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**ARCHANGEL MICHAEL
THE FIERY THOUGHT KING:
HOW CAN WE KNOW HIM?
Part III**

SPIRITUALIZING THE KNOWLEDGE OF SPACE

By Bill Trusiewicz

Welcome O Life! *I go to encounter* for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.

James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

So far in this series of articles we have addressed several imperatives that one learns to embrace as one progresses in what has been called “the school of Archangel Michael,” the Fiery Thought King. It will be helpful to briefly reiterate these important points before we begin the present study that takes up the matter of *Spiritualizing our Knowledge of Space*. We will be seeking to penetrate Rudolf Steiner’s words in his last address wherein he encourages us to take up the Michael Power and the Michael Will to penetrate the whole of life to meet the challenges of our time. This must be done by *spiritualizing our knowledge of space*, one of the most important imperatives that we learn to carry out as students in the school of Michael.

Now to reiterate, in Part I we began by examining the Michaelic imperative of *questioning*. This imperative is illustrated in the very name: Mi-cha-el, which translates as a question: “Who is like God?” If questioning is employed in the right way it can lead us to the spirit behind what we behold in everyday consciousness. We discussed the imperative of taking a path that is universal, that embraces the whole of humanity in a spirit of *cosmopolitanism*. We grappled with the imperative of cultivating *universal individualism*, in which we recognized how the higher “I” is highly individual but is supremely committed to advancing the cause of human spiritual evolution harmoniously in the social sphere. We explored the meaning of the Michaelic imperative of *mirroring the highest in the other* that is essential for advancement in any Michael community. In Part II we discussed the highly significant fact that *Archangel Michael is taciturn*: he seldom speaks to inspire us but waits for us to take initiative in spiritual matters. In addressing this fact, we sought to clarify the essential distinction between Cosmic Intelligence and the Human Intelligence for which we must and can strive, thanks to the Archangel’s silence. The act of fashioning Human Intelligence from Cosmic Intelligence institutes what Rudolf Steiner called

“reverse ritual,” based on the fact that we as human beings can return something to the sphere of the hierarchies, can return speech to the stars, so to speak.

In this third in a series of articles that have as their goal enabling us as spirit seekers to better know Archangel Michael, we will explore the statement from Rudolf Steiner’s last address quoted earlier, concerning the “great crisis” that humankind would pass through after the end of the twentieth century. Steiner said that it would be necessary that “the Michael Power and the Michael Will penetrate the whole of life.” He said that these “are none other than the Christ Power and the Christ Will.” We will explore how it is that through the Michael Power, humanity in our time can and must transform our predisposition to view all things in a materialistic way, due to our peculiar knowledge of space. We will address the question of how Michael can help us to spiritualize our knowledge of space and thus “penetrate the whole of life” to meet the challenges of our time.

As we approach the subject of spiritualizing space, let us recall the famous line from the opera *Parsifal* by Richard Wagner, which opera Rudolf Steiner praised as significant, adding to a deeper understanding of the Christ Event.¹ In the libretto of *Parsifal* the elder Gurnemanz exclaims to the youthful Parsifal in reference to the environs of the Grail Castle, “You see, my son, here time becomes space.” In other words, time is *revealed* spatially through the magic of the Grail. With this picture in mind let us seek together to enter the Grail Castle by way of participation in the drama of transformation that is taking place in our time under the rulership of Archangel Michael, the zeitgeist or Time Spirit of our era. To do so we will first need to enliven our thinking by penetrating the abstractions represented in the words “space” and “time.”

As we begin, it is important to realize that it is only in the last few hundred years (since the 14th and 15th centuries) that the conception of space as we understand it today came into existence as a widely held idea. It will be easy to see the transition from the earlier period of human history in which time predominated in human consciousness if we realize how art since the Renaissance differs from the art that preceded it. We know that during the Renaissance the use of *perspective* in painting and drawing came into vogue. Perspective is the way an artist represents a scene on a picture plane accurately according to what a viewer sees with his or her eyes. It is the technical way to represent how light enters the eye from a distant subject, geometrically depicted, to give the illusion of three-dimensionality. Most simply, this means that closer objects appear larger and further objects appear smaller, conforming to the natural convergence of lines toward what are called vanishing points.

