



WHERE THE GODS COME FROM

Terror, Religion and Regression

Interviews and filmtexts
by Petrus van der Let



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Breastfed baby



Child-God Mithras



Mithras Self-Sacrifice



Soma-Sacrifice in a school for Zarathustra-Priests, Mumbai/India

UNDERWORLDS

Or: Death and Resurrection of the Child-God Soma¹

Is Europe undermined by miles of tunnel systems, dating back thousands of years, as some scientists believe?

Or do these earth caves date from the Middle Ages? Were they empty tombs for the souls of the dead and eventually forbidden by the church?

Earth cave-owner: *By 1580, the first witch trials had begun and the accused were routinely asked under torture: Did you put out small shoes or plates in the cellar? The point was to find out whether people were continuing with this cult.*

How did this idea of a “soul” that is saved in an afterlife come about in the first place?

Harald Strohm – historian of religion: *This world is more or less rotten: We – the priests – promise you happiness, if you do as we say, and if you pay and support us. If you do that, you will get your reward in the next world. The ancient myths associated this sort of happiness with early infancy. You will be saved in the future.*

In a school for Zoroastrian priests in Mumbai a Soma sacrifice is made, just as it was described 3500 years ago in the ancient Indian Rigveda. Literally translated, Rigveda means “knowledge in verses”. It is a collection of songs about the adventures of the Gods and is more than one thousand pages long. The gods Soma and Indra are the main protagonists.

Harald Strohm: *What my work on the Rigveda over the last decades has brought to light is that many of the gods are based on childhood experiences, and that the individual gods reflect certain stages of early infancy. Soma is an infant aged between 3 and 5 months. Once you look at the work from this perspective, many passages quite obviously describe experiences from early infancy. Let me read a few text passages from our latest book.²*

To Soma: Adorned with wedding clothes, thou shalt robe thyself in milk. The divine has wrapped himself in white robes – in swaddling clothes! He has wrapped himself in his robes like the son in the arms of his mother, to drink the milk. He hastens to his woman like a suitor, a lover, to take his place in her lap...while he is being nursed!

The myth surrounding Soma is this: this phase of being breastfed, this close, highly erotic relationship with the mother and her breasts, her face, the eye contact while feeding – this phase of early infancy must end at some point and give way to a new phase of early childhood. Mythically speaking, this means that Soma must die to be resurrected as a different child, as Indra. In fact, Soma’s “death” ushers in the next phase of early childhood: Indra, who represents the period between 6 and 18 months. What is astonishing is how this drama of Soma’s death and Indra’s resurrection is acted out by the so-called Soma sacrifice, where Soma is represented

¹ Compare the documentary film with the same title on DVD at www.alibri.de also with English subtitles

² Zitat aus dem Rigveda in dem Aufsatz *König Soma...in Herrscherkult und Heilserwartung* hg. von Jan Assmann, Harald Strohm, Paderborn, 2010, page 59

by the stalks of a plant. These stalks are squeezed during the sacrifice killed, in a way – so that only the juices remain. The juice is also called Soma and has a slightly intoxicating effect. The congregation performing the sacrifice would drink this juice in dedication to Indra. They drank the blood, so to speak, of Soma, the dead son of God, thereby resurrecting Indra in themselves. In effect, they re-enacted this ancient drama of early infancy within themselves.

This drama of being weaned was rewritten over the course of the following centuries by the powerful, growing caste of priests. Soma was no longer resurrected as Indra, but as himself, as King Soma, more powerful than any human king.

Harald Strohm: This meant that the fundamental message of the Soma sacrifice shifted significantly. The re-enactment of the dramas of early infancy: the first detachment from the mother, the rediscovery of the mother in a visual sense, because that's when babies develop a sharper, more detailed sense of vision. Up until that point, they know their mother only by touch, but now they can see her properly, and of course she appears to them as a fairy-tale creature. In the Rigveda, she is the goddess Usha, the goddess of the dawn. These dramas are now pushed into the background, and the priests are faced with a problem: They have to replace the ancient meaning that has become lost – the deeply touching re-enactment of early infancy – with a new religious meaning. And it is quite clear what happened – the priests promised a new meaning of life, not in the past, but in the future. The message is: There is a better world waiting for all of you. To reach this alleged better world, the concept of the soul had to be invented, as the body rots after death.

This stone relief shows a siren carrying a baby-like soul into the underworld: depicted 500 years before our time in Lycia.

Jürgen Borchhardt headed the archaeological excavations in Lycia for over 40 years and found a whole city – Limyra. 2500 years ago, the earth surface here was 9 meters higher than today. For this reason, quite a few sarcophagi have been flooded. Tombs were found that had been cut out of the rocks, so-called necropoli, “cities of the dead” in ancient Greek.

Jürgen Borchhardt: After decades of preparations, we have finally tried to reconstruct parts of a Lycian house. I think it is fair to say that we were quite apprehensive about this. We tried to reconstruct parts of a Lycian house in a 1:1 scale from the stone elements of the necropoli. Here we are, sitting next to an element of a Lycian residential house. Most likely, the most important part of the house was used for the burial sites – remember, this was a patriarchal society, so the most important part of the house would be the andron, the banquet house, where the master of the house would receive guests in the evening.

Hades was the ruler of the underworld. He had trouble finding a wife, and finally abducted the goddess Persephone while she was innocently picking flowers. Zeus, king of the gods, eventually forced his brother Hades to return Persephone to the world of the living in the spring, so that she only had to spend winter in the underworld.

A description of the underworld in the Odyssey is reminiscent of the Saklikent gorge in Turkey. It is almost 20km long, very narrow, and thrown into perpetual shadow by the high rocks. Hardly any mortal ever succeeded in leaving the netherworld. Odysseus, the crafty victor of Troy, is one of the exceptions. Circe advises Odysseus to consult the spirit of Theban prophet Tiresias in the underworld about whether the gods will allow him to return home.

If the Trojan War ever happened at all, it may have been a battle between the Mycenaeans against the Hittites. In their capital city Hattusa, there is an underground walkway that the kings used when they appeared before their people. A 3300-year old peace treaty between the Hittites and their neighbors, the Mittani, also calls upon the gods Indra and Mitra from the ancient Indian Rigveda.

All Hittite gods wore pointy hats, like the Iranian Mithra, who later morphed into the Roman Mithras, revered in caves and underground cult sites. Originally, this god Mithra represented a slightly older child: Mithra means something like “divine treaty”. He was able to set up agreements and contracts. To do this, he had to be able to speak – to be at least 18 months old.

Harald Strohm: As a sort of composite god, a combination of several deities from the first, second, and third years of life, he lived on to inspire the Roman Mithras cult as well as later religious history – elements of this cult can be found even in Christianity. What makes the Iranian Mithra so astonishing – the cult contains elements of the ancient Soma sacrifice, things that are associated with a very young god like Soma for instance the use of swaddling clothes.

Although the Iranian prophet Zoroaster condemned the Soma sacrifice as “intoxicating piss”, the cute little child-god was so popular with believers that he is still revered today by Zoroastrians. The same holds true for Mithra, who still has his own thanksgiving festival in Iran which even the Mullahs regard as compatible with Allah’s intentions. Tehran airport is called Mehrabad: Mithra’s abode.

Edgar Lissel – artist: A topic that greatly interests me right now comes from archeology: the Mithras cult. Mithra is an ancient Persian deity whose image can be found all over Europe, thanks to the Romans who spread the idea. I discovered this deity in the museum in Carnuntum near Deutschaltenburg, together with a publication by Harald Strohm which pointed out fascinating connections.

Edgar Lissel likes to draw inspiration for his art from science. This video of the journey of a ray of light, for instance, was made in an ancient cupola – as a video and a photo series.

As the religion of the Roman soldiers, the Mithras cult was dominating in Europe until the third century of our time. The birth of Mithras was celebrated on December 25, long before this date was annexed by Christianity to commemorate the birth of child-god Jesus.

Until that point, the Romans also erected many burial mounds like the ones here in Semriach in Styria, which was discovered by accident.

Wolfgang Hesse – physician: *After the farmer had come across one of the mounds here, he asked my father, who was a good friend of his, to take a look at it. My father then asked Professor Modrian from the Joanneum Museum for his opinion. He said that it could be a Roman burial mound – let's start digging and see what we find. After all, there had been instances in the past where what looked like a burial mound was actually a lime kiln or something.*

The old Egyptians mummified their dead so the soul would have a place where it could live on. This was only possible if it returned into the preserved body.

Michaela Hüttner - egyptologist: *What we have here is a Book of the Dead, a papyrus roll with a collection of dictums that would help the dead reach the underworld. It begins with the deceased on the bier being mummified by the god Anubis, the god with the jackal head. Underneath the bier, we can see 4 canopic jars for the viscera of the dead, and the grieving goddesses Isis and Neftis. Next are several stations on the way into the netherworld: the deceased is crossing the water in a boat, he must answer several questions on the way to which the Book of the Dead contains the answers. He must pass sentinels and answer their questions so that they allow him to walk through the door. This way, he slowly works his way to the judgment of the dead, where the heart of the deceased – the seat of the conscience and the thoughts – is weighed against the small figure of Maat, the goddess of truth and justice. She carries a feather on her head to symbolize that truth is as light as a feather. If the two scales balance, the deceased was a good person who led a decent life. He will then be allowed to pass into the netherworld. Behind the scales, we can see what awaits him if he wasn't a good person: the Lake of Fire, which somewhat pre-empted the purgatory and hell of Christianity. In Christianity, it is the Archangel Michael who weighs the souls, also using a set of scales.*

A distant relative of the Indian Soma was the ancient Egyptian child-god Horus, who is being nursed here by his mother – the goddess Isis. The similarity to later depictions of Mother Mary with baby Jesus is no coincidence.

Michaela Hüttner: *We are in the cult chamber of Ka-Ni-Nisut, the overground part of a tomb that was situated close to the Cheops pyramid. This is where the relatives of the deceased would come, leave sacrificial offerings and say prayers. This would happen before a blind door, which we see here: a stone rendition of a real door, not intended for the living, but for the soul of the dead. The ancient Egyptians believed that the soul of the deceased would enter this room from the underground burial chamber and accept the offerings laid down by his relatives.*

In Styria, the tradition of leaving offerings on All Soul's Day for the dead in stone holes still lives on.

Heinrich Kusch – pre-historian: *These stone arrangements in the Vorau area are prehistoric. In modern times, they have been mostly used as door or gate stones, but also as boundary stones. They are several thousand years old. So far, we have been able to document more than 330 such stone arrangements, also called menhirs. The locals believe that they indicate the underground walkways that are said to run below the surface here.*

On a 15th- century plan showing the ground view of Vorau monastery, dark lines point away from the monastery on three sides. They were thought to indicate subterranean walkways and gave rise to wild speculations about the hidden treasure of the monastery. In 1784, Emperor Joseph II sent a committee to Vorau to “excavate the treasure in the name of God”, as it was put at the time. But underneath the column of our Lady no wooden barrels filled with gold were ever found, and indeed anywhere else.

After 1941, Vorau monastery housed a school for the Nazi elite. It is said that at the time, valuable objects were brought from the monastery to Masenberg Mountain via an underground walkway. Masenberg Mountain does indeed have an extensive system of underground walkways, but no link to the monastery has been found so far.

Underground worlds tend to inspire legends, and the younger the audience, the more enthusiastic the response. According to legend, the discovery of iron in the Styrian Erzberg goes back to a water sprite, who lived in a grotto near Eisenerz until the locals took him prisoner. To regain his freedom, the sprite offered them gold for 10 years, silver for 100 years, or iron forever.

The ancient religions also live on in our legends and fairy tales. The dwarves wear pointy hats similar to that of Mithra. Hel, the goddess of the underworld, became Mother Holle, who can only be reached by passing through a well. Hel is also the root for the word hell.

Edgar Lissel: *I am really looking forward to telling my son those tales. It will make me see those figures and their stories from a completely different perspective. Reliving those stories at a different age and with a different point of view: I'm really excited about this retake.*

The Women's Cave near Kaindorf was a refuge for women and children during the wars. It is more than 60 meters long and most likely used to be even bigger, but some of the corridors have silted up. Kaindorf is first mentioned in a document from 1255, but finds from Roman times show that earlier settlements also existed. When exactly this cave was dug can no longer be determined.

Heinrich Kusch: *In former times such passages were often used for healing rituals for instance, one had to slip through the passage 3 times to “wipe off” the sickness. I just passed through one of the narrow passages that are characteristic of caves of this sort. This passage was originally much narrower and was enlarged at a later point to make it easier to get through.*

Several of these low tunnels form a circle. It is hard to say whether they were also used for cult purposes. In some of these cave systems, small statues of females have been found that suggest that goddesses were worshipped here. Maybe as a counterbalance to the strictly male Christian God the Father.

Some underground caves are so low and narrow that they could neither have been used as hiding places nor as cult sites. Edith Bednarik has measured and documented dozens such tunnels in Lower Austria alone.

Edith Bednarik – cave researcher: *The theory of soul graves – what do you think of that? I think it must have been something like that. They imagined the souls as small people – that would fit in with the size, and with the idea of a link to the forefathers, or with one's own soul, one's own shadow. The more time I spend researching these caves, the more likely it seems to me that they were used for cult purposes and not as hiding places.*

In 1945, Margarete Unger was 19 years old: *This was my parent's house. We moved down to the cellar 14 days before the Russian army was said to arrive. And when it got closer, word had got around in the village that we had somewhere to hide, and several young women came to join us underground. My father then bricked up the entrance. It would have been okay down there, but after an hour we realized that the candle was burning lower and lower. We were afraid we would suffocate, so we screamed for my father to open up the entrance, and he took out the bricks and we crawled back up. Nothing happened to us, and no Russians got to our house either.*

Some earth caves are discovered purely by accident. These strange niches in Gaweinstal were discovered when a cellar was extended. The owner of the house has so far removed 12 cubic meters of filling material.

Earth cave owner, Gaweinstal: *In 1552, the Council of Trent was held under Pope Pius, and the conclusion was that the soul doesn't need a place to dwell until Judgment Day. So people thought – okay, the body rejoins the earth, but what will happen to the soul? And quite a few cults sprang up around the concept of the soul. The church wasn't too happy about that, so they came up with the idea of purgatory, where the soul goes to await Judgment Day. I come from a strictly Catholic region, and I remember my grandmother putting out a plate with slices of cake and a glass of water in the cellar on All Soul's Day, because that's when the souls of dead relatives come to visit their family. When we were children, we were not allowed out that night. In Bavaria, this custom survives to this day – people putting food and drink in the cellar, where they think the souls of the dead linger.*

The most important sacrament of the Mandaeans is salvation through repeated baptism.

Harald Strohm: *During the Brahman period, approximately 1000 years after the Rigveda, a new type of Soma sacrifice developed – the Brahman baptism. Like I said earlier, in the original sacrifice, to re-enact the drama of Soma's weaning, stalks of plants were squeezed and the juice then drunk. This squeezing of the stalks was now transformed into a kind of performance that was acted out by the congregation, usually a bride and groom, as Soma was always revered as a wedding god. The bride and groom were the stalks, so to speak. To reenact the story, they dressed up as Soma in white cloths, and "squeezed" themselves empty weeks before the wedding by rigorous fasting. At the actual wedding, they were allowed to consume some food, and then had to step into a bath – a river, actually, as it had to be a body of flowing water, but it was impounded to form a small pond. They drank some of the water, bathed, washed, and that way restored the energy they lost in the squeezing process.*

This wedding and baptism ceremony takes place at the Pegnitz River in Nuremberg.

The Mandaeans are a 2000-year old sect that combines Jewish and Christian elements. They consider John the Baptist the reformer of their religion, while Jesus is a false prophet.

Sabih al Sohairy – Mandaean community, Nuremberg: *We call ourselves Mandaeans, from Manda – knowledge. In Iraq and Iran, they call us Sabians. We are mentioned in the Koran, but Muslims today no longer acknowledge this. And that's a problem – we don't have a lot of rights in Iraq, still don't after all this time.*

The most important celestial creature of the Mandaeans is Manda d-Haije, "Son of Life" in Aramaic. He is just eight years old and represents knowledge and salvation.

Sabih al Sohairy: *They immerse themselves in water to symbolize death. When they reemerge, they have joined the world of light. The ceremony stands for life and death.*

Harald Strohm: *The ritual is about death and resurrection, like in the old Soma sacrifice. The re-enactment of the dramas of early infancy has fallen by the wayside, now the point is to represent the end of this life and the resurrection in another. However, the ancient tale of rebirth of the original Soma sacrifice is still being told and reenacted. In particular, candidates for baptism are still dressed in white swaddling clothes.*

As in Christianity, the Mandaeans believe that a woman brought evil into the world. Instead of the fall of man brought about by Eve, they believe that a female demon was involved in the act of creation.

It is no coincidence that the Mother of God is particularly revered in patriarchal societies. By idealizing motherhood in this way, the seed is also sown for disparaging women as equal partners in any other roles and functions.

