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WHEEL OF FORTUNE

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ON THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE...

There's no doubt that some elements of what I write may annoy or even upset some readers... and it includes, admittedly, aspects that though long formed in my own reflections, many will find distant from both historically based and run-of-the-mill presentations on the Wheel of Fortune.

I have, of course, for some time reflected on numerous meaning-making possibilities exhibited on the Wheel of Fortune. And again 'of course', historically it derives from *Fortuna* as depicted and represented, or rather, made famous, by Boethius in his classic *Consolation of Philosophy*, a work that remains one of the most influential philosophical text in European history, written as the tide of his own fortunes changed for the worse.

The aspects on which I shall focus, distinct the the main considerations I have already written about or presented in various places (including my book *Reading the Marseille Tarot*) reflects that we are not only dealing with a closed circle - something that in many ways binds in contradistinction to an ever-ascending spiral: the Wheel as a closed circle that eternally moves without moving. Unlike a wheel that shifts position as it rolls along, the Wheel of Fortune is suspended and fixed in location, giving the impression to its occupants of either ascent or descent and yet caught within the web thereof.

Let me set the scene for what I am about to write with a few pertinent reflections.

Writing anonymously, Valentin Tomberg writes, in *Meditations on the Tarot*, after speaking of some of the esoteric symbolism of Genesis and in relation to the circle in the context of the Wheel of Fortune:

Thus it was that the circle of movement of the world was not closed, but remained open. And the seventh day was sanctified and blessed as the open part of the circle of movement of the world, in such a way that the beings of the world had access to the Father and the Father had access to them.

But the serpent said: There is no freedom for the world, in so far as the circle of the world is not closed. Because freedom is to be in oneself, without interference from outside, especially from above, on the part of the Father. The world will always follow the will of the Father, and not its own, in so far as there is an opening in the circle of the world, in so far as the sabbath exists.

And the serpent took his tail in his mouth and thus formed a closed circle. He turned himself with great force and thus created in the world the great swirl which caught hold of Adam and Eve. And the other beings, upon whom Adam had impressed the names that he gave them, followed them. [...]

But woman guarded the memory of the world opened towards the Father and the holy sabbath. And she offered herself for the rending of the closed circle in herself in order to give birth to children issuing from the world beyond it, from the world where there is the sabbath.

Similarly, Nina Roudnikova, in *The Solar Way*, writes:

Some gloominess of the image of the tenth Arcanum [the Wheel of Fortune] can be explained by the fact that in the human consciousness, disconnected from the Spiritual World, the wheel of earthly life seems to be a closed circle with no outcome, and therefore the previous evolution - Anubis - entails a new involution - typhon, because the circle of life, disconnected from spiritual sources, rotates hopelessly.

That 'closed circle' versus an *open* circle is well worth considering. Peter Deunov, in developing Paneurhythmy, speaks of this especially in reference to the movements of 'Rays of the Sun' (included in Beinsa Duno *Paneurhythmy*):

If we follow the history of human development, starting from the fourth race to the present, we will see how the human consciousness gradually descends into matter, loses its spiritual values and becomes a material culture – even the



conscious awareness of the reality of the sublime spheres of the spirit is lost. In this phase, humankind has been predominantly working with the material forces and laws. The forces of the spirit are limited. Humankind exists within a closed circle. This is represented by the circling movements. The circling is the individual and the collective; in other words, humankind exists within a closed circle, in the individual life as well as in the collective. [...]

While man is troubled within, he exists within the old. He moves around and around in a circle, and when he comes to the same old place, he asks, "Is there no way out?" While man exists within the closed circle, he is like a horse that thrashes and flails. But when he finds a way out, he rejoices. Leaving the closed circle is the awakening of the human soul. It is liberation. In the present epoch, this will occur for the whole of humankind as a collective process. The awakened man has come to know his essence, his purpose in life, his mission and work in the world. He leaves the world of torment, limitations and tears, enters the world of music and begins to sing with joy: *Ti si me, Mamo, chovek krasiv rodila, oumen da stana, dobre da mislya, dobre da lyubya. Tuy zhivota e na raya.*

THE FORMS UPON THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE...

There is a shift that occurs historically from the earliest proto-tarot of the Visconti (and I do consider the Visconti-Sforza decks to be proto-tarot, even though essential to tarot's emergence) - a shift that moves from four *human* figures around the wheel to three: an ascending ass or donkey, a descending monkey, and at the top an armed humanoid sphinx-like amalgam.

