell him in my office the reasons for my statement. Remembering my duties as a citizen of the country which saved my skin in 1933 I made an appointment and before that came about I had, of course, to organise my chaotic memories in such a way as to produce an intelligible conclusion. It was this:

When I went to the Soviet Union I expected the unexpected, remembering that the Liberté and Egalité of 1789 had by 1793 begotten the Fraternité of Robespierre and then later on twenty years of Napoleonic Wars had devastated Europe and reduced the height of French recruits by two inches. So I was not at all surprised that I could not see much "Socialism", either in the Social system or the mentality of the people: Often I was inclined to believe with Pasternak that the Russian

Revolution had never taken place, a belief independently formulated by my friend Prof. Basham who, another ex-Communist, looking around him in Moscow said that all this would be just the same if the Tzar had stayed on, or Kerenski had won, or Kolchak, or anybody else. Since I was unwilling to admit that my Marxist days might have been entirely wasted I asked myself, - what then has Communism actually achieved?

It has achieved two things: (1) It has conferred a military advantage on those who adopt it. Just as 150 years ago the bourgeois armies for a time beat feudal armies, so up to now Communist armies have defeated Capitalist armies. (2) It has enabled Nations to regain their ancestral soul. The hectic culture that we have had in Europe has been bought by the systematic destruction of all other cultures over the last 450 years. By the end of the 19th century we stood alone in our over-towering eminence, lost faith in our own cultural values and were overtaken by the spirit of nihilism. This led to the senseless massacres of the First World War, to the equally senseless bestialities of the Second World War, and may well lead to the elimination of about 1-2000 million people in the near future. It was the genius of Lenin to have seen that the First World War meant the moral abdication of European leadership. Ever since the 18th century countries like Russia under Peter the Great, or Japan under the Meiji dynasty had sought protection from the European onslaught by adopting some of our ways. After 1917 Marxism-Leninism has given non-European countries just enough of an inoculation with European thought to enable them to shake off their bondage to the liberal democratic thinking of the European bourgeoisie and to revert to their own ancestral ways. For there can be no doubt

that what I encountered in the Soviet Union was Mother Russia, as she had been for 800 years at least. The same thing happened in China. And even in Germany, so I am told, the Communist part has preserved much more of the traditional German values, whereas the West is a province of America also in its culture. Be that as it may, my visit to Russia led to my final parting from Communism. The two things I spoke of are surely worth while, but they were not what I had striven for when I had joined in 1928.

f. Providence and my friend Dr. Diederichs.

In Part I we have seen that much is happening all the time, though I myself never really do anything. I sit about in apparent passivity, and things happen tome, caused apparently fortuitously by unconnected agents from the outside and yet the result is as if I had planned and designed it all myself. In fact my life has from early years onwards been governed by an inflexible faith in Providence. Whenever I have to take a decision I spend a vast amount of care on determining "the Will of God". This is done partly by magical means, such as a study of astrological transits or the flight of birds, and so on, and partly by complicated spiritual exercises by which I try to abolish my own private preferences and desires. The ordinary ignorant worldling imagines that if a man ceases to have thoughts he will just fall asleep. Those trained in yoga will know that he sets free a realm of quiet Calm which was within him all the time. Likewise the ordinary ignorant worldling imagines that if he surrenders himself passively to the outside forces which surround him, he will perish and get lost. In fact he will find himself, and achieve everything he sought to achieve. For he does not interfere with his Guardian Angel. It is, of course, in our chaotic times easier to act upon such principles than to formulate them. Owing to the decrepitude of all traditions we are without a language in which to speak of Holy things, or even of important things. I like to speak of "Providence" because of the Stoic and Christian influences on my life. In other moods I prefer to speak of "Fate", following the example of my otherwise unphilosophical maternal grandfather with whom I spent many happy days at his beautiful house named 'Quellenthal' inLangenberg, and who used to say ever so often, "Et kuett wie et kuett", which is German

dialect for "It comes as it comes". The "Will of God" goes back to my Calvinist ancestors, "Destiny" to my study of the early Greeks, and of course "karma" can also be brought in at this point.