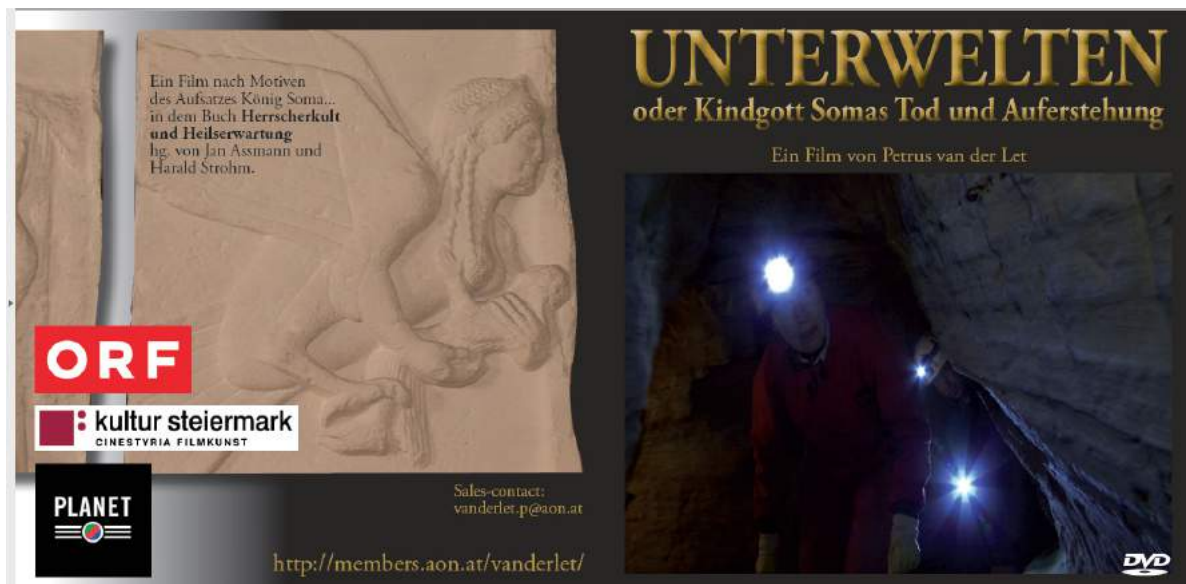
Harald Strohm: *Just think of the enormous status of the nursing baby Jesus in Western art: Maria lactans, the nursing Mother Mary – this image has inspired a whole range of saints, for instance St. Bernard, to regress into the role of the baby Jesus: This vision has been painted a thousand times over: the saint being nurtured by Mary's breast milk that she sends down from heaven in a great big spurt. In Christianity, the drama of breastfeeding and weaning plays an elementary and fundamental role that is incredibly complex and has so far not been explained in theological terms.*

Sabih al Sohairy: *John the Baptist didn't found a congregation as such, but we believe that he was our last prophet. He died of natural causes.*

Harald Strohm: *The New Testament says that Jesus was baptized by John when he was 30 years old, and this marks the beginning of the end, his sacrificial death: from here onwards, the drama unfolds all the way to the cross. Astonishingly, practically all the great painters have depicted this drama not featuring a man of 30, but an infant. Baby Jesus, swaddled, clearly still being nursed, with a proprietary hand on his mother's breast or a nipple in his mouth, and a slightly older baby -John- on the other side, who announces: See the lamb of God, the agnus dei – little Jesus, who has to die as a 5 month-old to be resurrected as an older child.*

That is the meaning of the ancient Soma sacrifice. The New Testament doesn't see things this way, but the painters still felt the urge to represent the story in those terms: the salvation drama of Jesus as a childhood drama.

Of course, the theologians and even the painters themselves would say that we are talking about an allegory. But that this allegory has remained so consistent throughout the centuries, from one painter to the next, is in itself highly significant. It would have made a lot more sense to reenact this drama with old, frail figures that are close to death anyway. But in psychological terms, this representation is exactly right: the drama of being weaned in the middle of the 6th or 7th month, linked to the slightly older child John. The drama of death and resurrection is being projected onto the middle of the first year of life.



JOURNEY TO THE CRADLE OF EUROPE AN ODYSSEY IN DIAPERS ?

Puppet: *That's not my Rosaura! That's a baby in diapers!*

Director: *My dears, that's all very nice – but we can see your hair.*

After shooting some scenes at a Punch and Judy show, the director withdrew to Semmering to think of a new concept for the film. He could not give anything away about the origin of the gods with pointed caps that would be censored by the TV-editors.

Jürgen Borchhardt - archaeologist: *Why is Poseidon angry? He can see Odysseus on the sea.*

Hubert Zemethy - archaeologist: *Odysseus has already drawn the bow. Bow and arrow were painted.*

In the shape of a bull, Zeus abducted the Phoenician princess Europa from the Middle East to Crete. She bore him three sons, Minos and Sarpedon among them. Sarpedon is said to have founded the Lycian empire in Asia Minor, near modern day Antalya. On this hill, Jürgen Borchhardt excavated a burial temple.

Jürgen Borchhardt: *This is a view over the royal seat of the Lycian king Pericles from approx. 400 BC, with the port of Limyra in the South. Limyra was called Cemuri in the language of ancient Lycia.*

Today, the burial temple is in the Antalya Museum. A wooden model is kept in Vienna, at the Institute of Classical Archaeology. A relief shows Pericles with the pointed cap of the Great King.

Mehmet Gür: *The archaeologist stayed up here, his food was cooked down in the valley. He showered using a bucket of water if he didn't feel like going down. That's how we worked up here for many years. His food was brought to him, but the child who took it ate some of it on the way, so he never got the full portion. That's what life here was like.*

At the foot of the hill, the ancient city of Limyra was excavated over several decades. Jürgen Borchhardt oversaw the excavations for more than thirty years.

Jürgen Borchhardt: *Today, this site looks like an English lawn, but even when I started digging, it was still one big swamp, with billions of insects and snakes.*

Over the last 2000 years, the African plate has shifted, submerging many of the former Lycian coast settlements.

Jürgen Borchhardt: *For an archaeologist, this must have been one of the greatest events of the 1880s. And as scholars, we must admire the work of the Austrian expedition. Archaeologist Otto Benndorf headed several expeditions to Lycia in the 1880s. Elaborate illustrations of Homer's epics were found on the stones of a burial*

site. The Heroon of Trysa, a monumental burial site in the Lycian mountains, is decorated with 200m of friezes and 600 figures.

On a visit to Vienna in the 1990s, the Turkish Minister of Culture questioned whether the friezes were rightfully in Austrian hands. Today, the burial site is almost completely overgrown and can only be found with the aid of local guides. Hubert Szemethy was asked to document how the frieze was acquired and to clarify the issue of legitimacy.

Hubert Szemethy: At the Academy of Sciences, we found original photographic plates from the 1880s. They were essential for resolving the issue.

Gabriel Knaffl was the last head of the expedition. Under his supervision, the finds were hauled to the Myra Valley on a specially constructed path, and from there taken on sleds to the port of Andriake. The friezes, which weighed several tons, were taken to Trieste on ships and from there by train to Vienna. 1 large sarcophagus was taken to the museum in Constantinople as agreed. The Knaffl-Hof in Graz bears the name of the Knaffl family. Also in Graz, Hubert Szemethy found vital expedition documents with a great-granddaughter of Otto Benndorf.

Hubert Szemethy: He bought a golden sabre – I wonder what happened to all that. Here he is putting together the first expedition in 1882.

Mrs. Benndorf-Keller works as a restorer and is fascinated by the letters her great-grandfather wrote to his wife, Sophie: *I think they were happy. In one letter, he thinks up a charming word play on “philosophy”, philo meaning “I love” and “Sophy” being her name.*

Bellerophon is the greatest Lycian hero. When he refused her advances, the wife of the king of Tiryns persuaded her husband to send Bellerophon to the court of his father-in-law in Lycia, with a letter demanding that its bearer should be killed. We found an image of the hero in an ancient burial chamber.

Jürgen Borchardt: Bellerophon is riding on Pegasos towards his greatest feat. The flying horse is Bellerophon’s wonder weapon. The Lycian king orders a feast before opening the letter. Over the next few days, the king takes a liking to Bellerophon and sets him several dangerous tasks instead of killing him. He asks Bellerophon to kill the Chimera, a monster with a lion’s head, a goat’s body, and a serpent’s tail, who breathes fire.

Jürgen Borchardt: If we imagine one of the lion’s paws here and the other over there towards Finike, the mountain range is a lion facing Egypt, blocking the way past the cape. So Bellerophon killed this awful monster, whatever it was. I think myths can be interpreted either in terms of geology or psychology.

The burning stones of Yarnatas can be explained with geology: methane escapes from the earth’s interior and self-ignites. For the Lycians, this was the place where Bellerophon locked away the monster, which lives on in the word “chimera”, meaning “wild impossible scheme.”

For the Greeks, this was the dwelling of Hephaistos, the god of fire; for the Christians, a gate to hell where a church had to be built.

Psychologically speaking, the idea of monsters with three heads comes from the first months of our lives. We learn to distinguish between humans and animals and different animals. Sometimes, several animals merge into a single creature, as in the case of the Chimera. Bellerophon defeats the Chimera with the aid of Pegasus, a gift from the gods. The flying horse is said to have leapt from the neck of the slain Medusa, who was killed by Perseus.

Brigitte Borchhardt-Birbaumer – historian of art: *The figure of the Medusa goes back to ancient cults, which were to do with the earth, with snakes, with the concept of death and rebirth. As a beautiful woman, she is the lover of the god Poseidon. Only later does she become a mortal, hideous monster, whose sight is so terrifying that it turns humans into stone.*

This new antagonism towards women is also reflected in the new museum of Mycenae, where the displays date back 3000 years. Beautiful goddesses are prevalent, but with Agamemnon, who led the Greek troops against Troy, male gods seem to become dominant. The conquest of Troy is probably based on Greek raids in Asia minor, which took place more than 3200 years ago. The supposed death mask of Agamemnon doesn't fit into this period. Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter, Iphigenia, to the goddess Artemis in return for good wind for the Greek ships sailing for Troy.

Mycenae was named after the mushroom-shaped sword handle of its founder, Perseus. Its entrance, the Lion Gate, is the city's most famous landmark. The city of Sparta is situated 120 km south of Mycenae. Paris, prince of Troy, abducted Helena, the beautiful queen of Sparta. Her husband Menelaos was the brother of Agamemnon, king of Mycenae.

Here in Monemvasia, Paris and Helena could have boarded the ship that took them to Troy. Asia Minor was ruled by the Hittites. In 1300 BC they burned the Greek city of Milet. Milet was protected by Mycenae. Does that mean the Greek attack on Troy was an act of revenge?

Towers of volcanic stone, huts of basalt. Cappadocia's bizarre landscape was a Hittite playground for 1000 gods. Hittite gods were revered in rocks and caves. Many wore pointed caps. Hittites had a policy of marrying neighboring Egyptians. Armed conflicts broke out anyway.

A film team left scenery and postcards in Hatussa, the Hittite capital. A local hotel owner played the last Hittite king. As though the result of a big war, the Hittite and Mycenaean empires collapsed c. 1200 BC, but there is no proof that the Trojan War really happened. The Iliad and Odyssey epics came 400 years later. The Chimera was part human, part animal.

Hubert Szemety: *The frieze shows the siege and conquest of a city, possibly Troy, although we cannot be sure. The battle is opened by ships that are dragged ashore. The figures are arranged in groups of 2 and 3 warriors. Some scenes are particularly dramatic, such as this image of two warriors, where one combatant plunges his sword into the heart of his defeated enemy.*

This image of a chariot with a warrior and his charioteer is particularly interesting, as it fits in with Homer's descriptions of chariot warfare in the battle over Troy.

In Ebreichsdorf in Lower Austria, Szemethy found various dragon slayers, but also the descendant of the man who co-financed the Benndorf expeditions.

Richard Drasche-Wartinberg: *You have already seen pictures of my great-grandfather. His father Heinrich was a successful entrepreneur in the 19th century. When the older of his 2 sons died, my great-grandfather became heir. This was a challenge, as he was interested in science rather than business. By contributing to this expedition, he fulfilled a long-standing wish.*

Homer writes that the ships of Odysseus were also blown off course here, near Cape Malea, to embark on their long wanderings. The wanderings of Odysseus were never precisely localised. In this chaotic array of routes, even the position of Ithaca is unclear, as Homer's Ithaca is not necessarily identical with the modern day island.

(Song)³

Like Odysseus, I come from Troy
with a brave and courageous heart
Even if I lose my comrades
I shall not abandon the battle
I shall resist the Sirens
and conquer the Laestrygons
I am searching for an Ithaca
On the seas of this world
I am not a flower
susceptible to frost
But Ithaca is also on a voyage
and cannot find its port.

At Christmas time on Ithaca, Odysseus makes way for another pointed cap wearer. Odysseus is present in the port of Vathi, Ithaca's capital. His palace is said to have been in the mountains, near Stavros, where a plaque remembers his travels.

Spiros Arsenis – former mayor of Vathi: *We are now below a rock, where an antique store room was found. We believe that this place is mentioned in the Odyssey: Telemachos wants to travel to Pylos to get news about his father Odysseus from King Nestor, who has returned from Troy. He takes a friend's boat and instructs Euriclea, his old servant to fetch him oil and wine for the journey from below the rock. So the store room excavated here fits the description in the Odyssey.*

Excavations are difficult in this steep terrain. In winter, they must be covered with wooden planks. Odysseus' palace is said to have been on top of the hill.

Spiros Arsenis: *We are now in the upper storey, from where we can see 3 ports. Homer also writes that the palace faces 3 ports: the royal port, the port of Reithron, where King Mentis arrived. And the third port is the trade port of Homer's Ithaca. The location is unique and fits in with Homer's description.*

³ Lyrics and music by Spiros Arsenis; Ithaca

In 1997, the University of Ioannina thus decided to continue with the excavations led by the archaeologist couple Papadopoulos in order to find Odysseus' Palace.

Homer refers to Odysseus' home island as the "westernmost" of four islands. This does not apply to Ithaca. A British amateur archaeologist now claims that the palace site is on Cephalonia, a neighbouring island, and that the palace had been built on Paliki, a separate island that only became joined with Cephalonia after an earthquake.

But nothing at all has been found on Paliki so far, except goat droppings. Incidentally, a large hotel complex is currently being built on Paliki – a holiday in Odysseus' homeland would be a great selling point.

But Greek archaeologist Lazaros Kolonas has discovered a burial site in Cephalonia whose age and dome-shape is similar to the graves in Mycenae. There was also trade between Cephalonia and the Peloponnese. We were the first camera team to film on this site.

Gerassimos Metaxas – author: We are at Tzanata, the south-eastern part of Cephalonia, where a large Mycenaean dome tomb was found. You can see an older site underneath, which was extended in 1350 BC. This is where the members of a royal dynasty were buried that flourished until 1100 BC. The finds in the tomb show that those buried here ruled over a larger region. We know that Odysseus' dynasty was the only ruling family in the islands of Western Greece around that time. It is thus very likely that this tomb harbours a great secret.

The island's inhabitants believe that Melissani Cave is the nymphs' grotto where Odysseus hid his treasures after having returned home. The remains of ancient fortifications were found in this part of Cephalonia. And this entrance is vaguely similar to the Lion Gate in Mycenae. These are the walls of a proud city, not of an irrelevant outpost. But hints are also to be found on the island of Ithaca.

Spiros Arsenis: Here we see a round construction that is mentioned in the Odyssey. This could be a Mycenaean dome tomb. But it is very likely that this is the cellar where Odysseus killed the household maids who had slept with his wife's suitors. The Odyssey mentions that the room was outside the palace walls.

Gerassimos Metaxas: Neritos mountain with many trees is one of the landmarks of Homer's Ithaca. Odysseus was proud of it, boasting to King Alkinoos that Ithaca can be seen from afar because of it. Cephalonia has such a mountain with many trees: Aenos.

Hubert Szemethy: These are the women's chambers with Penelope and her maids, and faithful pig keeper Eumaios carrying torch and sword. The next image is of Odysseus killing the suitors, helped by his son. Then a wine goblet as a symbol of the suitors' feast, and a row of bedsteads on which the revellers cavorted. These suitors are trying to protect themselves from Odysseus' arrows, begging for mercy or hiding behind small tables.

Vital documents about the expeditions made in the 1880s are written in Osmanic, a language comprising Turkish, Arabic and Persian elements.

Sule Pfeiffer-Tas – turcologist: *The Turkish authorities and my colleagues in the archives gave me a lot of support. The documents were difficult to locate: they had not been put in any kind of order. On some days, I had to sift through 1000s of pages.*

Felix von Luschan, anthropologist, archaeologist and explorer, was a member of the expedition in the 1880s. He discovered a species of salamander in Lycia that was named after him. The specimens he collected are kept in Vienna's Natural History Museum.

Photographer: *There is usually a gentleman in the background, an accessory to the display.*

Berhard Lötsch: *So I am not the museum director, just an accessory for Mrs. Andessner.*

Brigitte Borchardt-Birbaumer – historian of art: *Irene Andessner wants to reconstruct the lost histories of women scientists, such as Sybille Merian, and of women artists by literally getting under their skin.*

The Lycians were on the side of Troy, and Sarpedon, son of Zeus and Europa, died in battle. The ancient Greeks believed that rivers separate the world of the dead from that of the living. Hades, brother of Zeus and Poseidon, rules over the underworld.

Jürgen Borchardt: *When the passage where Odysseus descends into the underworld would be recited at the court at Xanthos, and that the audience would be aware of what Saklikent looks like, and what sounds and smells are prevalent here. This is the house of Hades – we can tell from the musty smell described by Homer.*

The investigation has shown that the Heroon of Trysa is rightfully in Austria. Its results are contained in a book⁴, which demonstrates that Austria respected all its agreements with the Osmanic Empire.

Lycia continues to generate a high level of academic interest, also because it is often considered to have been a matriarchal society. Jürgen Borchardt disagrees: the figures on the burial sites indicate precisely the opposite – male predominance. The position of women got rapidly worse, that was the trend.

Agamemnon returns after ten years of fighting in Troy, and his wife stabs him in the bath because he had sacrificed their daughter, Iphigenia. This particular bathroom in Mycenae seems to be under construction. Agamemnon's son Orestes is told by Apollon's oracle to avenge his father and kill his mother. There is clearly room for everyone in the family tomb.

After having killed his mother's lover and his mother, Orestes is overcome with remorse. The goddess Athena promises him a fair trial. Apollo comes to his defence, confirming that Orestes acted on Apollo's orders.

⁴ Hubert Szemethy *Die Erwerbungs geschichte des Heroons von Trysa*, Vienna 2006.

Orestes is then acquitted by Athena. The message is clear: the old rule of the female gods is suspended. It is now permissible for a man to kill his wife or daughter.

In the 19th century, Austrian writer Leopold von Sacher-Masoch also glorified the idea of dominant women and a matriarchal society. His family crest is displayed on his house in Graz. His love goddess Wanda remained cold and aloof: a white marble body in a fur coat.

Irene Andessner decorated a hotel room in Graz with the props of her Wanda-Sacher-Masoch production.

Barbara B. Edlinger – gallery owner, Graz: *The bed is true to the description of the bed in Masoch's novel "Venus in Furs." So if you're in the bed, you are really in the book. And if you get out of it, you enter the present – in this coolly decorated, minimalist space.*

Is the lady in the bathroom supposed to be a threat?

(Song)⁵

When we all obey the orders given by the state

When the churches control our heads and hearts

When mankind is ruled by market forces we should remember:

Masoch lives – suffering is his delight.