In the modern world it is generally assumed that the geometric representation of space on a picture plane or pictorially in one’s consciousness is the “correct” representation. If one considers only the way light enters the eye, it may indeed be called “correct.” But is this the only valid means of representing the human experience of seeing? It is common in our time to view ourselves and the world we inhabit as mechanically constructed according to scientific principles that derive solely from our mechanistic view of the world. The “correctness” of such imagistic constructions is not to be disputed, as such depictions correctly define the material world, i.e., what appears to our outer senses.

¹ See: *Parsifal*, Notes from a lecture given by Dr. Rudolf Steiner at Landin on 29th July, 1906

Beginning in about the 15th century, the system of perspective was predicated on solely materialistic grounds. In 1435 Leon Battista Alberti, one of the earliest proponents of the theory of perspective, says in his book *On Painting*, “No one would deny that the painter has nothing to do with things that are not visible. The painter is concerned solely with representing what can be seen.”² This was a radical statement for a time in which most art depicted angelic beings and imaginative, mystical and spiritual experiences which were clearly not visible in the usual sense. The effect of adopting the theoretical basis described by Alberti and others was eventually to all but eliminate the representation of the inner dimension of seeing in art. This change led to naturalism in painting and what it called “representational art” in which the outer world is rendered according to the laws of geometry that hold in faithfully tracing the path of the reflection of light as it approaches the eye.

As we explore the transition of human consciousness that occurred during the Renaissance, we can begin to get a feeling for both the passing state of consciousness and the newly developing state. The Renaissance marks the end of a period of human developmental history in which it was customary to depict inner, spiritual experience and universal soul and spiritual memories of humanity in imaginative pictures. What these experiences were is reasonably clear from reviewing painting and sculpture prior to the Renaissance, i.e., during the Middle Ages and earlier. Clearly in the Western World as a whole, religious/mythical/spiritual subjects predominated with very rare instances of naturalistic art.³

What is of real interest here is not so much the subject matter of art as such, but the forces that are operating *behind* the subjects of art in the souls of human beings during the period prior to the Renaissance. What may first strike us is the fact that most art of the time harkens back to an earlier historical period—the time of Christ. We should take note that while naturalistic painting, depicting nature “faithfully as the eye sees it,” represents a moment in time—the moment when the artist is painting; art prior to the Renaissance almost invariably (aside from standard portraits of notable personalities and the like) depicts past events re-capitulated, re-imagined. If we call this earlier art “timeless” (which it certainly was), we really mean that it depicted something that is “good for all time,” or that, by virtue of its universality, endures for long spans of time. We mean that in a sense it contained or consisted of a breadth of time. Indeed, if we survey the record of human history going back into the distant past, we find little that gives much attention to space in comparison with time in the sense we have just established. Even the earliest portraiture (before the Renaissance) was more symbolic than representative, in most cases caring little for likenesses. The symbolic character of art that disregards external appearances highlights time rather than space; it places little emphasis on what appears to the senses in space in the moment, favoring collective qualities over sensible individual attributes, choosing the universal and typical (time-concentrating qualities) over the personal and distinctive (space-conserving qualities). The general tendencies referred to here in reference to art before the Renaissance can be seen universally in the broad spectrum of the cultures of the world, in literature, and indeed in

² Alberti, Leon Battista. *On Painting*. (Circa 1435-36) Translated with Introduction and Notes by John R. Spencer. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1970 [First printed 1956].

³ Taking up the art of the Far East would be very interesting to contrast with the Western perspective but is a completely different matter that will not be addressed here.

all of life. One can draw the same parallels when reviewing the pre-Christian art of Europe and the Near and Middle East with its rich mythologies and depictions of its pantheon of gods. Generally speaking, little regard is given to space. During these periods, very little attention is given to the material world that occupies space compared with the era following the Renaissance.