This new confusion of tongues was once brought home to me forcibly in Grinnell, Iowa. At that time, John A. T. Robinson's 1963 book, "Honest to God" had taken the faculties of philosophy and religion in America by storm and everybody was talking about it. The whole afternoon I had to listen to arguments like this one; We cannot say that God is "up there", because this remark gave sense only when people thought the earth to be flat. Now that we are ever so sophisticated and know that the earth is round, we also know that for Australians "up there" is what is "down there" for us.* All I could say in reply to this argument was that it is so incredibly silly as to be unanswerable. Later in the evening I had intended to fly back to Madison in one of those creaky old Viscounts which were then used for local transport in that part of the world. Before I left Grinnell Muriel rang up, and told me not to fly because there were heavy storms on the way particularly over the Lakes. The argument went to and fro, and in the end I settled it with the remark, "Of course I will fly today. Our lives are in the hands of God". When I had said this I reflected that I had not only asserted the existence of a God in whom I did not really believe, but also had attributed hands to this very God. In

* I would have thought that Australians with their well-known addiction to beer and social equality would have little use for any kind of God, whether "up there", or "Down there".

other words my statement was about as "anthropomorphic", metaphorical", and "poetic" as it could possibly be. On the bumpy ride back, and often since , I have tried to reformulate what I then said so as to make it theoretically unassailable. All I got was a lot of unconvincing and dubious abstractions. The truth is that each living tradition has its own self-validating way of speaking which is perfectly clear to those in it. To concoct some universal pap which could be swallowed by everyone and everybody is not worth doing.* Accordingly it was a wise decision when the baby-faced and pouty-mouthed Bishop of Woolwich gave up playing the enfant terrible among real people, and went back to Cambridge, from where he still sets the tea-cups a-tinkling in many vicarages, but no longer elsewhere.

So now, looking back over my life, I am quite convinced that I have been guided by a benevolent force whenever I

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* In 1977 seven English theologians, "pursuing their insights to their logical conclusion", set out to shock the general public with "The Myth of God Incarnate". To quote the report in The Times: "These theologians are now saying that the time has come to break through the shell of incomprehensibility in the hope that this will give more meaning to the story of Jesus by stripping away the myth to reveal the essential ideas behind it. - Professor Wiles ("the most distinguished of the seven") expresses the truth behind the myth of the incarnation by affirming two things; "That his own life in his relation to God embodied that openness to God, that unity of human and divine to which the doctrine points; and secondly that his life depicted not only a profound human response to God, but that in his attitudes towards other men his life was a parable of the loving outreach of God to the world". - That, for him, is what the myth of the incarnation means, and in that sense he believes the myth to be true"." - I can only say, "My hat, Sir!"

allowed myself to be so guided. To some extent this was made possible because I always tried to ferret out what I was meant to do, and to discard what I merely wanted to do. This requires some spiritual discernment, but it can surely be done. All the so-called "chance" events have actually contributed to the fulfilment of my life plan, and I have naturally sometimes asked myself whether any "chance" event could have deflected me from it.

To take just one example, in 1933, when I was in London, I was pretty unhappy and disconcerted since there seemed to be no opening for me anywhere. Now and then I walked along Charing Cross Road thinking how I could kill myself without getting too much hurt in the process. Then my old friend, Nicholas Diederichs offered me a job at the University of Bloemfontein. I was tempted to take it - the only other offer being from some small University in one of the Southern States of the USA. If I had done so, what would have happened to my Buddhist Studies? Apartheid is one of the legitimate offshoots of Calvinism*. So I could easily have joined the Broederbond and used my considerable talent for sophistry to help in building the philosophical foundations of Afrikanerdom. Whereas now I am a totally insignificant intellectual, then I would for years have felt that I was making history. Only that at present, in these latter days, I would find that everything I had built up was being swept away by the irresistable and all-consuming tide of Marxism-Leninism, a fitting punishment for so much hybris in the past.

* As shown convincingly in W. A. de Klerk, The Puritans in Africa, 1976.

When I was on the point of accepting, Prof. C. E. M. Joad tried to dissuade me from taking up the Bloemfontein offer, arguing that South Africa is a grimly uncultured place, that a newly acquired Jewish wife would be no asset to me there, and so on. He assured me that I was terribly clever indeed, and would have a great future in this country. All that I needed was to be given the opportunity to show what I could do, and in that he could help. Next term he was due to go to the States, and he would give me his position during that term. He was so persuasive that I declined Diederich's offer. After Joad had gone to the States it became apparent that (1) he had promised this position to nearly everyone he knew and that (2) it was not his to dispose of. His substitute was appointed by a Committee which naturally was disinclined to land itself with a young German of Communist sympathies who spoke English awkwardly and with a dreadful accent.