Masoch lives – the whip is his salvation.

Masoch lives – maybe even in you.

These days, everyone is Masoch.

He wanted to liberate us, but didn't succeed.

He wanted to forgive us, but failed in that as well.

He wore his cross like a medal. What has become of his name?

Masoch lives – we're all so patient. Masoch lives – we're all feeling guilty.

Leopold von Sacher-Masoch lives!

Masoch lives – never be immodest!

Masoch lives – to live is to suffer

Masoch lives – maybe even in you.

Because these days, everyone

or at least almost everyone is masochist.

Brigitte Borchhardt: *Zeus in the shape of a bull is similar to the early religious idea of the Bull of Heaven. It is interesting that Zeus doesn't stay with Europa, although they have children together. But he marries her off to a Cretan king.*

Necla Kelek - author: *Gaia of Greek mythology impressed me a lot. She was above Zeus. It was she who ruled. It was important to me that such a woman existed. It gave me strength. That Zeus stripped her of power and made himself king, showed me a new side of history: that the fight between man and woman is reflected in history when power is concerned. I'm glad we experience more partnership and equality today.*

Like Dionysus, the god of theatre, Zeus was sometimes revered as a child-god. Figures found on Crete were similar to those in Mycenae. Prehistorian Heinrich

⁵ Lyrics: René Freund; Music: Peter Uwira

Kusch and painter Fritz Messner reconstructed the cult site in the stalactite cave of the god Zeus on Crete. The Cretans believed that the god always remained an infant, as he died at the end of the year and was reborn straightaway. In a remote part of the Lurgrotte cave, Heinrich and Ingrid Kusch discovered that humans had been mining sinter here even thousands of years ago.

Ingrid Kusch: *This is the central area of the ancient mining site with the old rib edge. The golden patches on the ceiling are caused by condensation water. They consist of algae and lichen, whose excretions have a golden shimmer. That is why so many legends are based on the belief that there is gold to be found in the mountains.*

Heinrich Kusch: *This is one of the few plates that have survived. It was knocked out of the sinter 2800 to 5100 years ago. You can see the deep cuts on the right and on the left. Other cuts have sintered up over the course of thousands of years. It is not yet clear what these plates were used for. Maybe for human dwellings, temples or other cult sites.*

Can you move it further to the left? We are inserting a camera into this 4cm opening because we assume that the cave continues behind the old rib edge. It could have been used as a burial site or as a space for worship.

Hittite kings were crowned in the shrine of Yazilikaya. Tesup, the god of weather, ranked high among the 1000 gods. Like his Greek counterpart, Zeus, he is shown as a bull and must defeat a snake. Tesup overcomes the snake Illuyanka when she drinks too much wine. The Indian dragon slayers and child gods, Indra and Mithra, also came west to Asia Minor. They are invoked in a contract Hittites made with neighboring Mitanni over 3000 years ago. In the Hittite city Alaca Hüyük, we found a cult passage where the sun shines through an opening at noon, similar to Mithraea Roman legions left all over Europe.

Mithra, also a snake conqueror, sacrifices himself as a bull, bringing man fertility and redemption.

Engelbert Winter – archaeologist: *Mithra played a role in the Hittite period. He is often quoted as the god of contract. He protects contracts and records legal validity. How much we can find out from existing buildings, caves and tunnels about cult practice such as we know from imperial Rome, I can't say. We lack definite proof.*

In Carnuntum in Austria, images were found of Mithra and Zeus Dolichenos – Roman, Jupiter Dolichenus. He wears a pointed cap and stands on a bull like the Hittite Tesup. Romans named him after his place of origin, Doliche in Anatolia, today Dülük. Doliche was a crossroads, trading center and an outpost for Roman legions. The University of Münster found a Mithraeum here which proves that Mithra came to the Roman Empire from the east. The Mithra sculpture was ruined by Christians who chiselled a cross in it.

Caves make good cult sites for gods, as this is also how we see the world as babies in our first few weeks: a dark cave, penetrated by rays of light as our vision improves. These contrasts stay in our subconscious all our lives.

Influenced by the teachings of Iranian prophet Zarathustra, Platon applied these infant memories to society at large in his allegory of the cave. From the infant's perspective, in his allegory, most humans live as if they were in a cave, seeing only

fleeting shadows of reality. Only few of them reach the light of knowledge, and are thus destined to lead the others. It goes without saying that Platon, the self-appointed king of philosophers, considered himself one of those leaders.

Platon's state is a totalitarian theocracy. As the infant depends on his parents, the citizen in Platon's state depends on official authority. Art and culture are censored out of consideration for the gods, and even sexual partners are selected by the magistrate, not the individual. Theocratic ideas of this sort have survived in Christianity and Islam, and plunged not only Spain into a long-lasting, deep depression.

We are still carrying the burden of the concept of sacred virginity, of the idea of a desexualised woman who is the mother of God, and of the fanatical devotion of young men to God the father.

Necla Kelek: Men in patriarchal societies have a mother neurosis. If a woman is not a mother she is dangerous, like a whore. The Mary Magdalene function – why isn't she married, why isn't she under control? A woman is forced into the mother role. She loves her son above all else and compensates for the love she is not allowed to have. This is why men cannot separate themselves from their mothers and have a happy relationship with another woman as a partner. He sees his mother as betrayed. This makes many men hard because they are not free emotionally. My 2nd book, The Lost Sons, is about young men who are raised by their mothers and cannot free themselves. If we do not solve this relationship, woman and mother, in Islam and other patriarchal religions, we will not have any free men who can carry democracy in a civilized manner.

The Mithra cult, spread into Germania by Roman legions, was a religion of redemption. At the last judgement Mithra would conquer evil for ever and paradise on earth would dawn. At Roman fortifications in Dieburg an altar stone was found showing Mithra's adventures. On the back we see Phaeton's ascent to heaven, which Ovid described as a comedy in his "Metamorphoses."

Just as Indra drove his cart, Phaeton drives his father's chariot. He emerges from the night through the gate of dawn. He cannot hold the reins tight and burns the land. His father strikes him with lightning. He plunges to earth as a falling star. His mother Clymene seeks his grave.

Clymene reminds us of our mother of God. The humorous, childlike quality is seen in figures of angels.

Engelbert Winter: It is striking that in imperial Roman times the 2nd and 3rd centuries – eastern gods and mystery religions gained popularity. The empire was shaken by crises at home and abroad, people suffering from war and hunger. They turned to gods with answers about life and death and possible rebirth. It is the time in the Roman Empire when Christianity begins its triumphant rise.

The world as a vale of tears, will soon fall. The last judgement is night and Christ the redeemer will build paradise on earth. These are promises of Christianity. It takes over elements of the Mithra cult: the joint meal, baptism and confirmation. The snake - or dragon in the Indian Rigveda – even a comic Hittite monster – becomes the devil who torments sinners, preferably women.

Psycho-historians say the umbilical cord is the ur-snake of our fantasies. Lack of oxygen at birth makes it a strangling creature. In Greek, sphinx is "strangler." Much

later she is said to pose riddles. Religion comes from the latin religere, to tie back. Tying back to our infant world in cave-like cult sites can be healing. If this regression goes beyond cult sites, and shapes our entire awareness, it can become psychotic. As in 1993 in Turkish Sivas. After visiting a mosque, fundamentalists and nationalists burned a hotel with a group of Alevites. 36 people died.

Necla Kelek: A Moslem man does not live his religion for himself alone and leave his family in peace. If he does not succeed in making his children good Moslems by the age of 16, he will not escape hell. That's very collective thinking. They are all connected. If a daughter does not want her father to stay in hell, she obeys because she loves her father and mother. She is taught that her behavior decides her parents' religiosity. Secularisation means that everyone must live a religion for him or herself and carry the responsibility alone. If parents do not allow children their own opinions and religion it means the state has failed. The state must protect children from rigid religion, give them a chance to grow up in a democratic society, be themselves and be able to leave their parents.

Leon Askin as Adolf Lanz:⁶ *In Isaiah III: 1, the "power of bread and water" are actually the chandalas, scrat-whores and other sodomitic riff-raff. It's definitely not a disclosure of simple, harmless customs when poets claim "water is the best!"*

Years ago the director made a film with Leon Askin about a forerunner of the Nazis, Adolf Lanz's New Templar Order. Various attempts were made to prevent the film. The head of the Austrian Film Institute preferred a portrait of Leon Askin to obscure the figure of Lanz. German TV made a documentary but never transmitted it. The copy was lost, the editor had an attack of amnesia.

Leon Askin as Lanz: *Behold God's angel thundering over lizards. Behold him with their hoards in the battle of the species.*

Lanz Ariosophy shows how regression produces deadly collective madness. The other person becomes a dragon that has to be slain.

Walther Paape - mountain rescue Dietfurt/Germany: *We are in the New Templar holy of holies, the cult room. In the photo there is an altar. It stood here with monks around it. The coats of arms were hung on the wall. I brought one with me. It's an original. They hung next to each other.*

Leon Askin as Lanz: *And for what in our ancestors' blood is lacking. Forgive us this guilt and tempt us not with our tormentor, the apeling. Then lead us into the last decisive battle Across the southern snowy, glistening space. Towards east and west that everywhere may rattle the earth with the bones of the impure race. A worthy sacrifice to the Aryan god.*

Walther Paape: *This is the coat of arms of Brother Jakob, who joined the order in 1932. He was 22. He was the son of the man who financed all of this: Count Hochberg. This is the Hochberg coat of arms we saw at the entrance to the cave and the swastika, one of the cross motifs the New Templars used.*

⁶ Compare <http://members.aon.at/vanderlet/english/stoleideas.htm>

The site in Dietfurt was discovered when the Red Cross mountain rescue team acquired the property. Dietfurt near Sigmaringen is a popular climbing area. The rescue team must often help over-ambitious climbers. On the rock where the cave is, a fortress was erected in the 13th century. Only the tower is left. The barracks erected by the New Templars in the 1920s is used by the rescue team.

Leon Askin as Lanz: *After God's own wishes should he be, the priest follow the angel guide. And in anger born of purity, hurl the dragon's brood aside. I was apparently suited God's wishes, because the Lord was merciful to me and showed me the picture of the dragon I had to fight.*

Walther Paape: *This room was one of 7 cells. Except for material we store here this is its original condition. The New Templar cells were spartan: a table, a chair, a bed, that's all. The order did without the comforts they had at home.*

Wilfried Daim – author and art-collector:⁷ *The reasons for his expulsion are given in detail: yielded to worldly vanity – vanitate saeculi - and was overcome by carnal love - amor carnali captus...*

Leon Askin as Lanz: *Pure begetting maketh pure, made select by the selected. It will be holy with the sacred, but evil if you couple with evil.*

Wilfried Daim: *On the 27th of April, 1899, he cast aside the monk's robes and the priesthood and fell away in disgrace - turpiter.*

Leon Askin as Lanz: *I entered the monastery because I wanted to keep my chastity. And that's also why I left again.*

Walther Paape: *Lanz said he was anti-feminist and never had a wife. The literature says he married a woman named von Liebenfels. That is not correct. Lanz did marry in 1899 on Helgoland. I know this from Wilfried Daim. She was Frederike Conried, nee Schifferdecker. She was 24 to 26 years older than Lanz.*

Leon Askin as Lanz: *The whore in the marriage bed is the downfall of all peoples and states!*

Walther Paape: *Frederike Conried was probably wealthy. She came from an industrialist family. Her first husband worked for her father. After his death she married Conried. They were divorced. She probably brought money into the marriage with Lanz. This money likely helped pay for Burg Werfenstein in Austria. It became the headquarters for The New Templars.*

Leon Askin as Lanz: *Our flag was solemnly hoisted and Frater Aemilius wrote a poem for the ceremony: There where granite pierces the throngs of cloud, Where once the Nibelungen horn echoed loud, there, greeting us in spring's bright sunshine is the swastika banner waving high from Werfenstein.*

⁷ Wilfried Daim author of the book: *Der Mann, der Hitler die Ideen gab*, Wien 1956, 1994;

Similarity of Werfenstein ruins to Dietfurt fascinated Lanz. So did the Dietfurt position at the source of the Danube. The New Templars took the train to Gutenstein and walked along the Danube to their cult site. Johann Blender, a child then, carried their baggage in his cart.

Johann Blender, carried as child the luggage of the New Templars: *They bought the Michel Fortress from 3 farmers and practiced their religion there – or whatever you call it. They were called the Burg Michel of Dietfurt.*

Leon Askin as Lanz: *We Arioheroicists are descendants of Adam. Adam, you were a man and a God at the same time, but Eve, your bride, spoiled your stock. Together with the devil, the creature in animal shape, Eve brought forth the inferior races! The Chandalas, sodomitic apes and the scrat-whores! My revolutionary theories disprove the entire course of development as Darwin describes it. The apes and ape-people are sideways and backwards developments of an original race. Man is not a more highly developed monkey or more highly developed animal, it's the other way around. Monkeys and animals are down-bred humans. This gorillist Darwin is right about his own origins.*

Lanz's despicable phrases appear in neo-Nazi publications today. His absurd prayers and findings appear in other languages, too. Since 1997 there are also New Templars in Budapest. Politicians also use Lanz's views.

The shock of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution is still felt today. Lanz and Helena Blavatsky opposed it with a degeneration theory: divine root races like the Aryans degenerated. In 1875 the Theosophical Society was founded in New York by a Russian, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Rudolf Steiner was secretary general in Germany until 1912 when he broke away with his anthroposophy. He used root race ideas, too, provoking discussions about racism in his teachings.

Degeneration nonsense also exists in Plato: "The most cowardly men become women, the most cowardly women become animals, and the most cowardly animals, plants".

Anyone making comparisons is attacked by anthroposophs. Stefan Leber, a Waldorf lecturer, says critics of Steiner are fanatics. He compares them with dogs, who sniff from scent mark to scent mark while leaving their own behind. Greetings from Adolf Lanz.

However, the affirmation of this life rather than the hereafter has also endured: for instance in the myths of our heroes and gods with their pointed caps. In a small museum in Ithaca, we saw a chip of a vase bearing the words "dedicated to Odysseus." Cockerels – ancient fertility symbols – were also used in the worship of Odysseus, similar to those of ancient Indian god Indra. Indra, revered as a child-god, entered many different cultures. From his thunderbolt developed the sceptre of kings, but also the slapstick of clowns and jesters. American linguist Calvert Watkins has shown that the Homeric myths are also rooted in Indra's battle against the dragon. Odysseus, with his pointed cap, is clearly a product of this tradition; as it is Karageiosis, the Greek equivalent of Punch, who never appears without a chicken.

Petrus van der Let Jürgen Borchardt

Reise zur Wiege Europas oder: Der Zorn Poseidons und die Irrfahrten des Odysseus



*Buch Der Zorn Poseidons und
die Irrfahrten des Odysseus (226 Seiten)
inkl. DVD Reise zur Wiege Europas (84 min)*



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DER FILMSCHAFFENDEN

DRAGONSLAYERS

And how the devil entered Christianity⁸

Nike van der Let – actress: *After the last performance of a Sisi-play in Vienna I went to visit my father in the country. In the 4th part of his film-series on gods with pointed caps, he wanted to use 8mm sequences from my childhood. I wanted to know which ones he would choose. I also wanted to re-enact the trial of the witch of Lindau on stage. In school I was once told that only one witch was ever burned in Austria. But my father and I did some research, and we found hundreds of cases. After a report in high school on the terror and horrors of the inquisition, my father left the Catholic church. However, he has remained fascinated by religion and its power to instigate atrocities. He is particularly interested in the roots of religious symbols: where for instance do Catholic bishops get their pointed hats from? My parents protected me from any religious affiliations. Given the misogyny of most religions, this makes sense in my view.*

The old Indian Rigveda describes a gaggle of child gods of different ages: Soma the bull and Vrtra the dragon are just a few months old. Soma the bull sacrifices himself before sunrise. From his grave, Indra rises to slay the four-month old dragon Vrtra, who is blocking the way out of his cave.

Folke Tegetthoff – fairy-tale author: People were happy with what they had. They even thought their dragon was normal. They might even have missed him if he hadn't been there. In former days he was quite bad, but now he was weakened by age. He spent his days laying in the sun and stuffing himself with sweet grapes.

The battle between one-year old Indra and the dragon Vrtra described in the Rigveda is the oldest dragon fight of mankind, dating back more than 3500 years. Rigveda means *Knowledge in Verses*. It consists of more than 1000 chants, the so-called mantras, hundreds of which celebrate the Soma sacrifice. Soma refers not only to the bull god, but also to a plant whose juice has a slightly intoxicating effect. In India, the followers of Zoroaster still prepare soma juice, like here, in this school for future Zoroastrian priests. The favorite drink of cute little Indra was his mother's milk. He is praised in Rigveda for opening the cave and freeing the visible world, but also for expanding the range of vision.

The Rigveda says:
*Drunk on milk and honey,
 Indra stretched the air when he burst the cave.
 He pushed heaven and earth farther away...
 He filled both worlds with air space...
 Indra created a spacious place for us!*

At this point, the Rigveda says about Indra that he shook off blindness and lameness. 1500 years later, it would be written that Jesus, another former child-god, had healed the blind and the lame.

⁸ Compare the documentary film with the same title; DVD at www.alibri.de

In ancient India, a fire was lit shortly before sunrise, the soma juice was pressed and then drunk while mantras from the Rigveda were chanted.

At sunrise, Indra defeated the dragon of darkness, left his cave, and met the enchanting goddess of the dawn. In psychological terms, this refers to the third or fourth month in a baby's life, when it leaves the dark cave of short-sightedness and recognizes its surroundings, especially its mother, in greater detail.

After the death of Austrian writer Adalbert Stifter, a text was discovered in which he tried to reconstruct these phases of early childhood with dragonfights:

Far back in empty nothingness, there is something like a joy, a delight that penetrated my being so intensely that it was almost destructive, and that I was never to feel again in my later life...