The ability to focus on the material world, making the physical world of space come into clear, precise view with perspective as the outer eye sees it, shifting the focus from the inner eye, was a monumental accomplishment for humanity. It may be seen as a step towards the fulfillment of the biblical dictum given by God to Adam, to “have dominion...over the earth,”⁴ a dominion that would bring human moral order and beauty to the natural world, elevating the laws of nature. What is meant here is difficult for modern humanity to grasp, since the sort of dominion we are used to seeing is very different from the noble dominion meant to be carried into the world by God’s children. And it is especially difficult to envision since many of those who claim to be God’s children care little for the earth and the natural world, considering it to be inferior to and less important than “heaven,” which simplistically defines for them the whole spiritual world. Nevertheless, humanity needs to acquire this new focus because the intention of the gods is to penetrate this whole planet to its dark core with the good, the true, and the beautiful to make it radiant with heavenly light. This focus obviously will not be possible without the greatest love for the planet and all of its inhabitants. We are describing here the Christian ideal of the New Jerusalem, the city of peace, which is the goal of humanity, a city transparent and permeated by spirit light. The Garden of Eden, having fallen into the hands of an errant humanity, in the end is resurrected by a redeemed humanity and becomes a beautiful city in which the darkened, physical, aspect of nature has become transparent—spiritualized: nature is ennobled through the evolved nobility of the human being. This is the meaning of the final words of the Bible.⁵ We can keep this picture in mind as we seek to fulfill Rudolf Steiner’s vision that “the Michael Power and the Michael Will penetrate the whole of life.”

At the present stage of human development we have only just begun to approach the material world to understand it. This is why it is so significant that humanity has adopted the new “perspective” of the material world that artists since the Renaissance have envisioned. This new perspective has allowed human understanding to penetrate material reality, yielding tremendous advances in technology—a process that is only just getting under way. But penetrating the material world is a spiritual matter with spiritual consequences equivalent to the traditional esoteric journey into the underworld. Modern humanity has not yet grasped this fact. What we face as a result of this penetration of the material world are the powers that live in the underworld—dark powers that emerge as human beings encroach on their world. Behind these dark guardians are the benevolent maternal forces that have been preserved from the fall, which will also emerge as we penetrate the earth with wisdom and love. But we will need to face the guardians of the underworld and master them before we can unite with the Mother forces of Shambhala.

⁴ *Holy Bible*, Genesis 1:26

⁵ See: *Holy Bible*, Revelations, Chapter 21

For the tremendous advances in technology, from which we all derive benefit in the modern world, we have much to be thankful. But the untransformed forces of the underworld have taken hold of our thinking. They have allowed us to see new vistas of reality, but as a side effect they have left the modern soul hanging over an abyss by removing the pictorial language of the inner life that used to nourish the human soul and spirit. As humanity crosses this abyss in our time (which began with the Age of Archangel Michael in 1879), we see another monumental shift in focus, and artists have faithfully mirrored this shift as they have mirrored changes in consciousness in all ages. Twentieth century art (often called simply modern art, distinct from contemporary art, which usually is considered post-modern) has broken away from the conventions established during the Renaissance, shattering the idea of perspective and of the superiority of naturalistic, representational or what might be called “photo-graphic” art—art that depicts nature as a representation of how light bounces off objects in space.