In this way Joad preserved me for Buddhist Studies. But even if he had not, I could never have stood the pace in South Africa. It is one thing to find a philosophical justification for apartheid. It is another to watch daily the cruelties, humiliations, brutalities, and injustices which it inflicts on the majority of the people you see around you. I could not have borne it. In fact there is a proof of this. When trying to outwit the State Department I acquired at one point the status of a "Canadian Landed Immigrant". This enabled me to cross the US Frontier without a visa and annoyed the Immigration people very much. It also allowed me to buy gold. Since we all try to preserve our savings from being stolen by what we may politely describe as "International financiers", I asked the Bank of Montreal to get me a number

of lovely gold bars. They were none-too-keen, made many excuses, and offered me instead gold certificates of the Government of Canada. These, however, are paper documents and thus can be revoked at any time. I might possibly have induced the Bank to get me the bars if I had persevered, but I am always careful not to expend too much energy on financial transactions. I then was advised to buy South African Gold Shares. When I was just about to invest many thousands of dollars in them I read an item in the newspaper according to which 10,000 blacks had been killed in the South African Gold Mines in the last thirty (or fifty?) years. This convinced me that any money gained from this investment would be blood-money and that the blessing of heaven would not rest upon it. How much more would I have reacted if I had seen the treatment of the blacks with my own eyes! It is therefore unlikely that even the acceptance of Diederichs' offer would have deflected me from my chosen Buddhist path.

Section 3. Places.

a. Visits to Italy.

Coupled with the joy of being in contact with the dynamic personality of Tucci, was the joy of being in Rome. It is well known that Italy does something to the German soul. At one end this is represented by Goethe, at the other by hordes of hooligans in sweaty Bavarian leather shorts singing; Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten, on the Campidoglio. My reaction was, I think, nearer to that of Goethe, and my first experience of Italy had been in 1920 when I cycled from Duesseldorf, where I then lived, to Venice. On the first leg of this trip, to Munich, I was part of a team which somehow won (though I have forgotten what, how, or why). We had to cycle by night, and I remember how much time we lost trying to read the signposts with our torches. At that time the roads were still unencumbered with noisy, stinking and murderous motor vehicles, although at times they were a bit rough, and the cobblestones in the smaller towns were distinctly unpleasant. I then went on over the Brenner*, and the first sight of the

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* At this point I may insert a warning to parents who think they can indoctrinate their children. When I pushed my bicycle up the road to the Brenner Pass, I had around me a truly magnificent scenery. I decided to ignore it by reading Walter Scott's "Quentin Durward" in the Tauchnitz Edition. This was nothing but the spirit of revolt. We had to endure as children three dreaded cultural activities, Art Galleries, Concerts and beautiful landscapes. In the first my mother guided our faltering steps and firmly told us all the time "This is Art", and "This is not Art". When I look at the wall of my study I see a reproduction of Max Beckmann's Odysseus and Kalypso which was branded as definitely not Art. Concerts meant that one was exposed for hours to a bore like Brahms, and was told all the time, "Sit still, don't wriggle" and so on. And as for these awful landscapes, sunsets etc., I remember already at school in Jena, when we had toiled up some valley so as to be able to relish some really splendid view, that I shocked the teacher by eating my sandwiches with my back to that very view.

Southern sky on the other side of the Alps was, to me, a revelation as it has been to many Germans before me. One night I spent with people whose house was so primitive that they had no chimney, and the smoke came out of a hole in the roof, though most of it seemed to stay in the room. When I passed the Lake of Garda I saw the Vittoriale degli Italiani, the house of Gabriele D'Annunzio, who each morning posed for his monument on a white horse. He was the sort of Piscean* buffoon for whom I have had a great liking all my life and whom I have imitated whenever I could. Eia Eia Alala. In Venice I stayed in a room directly on the level of the canal in one of the old palaces, say of the Vendramin. In Venice I learnt what beauty can mean. There was just one omen of the sad future. The first flocks of American tourists had arrived. They always moved in groups, and it was quite a sport to go to a place where they were regularly shown "The biggest picture in the World" (depicting The Last Judgement). Nobody could yet foresee that these Barbarians from the Middle West would one day destroy decent cooking throughout Europe by their insistence on hamburgers or frankfurters, and on putting tomato ketchup on any dish set before them. In Rome, in the fifties, their often outragious behaviour in restaurants was known as La Brutalita Americana.