This must have been very early, as I recall a high, wide wall of nothingness around me... Then there was something else running gently through me: there were sounds. I swam to and fro in a soothing fanning motion, I felt softer and softer inside, then almost intoxicated, then there was nothing. Three fantastical islands lie in the veiled sea of my past, like primeval memories.⁹

These are the primeval islands of interrelation out of which our visual world is assembled during the first months of our lives. Modern infant research uses the Greek term *chaos* to describe the visual world during the first months of life: From the primeval chaos, interrelated islands emerge. *Islands* and *primeval hills* are universal images of early myths. The prophet Joel has them flowing with milk. Buddhism has the mythical mountain Meru, which is surrounded by an ocean of milk.

Adalbert Stifter: Something distinct kept repeating itself. A voice that spoke to me, eyes that looked at me, arms that made everything better. I screamed for those things. Then there was pain, grief; then sweetness, soothing. I remember futile struggles and the end of dreadfulness and destruction. I remember brilliance and colors in my eyes, sounds in my ears and bliss in my soul. More and more I felt the eyes that looked at me, the voice that spoke to me, the arms that made everything better. I remember calling all this Mom.¹⁰

Although the Popol Vuh, the sacred book of the Mayas in Central America was certainly not inspired by the Rigveda, its gods have to go through similar trials. Their cults also make real mountains into centers of creation and *primeval hills*. Artificial hills like the Mayan pyramids originally also had this function. Their gods created man from maize and milk.

Author and therapist Magda Wimmer spent a year with the Mayas in Guatemala. She wrote several books and was fascinated by the therapeutic character of their rites. She was surprised by the trans-cultural parallels with Christianity.

Magda Wimmer: *Like many ancient civilizations, Mayan culture is maternalistic.*

⁹ Compare Petrus van der Let *Zipfelmützensgötter*, Aschaffenburg 2004 page 18

¹⁰ Ibid page 19 <http://www.alibri-buecher.de/Buecher/Religionskritik/Petrus-van-der-Let-Zipfelmuetzengoetter:158.html>

Unlike our patriarchal culture, which is dominated by maleness, these people are very much in tune with the earth, and women have a high status. They also make all important decisions. The dragon goddess is something like the primeval mother, a figure that can be found in all ancient cultures. She is the sea dragon from which everything stems; the sole figure that gave rise to creation.

In the 8000-year old town of Catal Hüyük in Turkey, 2 types of goddesses were found: the primeval mother of the first months of life, who is bursting with milk and has no face, but whose plumpness reflects the baby's sense of touch.

And the slighter figures of the later months, when the baby's sense of sight is more developed. During the first few weeks, a baby's attention is focused on the contours of its mother's face. During the next 2 months, it focuses on her eyes. The mouth comes later, the nose is least important. This corresponds with our beauty ideal: women use make-up to emphasize those parts.

The bull was revered in Catal Hüyük as long as 8000 years ago. Later on, Tesup, the weather god of the Hittites, was also depicted as a bull or standing on a bull. He was the most important Hittite god and had to slay a dragon that looks like a gigantic craw worm.

The ancient Indian dragon slayers Indra and Mithra also went westward. In a peace agreement between the Hittites and the Mitanni, their eastern neighbors, they were invoked more than 3000 years ago.

In the rock shrine of Yazilikaya, the Hittite kings were crowned. They had more than 1000 gods, most of which are depicted wearing pointed caps and were worshipped in rock formations and caves.

Tesup, the god of thunder and lightning here shown with the sun goddess had a hot-tempered son named Telipinu. Despite his temper, he was revered as the god of fertility. One day, Telipinu's temper manifests itself in a rather chaotic manner. He puts his left shoe on his right foot and his right shoe on his left foot. This is how he leaves the country. The crops don't grow, the cows don't produce milk; none of the animals breed. The people starve and cry to the gods for help. Tesup convenes all the gods to discuss how to bring about Telipinu's return. Hannahannas, the Hittite mother goddess, knows what to do. She sends a bee to bring Telipinu milk and honey, the food of the gods, which mollifies him. The little god returns, and with him fruitfulness and fertility.

Odysseus, whose name means *angry*, could be a relative of this god: he, too, wears a pointed cap.

Whether the Trojan War actually took place is historically unproven.

But 1300 years before our time, the Hittites burnt down the Greek city of Milet in Asia Minor. Milet was protected by Mycenae: a Greek attack on Troy could well have been an act of vengeance.

Towers of volcanic tuff, hats of basalt: the bizarre landscape of Cappadocia was the playground of the 1000 Hittite gods.

The more militant and powerful the states became, the more frightening became their monsters and gods. Fear and punishment were effective tools to ensure the

obedience of the population. From the original legend: the hero kills the dragon becomes a hero, who must kill his enemy in war, like a monster.

The Hittite chimera is thus part human, part lion, and part fire-breathing snake. However, maybe as an act of defiance against the authorities, the childlike aspects of the dragon fight have survived to this day, for instance when Punch fights the crocodile.

The more democratic and self-confident our society grows, the more importance we attach to the figures from the dawn of our life. The immense variety of religions and gods actively contributes to this urge. Pharaoh Tutankhamen also realized this when, by popular request, he was forced to abolish his father's monotheism in Egypt and re-introduce the old gods. When he died at just 19, he left an equally young widow behind. Her messenger may have walked through this sacred passage in Hattussa, the Hittite capital, to arrange her marriage to the king's son. However, the son of the Hittite king was murdered on the journey to Egypt. Instead of a wedding, there was a war with the neighboring country.

Both the Hittites and the Egyptians saw the sphinx as the guardian of the city gate. Originally, the sphinx was a destroying dragon before she began to ask strange questions.

Folke Tegetthoff: One day, the dragon remembered that he used to be different and went on the rampage once again. But he acted strangely: he chased after everything. Whether it was a woman, a dress, a pair of trousers or a toy, he grabbed anything with his huge clutches and carried it off.

Folke Tegetthoff, descendant of a famous admiral of the Habsburg monarchy, is one of the world's most successful fairy-tale authors. The total circulation of his 38 books is 1.4 million and they were translated into 10 languages, Chinese and Japanese among them. He also organizes Europe's largest story-telling festival in Lower Austria.

Folke Tegetthoff: For me, the dragon is primarily a symbol of authority; what people wanted to recognize as some higher entity, something to be afraid of, something they couldn't really understand. Throughout the history of mankind, ever since we developed thoughts and emotions, stories were told to make sense of the world. The concept of authority, whether it is represented by gods or kings, is difficult to grasp. This is why mankind thought up all these animals and monsters, to make it comprehensible. That is also where the desires, hopes, dreams and fears of a people, a society, are reflected.

Celtic sounds in the Museum of Prehistory of the Province of Lower Austria. This is where a model of the Roseldorf sanctuary was built on a 1:1 scale. The discovery of this sanctuary was an archeological sensation, as it is unique in Central Europe. The Celts maintained trade relations with Greece and Asia Minor.

The Celtic equivalent of the Hittite weather god Teshup is Taranis. The dragon becomes the lindworm. In Celtic, *lind* means *lake*. The creature is thus a lake monster.

The bull was sacred also to the Celts, and the stag-horned god Cernunnos tamed a snake. Child god Lug had his own feast day when children received presents. A bronze bucket shows scenes from Celtic daily life, such as sports competitions and drinking feasts. The Celts also wore the pointed cap.

The rising interest in the Celtic world is not just due to Asterix and Obelix. People seem to feel that the old heathen religions have a great potential for self-healing. Eveline Grander from Carinthia uses Celtic shamanism to address the psychological layers of early childhood.

Daniel: This massage was for me like passing through a birth canal, a cave. The result was just like it was 3 days after my birth. My left arm was completely lame, due to a breech presentation and a jammed muscle. The same thing happened after the massage. Both arms were lame, cramped, tense...

I felt a great surge of fear that subsided after a quarter of an hour. My mouth was lame, too, and my tongue. The after-effect was a total liberation. First alternating laughter and crying, feeling lighter, more relaxed...

I go through life less tense now, I'm rid of a lot of ballast.

The *lindworm* is the landmark of the city of Klagenfurt and faces the figure of Heracles. The legend says that this ancient Greek hero strangled 2 snakes when he was just a few weeks old. In the Middle Ages, the bones of cave bears were often taken for dragon bones and used to prepare healing ointments.

Heimo Dolenz - archaeologist, Klagenfurt: *More than 650 years ago, near Klagenfurt, this fossil skull was found. Since a lindworm was already in the city coat of arms, it was seen as a confirmation of the legend. In 1840, a specialist from Graz determined that it was a woolly rhinoceros from the Ice Age.*

The dragon is also a heraldic animal, and a symbol of those in power. From ancient until modern times, the idea remained that kings are also healers, especially of blindness and lameness.

Roman emperors Vespasian and Hadrian were said to have worked miracles. Even Karl II collected the crutches and sticks of those he had allegedly healed. Some of this can be explained by the old dragon fight myths. Not just old people are blind and lame, infants are, too they cannot see properly and are unable to walk.

Like weather gods, the rulers also controlled the weather, as reflected in the German term "Kaiserwetter" for blue skies. The Mithraic kings, as the cultic representatives of the divine creators, made the heightening of visual acuity into a rite. Colossal cult sites like Nemrud Dagi in south-east Anatolia bear witness to this.

After the symbolic victory over a dragon, the Mithraic kings stepped out of a cave, thus bringing all plants and animals, especially the milk-giving cows, into daylight, and opening up the wide range of vision that we are used to.

The dragon is not always hostile. Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, is protected by a dragon, who is also shown on the city's coat of arms.

Nearby Ptuj was called Pettau during the Habsburg Empire. It was an important trade centre and military base during Roman times, when it was called Poetovio.

As the Mithras cult was particularly popular with Roman soldiers, several cult sites were found here.

One of these sites is situated below a dissolved Dominican abbey. It indicates that the miter of Christian bishops developed out of the pointed cap worn by the followers of Mithras. Mithras cult sites are situated underneath many churches and monasteries. The idea was that this competing religion would literally be buried. Some church fathers even claimed that the Mithras cult was an imitation of Christianity. Recent research shows the opposite: Mithras is almost 2000 years older than Christianity.

In several text fragments, Mithras is referred to as the *god in diapers*, using the same Greek words “to sparganon” that describe the baby Jesus in Luke. After leaving the cave, Mithras must prop up the sky.

During the first few weeks of their lives, infants experience the world as a carousel ride. The different pieces of sensory information are not yet coordinated. A noise here, a face there – to distinguish between our 5 senses, we need experience.

This is also why Indra must make the mountains stand still after he has slain the dragon. A process described in the Rigveda:

The mountains flew away and settled wherever they wanted to, causing the earth to quake. So Indra clipped their wings and made the mountains stand still, and made their wings into clouds. The mountains sat down like flies.

You fixed fast and firm the earth that staggered.

You measured out the earth's wide middle region.

The mountain which wanted to run away sat down, and gave the heaven support.

Both the heaven and earth trembled afraid of the bull Indra with his club.

Drink, drink brave Indra, the soma, the milk.

The Popol Vuh, the sacred book of the Mayas, contains a similar passage:

It was twilight then on the face of the earth. There was no sun, no moon, no stars, no dawn. Cabracán moved the mountains and made them tremble. He played ball with the large mountains, the Chikak, the Pecúl. These are the names of the mountains that existed when it dawned.

Magda Wimmer: *I witnessed certain rituals where Mayan was spoken and where you really felt this deep bond with nature. Suddenly you hear:... in nomine domini Jesu Christo, which brings you straight back to Catholicism.*

As the underlying mythology is so similar, there is really no great difference. This child-god borne by a virginis equivalent to the Mayan virgin who gave birth to divine twins.

Like Indra, divine twins Hunahpú and Ixbalanqué must now tame the mountains. Like Indra, they are hunters. They kill a bird with their blowgun, which they use to poison Cabracán, the mountain shaker.

In this way, they put an end to the initial chaos and are able to see clearly: *They saw and instantly they could see far, they succeeded in seeing, they succeeded in knowing all that there is in the world. When they looked, instantly they saw all around them, the arch of heaven and the round face of the earth. Their sight reached to the forests, the rocks, the lakes, the seas, the mountains, and the valleys. We have been created with a mouth and a face, we speak, we think, we walk. We feel perfectly, and we know what is far and what is near.*

The Mayans commemorate this creation by erecting a high pole at the start of a new year. On the top of the pole is a rotating device in which two brave young men spin around.

Jesus is quoted thus: *Even if you say to this mountain, be taken up and cast into the sea, it will happen.*

That faith can move mountains is based on the visual experiences of our early childhood.

Ivan Zizek - Archaeologist, Ptuj: *We know that only men were allowed into the Mithras cult. Women could not participate.*

Near the Mithraic cult sites, plates were found that depict the Nutrices Augustae, nurses suckling babies. Maybe they were a counterweight to the entirely male Mithras cult. The Nutrices Augustae are unique in the Roman Empire, as is this representation of 3 grown women as wet-nurses. Dr. Saslo thinks that this image stems from an ancient Celtic tradition, a foreign cult that infiltrated the Roman belief system.

Noblewomen in ancient Rome employed a wet-nurse if they had little or no milk to nurse their babies. The wet-nurses were usually paid with a basket of bread, as it is shown in the reliefs. Breastfeeding was also delegated to wet-nurses in order to preserve the beauty of Roman ladies.

Folke Tegetthoff: *But the old dragon who had spent his days laying in the sun also heard this word: "beautiful".*

And he thought to himself: What the devil does it mean?

He looked around, and suddenly he realized: when people were naked, they were just normal. But as soon as they put on nice clothes and other nice things, they were meant to be beautiful.

Folke Tegetthoff: *What makes fairy-tales so extraordinary is that very similar characteristics developed independently, in totally different time periods.*

For instance, the red pointed caps worn by dwarves whoever first came up with this idea surely didn't know anything about Mithra. These things come from deep inside the human soul, which feels and acts in similar ways all over the world and throughout the ages. For me, fairy-tales are something like the collective subconscious of mankind and thus the deepest-felt expression of the human soul.

Near the town of Krems, where Tegetthoff's story-telling festival is held, a monument was built in Pöchlarn in memory of the most famous dragon slayer in history. However, at the time the Nibelungs were supposed to have travelled through here, Siegfried had already been murdered and his widow Kriemhild was on her way to marry the king of the Huns. 13 years later, they are said to have come through here again, but this time it was a journey towards death.

As the number of Roman soldiers was growing, an even larger Mithras temple was built in Poetovio in the 3rd century A.D.

Ivan Zizek: *One of the most stunning reliefs that was excavated is that of the altar: It depicts Mithras being born from the rock, accompanied by Cautes and Cautopates, above him the sun god Deo Soli and of course the moon.*

Images of his birth from the rock often also show the conquered snake. Psycho-historians think that the primeval snake of our imagination represents the umbilical cord.

Mithras then sacrifices himself in the shape of a bull, thus redeeming the earth, which becomes fertile once more.

This scene is familiar to us from many altar images and symbolizes the parting of the little god from his nursing mother, usually shown as the goddess Luna. It also represents the end of pre-linguistic childhood.

The entrance into the paternal world is shown in this altar relief from Ladenburg, near Heidelberg. Mithras and the sun-father eat a cultic meal. They stand at the cave exit. The bull has been slain. Its legs are the feet of the table, its skin covers the bench. The ritualistic bread and wine are identical to the Christian flesh and blood of the son of God who was sacrificed and finally rose from the dead to ascend to father. Christianity projected this symbolic story onto adult people, but its roots become often apparent especially in art.

Ivan Zizek: The Mithras cult had 7 levels of initiation. There are a lot of parallels with Christianity. In the Roman Empire, the birthday of Mithras was celebrated on December 25, like the birthday of Jesus today. The 7 levels of initiation are similar to the Christian sacraments. You only become a fully-fledged Christian once you have received the 3rd sacrament. In Mithraism, the period of preparation also lasted until the 3rd level of initiation. Only then did followers become fully-fledged members. There were also trials to be passed between one level and the next. We know that there were rituals involving water, honey, fire, and wine.

The honey ritual was supposed to cleanse the tongue from all sins. It evokes the idea of milk and honey as the foods of the gods. Like all religions, Mithraism also operated through a "holy confusion", created by contradictory regulations and commandments: *Take from the sunrays breath, inhaling thrice as deeply as thou canst; and thou shalt see thyself being raised aloft, and soaring towards the Height.* (This sort of rapid breathing brings about a light trance.)

And thou shalt see the Gods gazing intently on thee and bearing down upon thee. Then straightaway lay thy dexter finger on thy lips and say: Silence! Silence! Silence! Next hiss forth long and puff and speak and thereon shalt thou see the Godsgazing benignly on thee, and no longer bearing down upon thee. You start the following prayer: Oh! Open unto me! I do invoke Thy Deathless Names, innate with Life, most worshipful, that have not yet descended unto mortal nature, nor have been made articulate by human tongue, or cry or tone of man: EO OEEIO IOO OEE....¹¹

The followers of Mithras also liked to dress up as animals, symbolizing gods and heroes.

Ivan Zizek: One of the relief plates that was found on this altar in the 5th Mithras temple shows how Sun, the Father, and Mithras, the Son, clasp each other's hand.

¹¹ Harald Strohm *MITHRA Oder: Warum ‚Gott Vertrag‘ beim Aufgang der Sonne in Wehmut zurückblickte*, München 2008, page 101

This indicates eternal faithfulness and parity after the ascent to heaven. Instead of the raven, Christianity has a dove to complete the picture of father and son. The link between the Iranian and the Roman Mithraic cult was discovered only recently: It is the dragonslayer Jupiter Dolichenus, who was also found in Carnuntum in Lower Austria, and near the town of Amstetten, left behind by Roman soldiers from Asia Minor.

Engelbert Winter – Archaeologist, Münster: *Excavations on a hill near the ancient city of Doliche, the Dülük Baba Tepesi, have now proven that the sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus was situated on this 1200m-high hill and that the cult was practiced there.*

The Nemrut Dagi with its impressive figures is situated not far from there. Inscriptions from 50 B.C. show that every month a ceremony took place where gold, incense and myrrh were sacrificed to the child-god Mithra.

In Matthew, magi from Anatolia bring these gifts to the baby Jesus. The oldest images of these three magi show that they were Mithraic priests, wearing the characteristic pointed caps.

More than 3000 years ago the ancient Iranian prophet Zoroaster announced a religious reform, in the course of which no other than one-year-old Indra became the Prince of Darkness, who had to be destroyed at the end of time. That way, the child-god who was only just learning to walk also toddled into Christianity - as the Devil incarnate.