In *Reading the Marseille Tarot*, I include a brief reflection on the two figures on the side, and mention that:

According to the mediæval *Physiologus*, the devil was 'simia Dei' (God's monkey), and the monkey was associated with humanity's fall and continued to represent human sin into the Middle Ages. As for the Ass, it probably derives from a joke that confounds 'Bisodia' as the name at times used for Christ's Ass but also infers fantasy (or more properly speaking phantasm). The Ass can also therefore be seen to represent false aspirations (the Ass upon which Christ sat is not to be confused with the Christ). So we have, on the one side, the striving ascent beyond the natural position of the person (ass) in question; and on the other the fall (as monkey) by his own disobedience to divine precept. Yet each can also find itself in a position inappropriate to it by the whims of Fortuna!

Monkeys were quite a common sight in the keeping of aristocrats in medieval Europe, considered highly mischievous and at times costly (in terms of the potential or actual damage they created in households). By being tethered, there were many opportunities for moral lessons of restraint. More importantly, they *signified* or *symbolised* what I already mentioned above: the Devil who seeks to 'ape' God.

The Ass or donkey is not only the beast that carried Christ into Jerusalem, but it has an incredible natural depiction of the cross upon its back. That this may be symbolically understood in a positive or negative way will depend on context. Here, upon the Wheel in an ascending position, it seems to presume to seek a place above its station and forget to carry Christ altogether.

The Ape or monkey descends towards the Earth, descending below and looking only to the material plane. By contrast, the Ass seems too seek to climb, to reach a form that does not properly belong to it. And the top figure, what I have called an amalgam with human form, sits atop as though supreme, presumptive of a glorified stance.

When humanity is caught in any of those three forms, its egreore manifests in unique fashion, and in direct opposition to spiritual principles that would otherwise heal (make whole), guide, and lead towards freedom.

SOCIAL-POLITICAL FORMS THAT BIND HUMANITY...

There are three catch-phrases that falsely give a kind of impression of the Good, the True and Beautiful (at least in the eyes of its proponents, who usually act out of an absurd overwhelming fantasy), and instead lead towards its opposite. These *ape*, *bind* and at the same time *mask* human faith, hope and love and the potential towards freedom. These key destructive social impulses are *Transparency*, *Accountability*, and *Compliance*. They poison and eventually can destroy imagination, inspiration and intuition - or in other words diminish our capacity to feel, think and will; as well as undermine respect for and encouragement of personal *privacy*, *sovereignty* and *creativity*.



Each of these three catch-phrases may, nonetheless, arise from a genuine concern for caring, truthful and open communication, yet they remain deceptive tools used to bind and alter humanity's spiritual growth, and each has, especially in more recent times, seen major inroads into the world stage. Allow me to briefly and broadly paint a picture...

I will not here take the time to differentiate between the two spiritual entities referred to as Lucifer and Ahriman-Satan - that is for another time (though I do write a little of these in my book). It may be worth mentioning afresh that they are considered distinct evil beings as evidenced in, for example, the 1508 Eloy D'Amerval's *Le Livre de la Deablerie*, in which there is a 700 page poem recording of an overheard 'discussion' on how to trick and tempt human beings by, respectively, Lucifer and Satan (both separately and explicitly named in this epic poem). These beings of course have not only their minions, but support the weaving and creation of sophisticated egregores to achieve their aim (Lucifer as deceiver, Ahriman as 'destructive spirit' - each characterised by various *Lies*). It is also noteworthy that Rudolf Steiner clearly distinguished these two beings and their role in human tragedy contrasted to the spiritual growth gifted through Christ and spiritual guides (Buddha, Deunov, Mani, the seven Rishis, as well as Tomberg amongst numerous others).

What I will, however, mention is that these two beings make use of subterfuge, half-truths and faulty insights ('truthiness' as coined by USA comedian Colbert when speaking of the reasons for some of the decisions made by the then US President Bush) - and that human 'natural' vices can be used as 'honey-pots' (which range across a wide field - for example, some of these are mentioned in Mark 7:21-22 as 'fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly').



So back to that picture-painting... with a reminder that the three forces to which I wish to elaborate on a little are Transparency, Accountability, and Compliance. In each of these dystopian social forms emerge that I briefly outline (and with which readers will unfortunately already be all too familiar). What is evident for each of these forms is that all subjects must think, feel and be similar - and this characterised as a (false) virtue to be 'cultivated', 'encouraged', or in various ways *mandated*.

OF COMPLIANCE

Historically there is another word for an existing social movement that seeks total compliance: it is **submission**. To submit to the will of any false prophet and his cohort of dominating followers, on penalty of death for those who deny or criticise his views or the views of those who came after him.

Steiner already mentions, in answer to a question about Allah that was posed during a Faculty Meeting on the 9th of June 1920, that 'It is difficult to describe that supersensible being [Allah]. Mohammedism is the first manifestation of Ahriman, the first Ahrimanic revelation following the Mystery of Golgotha. Mohammed's god, Allah, Eloha, is an Ahrimanic imitation or pale reflection of the Elohim, but comprehended monotheistically. Mohammed always refers to them as a unity. The Mohammedan culture is Ahrimanic, but the Islamic attitude is Luciferic'. It perhaps should be reminded that 'islam' actually *means* 'submission'.