* When I skipped through Anthony Rhodes fine biography of D'Annunzio, called, "The Poet as Superman", I came on Page 234 across this delightful passage: "Signs of the poets lunacy now begin to multiply. He had always avidly read the Almanacco del Barbanera, a kind of Italian Old Moore and dozens of copies of this astrological work now lay about the Vittoriale".

Tucci's Institute is quite near Santa Maria Maggiore, and so I first settled into a pensione, between that Church and the Termini Railway Station. The very first afternoon, I hastened to the Museo Nazionale Romano in the ruins of the Baths of Diocletian, and there for many hours I viewed in rapture and reverence the relics of antiquity. Later on, I spent much time with the monuments of the pagan past, the Pantheon and Hadrian's Tomb being the great favourites. Once Tucci took me to the Opera House to see Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice. The decor and performance were really quite superb, and two thousand years of Christian obfuscation and tomfoolery seemed to have vanished away. My view of classical antiquity is that of Schiller's poem on Die Goetter Griechenlands, and since this is my life story I do not have to justify it against what may be called more recent research. When a young man I was a great admirer of the Emperor Julian, and Ibsen's drama on him disappointed me so much that I started to write what I hoped would be a better one. Nevertheless Roman Christianity did not strike me as as distasteful as I thought it would. Except for a few fake relics, I found it quite attractive for exactly the same reason that Martin Luther hated it so much, - i.e. because there is so little Christian about it. The old Roman Empire was a device to extricate money and power, through the manipulation of superstition coupled with military force. Later history has shown that the legions were in fact superfluous for this purpose, - being expensive, and liable to mutiny and defeat. This was confirmed by San Pietro, the Church which had caused the Lutherin schism. On the frieze under the drum of the dome there is an inscription in letters six feet high, made

with gold obtained by the massacre of countless Mexicans. This inscription does not, however, deal with the spiritual life, but with the priestly claim to supremacy for Rome as the City of Tu Es Petrus, and so on.* The only offensive irruption of Judaic Christianity is in the Vatican Museum next door, where all the male statues have been disfigured by having fig leaves plunked on to their middles, whereas female statues are very few and far between, because even our black robed eunuchs could not think up suitable bras for them. It is quite amazing to see how these hideous fig leaves made of dark-green clay destroy the entire proportion of the male body. The female figure suffered likewise before pubic hair was allowed. This reminds me of the great days of 1936 in Barcelona where my anarchist friends had plastered the Ramblas, the avenues leading up from the sea front, with innumerable photographs of naked girls taken from "Paris Plaisir", and such publications. When I enquired what was the point of this, I was told that it was meant to be a blow against the hypocrisy of the priests, and for the emancipation of the flesh. This struck me as very funny. I pointed out that none of these ladies had any hair below their necks, and that it would be a much more creative idea to strip naked a number of the very pretty Catalan girls of Barcelona, and then we could see what "the flesh" was actually like. In reply I was told that my bourgeois birth

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* After Matthew 16, 18-19. These are surely the sixteen most profitable words ever penned by the hand of man. In Ronald Knox's English version, "Thou art Peter, and it is upon this rock that I will build my Church; and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven".

had obviously corrupted me irretrievably, and that I mistook socialism for decadence. Nor could I answer back, because they had just offered to bump off the man who shadowed me for the GPU. To return to Rome, when I saw the Papal Altar of San Pietro, I was very cross to think that it had been made from the bronze of the Celestial Deities of the Pantheon, and thought of Swinburne's telling remark to the Aztec Princess:

"So this is the truth of your holy religion.
The father, the son and the wonderful pigeon."

But I changed my tune later, when I had the wonderful experience of being blessed by Pope Pius XII with hundreds of others, by his taking some of theHoly Ghost from those doves, and putting it on us. What impressed me particularly was that just like Julius Caesar before him, he was the Pontifex Maximus carried high above the crowd on his ivory chair, and by putting his biretta on theirs, he conveyed to them the grace of God. It was truly magnificent. This bath in the fountains of antiquity on my Roman visits has proved a perpetual fountain of youth to me.