Modern art has offered back to humanity the “language of the inner life.” It has come back, *but not as a given*, such as in earlier times when artists depicted important spiritual events of the past or later simply by apprehending what is given by outer nature, as in landscape painting and all representative art. In keeping with the *inner* pictorial view to which modern artists have adhered and which rejects the ideal of realism, the work of these modern artists have been called “in-scapes” rather than landscapes, indicating the *inner* point of view. The fragmentation of the picture plane and the depiction of dream-like and fantastic, abstract, imaginative constructions such as have become cliché in our time (begun by the pioneers of Modernism) was a human invention—*not given*, but created to express the reality of the inner life. These pioneers included Picasso, Juan Gris, Matisse, Toulouse Lautrec, Braque, Cezanne, van Gogh, Wassily Kandinsky, and in America, Marzden Hartley, Arthur Dove, Georgia O’Keefe, John Marin, and Charles Demuth, to name a few. (Rudolf Steiner’s very significant contribution to art in the twentieth century is of another order and cannot be compared with that of these other artists.) It is no accident that this viewpoint developed coincident with the regency of Archangel Michael.

We could easily point to parallel developments in every sphere of human culture, including the sciences, in which the traditional, the classical and nearly all the long-standing conventions of representing “reality” were overturned. In every case there has been a movement away from the merely visible world and the time-bound, space-bound ways of understanding ourselves and our world. A door has been opened to exploring the unknown: the unconscious, sub-conscious and super-conscious—in a word, the invisible. Modern artists, as an avant-garde of culture in the Western world, have rejected the old idea of reality. Their vision has not yet permeated the whole of society, but the mores which were defined by the church or the state have lost their power over us. The moral imperative of our time and of the future lies in our power to re-define reality, to live true to what we know as soul and spiritual beings, as knowers ourselves, no longer beholden to the knowledge experts of the past. Of course, the denizens of the past are all around us serving as a counter-balance to the avant-garde that would fly off into the future too quickly. In confronting the invisible world (that we as students of spiritual science know can be represented through imagination, inspiration and intuition), humanity has been plunged into a void. We are left with a world whose foundations we can no longer claim to understand or readily define, as previously. Several modern schools of thought have arisen to underscore this fact, such as: systems theory, complexity science, integral studies, futures studies, post

structuralism, post formalism, open systems biology to name a few.⁶ But more importantly, a moral void has opened up. To say that a moral void has opened up is *not* to say we are confronted with an *immoral* void. A moral void creates an opportunity, an imperative. It has become imperative to create something, to envision something. Modern artists would never go back to merely representational painting of the outer world—that has become meaningless and even immoral in a certain sense, or at least backward, when so much more potential for creation exists within humanity. Nor would they allow anything that is not authentic and unique to the individual artist. Artists and art aficionados absolutely reject all such work as “derivative” and therefore “not creative” by their standards.

The visible world, the world of space, has lost its power over us. The invisible is now our guide into the future, and the act of spiritualizing space is intimately connected with our ability to re-define the old notions of reality and the old understanding of morality through the power of our inner life, by our own soul and spiritual faculties.

If we examine what has been presented above we will realize that the world does not merely stand before the threshold of the spiritual world, but rather it is being pushed over the threshold. It is no longer enough to define ourselves by outer perceptions; humanity is now being required to cross the threshold. All of the difficulties of modern times are the result of what is confronted on the front lines, in the throes of the moral void that is encountered at the threshold. It is not a metaphor to say that when viewing modern art one is looking into the abyss of human consciousness where one might witness chthonic, under-worldly powers, or perhaps catch a glimpse of a dawning Shambhala.

This situation is all the work of spiritual evolution, the result of the retreat of Archangel Michael, of his becoming taciturn. As the focus of human attention on superficial, outer reality is breaking down and yielding to unexplored inner depths, so too Michael no longer works from the outside, but seeks to work *within* humanity. How is it now that Archangel Michael will work *within us* to “penetrate the whole of life to meet the challenges of our time?” We will answer that question once we have addressed how one can develop the Michaelic courage necessary to gain intimacy with him.

We have discussed the abyss, the negative side of the challenges we face in the modern world—things that have to do with Michael’s retreat, we might say. Surely Archangel Michael works in a positive way as well—moving forward. Yes, much is said of the iron courage of those who join the ranks of his companions in the struggle for human freedom. If we know Michael, when we speak of this courage we are clearly not speaking of natural human courage. We refer here not to something that comes naturally, but to a quality that we acquire only as we tread the arduous path of spiritual development and face its guardians. It is something that is planted in us by the spiritual world and becomes iron courage in us through our exercise. What is the seed of this courage in us? The seed of this courage is one thing: an intimate relationship with Archangel Michael.