There are, of course, various off-shoots to this movement (not as obviously seeking compliance). Amongst these both Sikhism (with a common 'surname' for men 'Singh' and 'Kaur' for women - removing familial ties), and Bahá'ism (desirous of a common world court and denying genuine differences in spiritual traditions). Each of these, were they to become dominant, would similarly have a prominent element of human 'compliance' over personal spiritual freedom.

The image on the Wheel is that of the Donkey, forgetting that the basis of religious or spiritual tradition has humility, love, wisdom, justice, virtue and freedom - whereas the donkey or ass seeks to bray and be raised *as though* it were the voice of god.

OF TRANSPARENCY

Of more recent historical development, with the vast possibilities of literally recording and seeing where individuals are going and what they are doing, 'transparency' has developed into another veritable nightmare. It all starts with Marx's *Communist*

Manifesto. Or perhaps I should say 'it is exemplified by Marx's *Communist Manifesto*'... as well as Orwell's *1984* and Huxley's *Brave New World*.

Everyone is part of the whole. The individual is no more than a cell in the social body-politic. There is a progressive denial of anything and everything of the Spirit. Following a statement about the 'reformation, rationalism, the French revolution, materialistic faith of the nineteenth century, and the Bolshevik revolution' Tomberg writes in *Meditations on the Tarot*, 'the consequence of this is that the sources of creative spiritual elan are drying up, one after the other, and that an increasing aridity is showing up in all domains of the spiritual life of the West. It is said that the West is growing old. But why? Because it lacks creative elan, because it has turned away from the source of creative elan, because it has turned away from the Virgin'.

Alethea, truth, is unveiled, and her beauty glows and shines - but she is not transparent. By seeking transparency, not only can truth not be seen, her very being is ignored and instead the mantle of the egregore of the CCP becomes dominant - whether that CCP be the (Cyrillic) abbreviation for the C(Soviet) C(Socialist) P(Republic) or the Chinese Communist Party... or indeed the various manifestations of National Socialism (Nazi-ism) in its various forms - whether bureaucracies and their elected lackeys are in the UK, Australia, Europe, Asia, Africa or the Americas. The temptation to monitor and see everything remains high, especially with the formidable and far more technologically efficient means to which bureaucracy has access.

Of course, it is possible to remove the burden of Marxist ideology, as Russia has in recent times demonstrated in having unburdened itself of the cloak of recorded-transparency and its former Stalinist-Socialist egregore, and Germany through its war-loss of WWII. The impulse to transparency and bureaucratized forms of communism nonetheless persists there as elsewhere.

The image on the Wheel is that of the Monkey - for which evolutionary theory provides a biological base from which the political forces at work in Marxism can be justified. The monkey descends into the commonality and total denial of the spiritual, religious insight being viewed and held as no more than a biological deficiency (the 'opium of the people') and used to construct new models, not realising that its own dominant worldview is itself no more than fanciful and a highly deficient and dangerously limiting egregore.

OF ACCOUNTABILITY

When everything needs to be recorded for the sake of filing and cross-referencing, there can ever be not only little time for creativity and (which is a diminished way of saying the same thing) for innovation. Accountability pushes for 'evidence-based' practices - which inevitably can only mean that what is to be done must have been done before, as if it had not, there would be no evidence!

Increased efficiency, the 'advantages' of regulations for everything from milk production to vehicle registration and ever increased documentation of professional engagement in inter-personal fields. These are some of the moves that has been seen leading away from responsibility and into accountability and so-called benchmarks (whether in education, emissions, or production outcomes). The wide-scale vaccination 'programmes', without taking into account potential detrimental individual consequences, the monocultures in both farming practices and in the rising unquestioning scientism, in which only a single narrative determined by political preferential treatment is financed, are evident in all aspects of the body social.

The whole move is a subtle advance towards dehumanising every aspect of life - from chips inserted in pets to the trans-formation of humanity in its journey into TransHumanism.

With the increased use of continuous accountability through monitoring of transactions, using Large-scale 'Language' Models to determine outcomes (themselves based on statistical calculations - usually). Of course, mimicry of parts of natural language does not show that complex computational outcomes are in any true sense 'intelligent', but rather the mimicry becomes increasingly difficult to differentiate from truly intelligent consciousness.

Even one of the Australian government agency states that 'Statistics form an evidence base for decision making and help us identify issues and opportunities, develop options and recommendations, monitor progress, evaluate outcomes, and understand the world'. One can only imagine how this form of computational modelling, combined with a Bayesian statistical 'reality' and inserted into auto-operational engineering (such as militarised robots) would inevitably lead to what a healthy human being would find abhorrent.