In addition to his many other accomplishments Tucci was also a believing, and to some extent even practising, Buddhist. He once told me that he would publish everything that I would submit to him on Prajnaparamita, because he wanted to use his power to establish something of lasting value. He has kept his word, and has published those works of mine which are commercially so unattractive that no-one else was willing to look at them. From gratitude I have willed the Buddhist part of my library to the Ismeo, and sincerely hope that no legal obstacles will come in between.

RT1 M E M O I R S

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* By common consent Part III cannot be published in my life-time and must wait for the 21st century, if ever there should be such a thing.

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(22)

2/3/78

Dear Sir,

since you are interested in my development from Marxism to Buddhism I send you a rather poorish surplus copy of my reflections on Marxism. By way of reward you might help me with CM 2. What is the title of the book of Pritskoleit, its date, and are there any biographical details about him? For instance, how old is he and does he come from Duesseldorf? - As to CM 13, are there any files of the Westdeutsche Beobachter for that period and can the Communist paper (I have forgotten even the name) be found?

Also in the first part I have been able to develop some of the arguments more clearly and extensively. If you discard your pages 2, 13, 16 and 24, and replace them with the RTlA version, and also add 8 +A after your page 8, your Ms will again correspond to mine here. On p.16 BB can you find for me the original German edition of the Naturdialektik and copy out for me the statement about the unity of Fortschritt and Rueckschritt, giving the page reference?

The Suhrkamp Verlag told me on Febr.21 that Dr.Unseld is abroad and will write to me when he is back. We will see what we will see.

Yours in the Dharma

Edward Conze



(26)

"Foxwell",
Marston Road,
SHERBORNE,
Dorset, DT9 4BN

24th April, 1978.

Dear Sir,

Very many thanks for the information and for the two books which I will return at the end of this week by registered post. So everything is solved for the time being except for the statement, now on p.6, that Dr. Lietz's "successor was Hitler's First Minister of Culture". After what you say about Bernhard Rust this does no longer look very likely. The information about the exclusion of Jews I got from Hans Mayer, Aussenseiter, 1975, p.417, but when looking at the book again I can find no reference to Hitler's Minister of Culture. The fact, if it were a fact, would be significant, but if it is no fact it will be better to leave it out.

The question of the Kaschube comes in in connection with Pritzkoleit, because I claim that belonging to one of the Slavonic minorities, in Germany, gave P. quite a chip on his shoulder. The same seems to me to be the case with Günter Grass.

In the meantime I have begun ~~to~~ bringing out the final version of my Memoirs, and the text has now been sufficiently expurgated that it can be shown to anyone. This was not the case with the first version which should really never have been ~~duplicated~~ xeroxed. In the course of the next few months I hope to bring out Parts I and II, and I will send them to you as they are being duplicated. If you have any comments to make on matters of detail I will be very pleased to receive them.

Now all over the world students have to work so much harder in term time than we used to do in the twenties. One must hope that

they learn correspondingly more than we did. In consequence I will ask you for nothing specific at the moment, and I am for the time being, with my very best wishes,

Yours in the Dharma,

Edward Conze

"Foxwell"
Marston Road
Sherborne, Dorset, DT9 4BN
Sherborne 3429

21/5/78

Dear Sir,

yesterday I sent you pages 36 to 97 of my SAGA. They just fill an envelope. I send you this new version not so much because I expect you to read it as to indicate that the first version should now be disregarded as dead and buried, and should not be shown to others. On the other hand, if a publisher wants to see something, this is what he should see. Suhrkamp have so far shown no sign of life, and I cannot imagine that they are interested in any of my work. I have really no great desire to be printed or read in Germany, but my wife, fourteen years my junior, reminds me of the inflation which eats up our savings day by day.

My statement on page 6, i.e. that Dr. Lietz's "successor was Hitler's first Minister of Culture" is obviously not borne out by the valuable information you sent me, and I will remove the clause. Even if his actual successor had later on become a Nazi, this would not prove very much if I reflect on the behaviour of my own relatives in the Third Reich. The desire for Tarnung may be served best by becoming an Obersturmbannführer!