⁶ I credit Jennifer Gidley for help with this list of modern schools of thought, read, *Evolution of Consciousness and Paradigm Change*, available on Academia.edu

As we approach the subject of intimacy with a sublime, hierarchical being, we tread on mysterious ground, sacred ground, a turf that requires that we remove our shoes—not just as a sign of reverence or to prevent damage as we tread, but to make a vital connection with the earth beneath our feet. Here we enter the environs of the grail castle where the mystery of the union of the divine feminine and masculine is celebrated in the sword and the chalice. Here, as spiritual beings, we feel the earth beneath our feet again after millennia of incarnations, but as never before. We enter again into our ancient wisdom, but it all has become new. Time is laid out before us in space: “You see, my son, here time becomes space.” (The realm of time, the etheric world, is set before our inner vision in a panorama.) And we can dimly hear the words of the ancient dictum, remembering how it sounded to the student of the mysteries striving for initiation, who finally beheld the vision of the Divine Sophia saying: “I am the All, I am the Past, the Present and the Future; no mortal has yet lifted my veil.” But the dictum has changed. Now Sophia says: “I am the Human Being, I am the Past, the Present, and the Future. Every mortal should lift my veil.”

Perhaps we can feel the grandeur of these words, but what does it all mean? How might these words be fleshed out in real life? How might we experience the depths again after more than a millennium of being schooled in superficiality? As we stand at the gate of this realm, let us return once more to the question of space and time that we began with; but now we will attempt to cross the desert of conceptual abstractions and enter the land of the pure, living, water and pulsing blood.

Let us begin by characterizing this new territory that is not built on the former foundations of thinking in which outer vision rules and in which it is assumed that everything is contained within the skin of a thing. Let us leave the straitjacket ideation of mechanistic, materialistic thought. In this new land we would move from ordinary space “as the eye sees it” into time, in the act of spiritualizing our knowledge of space, with the help of the Time Spirit.

What does it mean to move beyond the experience of space, the three-dimensional world, into the world of time, the fourth dimension? We have already given a few clues to what the experience of time might be. We have mentioned the “timeless” or symbolic nature of seeing that was represented by artists before the advent of perspective. It was easy and natural in earlier times to experience the permanence of the timeless or to have what we might call a *time-condensed* experience. Humanity was embedded in a myth-and-symbol-rich world, a culture that was thick with ritual and festival to keep the ancient memory alive and coursing through the blood. The outer world has become such a distraction for us today precisely because our focus is on space, and our concern is with objects in space, viz., the material world. The abyss we have fallen into or have been pushed into is a void of time. We are dimly aware of this void; references to it slip out in our language. We are perpetually trying to “save time” because we “don’t have enough time.” So modern technology provides us with “time saving” devices that will give us more time, quality time—with those who are important to us, for instance. Or we can “buy time” to make more money because we know that “time is money.” As a culture, we actually know that we are running out of time; we even acknowledge the “end of time” with expectations based on all sorts of prophecies regarding the “end times.” We feel the void of time, sometimes acutely, but we don’t really know what it means. We may say that time is precious but most of us don’t comprehend the depth of truth in that statement. Or we simply don’t know

how to escape the imprisonment of the time void, which is simply the shadow or underside of un-spiritualized space.