On 21st March 1575, a certain Paolo Gasparutto appeared in the town of Cividale in Friuli claiming to be a Benandante, one who walks with the good. According to his tales, he met up at night with other men in a cave, from where they flew on the backs of various animals to a forest clearing, awaited by women with whom they played games, danced, and, armed with fennel stalks, fought the Malandanti, those who walk with the bad.

Ever since the earliest tales of mankind, this stepping out from a dark cave onto green meadows is connected with the idea of a paradisiacal garden, but also with that of an underworld, a kingdom of the dead. One primeval memory from early infancy is the bright green of the first landscape that opens up around us.

In the New Testament, this paradisiacal meadow doesn't exist. When the myth of such a meadow appeared in Europe in the 16th century, it could not be interpreted in Christian terms. However, it survived in folk cults such as that of the Benandanti in Friuli. The Benandanti also worked as healers and allegedly had the power to influence the weather.

Artist Alessandro d'Ossualdo from Udine, sees the Benandanti as an inspiration. He also illustrates children's books.

Alessandro d'Ossualdo: I am not just interested in the adventures and rituals of the Benandanti per se many of them have parallels in other cultures but in the fact that these rituals are so multi-faceted, and that many of these facets are very modern. There are not just black magi and good wizards, but also animals that they fight, and

these fights are really rituals with magic wands. The similarities with the Golden Compass and Harry Potter are striking. On the one hand, these rituals are archaic, fascinating, complex and modern.

When did you realize that you are a Benandante?

Sergio Cecotti, Former Mayor of Udine: *Towards the end of the 1970's. I think I read the bestselling book by Carlo Ginzburg in 1979, and I realized that I was familiar with the adventures of the Benandanti, because I had experienced them too. When I told my mother about it, she said that I was also born in the caul, the amniotic sac.*

d'Oswaldo: *That is an important point for the Benandanti: to be one, you must have been born in the caul. If you weren't, you can't be a Benandante.*

Cecotti: *Yes, that is part of being a Benandante. If you were born in the caul, you can decide whether you want to be one or not. That is your decision; almost a sort of vocation.*

d'Oswaldo: *What is the difference between you and the Benandanti of the 16th century?*

Cecotti: *To answer this, I must go back in time a little. When I found out that I was born in the caul, I began to think about what this could mean. What interested me the most is the rigorous logics behind this belief system. Of course, you either believe or you don't. You are free to think that this is all nonsense. However, there are no contradictions whatsoever in the stories of the Benandanti. It is a theology, ideology, whatever you want to call it that is completely coherent.*

d'Oswaldo: *For centuries, Friuli was only really relevant as a transit region. However, many elements from the past have survived here, the Benandanti among them. But there is also a revival of King Arthur's round table, in the form of an ancient ritual for the Celtic goddess Epona, the same ritual that was also celebrated at Stonehenge and was absorbed by Christianity: the kissing of the crosses of S. Pietro in Carnia. Closer analysis shows that this is an important historic relic.*

The frank accounts of the Benandanti turned the sadistic inquisition against them. The judges thought they had *proof* of the Benandanti celebrating the witches' sabbat. As a consequence, hundreds of trials were held and the same confession extorted by torture: the witches and wizards met near a cave from where they went to a mountain pasture to meet the devil.

Like cute little Indra he usually appeared in the shape of a hunter.

The *Burning of the Witch* in Vorarlberg is today called the *Fire of Flying Sparks*, but the witch-hunting element hasn't disappeared completely. In fact, this is an old Alemannic custom: the fire indicates the end of the carnival season and the beginning of Lent, as well as the end of winter.

Nike: In 1729, a young woman of 30 years was arrested in Lindau, because she had been denounced as a witch. Usually, no more than two denuncements were necessary for an arrest. Because of her red hair, Maria Madlener was also called the Red Maiden and most likely had sexual relations with several men in the town. Now she was pregnant, and the gentlemen in question wanted to get rid of her. Despite her pregnancy, she was locked up and tortured. But why did she first have to take her clothes off and was shaved all over? Shorn, as they call it in her file.

Petrus: The inquisitors were probably looking for the devil's mark on her body, as proof of her pact and sexual relations with the devil. Naturally, the mark was expected to be in an intimate place.

Nike: On the morning of 8 May, a certain Georg Loser reported that the captured woman was in great despair and had renounced God, and that Satan had been in her chamber. So the Council sent a priest to her, whom she told that she no longer desired heaven and would obey only the devil, who had appeared to her the night before in the shape of a black hunter. He had promised to give her money and to cut her free from her shackles. Then they had flown to the lard mountain together.

Petrus: The lard mountain or Blocksberg – those are the butter and milk mountains of early childhood that are often fantasized about during a psychotic episode. And she was certainly psychotic after the horrors of the torture chamber.

Nike: Later, she was asked questions compiled by jurists at the University of Tübingen. Firstly, why had she screamed mine is the devil during her torture? Secondly: Had the devil come to her in prison in the shape of a black man, and had he promised her money and rescue?

Thirdly: Had she made a pact with the devil - how and what sort of pact?

Fourthly: Had she cast a curse upon the torturer's left leg, so that he was lame afterwards?

Until the birth of her child in 1730, she was held captive in the cellar of the town hall in Lindau. The court had ruled that it was not allowed to ease the pains of birth. After the birth, she was beheaded.

One consequence of the inquisition was the complete loss of trust in the legal system: most trials took place behind closed doors denunciation and kin liability were par for the course, and torture meant that the accused had practically no chance. For the water test, a stone was tied around the neck of the suspected witch and she was thrown into a river. If she drowned, she wasn't a witch and her soul was saved. If she survived, she was a witch and dragged off to the stake.

In the centuries that were dominated by a completely unreasonable, fanaticized Christianity, the dragon was also seen as the devil's animal. With him, early childhood was also demonized and children were accused of witchcraft simply because they had dreamt that they were able to fly.

In truth, the inquisitors needed only to have looked at the images in their churches to understand the origins of such visions. In a sort of collective mania, the devil was considered a real person, a mania triggered by the Christian hostility towards the human body. In league with the devil, the witches were also held responsible for the sexual fantasies of priests.

An irony of history: The use of the wooden confessional screen was prescribed by the Council of Valencia in 1565 to protect the confessors from sexual molestation on the part of the priests.

The terrors of the inquisition still have the power to frighten people. From a therapeutic point of view, it thus makes sense to commemorate the inquisition with entertainment, with dressing up and having fun: like here, at a Walpurgis Night celebration in Kapfenberg.

Sylvia Schanner, Town councilor, Kapfenberg: *In the Walpurgis Night people from all over met on a mountain to drive out the spirits of winter, and danced around a bonfire to welcome spring. We would like to revive this tradition.*

The inquisition also left a trail of destruction and murder in Central America. In February 1524, Pedro de Alvarado crossed the Suchiate River, which today forms the border between Mexico and Guatemala. Appalled, a friend of Alvarado's wrote: *There was no crueller man, no one who treated the Indios worse: he tortured and killed the chiefs; plundered and burnt down the city of Uatatlán and smashed the figures of its gods, the inhabitants were either murdered, made subjects of the Spanish crown, or burnt for witchcraft.*

Magda Wimmer: *People in Guatemala still live embedded in their family and village networks which appear highly traditional to the outsider. However, on the inside, they are often torn. The effect of missionary work is strongly apparent, in particular through evangelical groups from the U.S. Life seems to evolve according to ancient rules, but social cohesion has weakened. They were badly damaged by what has happened over the course of the last hundred years. This suppression still goes on, albeit in a more subtle manner. The preachers tell them of a god who loves the poor and will reward them eventually: these people will be kept in poverty, they will remain on this level.*

Once a year, in the Bavarian town of Furth, the dragon is the star of the show. The *Drachenstich* is the oldest folk play in Germany and has been put on stage for 500 years. On the evening before the premiere, a procession takes place, and the dragon is part of it. Of the town's 10,000 inhabitants, 1,400 take part in the play, together with 250 horses, replicas of medieval carts, carriages, cannons, sedans, musicians. The town of Furth is situated right where the Bavarian Forest merges with the Bohemian Forest, and has given the densely wooded valley at the border its name. Every year, a different dragon slayer and his princess are selected. A museum is dedicated to the long tradition of this folk play. Of course there is also plenty of beer and the colors of this honey-colored drink with its white foam cap bring us right back to the food of the gods.

Folke Tegetthoff: *Well I'd like to know one thing, thought the dragon, am I beautiful or am I ugly? He looked into the mirror, and saw what he had been seeing for the last 653 years, for that was his age. And suddenly he felt alert and young and full of energy. This has to change, today, right now! He bellowed, and then added quietly: I want to be beautiful, too! Yes, I will be the world's first beautiful dragon.* The child-like character of the dragon also comes out in the folk play. However, the highlight of every performance is the beast itself, which is operated by 3 people.

Art as Salvation And Pictures of Reality¹²

The final stop of the old Baden railway line is situated directly in front of a newly adapted art museum. The new building houses the pictures of one of the city's famous sons – Arnulf Rainer, who donated parts of his oeuvre to the Province of Lower Austria.

As a young man of 31, Rainer had already explored a great number of styles which Ernst Fuchs, a confirmed Fantastic Realist, never even attempted. His world of fantasy was well received not only internationally but also in Vienna.

The roots of abstract painting in Vienna first appear as early as 1900, in the decorations of Jugendstil. In Gustav Klimt's Beethoven frieze in the Secession, the patterns of dresses merge into abstract surfaces.

But what does the giant ape, surrounded by lascivious women, signify? When Charles Darwin's theory of evolution was published in the mid-19th century, many took offense: Man, just one species among many, and not a divine creation? Counter theories sprang up immediately, for instance the Root Race teachings of the Theosophists. The Theosophical Society developed out of a spiritualist association in New York, founded by Russian-German Helena Blavatsky.

Herbert Fuchs - Theosophical Society, Graz: *The species of the apes is a degeneration of mankind. We don't know why – maybe through sodomy. Man does not descend from apes, but apes from man. So we are talking about a degenerative process.*

Until 1912 Rudolf Steiner was Secretary General of the Theosophist Society in Germany. He seized on the idea of degeneration for his Anthroposophy, as did former monk Adolf Lanz for his Ariosophy.¹³

Through sodomy, the divine blond Aryans had degenerated into subhuman races. As Lanz-Liebenfels got married in 1899 he had to leave the monastery and founded his own order.

Brigitte Borchhardt-Birbaumer – historian of art: *Klimt created his Beethoven Frieze in 1902, but we can still discern a link to the racist theories of Lanz-Liebenfels and his Order of the New Temple...*

According to Lanz-Liebenfels, the devil seduced Eve as an ape, a tradition that he keeps up to this day. The blond artistic genius has armored himself against him and commences his battle against the animal powers of the libido.

Michael Ley - sociologist: *Lanz not only had enormous influence on Hitler, but also on modern painting in Vienna. Some of Gustav Klimt's pictures, for instance, can only be interpreted through Lanz's racial theories.*

¹² Compare the documentary film with the same title by Petrus van der Let & Martin Luksan; DVD www.alibri.de

¹³ Compare the film HITLER STOLE MY IDEAS by Petrus van der Let and the book RASSE MENSCH www.alibri.de

Beat Wyss – historian of art: *This is specific to modern art during the Habsburg Empire when it was already overshadowed by the conflicts that would finally break out during WW 1. After all, these fantasies of Aryan greatness were in stark contrast to the political reality of the time. This multi-ethnic state is about to collapse and art has one last stab at the utopia of a Christian, white race: a Catholic race, we may even say in Habsburg terms. The problem is that art is never better than the society that produces it. Art tends to preempt what will happen next – the good things and the bad things.*

The bizarre insights of Lanz are being rehashed today and are also being propagated over the Internet.

Wilfried Daim: *Stupidity never dies!*

In 1958, depth psychologist and art collector Wilfried Daim published a book on Adolf Lanz which is still considered the definitive work on the subject and appeared in several editions.

Wilfried Daim: *What is so fascinating about it? This idea of superior and inferior races, with oneself on the superior side. You can be as stupid as you want, but if you are blond, you belong to the correct race: pure nonsense.*

With his expressive style, Egon Schiele was able to overcome Jugendstil and at times came close to abstraction. In 1916, he illustrated a book on racial types for “race scientist” Erwin Hanslik.

Franz Smola – historian of art: *I was surprised when I encountered the facial features of the illustrations in later works, for instance in the picture behind me: the two crouching women from 1918. Like the illustrations they show a highly schematized image of the human face, without individuality.*

Egon Schiele was born in Tulln. The city that has turned its former prison into a museum in his honor. The prison is similar to the one in Neulengbach, where Schiele was jailed for his paintings.

The young Arnulf Rainer painted in a similar style to Ernst Fuchs, who always spent a long time over a canvas.

During World War I, an artistic genre developed in Zurich that would leave a lasting mark on the art world of the 20th century: Dadaism.

Adrian Notz: *The Cabaret Voltaire is the birthplace of Dadaism. It was opened on February 5, 1916 by Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings. The original idea, as stated in the official application, was to create a place for “beautiful things”.*

One ambition of the Dadaists was to create a zero point. For Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings, there was a strong religious component: Hugo Ball was a practicing Catholic and they had set up an altar in their nearby apartment.

Hugo Ball said: To understand Cubism, we must first study the church fathers. That was his zero point, so to speak – to fall back on the Christian mysteries.

The Zurich Dadaists were also in touch with the Italian Futurists, but their radicalism ended in Fascism. Why were many European avant-garde artists involved in totalitarian movements of the 20th century? This aspect is often ignored. We put it up for discussion at the Swiss Institute for Art Research.

Michael Ley: *Is modern art regime-orientated and does it wish to provide a vision of salvation in this sense?*

Beat Wyss: *Modern art is precisely this discourse: the question of "Where do we come from, where are we going, what should we do." It is a platform for secular observations about the world. This is the only way of establishing a dialogue about God and the world in a post-religious society. This is the function of art.*

When Dadaism gained ground in Germany, an Oberdada was appointed: Johannes Baader.

Song:¹⁴

It is the Oberdada from the Rhine
 He is great and powerful
 Nobody can be like him
 As strong, sublime, magnificent
 All art from now on is dead
 And with it the world and God
 Dada will you set me free?
 Dada make me a God
 My art is unforgivable
 Make me a God,
 For I would like to be sacred...

Bernd Baader: *Johannes Baader was a product of Swabian pietism. He had strong religious sentiments. During the years when he worked as an architect in Zurich, he fought a number of battles with himself that ended in a sort of personal enlightenment. He then came back to these ideas with Dadaism, alienated and mocked them. Still, for him they constituted an important message that he weaved into happenings and sermons.*

Similar to socially critical Dadaist George Grosz in Germany, Franz Probst described the contrasts in Vienna during the inter-war years. The social and military tension in the air made a deep impression especially on young artists.

How could they have abstracted the war raging around them?

After WW 2, Probst still couldn't make a living from his art and worked as a laborer on building sites. Wilfried Daim spent several months looking for the artist, whom he then befriended.

Daim was in fact the inspiration behind several of Probst's works, such as this triptych that shows the Greek god Chronos devouring his children.

¹⁴ Music: Peter Uwira; Lyrics: Petrus van der Let

Wilfried Daim: *He doesn't always depict the workers in a flattering light, although in a conflict he tends to side with the weaker party. However, there is also a certain ambivalence, making the conflicts more objective.*

Daim also collected the works of Otto Rudolf Schatz. In woodcuts, Schatz depicted the social battle that raged in the early 20th century. After the Nazis had annexed Austria, Schatz was deported to a concentration camp because of his Jewish wife, who was herself murdered by the Nazis. After the war, he kept afloat with commissions for works on public buildings.

Karl Andreas: *The works that are considered outstanding today – were shoved into a storage room. The famous picture with the lunar women was apparently unsellable. But he never complained about not selling anything. Except for us, he had no relatives. When my mother and my wife visited him, he told her: Go and pick a picture for yourself! He was a very generous man. If my wife had chosen a giant canvas, he would probably have given her that as well. I wouldn't have been very happy, because that sort of picture would never have fitted into our tiny apartment. My wife chose a landscape which I thought highly modern.*

Wilfried Daim: *In general, people are careful not to go against my understanding of art, because they think: If he is right, I'll look pretty stupid and then where's my place in art history?*

When Otto Rudolf Schatz was commissioned to paint a fresco in a library in Ottakring, he chose a classical motif. Books were important instruments in the workers' education. Schatz thought his "objective irony" would be out of place. Instead, he contrasted the free world of the readers with an image of the hardships of labor, which he painted again during a restoration in 1948. Today, his oil paintings are exhibited in museums and some of them have increased 1000fold in value.

Franz Smola: *That's a phenomenon that still cannot be explained: how styles that were so up-to-date suddenly went out of fashion. That's what happened to representational art after 1945. Abstract art had started out as a marginal style, but eventually representational artists became the minority.*

Beat Wyss: *The reason was that the German Nazis were such squares. With some exceptions: Göring admired abstract painting and collected abstract works in secret. The nature of the paintings he collected for his planned museum in Carinhall was something he had to keep from the Führer. After 1945, National Socialism and modern art were seen as opposites. Modern artists were rehabilitated, even turned into victims. In terms of cultural policy, that was a distortion – after all, several of these artists were pro-Hitler, e.g. Emil Nolde, who felt snubbed when he was excluded from the NSDAP.*

After 1945, representational art lost ground even when it was a direct result of the artist's lifestyle, as was the case with Werner Berg.

Harald Scheicher – nephew of Berg: *Looking at this altar in the background, the influence of Nolde is particularly visible. However, Berg later moved away from Nolde*

by emphasizing the flatness of the picture and the calm color strokes, which differ from Nolde's fiercer application.

For Werner Berg, success in Austria remained at first elusive. In 1933, Werner Berg entered this altar for an exhibition of the Austrian Katholikentag, but the jury rejected it as too modern.

Harald Scheicher: An exhibition was planned in Cologne in 1935, but the Reichskunstkammer banned it as "unhealthy". There was an exchange of letters, but that was the beginning of the hate campaign that led to one of his pictures was shown in the exhibitions of "degenerate art" in Vienna and Hamburg in 1938.

Art in the Third Reich was narrow-minded in terms of content and unimaginative in terms of form. Art was controlled by the state, which rated it according to its propagandistic value.