What I want to do at present is to finish my Memoirs in a way which pleases me and precludes legal action for libel, etc. Much of it is, I think pretty tedious for others, and when it comes to the commercial exploitation the whole thing could be cut down to about one half of the present text. The remainder of PART I should reach

you in July, I suppose.

With my best wishes, I am

Yours

Edward Carey

Professor Conze's Autobiography

THE MEMOIRS OF A MODERN GNOSTIC

In his old age Dr. Conze has often been asked to tell the story of his life. At last he has complied. The few close friends who have seen the result found it interesting,entertaining and instructive. Commercial publishers have, however, reacted with a mixture of horror and embarrassment. A SAMIZDAT publication is therefore indicated.

The entire work has been divided into Three Parts. The first two are now being printed in a very limited edition. They can be bought separately, at £6.00 for each Part. Copies of Part I are expected by May 15, copies of Part II later in the year.

The First Part, called 'Life and Letters', surveys Dr. Conze's life and writings from 1904 to 1977. A few themes are further developed in Part II, 'Politics, People and Places'. Most of Part III, aptly named, 'Forbidden Thoughts and Banished Topics', will remain hidden from view until the year 2000 A.D. Then it will become obvious how much in the late Seventies the freedom of speech had been curtailed in our crumbling 'nanny state', even for scholars. A few chapters may be released as Supplements when circumstances permit.

Copies can be obtained from:

The Buddhist Society, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PH
The Bookshop Manager, The London Buddhist Centre, 51 Roman Road, London E2 0HU
Luzac & Co. Ltd., 46 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PE
J. M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, London W.C.2
Booklore, 2 Hound Street, Sherborne, Dorset
Ad Orientem Ltd., 2 Cumberland Gardens, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex

Trade Enquiries to any of the above addresses.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE MEMOIRS OF A MODERN GNOSTIC by Edward Conze. The Samizdat Publishing Company, Sherborne. £6 per volume.

Dr. Conze is one of the world's foremost Buddhist Scholars; this could mean that he is an expert in Buddhist Studies, but is not a follower of the Buddha's Path; or that he is such a follower, but is an expert in some other branch of knowledge. In Dr. Conze's case, he is both the expert in Buddhist studies, and the follower of the Buddha's path.

This is a vast work, but it is the product of a vast mind: after reading these Memoirs one must surely come to the conclusion that Dr. Conze is among the most powerful intellects of this part of our century.

The Author has divided his work into three main Parts: Part I—'Life and Letters'; this is in turn divided into three sections, covering the years 1904-1933, 1933-1948, and 1948-1977 respectively.

Part II—Dr. Conze calls 'Politics, People, and Places'; he devotes a section to each subject.

Part III—he describes as 'Forbidden Thoughts and Banished Topics', and adds as a foot-note: 'By common consent Part III cannot be published in my life-time and must wait until the 21st century, if ever there should be such a thing.'

Each part is virtually a complete book in itself, and covers a great deal of ground: for we have biographical details, views on a wide range of people and happenings, and running all through, Dr. Conze's highly individual musings on things religious and philosophical.

He tells of his birth: his father was in the German Consular Service, and thus the baby came to be born in England instead of in Germany. This alien birth, however, was to stand him in good stead in the after-years (when he had to leave Germany in face of Nazi intimidation) since it conferred upon him British nationality. He returned to Germany when he was six months old.

He appears to have had a happy childhood, and was at school (so he tells us) 'always the first in the class, and the naughtiest'. At the age of ten he was sent to one of the Public Schools of Dr. Hermann Lietz, and unlike the attitude of many brilliant men towards their preceptors, Dr. Conze greatly admired his head-master, who had a profound influence upon his thinking.

At thirteen he first became introduced to Buddhism, through a German translation of Lafcadio Hearn's 'Gleanings in Buddha Fields'. Hearn includes several quotations from a Mahayana Scripture 'The Diamond Cutter' in the course of his work, but Dr. Conze had misgivings as to the accuracy of the translation (which was from the English, in turn taken from the Japanese, translated from the Chinese and that from the Sanscrit original). He vowed that one day he would gain access to that original, which indeed he did. This idea of the necessity to know Buddhist texts in the orginal languages if one is to understand Buddhism is expressed again by Dr. Conze when he comes to deal with Western Buddhists in general; but of that more later.