If we truly understood our predicament we would stop and listen. We would enter into the silence until we could hear the voice of silence, calling us back to ourselves. We would hear: “Every mortal should lift my veil...I am the human being...I am the Past, the Present and the Future.” We would stop the incessant internal dialog; we would stop our obsession with doing; we would stop our “wise and prudent” fascination with the past and the future, and we would simply BE PRESENT. We would realize once and for all that the future and past have no existence outside of the present moment; they exist only in the present moment. All else is imaginary; all else is fantasy. One of the paradoxes of this path is that we can only receive the gifts of the past and the future in the present. Time is Now. The eternal lives in the present moment. We only own ourselves truly in the Now. We can only act Now. When we draw all of our forces of thinking and feeling into the present, we can awaken and we can act. We mistake outer movement for action. Real action, spirit-action, is from within; it is not outer movement.

What does it mean that the future and the past only lay in the present moment? The answer to this question is intimated in Gurnemanz’ words to Parsifal: “Here time becomes space.” One of the first steps on the path of initiation is seeing the panorama, the tableaux of our life spread out before us. We must cross this threshold. This happens with every near-death experience. It happens at death. It happens when the etheric body separates from the physical body. It happens with initiation. We see this tableau—our life spread out before us, the past the present and the future lying before our eyes as if in space. Here time becomes space. We enter the etheric world. Let us further clarify this enigmatic saying. *Here time becomes space* means that space is our way of translating things; it is our way of comprehending time. At this point in our evolution we relate most clearly to the spatial. So when we say “time becomes space” we mean that we are able to comprehend time, we are able to “see” time—in spatial terms. When we see the tableaux we *see* time, whereas before it eluded us.

Now that we have begun to enter into the mood of time, let us proceed a step further away from the abstract towards the real. What do we see in the moment when we have stilled our thoughts and drawn together our soul forces? We have said that we see time spread out before us—our human life and its trajectory, we might say. As with all spiritual matters we can talk about these things, but it is a very different thing to experience them. We have either experienced the tableaux or we have not. Perhaps we have experienced the tableaux but don’t remember it. This is so often the case. We get distracted. We don’t know what is important, what to focus on, so we let valuable experiences go, and we lose them. The spiritual life has a lot to do with what Don Juan, the Nagual, the teacher and the man of knowledge in Carlos Casteneda’s stories called “recollecting.” It also has much to do with what he called “stalking.” Stalking is what we do to find the spirit. We watch intently, quietly. We bring all of our forces of attention to the task—that is “stalking.” We have experienced the tableaux but we need to recollect it. To recollect is just to *re-collect* an experience, to re-live it, to resurrect it. Stalking and recollecting work together, helping us to bring the past back into the present to *see it*. As we do this we will be building our spiritual hut, and we will understand the spirit of the Hebrew “feast of tabernacles,” the bounty of having a spiritual house of our own.

Seeing ourselves in our past, present and future states is not an abstract exercise; it is a moral tour de force. It involves us in the death process that usually lives in us without our knowledge. We see the tableaux as the death in us, our mortal nature, makes itself known to us in a monumental way. It is a colossal achievement to see this. Have we seen this? Are we willing to see this? The tableaux we see reaches from the past into the future with a center point, the NOW point, at which we can choose death or life in a moment of spirit-decision. We can choose death or life, but either way we die. If we choose spirit, our old self separates from us (dies) and we are resurrected; if we choose death we remain dead. As Goethe says, “we die and become.” Actually he says, “[a]nd as long as thou art without this dying and becoming thou art but an uneasy guest on the dark earth.”⁷ Through dying and becoming we enter the Grail Castle and partake of the feast. This is where the sword and the chalice come together; where we celebrate a solemn and bounteous festival of meaning; where our blood is spilt but is captured in the grail cup to be etherized. This dying and becoming becomes an organ in us to see dying and becoming around us—to see the mortal and the immortal. It becomes our “ticket” into the etheric world. Having seen this in ourselves, having taken proper account of it, we can now see it in others. We can see the tableaux of a person’s life. We can see the human being, the past, the present and the future. We can see TIME. “Here time becomes space.”

These are just clues. We must do our own stalking and recollecting. To become Michael’s companions, to become companions of the Time Spirit, we must be courageous and do the work or we will not be able to spiritualize space, we will not be able to engage “the Michael Power and the Michael Will [to] penetrate the whole of life,” as Rudolf Steiner entreats us.