Franz Smola: I think that modern art rightfully claims the privilege of having truly opposed Nazi art. The allies supported this and the abstract art. What was wanted was a new start, and it was felt that Nazi art was a dead end. The opposition to representational art after the war applied to any art, even the most original.

Harald Scheicher: Werner Berg spent 3 days on average on a canvas. Then he went to his studio in order to remain independent of any natural appearance. He always reworked his pictures in the studio to free himself from the many details that nature provides and to simplify everything to a level where the image becomes almost symbolic.

Werner Berg remained committed to representational art even after the war and justified this decision with his way of life as a farmer. He simplified the mountains and the wide valleys surrounding his farm with flat surfaces, with a chalk base coat soaking up the colors. In these matte surfaces, a detail stands out here and there – sometimes bright, sometimes not.

Harald Scheicher: It is usually a lit window, a lit door, a headlight, the light of the moon: usually points of refuge in an unwelcoming, cold, dark winter landscape.

The Werner Berg Museum in Bleiburg also shows works by Rainer. Maybe one day representational painters will also be exhibited in the Rainer Museum?

Peter Baum - photographer: The changes in Arnulf Rainer's oeuvre are to do with his creative curiosity. Whenever it seemed that a certain goal was reached, Rainer started a new series. But certain phenomena, like painting over pictures to create a new, concentrated image in a mute space that cannot be explained in terms of representation, fascinated him again and again.

Painter Bruno Wildbach deliberately positions himself within the older tradition.

Bruno Wildbach: With representational art, there is always the risk of ending up with an illustration. To avoid this risk, my approach is subtle. I don't start from a concrete

sentence or subject, but engage with people I know who have experienced something that fits with the subject. This is how the painting works.

Manfred Lang – gallery owner: *When Wildbach paints two isolated figures, it is a critical representation of societal circumstances. In representational art, the artist's engagement becomes visible. This is unnecessary in abstract art here, it is the formal and gestural element that attracts or repulses viewers or leaves them indifferent. Representational art hardly ever leaves us cold. When viewing representational art, an interpretation of the picture is usually desirable.*

One meeting point for modern art after 1945 was the Galerie nächst St. Stephan, founded by cathedral preacher Otto Mauer.

Elisabeth Madlener – gallery St. Stephan: *He was a gifted orator. Unfortunately I never had the opportunity of listening to him. He believed in the renewal of the Catholic faith and church through young, contemporary art; where it concerns itself with mankind, our inner lives, our demons.*

Otto Mauer was known for his theory that artists wrestle with demons.

Michael Ley: *But isn't this a fallacy, that art can deliver what religion is no longer capable of?*

Beat Wyss: *Modernity asks too much of art. It is expected to deliver the impossible. It is a product of the secularization of society, but also has to take over functions of religion. Accidents are bound to happen, with art becoming almost too religious in an excess of fervor.*

A tunnel is planned between Graz and Gradec in Slovenia. High enough for two adults to shake hands and for pack mules to turn around in. If the two sides were to remove one cubic meter of rubble every month, the tunnel would be finished in 5658 years. That's the basic concept.

Barbara Edlinger – gallery Graz: *Conceptual art also has its roots in Dadaism. But all art that came before us is our mine, the resource out of which we develop our new works. The transnational rubble removal project is symbolic in character – it is limited to a 7-day period.*

Muhammad Müller - artist: *The symbolic or the abstract used to be perceived as the more "realistic" styles. Today, the symbolic is considered less realistic. However, this is a misconception. This conviction has also to do with my belief in Allah, who registers everything much better than we.*

Song: For I would like to be sacred....

Muhammad Müller: *My starting point was the belief that everything is preordained. We just tag behind, retrospectively applying concepts to everything we do. We think that we ourselves have eaten something just because we put the food in our mouth, when really it was put in our mouth by the grace of Allah.*

A Styrian castle was rented as the perfect setting for an attempt at “absolute painting”.

Ferdinand Penker - artist: *The book covers from the turn of the century, the paste-and-comb patterns of the Wiener Werkstätte. These are fantastic, non-representational designs that still served a purpose.*

Bruno Wildbach: *Could it be that abstract painting looks at folk art or articles of daily use to see what patterns have proven useful and how they could be developed further?*

Penker: *My hope is that my pictures are reality and that their existence is not dependent on any previous reality.*

Wildbach: *So what is the ultimate point? The overall compositional harmony, or formal beauty?*

Penker: *The point is to add something to the variety that already exists. When a work of art is taking shape, it is easy to think of oneself as a creator of sorts.*

Maybe that is why Ferdinand Penker likes to visit nearby Seggau Castle on a Sunday, where a powerful bell rings at midday.

The world of Bruno Wildbach is less mystical. Sometimes he paints gigantic canvases for which he needs a factory floor and a lot of physical strength. He must choose his working method carefully: for instance, no pure colors, as these often come across as kitschy in a painting. The new efforts in painting ultimately aim at finding a new kind of impact. Logical thinking has no place here. As can be seen in Wildbach’s works, it is possible to apply representational and abstract styles to one single picture.

Rudolf Leopold – art collector: *That the ultimate goal must always be the abstract is a fallacy that many art historians fall prey too. In some cases this may be true, but in the majority of cases the result is a slightly boring form of decoration. This is also the reason why Picasso preferred to paint actual faces, but with 4 eyes it allowed him to retain the stimulus of the representational.*

Arnulf Rainer - artist: *Of course, the prospective buyers choose their own pictures and are difficult to influence. If they have a good eye, like Otto Mauer, they might cream off the best works.*

Ernst Fuchs: *I painted this picture under the influence of “The Antipope” by Max Ernst. If you were to ask me today whether I can interpret this picture without referring to Max Ernst, I would have to say no. I always gave myself up to this sort of thing unconsciously and never questioned it. There is no answer to the question of why or for whom I do this. The pictures are not addressed to anyone and are not painted for a buyer. They are works commissioned by myself whose subject I don’t even know.*

In 1957, Fuchs and Rainer competed over the Church of the Holy Rosary in Vienna. Ernst Fuchs won and was commissioned with painting the altar picture in this severe-

looking parish church. In this case, the parishioners overrode art expert Mauer, who favored Rainer, the abstract painter.

Bruno Wildbach: *This is an acquaintance of mine, who was disfigured after an accident when driving his truck. Representational painting cannot play freely with colors and shapes. On the other hand, it never runs the risk of underestimating the visible surface.*

Wildbach creates a new effect out of two different methods: a link between representation and abstraction. At an exhibition in the Benedictine abbey of Admont in Styria, we encountered a similar effect, brought about by different means. Edgar Lissel photographs real objects from such a close distance that a drop of water becomes a fascinating, almost abstract, image, or a series of images on film.

Michael Braunsteiner – historian of art: *I think what is essential about Edgar Lissel's works is that he doesn't look towards the outside, using rational thinking and other automatic responses. His perspective concentrates on what is inside, eliminating the elements that we are used to and forcing us to look at subjects and objects that we no longer notice in our everyday lives.*

Edgar Lissel - artist: *My work focuses strongly on the creation and disappearance of images, on the process and location of an evolving image. This is a picture from the series "Myself", my skin bacteria, my skin flora in a nutrient solution. With the help of scientists, I developed a process that allows the bacteria of parts of my body to remain in the solution. After 2-3 days, the bacteria grow, thus creating an image of my body.*

The representatives of Viennese Actionism used not only their own bodies for their art, but also those of others. Otto Mühl was able to do this within the setting of his commune.

Peter Skopik: *Otto Mühl was the artist who dealt with things. But because of the way we lived together, we became a sect. As we weren't religious, we did not see ourselves as a sect. We thought about what sect means: it comes from Latin and means the selected, the special ones. And that is how we saw ourselves: at the pinnacle of mankind, because we had come up with a totally new way of life. But when the child abuse by Mühl came out and it turned out that a lot of money had already been spent on lawyers' fees, some of the members of the commune seized the opportunity for revolt. In the course of the revolution, the joint property was divided and Mühl was symbolically beheaded. He went to prison for years.*

Wilfried Daim, the individualist, was eventually presented with an award by the City of Vienna.

Norbert Leser - political scientist: *You could describe him as an artist-adventurer on the prowl. He is always on the lookout for objects that could be valuable in the future. Ernst Fuchs was highly praised, and has become generally acceptable. And Arnulf Rainer, the imaginative one, presented himself in the way the media liked best.*

Bruno Wildbach and the Penkers are having afternoon tea. In Stainz in Styria, they discuss emotions and sentiments evoked by art, and what could be stronger than a strong impact.

Michael Ley: *And what “odor mark” does art have now, after the totalitarianisms? Arbitrariness?*

Beat Wyss: *That takes us back to the beginning. It is the communication of second-order observations. I am being deliberately dry, because I think we need a certain level of somberness. The point of modern and contemporary art lies precisely in this conflict and in the debate of this conflict. This is something that art can productively do: to form a platform from which laypersons can openly discuss God and the world. The artist should be a director that presents second-order observations while engaging in a number of dialogues.*

Mehrere österreichische Maler hatten im 20. Jahrhundert das Problem, nicht dem Zeitgeist der Abstraktion zu huldigen, sondern realistisch zu gestalten. Trotz des Mangels an Wertschätzung hinterließen sie ein beachtliches Werk, das heute zunehmend Anerkennung findet und im Wert zum Teil um das Tausendfache gestiegen ist.

Der Dokumentarfilm zeigt Motive und Stilrichtungen der Malerei von 1900 bis heute: vor allem die Kontroverse von gegenständlicher und abstrakter Malerei in Österreich.

Dabei fällt auf, dass viele Künstler von irrationalen Ideologien getrieben sind, als wollten sie beweisen, dass ihre Kunst Erlösung bringt und die bessere Religion ist.

KUNST ALS ERLÖSUNG

Petrus van der Let
Martin Luksan

KUNST ALS ERLÖSUNG Und Abbilder der Wirklichkeit

LEHR-Programm gemäß § 14 JuSchG

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THE MAGIC OF THE NIGHT¹⁵

The Leopold Figl Observatory has Austria's largest reflector telescope. We are at Mitterschöpfungl in the Vienna Woods, approx. 60km west of Vienna.

August Ruhs – psychiatrist: *Day only exists because night exists. If we were surrounded by the same level of brightness or darkness all the time, we would not have two names for two different states.*

Silke Silkeborg - artist: *Nighttime always comes with fewer distractions. On a visual level, the world is greatly reduced, and that creates a certain magic.*

Song:

Between today and tomorrow¹⁶

Lies a long, long night

Maybe spent in restlessness,

Tortured by worries and anxieties

Silke Silkeborg - painter: *I like to work on the floor because it allows me to use my whole body and arrange everything around me. This creates a greater intimacy with the picture. I am interested in different aspects of the night, for instance how colors change during the night. Even in large cities, where light pollution is very strong, the visual codes we operate by during the day disappear or change at night. I like to explore the limits between what disappears and what remains visible.*

Harald Strohm – historian of religion: *In this painting at Schloss Eggenberg, Ghisi beautifully depicts the dance between the night and the dawn. On the right-hand side, you can see night with the moon and stars, and on the left-hand side dawn. They are performing a dance, almost swirling into each other.*

Lachlan Blair – photographer: *I met my wife in Canberra, where she studied and also taught from time to time. The city is not very large and we built up a friendship and also had many friends in common. After several years, it became clear that a long-distance relationship wouldn't really work and that I would have to move here.*

Re-enacted production of the photogram in "Day for Night"

Bruno Wildbach – painter: *This room only contains unfinished pictures. I do classic layer painting using oils, where one layer after another must be left to dry. As soon as one layer has fully dried, I can apply the second or third layer. And once 10 or 15 pictures have reached a stage where I can insert figures or finalize the picture, I try to get the room as empty as possible. I turn all other pictures to the wall and put only one up against my favorite painting wall – usually this one – to finish it. And this continues until I have completed a cycle of 10 or 15 pictures.*

¹⁵ Compare the documentary film with the same title; DVD www.alibri.de with English subtitles

¹⁶ Lyrics: Ernst Goll (1887-1912) Music: ILMALA

Andreas Weilharter – gallery owner: *With his imagery that fits in somewhere between abstraction and figurative painting, he holds a unique position in the world of painting. That is what we are looking for, and we have found it in Bruno Wildbach.*

Song: My longing is a dark boat
That leaves the shore at sunset
Your longing is a white swan
That sails along a moonlit path

Michaela Math – artist: *Nighttime, the darkness of night is a state of emergency for human perception, which is after all reliant on light. The more light we have, the more sharply we are able to identify and assess objects. The less light we have, the more the visible surface recedes into the background, and we are forced to define things ourselves, to flesh them out with elements from our memory or our imagination.*

Song: And one time in the deep blue waters
The two will meet. And all will be well.

Harald Strohm: *From the point of view of developmental psychology, the night also has an entirely different aspect. This results from the fact that we spent the first months of our lives in a world that was not yet open to us on a visual level. All babies have a significant visual impairment up until the 4th or 5th month of their lives. They cannot assess depths, distances etc. And both the ancient mythical world and modern-day infant research talk about a dark world that opens up and widens only gradually, giving rise to the visual world as we know it.*

Song: My love, a long long time ago
You took my peace and rest
So why are you now signaling
A welcome with your hand
Why are you making eyes at me
Greeting me with longing
Pursing your ruby-red mouth
To kiss this cheerless guest

Andrea Illibauer – Kubin Museum Zwickledt/ Upper Austria: *Those were the stables for the chickens, ducks, goats and pigs that the Kubins kept. They didn't look after the animals themselves; that was the job of the housekeepers. The agricultural land and the forest were cared for by farmers from the neighborhood. The land and the forest were rented out in return for produce. The Kubins were very popular in the village, but also a little suspect. We now have a permanent exhibition here.*

Song: Your hand is as cold as ice
I don't even want to hold it

A long long time ago
It cleaved my heart in two

Brigitte Borchhardt-Birbaumer – cultural scientist: *The allegory of the night usually shows a veiled figure. This figure stems from Greek mythology and is usually a goddess, often shown as a mother. Some of her children give rise to negative associations, some to positive ones, such as sleep or a loving embrace. Negative associations include death, war, revenge, and the nightmares that haunt us.*

Song: Your mouth is as red as blood
I don't even want to kiss it
A long long time ago
It set my heart on fire

Your eyes are as deep as the ocean
I don't want to hold their gaze
A long long time ago
My heart drowned in them

Harald Strohm: *Very often, mythical creation stories start out with the god of creation being kept in a cave where it is still night. The god will then break open the cave, for instance Indra in ancient India or Mithra in ancient Iran, and the world is born from that cave. This dramaturgy of the original darkness of the cave and the world of light that opens up around us is also reflected in our first encounters with our mother. During the first months of our lives, we only have a dim visual idea of our mother. Three-month old babies will see her eyes, her hairline, but not the whole mother figure in all its glory. That only happens around the fifth month of an infant's life, when they are first able to see their mother as a complete figure. From the infant's perspective, this must be a truly amazing sight.*

Esin Turan – artist: *I often choose political themes for my works. The theme here is Kristallnacht. As you can read here, the pieces spell out "night" in Hebrew. It is a tactile object. You are free to touch the broken glass, but you probably wouldn't want to. No one likes to touch broken glass anyway, and no one much likes to touch upon this topic. My current work is also linked to the theme of Kristallnacht in Turkey in the context of the Armenian genocide that took place in 1915, before the Jewish genocide that began in 1938. I have an Armenian book here that has not been cut yet and that I found in an antique store in Istanbul. The metal nails will go in here: A very topical subject –the Armenian gold that disappeared after the deportation, with no one quite knowing what happened to it.*

Alfred Kubin (1877-1959).

Andrea Illibauer: *This is the parlor with the table that witnessed conversations between a great many artists. Many artists visited Kubin here in Zwickledt, for instance Hermann Hesse, Paul Flora, Hans Carossa from Passau. This table is also where Kubin wrote his only novel, "The Other Side", published in 1909.*

Favorite book: "The Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Conrad

Bruno Wildbach: *I first read this book as an adolescent and later rediscovered it. The story inspired my last exhibition, which I dedicated to Joseph Conrad, the author. A wonderful story that has remained with me for almost 30 years. It is about a man called Marlow who is commissioned by a Belgian trading company to find an ivory trader named Kurtz in the Congo. Marlow then embarks on a journey where he discovers himself and also the terrifying precipices of human existence.*

Esin Turan "Dowry"

Esin Turan: *This work dates back to 2008 and was first exhibited in Villach. Later, I was invited to contribute to an exhibition in New York that was part of a festival organized in conjunction with the Austrian Cultural Forum. Both works were sent to New York; however, "Dowry" was not shown – it turned out to be too provocative for the US organizers. The second picture is called "Livatha": It is about homosexuality, which is illegal in Islamic societies and subject to severe penalties or even death.*

Song: We wander through eternity
 Woken by noise and confusion
 "The old year – the new year!"

Iranian New Year, "Now Ruz" – goes back 3,500 years.

Harald Strohm: *The dawn that recurs every day was one possibility of re-enacting the dawn of early infancy. But the annual dawn – the beginning of the New Year in spring, usually at the time of the solstice – was also a good opportunity for a celebration and was seen as such by many cultures, the Iranian one among them. Even the Iranian community here in Graz celebrates Now Ruz – literally, "new day", on a yearly basis. In reality, we are talking about a re-enactment of the drama of early infancy, also reflected in the hero of Now Ruz, a god named Yama. Even his name sounds a bit like baby babble, which indicates that Yama was a very young god. This is also borne out by the fact that he feeds on milk and honey – classic baby food. Yama lived in a cave, and although people probably didn't grasp that the story had anything to do with early childhood, they intuitively interpreted the message correctly, as did many other cultures. The description of the cave is intuitively accurate. Yama uses his heels to widen his field of vision, thus enlarging the cave until it finally bursts open, giving way to the world at large.*

Song: We know nothing of time and space
 We wander through eternity
 We know nothing of time and space
 We wander through eternity
 When we are woken by noise and confusion
 The old year – the new year!

Belinda Grace Gardener – cultural historian: *The clichéd element of the night is also reflected in the history of painting, where night is often shown as the realm of the*

uncanny. The Romantics considered it sublime, Caspar David Friedrich shows it as a place of yearning. In her art, Silke Silkeborg adds yet another dimension to all this. I would refer to this dimension as the “urban night” – her pictures show the other side of our everyday lives.