Dr. Conze tried three Universities (Tuebingen, Heidelberg and Kiel) before finishing his studies in Cologne, where he took his Ph.D. on 28 July 1928 at the age of twenty-four; his thesis was on 'The Concept of Metaphysics in Franciscus Suarez', later published by Felix Meiner in Leipzig.

Then after further years of study, and work on his book 'The Principle of Contradiction' came 1933 and the Nazis. With his status as a British Subject, Dr. Conze was allowed to leave Germany, and he arrived in England on 15 June 1933 'with one suit on my back, and £4 in my pocket'.

SAMIZDAT
Publishing Company
Sherborne
1978

During the last years in Germany while he lived in Hamburg, Dr. Conze joined the Communist Party and became an active worker. He has since moved right away from the Marxist viewpoint, but (and this is an admirable feature of his book) nowhere does he look for Reds under the bed, or indulge in the usual polemics against the Menace. This is indeed praiseworthy, for to keep a balanced viewpoint on this subject is not easy and it is a tribute to Dr. Conze's moral and intellectual integrity.

The years in England have been at all times difficult; the awareness of his 'German-ness' and his own particular temperament often made his relationships with other people brittle, and there are amusing accounts of his brushes with leading worthies in the scholastic world. As a rule, Dr. Conze is critical of most members of the human race, and in general, looks upon Humanity with eyes wide open. He is frankly anti-feminist, and has some caustic things to say about some of the leading 'Women of the Day' that he has met during his years in this country.

After the 1939-45 war, Dr. Conze was drawn into the Buddhist movement in England, but on the whole has little praise for British Buddhists, whom he generally considers to be in virtual ignorance of the real meaning of the religion which they profess to follow ('The rift between those who know what Buddhism is and those who propagate it is a common flaw of sectarian Buddhism all over the capitalist world'). The Buddhist Society is not excluded from this consideration, and Dr. Conze shows himself to be completely out of sympathy with its leadership.

In the Section of Part II on 'Places' Dr. Conze describes his visits to Italy, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and Germany. Of Italy he speaks with great affection, describing with a gentle humour his joy at being blessed in Rome by Pope Pius XII. He is obviously highly critical of the U.S.S.R. yet displays understanding for its failings and the abuses within the system. He rebukes a crowd of American tourists who are gloating over the poverty and shabbiness visible everywhere: 'this is easily explained by the years of Civil War and the Nazi invasion'. His view of Communism is original: 'Communism is, of course, a branch of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. In its origins it was a secularisation of Judaism and Calvinism. In consequence, it is as intolerant as its religious forebears'.

On the U.S.A., Dr. Conze, for quite different reasons, is no less severe; he sees few attractive areas in the 'American Way of Life'. He tells of harassment by the C.I.A. and the Immigration Department and says that on crossing the border into Canada, he experienced the same emotions as he had when he arrived in England from Germany in 1933.

But it is for the land of his fathers that Dr. Conze reserves his most scathing comments; here he truly dips his pen in vitriol. He maintains that, fundamentally, nothing has changed since the Nazis. 'Europe is now subdued not by military but by economic force. The 'slave' workers are now known as 'guest' workers and as tourists the Germans inundate the same Europe which they had visited as soldiers before'. And again: 'Formerly everybody was inconvenienced by having to click their heels. Now people throughout the world are inconvenienced because they have to work harder than sensible people would wish to work, just because Germans cannot think of filling in their time with anything except constant slogging work'. He speaks of the two Germanies, each complementing the other, adding 'After the liberation will come the reunification and then the recovery of the lost living space. Thereafter the open reconquest of Europe'. He later remarks: 'My brief stay in Bonn made me realize what an inestimable boon it had been to me that I had spent most of my life in England'.

BOOK REVIEWS

These memoirs might well be titled 'A Twentieth Century Testament'. Here is the story of a twentieth-century man's moral, intellectual and spiritual evolution, played out against the background of the history of his times, a man who emerges from these pages as being of moral integrity, intellectual superiority, and spiritual profundity.

Let those who may take offence at the Author's constant displays of irascibility look into their own natures; for they would have failed to see the True Man as he is revealed in this life-story.

RAYMOND PERCHERON.