We have examined this facet of spiritual experience that is one key to seeing into the etheric world. Through this experience we begin to know how our new organ of seeing Time can allow us to see the tableaux, the panorama of a person’s life, allowing us to engage with our fellow humans on a deeper level than might otherwise be possible. Let us elaborate this scenario a bit more before we attempt to globalize the idea of seeing Time, or having etheric vision.

What does it mean to see another person’s humanity, his or her past present and future? First, it means to understand that death works in us all, that we all are chained to the rock like Prometheus—the rock of our material nature. At that turning point in our lives when we saw our own tableaux, we met face-to-face the being of our earthly nature, the being of death that works in us. If we were fully conscious we recognized this being as ourselves, our double. We have seen our weaknesses, our failings face-to-face. If we have made our meeting fruitful, we will have walked away as a different person, as a person resolved to take the path of spirit with whatever little power we have to do so, to take the risks and to press through all of the obstacles that would present themselves. The future opens to our inner vision the moment we take the challenge. If we fail to take the challenge we see only dimly, we see a dark future lived without the spark of Life, without the flame of the etheric burning in it. The new determination, the new resolve that we make at this point is not the same as our earthly resolve, our earthly determination, which does not afford us the clarity and depth of vision to see what the real obstacle is. It is only in seeing the real hindrance that we can develop Michaelic courage;

⁷ Taken from: *The Mysteries (Die Geheimnisse)* A Christmas and Easter Poem by Goethe

everything that comes otherwise is a filmy shadow, a weak excuse for the spiritual iron that is imparted to us in this encounter with Time, at this meeting with the Time Spirit.

This is how spiritual intimacy with Archangel Michael is born in us. He is the one who holds up the being of death for our vision. He stands behind this being that we call the Guardian of the Threshold until we can confront it as we should. He stands preeminently, of all the archangelic beings, as one who has faith in the human being. The radiant sun spirit shines like the sun upon our future, opens up our spiritual future once we have taken in and have digested the moon of our karmic debt, of our karmic bonds—in the double. This is what we become aware of: that without our determined participation in the face of the double we have no power; there will be no sun of the future; we are condemned to the darkness, to nothing more than the light of the moon. Without this experience, all of what we usually call courage is mingled with motives of our lower nature and cannot be called courage in the highest sense, which must be related to truth. But once we take the step forward while facing our double, the presence of the light of Archangel Michael is there to guide us to truth, and real courage is then born in us.

The significance of this meeting arranged by the Time Spirit, in which we behold his radiance, is that we are henceforth filled with unspeakable appreciation for this presence of light, this etheric vision that we have acquired from him, and with gratitude to the spiritual world. We recognize that without the knowledge of his presence as the light that fills our world, we were condemned to darkness, to a vision of the world that does not glow with the good, the true, and the beautiful, but with only a pale and distorted reflection of these. And without the faith that Archangel Michael has in the human being, the faith to lead us to the Greater Guardian of the Threshold, Christ, we would be condemned to living on the surface of things, to seeing only the outer shell of the world, the hard skin of things that is reflected by the physical light that meets our eye. Through this experience we acquire the proper appreciation for Michael/Christ and the humility that does not condemn others but that understands the human predicament. This humility allows a sort of spirit-beholding of the etheric world of time in humanity, and enables us to carry out the Michaelic mission of faith in our fellow man/woman, against all odds, shining the light of the future to irradiate the past, the present, and the future in the Now of being human.

In these few pages we have concentrated our attention on the seed point of Time, the gestative moment that opens the doors of perception to etheric vision, and we have begun to elaborate that sort of vision as it applies to the human being and to our seeing of one another. Of course we need to globalize this vision to “penetrate the whole of life,” as we have set out to explain in this article. This work will be left mostly to my readers, but we should at least indicate in the broadest strokes a picture that may be extended without limits by the devoted student of the school of Michael.