Silke Silkeborg: This is the last opportunity before my departure to paint one of Denmark’s state-of-the-art cattle-breeding stables at night. When I saw this garishly lit building for the first time, I immediately wanted to paint it. The title I had in mind alone merited a picture: Cattle Palace. A massively market-oriented cattle-breeding business that really shows its insanity at night. The cattle that live here will never experience a natural night. Even though the animals may be used to this profoundly unnatural state of affairs from birth, it is still a kind of torture to be exposed to this eternal day.¹⁷

Harald Krejci – art historian: Especially at the turn of the century artists engaged with the new ideas of psychoanalysis, of the interpretation of dreams. This idea of a reality that transcends the reality we perceive is often associated with nighttime. Artists use the metaphor of night to showcase their themes, such as in Emil Nolde’s “Joseph Recounts His Dream”.

Song: We are searching for our one true mate
Who we will call dearest and make our bride
And maybe, just maybe
We will even call her woman
And then the deepness of our dream
Will wrap us once again into the hem of its cloak

August Ruhs – psychiatrist: Freud verbalized a twofold interpretation of the night. First of all, the night was a metaphor for states of the soul that we are unaware of. This means that Freud succeeded in revealing the power of the subconscious on the human mind, the true, secret motives behind our actions and efforts. Psychoanalysis is a method that relies on verbalization and free association to access the places buried deep within our subconscious. Dreams provided privileged access to these places, and it was through dreams that Freud examined the night in a real sense, by revealing the secrets of dreaming.

Song:
Maybe this strange country
has beguiled my pure child’s mind
and all the happiness contained in my hand
has long since stopped breathing

Maybe the blossoms on the tree
have shriveled before fall could claim its fruits
Maybe it is all just a dream
awaiting an uncertain dawn

¹⁷ Silke Silkeborg DAS DUNKEL – Journalberichte über das Malen in der Nacht, Hamburg 2012

Harald Strohm: *It is absolutely clear that the Mother of God re-enacts precisely this symbolism. Usually, she is shown holding a 6-8-month old baby – even in the nativity scenes, the baby is never a newborn. It always has a head full of curls, and his mother seems to be wearing a nightgown that she is taking off or that seems to slide off her, showing an undergarment that is as red as the morning sky. In addition, she is always a beautiful, refined young woman, with clearly contoured facial features, lovingly elaborated by the painters. She thus represents the act of creation – the coming into being of the human world, as baby Jesus would have experienced it, and as we all did at some point.*

Brigitte Borchhardt-Birbaumer: *In earlier times – far into the Baroque and certainly during the Middle Ages – weddings and betrothals took place at night. As the light of the candle would dazzle the viewer, the candle is shielded by the hand of the person in the picture.*

Thomas Posch: *What is your shortest definition of night?*

Walter Seitter – philosopher: *The great darkness that approaches us every day. “Night” is said to come from what is “nigh”; what comes closer and closer until it envelops us fully. The great darkness that marks the 24-hour rhythm of our life.*

Thomas Posch – astronomer: *It is untrue that there is no light during the night, but the intensities that we measure from the stars at nighttime are 100 million times weaker than the intensities of sunlight. And yet our eyes are capable of dealing with these enormously different ratios.*

Walter Seitter: *In terms of religious history, ancient cultures that we consider, polytheistic, turned the balance between light and darkness into something sacred. In Persia, Zarathustra replaced polytheism by a quasi-monotheistic dualism. Light and darkness face each other like good and evil. This was an important breach in the history of mankind.*

Harald Strohm: *It immediately becomes obvious that the declaration of war between light and darkness also introduces a new dynamic into the mythical world: the history of the world is thought of as a linear process. From now on, it has a beginning and an end, and its goal is to redeem the world and to usher in a time when there is no more darkness, only light.*

The Gnostic movements marked a turning point in religious history and took the war against darkness one step further, into fanatical territory. The beginnings of Gnosis are not entirely clear, but it is certain that there was some Iranian influence. A passionate war is being waged against darkness, and the ancient mythical motives from heathen times pop up again. Darkness now has a female character – the female element and sexual seduction represent an evil that must be destroyed. This kingdom of light that will ensue at some point, after the dramatic end of this world, with blazing fires and rivers of blood, will be free from sexuality; inhabited mostly by men and pure spirits, one imagines.

Andrea Illibauer: *After the death of his wife, Kubin moved into this room, and this is the bed where he died. His housekeeper kept the funeral ribbons in this wardrobe and you can see the great wave of sympathy the funeral solicited: the Minister of*

Education, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Vienna Secession, the Munich New Artists' Group all contributed wreaths. Many renowned families from the surrounding area also attended the funeral.

Walter Seitter: We often hear about the 24-hour society, which can be interpreted to mean that we live through 24 uniform hours – the homogenization of the world we live in. Nightlights have their qualities, but an excess of artificial light during nighttime is a nuisance for many.

Thomas Posch: So far, the only country that has light pollution legislation is the Republic of Slovenia. Of course, that doesn't mean that you can't turn the light on at night; it only means that full cutoff lights are used. They only reflect light downwards and are covered at the top.

Inge Morath –photographer (1923-2002) Married to writer Arthur Miller for 40 years after his marriage to Marilyn Monroe had ended.

Regina Strassegger – journalist: Our first encounter was characterized by the positive anticipation of meeting this person – the wife of Arthur Miller, the famous Magnum photographer. Her facial expression was radiant, open, approachable, but a closer look would have shown that she had just finished high-dose chemotherapy to treat lymphoma. I didn't know that, and she didn't mention it. In this sense, it really was the last journey she took as an active 79-year old. The title "Inge Morath – Border Spaces – Last Journey" only came about afterwards. Originally, what I had in mind was a journey back to childhood. This house at the border, her lifelong friend Renate Moszkowicz- Dadieu. Historically speaking, this is not an unproblematic name – Dadieu was the SS Gauhauptmann in Styria. This stretch of land – Lower Styria, beyond today's border, a former Styrian heartland – all highly charged on an emotional level. This table saw many talks about this topic. This was Inge Morath's emotional childhood home, where her parents spent their summers and where she spent her childhood summers with her friend. In the preface to the book, Arthur Miller wrote about childhood as the golden years that are sacred. When a 79-year old woman once more embarks upon the journey into her childhood memories, it is a very special act. After all, this is where the cycle of her life began. For us, it was not at all clear that this cycle would also close here. Here, in this place in Southern Styria – also Slovenian Styria – is where she took her last photographs. You can see that one of her last images was a bit blurred because she simply lacked the strength to hold the camera still. Clear signs that a life was coming to an end here.

Silke Silkeborg: I remember that it was a long way from my attic downstairs to the toilet. When I woke up during the night and had to face that trip, feeling my way along the walls without being able to see anything, I was afraid of what could lie in store behind the door. As a child, I populated darkness with monsters. I was not familiar with the experience of darkness, and there always had to be a light on for me to be able to go to sleep. This falling into a dark space – what happens when I go to sleep? What awaits me in this sleep? Do I take the darkness with me when I fall asleep? These experiences play a great part in why I engage so much with darkness now.



Silke Silkeborg

WITTGENSTEIN'S THERAPY¹⁸

The Wittgenstein family were wealthy industrial magnates. At the turn of the century, they were the most important financiers of the Secession building in Vienna.

Rudolf Taschner – mathematician: *The Vienna Circle had studied Wittgenstein's Tractate – he himself was never a member of the Vienna Circle. The name is based on the idea of all members being equally distant from the center, like in a circle. The center is Wittgenstein and his book, and the center is not part of the circle as it is not located on its curve. It makes sense, if you think about it.*

Maria Stracke - artist: *My great-grandmother was the sister of Ludwig Wittgenstein, one of the 8 siblings in his family.*

Ludwig Wittgenstein was born in 1889 as the youngest child in his family. He was christened, but also had Jewish ancestry. Adolf Hitler was born in the same year.

Reinhard Pichler - headteacher: *The yearbooks of our school in Linz clearly show that Hitler was a student there in 1903/04. He was in year 3 when Wittgenstein joined the school. However, Wittgenstein started out in year 5.*

Bernhard Leitner - artist: *Wittgenstein wasn't interested in publicizing the house after it was completed. Yes, pictures were taken, but it was largely forgotten about because he never mentioned it. It very much remained a family affair, and that was the way he saw it. He never talked about the house, only mentioned it indirectly in his lectures much later in life.*

Hans Dieter Klein – professor of philosophy: *And this is the impulse that makes the fly buzz around even in the bottle. This is the effect that therapy aims for, to make you go out there and embrace life.*

In St. Aegyd in Lower Austria, parts of Karl Wittgenstein's metal factory still survive. His fortune was founded with a commission to manufacture rails for the Trans-Siberian railway, and he became one of the richest men of the Habsburg Empire. This is the way the great-granddaughter of Ludwig Wittgenstein's sister Helene portrays her business-savvy ancestor.

Maria Stracke – artist: *The father of Ludwig and of all those other children was a despot. A genius at business, no doubt, but he really did rule his family with an iron fist. Especially his kids – they were all so gifted and he wanted all of them to follow in his footsteps, because he thought that any decent person should go into business and make money.*

It must have been really tough for those kids to stand up to this kind of authority. As a consequence, 3 of his sons tragically committed suicide. The youngest ones – Ludwig and Paul – were given greater freedom. The parents had probably realized that you cannot push children too hard. They were allowed to live their lives more or less the way they wanted to. And yes, they led complicated lives, but at least they freely chose their professions and neither went into business.

¹⁸ Compare the documentary film with the same title; DVD www.alibri.de also with English subtitles

The 3 daughters had a completely different status. Margret was the rebel of the family, and there is a funny story about her: The workers went on strike in my great-grandfather's factory, and he said: Just let them, they can't afford to strike for longer than a couple of days. But the strike went on and on, one week passed, then a second week, and he couldn't understand why. Finally he found out that his daughter Margret had been financing the strike. She agreed with the workers and also thought, that they deserved higher wages. And instead of going into a fit of rage, her father accepted his daughter's opinion. He paid his workers more and that was that. So there was a different side to the family, too.

In 1903, 14-year old Ludwig Wittgenstein attended the funeral of Otto Weininger, who had shot himself at the age of just 23 after finishing his book "Sex and Character".

Michael Ley - sociologist: *Weininger is something of an icon of Viennese modernity. He thought the world was threatened by everything female. The emancipation of women is seen as a threat to the male, as a questioning of male values, and this is what Weininger revolts against. And this criticism of women ties in with an unbelievable anti-Semitism: For him, Jews equal women.*

In 1903, Ludwig Wittgenstein left the family home where he had been taught privately up to that point to attend the Realschule in Linz. One of his fellow students was Adolf Hitler, who, after the death of his tyrannical father, lived in this house behind Leonding cemetery with his mother. Hitler received parts of his primary education at Lambach monastery. As an altar boy, he would have seen the coat of arms of Theoderich Hagn in the sacristy. Hagn thought that the roots of the Benedictines went back to the ancient Germanic tribes.¹⁹

An Australian author believes that this class picture shows both Hitler and Wittgenstein. He thinks that an argument between the two may have been at the root of Hitler's anti-Semitism.

Reinhard Pichler – headmaster of Fadingerstraße high school: *The yearbooks of our school in Linz clearly show that Hitler was a student there in 1903/04. He was in year 3 when Wittgenstein joined the school. However, Wittgenstein started out in year 5. Reading on, we can see that Hitler had left the school by the following year, while Wittgenstein moved up to year 6. It is thus unlikely that they became friends during their time at the school. In my experience, students in year three don't have much in common with students in year five. Also, this book shows a class picture, and it is not likely that a student in year three would be in the same picture as a student in year five.*

When we compare other pictures of Wittgenstein from 1903 with this class picture, it becomes obvious that the boy next to Hitler isn't Wittgenstein. After dropping out of school, Hitler dedicated himself exclusively to his great passions: Wagner operas and drawing. He was less interested in nature than in architecture. A fundamental difference between Wittgenstein and Hitler was that Wittgenstein later sensed that he was suffering from a severe autistic disorder. This awareness kept him from getting

¹⁹ Compare the film *HITLER'S RELION* by Petrus van der Let also as download: <http://www.alibri-buecher.de/Videos-DVDs/Herrn-Hitlers-Religion-Download::335.html>

caught up in any political religion. Hitler, on the other hand, turned his disorder into a divine calling. Hitler continued to visit Linz later in life. Even during World War II, he often led people to the places of his youth and showed them his favorite buildings: the Landhaus, seat of the regional parliament, and the Landesmuseum.

Rainer Kampenhuber - teacher: *Ludwig Wittgenstein didn't do very well in his written school leaving exams in 1906. He failed two subjects – German and geometry – but improved his grades with oral exams in those subjects. Considering his later work, the failed written German exam is particularly interesting: It is an essay about a quotation from Herder: "Work to life is healing balm, work of virtue is the spring." This sounds antiquated to our ears, and Wittgenstein had a hard time with it, too. The essay was marked Fail, and the reasons given were that the argumentation was too short and lacking in linguistic quality. In fact, Wittgenstein had problems with spelling even in his adult life.*

Elvira Muchitsch – clinical psychologist: *Problems in school are common in autistic children. Especially children with Asperger's usually have difficulties with reading and spelling, sometimes also with arithmetic. This may have been the reason why he failed his written exams – there were just too many spelling mistakes. Such people also have difficulties performing at a fixed time, which is the way you need to function in school. In his oral exams, he was able to excel – he had the added resource of rhetoric at his disposal. In his written exams, when it was all just down to him, his attention may have slipped, or he simply wasn't able to process this sort of strain at that moment. Pure performance is something that these patients find hard to deal with.*

Maria Stracke: After graduating from high school, Wittgenstein went to Berlin where he studied mechanical engineering. He was particularly interested in aeronautics. Flying, in particular building flying objects such as kites, had also been his boyhood passion. He originally wanted to become an aeronaut, but the study of mathematics led him to philosophy. He had a lot of conflicting ideas about what he really wanted to be, and this is partly what attracted him to Cambridge.

Wittgenstein's initial glorification of the war is also reminiscent of Hitler. When he was moved to the front at his own request during World War I, he wrote: *This is when the war will start for me. And maybe also – life! Maybe the vicinity of death will give me the light of life.*

Maria Stracke: *He wrote many letters to his sisters, describing how much the war burdened and tortured him. Here is the burning evil, the nightmare of it. Below, we see three volcanoes and his own words: "Inside me is a commotion like in a geyser or a volcano. Eruption is inevitable."*

During his time in the army, Wittgenstein wrote the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, a logical-philosophical tractate ordered according to the logical weight of the sentences: 1. *The world is everything that is the case.*

1.1 *The world is the totality of facts, not of things.*

1.11 *The world is determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts.*

1.12 For the totality of facts determines both what is the case, and also all that is not the case.

1.13 The facts in logical space are the world.

1.2 The world divides into facts.

Rudolf Taschner – mathematician: *Ludwig Wittgenstein was enthusiastic about going to war, but on the battlefields along the Isonzo river disillusionment was bound to set in soon. Tortured by self-doubt, he hit upon the question – how does the thinking process start?*

And he wrote the ultimate philosophical book. To make this sort of claim, you had to come from a family like his and have a father like his. So he wrote this thin little book, the Tractatus, and he said – anything that can be said about philosophy is in that book. And up to a certain point in his life, he really believed this and even went as far as saying: Now that I've written the Tractatus, philosophy is finished for me. Why should I waste any more time with it? I want to do something productive. And he did - he became a teacher.

Maria Stracke: *Some sentences from the Tractatus:*

What is thinkable is also possible.

The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts.

Geometry, language, and architecture are all linked to this concept.

It really makes perfect sense.

Sigrid Freinberger – teacher, Lilienfeld: *I want to show you a few examples of optical illusions, where you think you are seeing one thing, and suddenly you are seeing something else. Here you can see 2 animals: a picture of a rabbit, and a picture of a duck. These sort of images also show that it is important to have previous knowledge: If you don't know what a rabbit is, you won't see one. Our perception thus relies on our eyes on the one hand, and on our brain on the other.*

Hans Dieter Klein – philosophy professor: *One of the problems that run through Wittgenstein's thinking – from the early days until much later in his work – is what is referred to as solipsism, the theory that only the self exists. Wittgenstein also uses this word in the Tractatus. We use it to refer to a thought experiment: we perceive and think in terms of objects, but we have no proof that these objects exist outside our own consciousness. Solus ipse: only the self, my self.*

The young Wittgenstein feels very much imprisoned in this capsule of the self, when he writes in the *Tractatus*: *In fact what solipsism means is quite correct, only it cannot be said... Years later he will come to realize: The solipsist flutters and flutters in the fly-glass, strikes against the wall, flutters further.*

Maria Stracke: *The image is a model of reality....and here: What is thinkable, is also possible. These are the 3 graces from the Guggenheim Museum in Venice. The unspeakable, that which strikes me as so mysterious...*

Here I see Wittgenstein more as a poet than a philosopher. The poetic element in his writing has always fascinated me.

Michael Ley: *Wittgenstein is a representative of the Positivism that developed in Vienna at the time: an attempt to explain the world in purely logical, historical, and empirical terms. The positivists were not interested in any kind of religion or mythology. Their idea was to explain the world rationally and logically.*

Rudolf Taschner: *Wittgenstein says that everything harks back to language, that language is the source of all thought. Language is the house of Being: Another sentence of 20th-century philosophy, but not from Wittgenstein.*

This concept of language contradicts the idea of Brouwer, who said: In the beginning was the number. When a baby is born, it sees one thing first – maybe the light, and then this one thing becomes darker and the infant feels something else: the mother's breast. This way it learns about the first and the second thing, and although they are separate, they somehow belong together, as 1 is the predecessor of 2 and 2 cannot be without 1: "the two-oneness", as Brouwer calls it. When I have 1 and 2, I have all the numbers. Language comes after that.