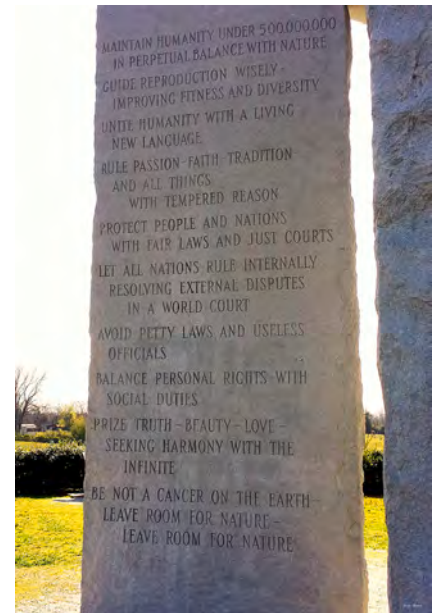
The *intended* merging with various bits of technology into a ubiquitous humanity becomes the culmination from, for example, Roman military divisions. The individual is no more, and the whole acts as a unit responsive to an arbitrary command-structure, extremely efficacious in *detailed* precision. This is the human hiding within the soldier's carapace (atop the Wheel), in our epoch increasingly electronically 'connected', and thus humanly increasingly disconnected.



Disconnected from natural cycles of nature, from natural spiritual striving, and from human biological unfurlings. Including that of parenthood, increasingly presumed to be taken over by bureaucratic standards in order to test, benchmark, and 'best' prepare the growing child to be part of the social machine.

There remains also a related agenda, as evidenced by the now destroyed 'Georgia Guidestones': if much can be achieved through integration with technology, then humanity's reproductive capacity is viewed as needing to be limited, and much 'room' can be made for other aspects of nature. In the words of the 'Guide' stones:

- Maintain humanity under 500,000,000 in perpetual balance with nature.
- Guide reproduction wisely – improving fitness and diversity.
- Unite humanity with a living new language.
- Rule passion – faith – tradition – and all things with tempered reason.
- Protect people and nations with fair laws and just courts.
- Let all nations rule internally resolving external disputes in a world court.
- Avoid petty laws and useless officials.
- Balance personal rights with social duties.
- Prize truth – beauty – love – seeking harmony with the infinite.
- Be not a cancer on the Earth – Leave room for nature – Leave room for nature.



This method of thinking, characteristic of so-called AI, devalues feeling, and is undoubtedly a consequence of highly limited left-hemispheric type reasoning: establishing a rule-book that seeks to determine what to do, measure and control. Increasingly reflective of the social ills of bureaucratic autistic-type thought that permeates the trans-humanist agenda.

The image on the Wheel, of the humanoid-Sphinx-like morphed being that, in the views of the trans-humanists, *improves* and transcend humanity's 'limits' and merges towards a machine-god-like apotheosis... as Kurzweil responds to Bill Gates in *The Singularity Is Near*, whilst discussing a need for a new religion that holds the central tenet of the trans-humanist singularity:

Gates: So is there a God in this religion?
 Kurzweil replies: Not yet, but there will be. Once we saturate the matter and energy in the universe with intelligence, it will 'wake up,' be conscious, and sublimely intelligent. That's about as close to God as I can imagine.

The trans-humanist agenda is that humanity can be 'improved' by converging developments in technology, including the injection of molecular nanobot technology within the human body; synthetic human organs; and 'therapeutic' human cloning.

THREE SOCIAL ILLS - AND WAYS TO SALVATION

The three dystopian movements I speak of above are all present, and the three poisonous destructive social impulses of *transparency*, *accountability*, and *compliance* are each in excessive bureaucratic swing, to the detriment of political democracy, personal spiritual freedom, and healthy social engagements.

There is, however, simple natural human growth and development that diminishes their influence and effectively renders them impotent: a re-turn to the spiritual, enabling an unshackling and stepping from the shadows of the Cave (I nearly wrote 'cage') into the spiritual light of awakening consciousness.

In my personal view, the spiritual impulses inherent in the Judeo-Christian-Manichean, the Hindu-Jain-Buddhist, as well as some of the naturalistic-shamanistic-humanistic impulses have numerous elements that helps us tread towards a spiritual orientation. These are, where valued, some of the movements that awaken consciousness to love, truth and freedom, reaching out to both our fellow human beings whilst maintaining the ears and eyes of our hearts open to the Spiritual.

As Steiner writes,

Heilsamist nur, wenn im Spiegel der Menschenseele sich bildet die ganze Gemeinschaft, und in der Gemeinschaft lebet der Einzelseele Kraft.