The most fertile image I can think of is that of the new human being who is born in this “dying and becoming” we have been discussing: a human being who is a child again. And we must place this new human being who is a child squarely before the challenge of elevating human culture above the divisions of science, art and religion—“to penetrate the whole of life.”

We have all become old; even the young have become old. We are old in our thinking. The only way to rebirth culture is to see how our old ways of thinking have created this division of culture.

We know that the old way is rooted in the material aspect of our human nature as it stands at the present point in world evolution; it is the old rock of Prometheus that must be penetrated by etheric vision. The rock stands as a symbol of the inertia, the immovability, the impenetrability of thinking. It represents the tendency to think of the material world as the starting point for everything, the vanishing point from which our vision is organized, so to speak. Human thinking has, by and large, followed this “rock nature.” Children and the spirit of childhood are not subject to this powerful influence; they are protected from it. Children have soft bodies, they have soft heads, and their thinking is mobile, not strongly influenced by the torpor of the old and sclerotic. Children are strangers to anything resembling fixed ideas as evidenced so clearly in their art which is so full of Time, of etheric presence, as we have been describing it, and so devoid of the character of strait-jacket, materialistic thinking.

One of the hallmarks of intimacy with Michael is a child-like nature as seen for instance in the German poet, philosopher and scientist Novalis. Novalis was a truly child-like figure to whom the divisions of culture were completely transparent. For him science, art and religion were child comrades on a human journey of discovery, and so must it become for us. Anything that is not born out of this youthful spirit is doomed to failure just as the sclerotic, impotent culture we have created is doomed to failure. The child-like figure we are seeking to envision here is actually our new-born selves, the selves we become in our “dying and becoming.” And it is none other than the child whose nativity we celebrate every year at Christmas who is born in us. Rudolf Steiner was clear that “the Michael power and the Michael will are none other than the Christ power and the Christ will.”

An elaboration of and a meditation on the child-like nature with its characteristic love, awe, spirit of discovery, purity of perception, and indefatigable predisposition to wonder would go well here, but we must leave that exploration for another time. Suffice it to say that we must engage ourselves in “recollecting” and in “stalking” the spirit to lay hold of the experience of the Michael power and the Michael will, which is born in us as a child and, incidentally, is tended and guarded by another archangelic being by the name of Ramael.⁸ Intimacy with Michael as we have elaborated it will eventually lead us to the knowledge of this other sublime being who will play a greater and greater role in the coming times as the skin of the old paradigm is cast off and the new community of the grail envisioned by Rudolf Steiner as leading humanity becomes a reality.

I opened this paper with a quote from James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* because it captures from this most characteristic artist of the early 20th century, the thought I have sought to elaborate in these pages. “Welcome O Life! *I go to encounter* for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.” This is the speech of a new-born spirit, a spirit radiant with hope for the future, an artist with vision for the moral future of humanity. It is the speech of one who has “eradicated from his soul all fear and terror of what comes out of the future,” to paraphrase Rudolf Steiner’s meditation “For this Michael Age.” It is the speech of a spirit that has confronted its shadow,

⁸ See: Adriana Koulias: *The Trinity of Nathan Soul, Vidar, and Michael: In the Past, Present and Future Sacrifices of Christ, Part II*, for an explanation of this being and his name.

what it fears the most, and is willing to face it again and again “in the smithy of his soul” for the sake of the future of humanity. It is the voice of a soul liberated from the nets of language, of nationality and of religion.⁹ It is the voice of a child: “Welcome O Life!” May this same voice resonate within us? May it resound as a clarion call to all who would become Michael’s companions in the task of “forging in the smithy of our souls the uncreated conscience of our race?” For this is the spirit that will empower us with “the Christ will and the Christ power” “to penetrate the whole of life” and to spiritualize our knowledge of space to meet the challenges of our time.

⁹ These words (language, nationality, religion) are taken from James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Chapter 5, p. 203, Penguin Books, 1976