Maria Stracke: *The war really changed him. He witnessed so much death and misery, and his father's fortune stood in the way of him thinking and living freely. He felt weighed down by it. He thought you could only become a decent person through hard work, and of course he renounced his fortune in the end. But before he gave it up completely, he supported many artists, such as Georg Trakl and Else Lasker-Schüler.*

After attending teacher training college in Kundmannngasse in Vienna – opposite to where Wittgenstein would build a house for his sister Margarete years later – he applied for a teaching post at a primary school in Lower Austria. Maria Schutz was too idyllic for Wittgenstein, so he walked to Trattenbach, which was more in line with his ascetic ideas. Today, sentences from the Tractatus are on display here. Wittgenstein had put his millions in his siblings' names, and lived next to this tavern. His former room has been made into a memorial room: the bed which he designed himself, a cat's skeleton which he prepared for his students. A school bench and the dictionary for elementary school pupils that he wrote. Wittgenstein also taught in nearby Otterthal and in Puchberg am Schneeberg, where class registers from the 1920s have survived.

Erika Grundtner – head teacher: *What is remarkable about these registers is that they were so beautifully kept. Of course, they were written in old-style Kurrent and with a pen. Pupils were often from poor farming backgrounds and had to walk miles to get to school. They were actually given clothes by the school – here is a pupil who was given a trouser suit. This was certainly not standard at the time.*

Ernst Geiger – Federal Office of Criminal Investigation: *Wittgenstein gave my uncle a great deal of encouragement. His family was poor and they had 5 children, he would never have been given the chance to attend secondary school if Wittgenstein hadn't been his school teacher in Puchberg. He wanted my uncle to attend secondary school and had to somehow get him there against his parents' will. Secondary schooling was highly unusual in Puchberg at the time, but he succeeded in winning over the parents. He paid for all of my uncle's schooling. My uncle then moved to Vienna to board with Wittgenstein's sister, Margarete Stonborough.*

Wittgenstein encouraged gifted children, but despite his high-minded ethical ideals, he could also be abusive. At least among the less talented pupils, Wittgenstein was seen as something of a tyrant. He slapped a girl's face once and the girl complained to the head teacher, who confronted Wittgenstein over the matter. Wittgenstein denied everything, and even years after he had given up teaching, he was unable to forgive himself for having lied in this particular instance.

Elvira Muchitsch: This is typical of autism patients – they make their own truths and their own rules, and they don't always conform with those of society. He simply lacked the ability to see that the girl may actually have deserved pity, that you don't hit kids when they have difficulties but try to help them along. That would show social insight. He was only really bothered by the fact that he had told a lie.

Maria Stracke: Elementary school teaching wasn't really his thing, and he knew that he wasn't very popular. As a consequence, he became depressed, was once more on the verge of suicide, unhappy with himself and the world. And his sisters, who adored him, saw that he wasn't well. Margaret had always wanted to build a house, and she had the idea that getting Ludwig on board would distract him from his problems.

This idea really worked – he pulled himself out of his depression, went to Vienna and became completely absorbed in the building project.

For almost 2 years, Wittgenstein was kept busy with building this house. Every detail was meticulously planned – every door handle, window handle, radiator.

Bernhard Leitner – artist: I think that the timeless quality of this architecture comes from the fact that it has nothing to do with the thinking of classic modern architecture. Wittgenstein's designs are different to those of Corbusier or Mies van der Rohe. The new element here comes from a range of influences.

For instance, the hall is based on that of his parents' palais in Argentinierstraße. But the same idea can be found in the Rasumofsky palais from 1806, not far from the Wittgenstein residence.

You see, he takes established ideas and purifies them – just like in his linguistic philosophy: he calls this process "boiling it down until something new comes about". For me, one of the most fascinating aspects of this house is the aesthetics of weightlessness. These heavy doors, and the metal curtains that are pulled over the windows in the evenings are made to seem light by means of mechanical devices. Using a pulley with a counterweight, the curtains are held in a state of suspension, so that 150kg can be pulled up with just a light tap.

The house was finished in 1928, and Ludwig Wittgenstein is invited to a lecture in Cambridge.

Borislav Petranov – Cultural Counselor, Bulgarian Embassy: Our cultural section and the Bulgarian Cultural Institute moved here in 1977, when the house was restored. It is now called Bulgarian Cultural Institute – Haus Wittgenstein.

Bernhard Leitner: The room transitions he creates with his double doors are particularly interesting: When both doors are open, temporary spaces are created

and then made to disappear when the doors are closed. The double door to his sister's living room – a wonderful take on complexity with simple means – the outer door is made of glass, the second door of metal. This means that she can be completely isolated if she is not in the mood to see or hear anything. If she wants to be able to see, but not hear, she can open the metal doors. If she wants to be fully integrated in the house, she can open both doors. This play with double doors is pretty much unique in the history or modern architecture.

Plans to tear down the Wittgenstein house existed in the early Seventies, but Bernhard Leitner was able to prevent this by starting newspaper campaigns and mobilizing other artists. His own art has been internationally successful for decades.

Bernhard Leitner: The central idea of my work is that sound is a sculptural material. The idea goes back to the early Seventies. I can build with sound. I build spaces and sculptures in which sound is able to move. In this work, entitled "Serpentinata", 48 loudspeakers are mounted to 2 snake-like tubes, so that sound flows between the loudspeakers, creating archways, small spaces and vibrations in the room through which I am able to move.

Maria Stracke: Margret and his other two sisters were his favorite listeners when he wanted to talk about philosophy. He particularly loved joking around with my great-grandmother. In his letters, he writes again and again how much he misses that sort of silliness.

In 1905, Gustav Klimt painted Wittgenstein's sister Margarete.

Maria Stracke: This portrait has an interesting story. Klimt painted her – beautifully; the picture hangs in the Pinakothek in Munich. But she felt differently about it. She thought that Klimt hadn't really done her justice. And as she liked to paint, she actually corrected the mouth herself. She thought that mouth wasn't really her mouth. And then the picture was shoved behind a wardrobe for years because she simply didn't like it.

Rudolf Taschner: It is generally thought that it was a mathematician's lecture that changed his mind. Brouwer, the famous Dutch mathematician, was invited around that time and Wittgenstein probably attended his lecture. He probably thought that whatever anyone else said was wrong – but thinking about something that was wrong led him back to philosophy. He had a new idea: We must play language games. This is late Wittgenstein – the one who never wrote another book, just kept a filing box for his thoughts.

Hans Dieter Klein: But these language games are also embedded in life. This is also why he uses the word "life form": If we ask for something, we want another person to do something for us. It is always connected with some sort of action. The famous, much-quoted statement from Wittgenstein's later philosophy – that philosophy is actually a kind of therapy – refers to the fact that we have all these different terms at our disposal. Terms such as MYSELF, concepts of time, and that we should use them in the context of our lives, but that we cannot theorize them in isolation, let alone in a formally exact theory.

It was the declared goal of Wittgenstein's therapy to shrug off those linguistic constructs that cannot be proven: constructs such as race, people, nation. Wittgenstein recommended questioning the constructs of Western thought, for instance the construct of a pre-existing soul that was used to brand witches, to stigmatize all non-whites as savages during colonial times, and to whip up blind hatred of the Jews during the Nazi regime.

Sigrid Freinberger: *If we reverse this picture, the chimney-sweep suddenly turns into a cook. We see two heads of the same thing here, and this can also happen with words. When I say the word "mother", who will you be thinking of: your own mother, of course.*

But what a mother actually does, what her function is, that probably won't occur to you straightaway – but that is also a way to think about the word "mother".

Maria Stracke: *Ludwig Wittgenstein compares language to an old and a new city. In his philosophical investigations, he writes: Our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with additions from various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight and regular streets and new houses.*

In his late works, Wittgenstein kept emphasizing the therapeutic element of his philosophical investigations. Several times, he thought of giving up philosophy to become a psychiatrist.

Several of Wittgenstein's therapeutic exercises aim at starting from scratch when faced with specific problems, to see with the eyes of a child and to re-name things that seem self-evident using the language of a child. Indeed, Wittgenstein's therapeutic approach resembles Freudian psychoanalysis: In a certain sense, it also attempts to flash back to a traumatic childhood by means of free association. However, Wittgenstein's therapy is not targeted primarily at sexual neuroses, but against autistic and regressive symptoms of culture and religion.

Maria Stracke: *He had blocked out the Jewish element in himself, which had never played a role in his family throughout his childhood.*

But when National Socialism took hold, he suddenly couldn't escape the subject, and he suffered a great deal over having renounced it so completely. He thought that he had committed a wrong there, by denying something that was real. While Wittgenstein was analyzing language in Cambridge, it was used as a lethal weapon in many other countries.

Wittgenstein's brother Paul lost an arm in WW 1 and later made a name for himself as a one-armed pianist.

Maria Stracke: *There was a great break-up within the family – Paul Wittgenstein, the pianist, realized in time that he would have to leave this country, that it would not be possible to live in such a system. He was one of the few who succeeded in getting to America, via several detours, but with his wife and children. It was difficult, but he got there. He blamed his sisters for thinking that they should stay in Austria, that nothing could possibly happen to them. And then of course it did happen, they lost a fortune to Hitler because they bought half-Jewish status for themselves. After that, they were*

left alone, at least for the time being. Maybe this would have been a miscalculation anyway, but the war was over by that time.

The therapeutic success was also visible with Wittgenstein himself. From his mid-life onwards, statements such as this one became more frequent:

I would like to live with someone. See a human face in the mornings. His homo-erotic relationships also acquired a new dimension – that of actual love. In 1946, he wrote: It is part of real love to consider the suffering of the other... Maybe the fly has finally found its way out of the fly bottle...

In 1946, the two Austrian philosophers Ludwig Wittgenstein and Karl Popper met in Cambridge.

Rudolf Taschner: A meeting of two great minds: Popper, not known for his modesty, and Wittgenstein, who also tended to be pretty sure of himself. And the young Popper asked Wittgenstein where he saw the essential problems of philosophy. And Wittgenstein said – philosophy is simply language criticism, nothing more, nothing less.

Popper was getting a bit nervous, as Wittgenstein was constantly playing with the poker at the open fire, waving it this way and that. And Popper said: Yes, but what about ethics? Isn't that also a philosophical problem? And Wittgenstein became even more agitated and said: Go on then, give me a moral sentence!

And Popper replied: You shouldn't threaten another man with a poker. At this, Wittgenstein threw down the poker and left the room without saying a word.

For more than thirty years, an international Wittgenstein symposium has been held every year in Kirchberg am Wechsel. I wonder if they take his advice to philosophers to heart: *Never stay up on the barren heights of cleverness, but come down into the green valleys of silliness. For a philosopher there is more grass growing in the valleys of silliness than upon the barren heights of cleverness.*



Painter Maria Stracke, great-granddaughter of Wittgenstein's sister Helene next to a portrait of Ludwig Wittgenstein

MIDDLE EAST

Trauma and Hopes of the Young²⁰

Mor – Jewish pupil: *Accross the road you can see there three fences. The first one is a regular metal fence; the second one is an electronic fence. And the third one is the wall which also has sensors that can tell if anybody goes by it. You can see between the electric fence and the wall there is a road for patrolling the area. And over there all the buildings is Tulkarem, a big city. It belongs to the Palestinian Authority.*

Ben – Jewish pupil: *Hi, I'm Ben. Right now we're in our school which is called Ramot Hefer. It's located in a Kibbuz in the middle part of Israel. Tel Aviv is south from here; so is Jerusalem. We're pretty close to a lot of Arab towns which I think is the main reason there are a lot of coexisting projects here; with Arabs and a lot of people - like our project.*

Samah – Palestinian pupil: *My name is Samah. I am 14 years old. I live in Kalanswa, a small village in Israel. We had a project here called Peace Camp. When I went to Austria a change took place in my life. Suddenly I had responsibility. Because we confronted each other together.*

Ben: *We live in a state that has constant war or fighting. And I feel good that I think somewhere I contributed to getting closer to the other side - to the so-called "enemy" and we contribute to peace.*

Manuela: *Well, I volunteered for this. It interests me a lot. On one side, because of the peace-issue, and on the other hand because ... I believe that these "identity workshops" help me to know myself better. This is why I participate.*

Evelyn Böhmer-Laufer - psychoanalyst: *I don't think that we want to teach them anything. I also think that we should not try to teach them anything. Because the adults of today have failed in their attempts to solve the very difficult problems of today's politics. I wanted to give them a free, beautiful, relaxed occasion to clear their mind. And I believe that if you give a person a chance to think freely they may be very creative and come up with something new.*

Nili Gross - teacher: *Thinking about your identity and also getting to know somebody else's identity, or identities, makes you, as I said more sensitive and open minded. Because identities separate and cause wars and hatred and racism.*

Scene making masks

Nili: *It's very difficult for him to do it with a boy. So I would like if there are two girls together to split and ... We are making now masks, individual masks.*

²⁰ With the president of Hadassah Austria Susi Shaked, the psychoanalyst Mag. Evelyn Böhmer-Laufer, director Walter Wehmeyer and teachers and pupils of Jewish and Palestinian Israelis and Austrian pupils we organized 2004 a Peace Camp in Carinthia and filmed also in Israel
http://members.aon.at/vanderlet/english/middle_east.htm

Because the children really will use the masks to hide their identity. And we go step by step to reveal; to go from one identity, the human identity to the individual identity, then to the group identity. And the mascs is one of the things that we should use. It is not a very easy thing to do it to each other. For example in the Arab culture it is not easy for a boy to touch a girl or a girl to touch a boy. Also I found out that some have personal difficulties boy to touch a boy.

Discussion about mascs:

Nili: There was a moment that I forced you a little bit; I wasn't very nice maybe, to do things against your will.

Samah: It's a wonderful activity –

Sarah: You can hide yourself – You can do whatever you want. It's a feeling – you don't have to stand in the public – you are only you – It's like ... your body and your soul – you are a new human being.

Dor: I feel uncomfortable to touch a man; I feel uncomfortable. Maybe I'm afraid to touch a boy like -. Yeah I'm afraid to touch someone, I feel uncomfortable with myself.

Nili: Dor was very open with us with his feelings. I don't think it is any subject for a joke.

Samah: It's a new experience. In our cultures we don't do these things.

Scene Reut painting

Reut: The Arabs that live in Israel they are caught up in a situation because they don't know where are they; to whom they belong - to the Palestinians or to Israel. And I don't know what I would have done in their situation that they are recognized as Israeeli citizens but they don't get the whole thing that we get.

Scene Dancing Workshop

Allah: In my usual life I am a swimmer. I train with a Jewish group. I study in an Arab school in Kalanswa and train with Jewish swimmers. It's not complicated what I am doing here. I can dance in Israel and here. In our tradition we are not allowed to dance in front of boys. My parents are traditional, they want me to be well educated and let me observe whatever traditions I feel good with. Had my parents thought that it is not right to come here I would not have come.

Or: In Israel there is not really a place where Jews and Arabs can meet – Here it's like a neutral place. Like starting from the beginning.

Evelyn: On both sides the big taboos are the two historical periods - the Holocaust – and what the Arabs call "Nakbah" - the catastrophe of the "immigration" of the Jews into the land of Palestine, something that the Arab population experienced as a trauma and which gave them the sense of being homeless. The Israelis, because of

their Jewish history, because of the Holocaust carry within themselves a sense of fright. Each year, on the remembrance day they make a statement which says "We will never again be victims".

Theatre rehearsing:

Yesan: *Hi Mom, hi Dad.*

Ahmad: *How is school?*

Yesan: *Good.*

Hadrha: *Are you hungry?*

Yesan: *No. I have something to tell you. Well, my friend Mohammad invited me to his house. Really I want to go, can I?*

Mellise Boskovich - teacher: *The kids and their teachers wrote this play together because they wanted to show the difference and the experience between the Jewish and the Arab citizens in Israel. That there are discriminations towards the Arab citizens and that there are certain checkings of their identities that the Jewish residents or citizens don't have to go through.*

Their play is about two boys who want to go visit each others house; an Arab boy and a Jewish boy who both study in the same school. But the parents are resistant. The Jewish parents think that it's dangerous for their son to go to an Arab village, whereas the Arab kid - his parents say 'fine, it's ok, we met Moshe. Go to his house, we have no problem.'

Discussion

Nili: *In 1947 Israel began. And that was the first war; when the United Nations declared about Israel a war began the next day between the Arabs and the Jews because everybody wanted the country. And that is called the Independence Day by the Jews and the Naqbah for the Arabs.*

Allah: *They chased us away. The Jews came and chased the people away who were there. These people went to all kinds of countries - Jordan.*

Mellise: *If we had acknowledged the pain and the tragedy that occurred I believe it would be easier to let it go and move forward. But because the Palestinians living in Israel and everywhere else but particularly the citizens like the kids from Kalanswa - they are people who did not leave. But they had land taken away, they had family who left and they have relatives who were displaced or maybe what we call refugees inside the country. And they are feeling a great amount of unacknowledged pain for the past.*

Reut: *So you know how many Israeli soldiers have died; you don't know how many Palestinians have died.*

Nili: *Like in the Intifada now?*

Ben: *Yeah exactly. The government hides like - they bomb a lot of times and lots of innocent people die. And the government just shows the terrorist that blow up in*

Israel. They don't show anything we do. You don't know because the government hides it.

Mor: They don't just go and kill Palestinians - if any Palestinian victim gets hurt it's because something went wrong; it's not done on purpose. It's usually a wanted people; terrorist groups. It doesn't justify but it's not done on purpose.

Ben: That expose, no! It's never on newspapers; never on main news on the television!

Discussion among teachers:

Otman Khalib - teacher: The Arab kids feel accused of all sorts of things. Today for instance - I made them swear on the Koran - it was not them who left the plate there. They feel all the time that they are not right, that they are being observed. They belong to a minority. Evelyn, they are not against you. You ought to be an Arab Israeli to understand the way they feel.

Scene Group-Identities

Manuela: For me my country Austria is not so important. Well, I like the country but it wouldn't be a problem if I lived somewhere else. And I'm a Christian but I am not really convinced by the church.

Reut: I would prefer if I wouldn't have any religion. And later on I could choose my own country. But it's like I feel that's something that forced me to do; I didn't choose it - so why should it be my identity.

Hadrha: Of course I want a Palestinian state. I am an Arab Palestinian. I had no other choice but to be an Israeli citizen. If I could I may just as well be living in a Palestinian state.

Samah: We are Muslims. We define ourselves Muslims because our grandfathers and grand-grandfathers were Muslims.

Aseel: Islam, like all religions, forbids violence. But we live in Palestine, and it is our duty to defend our land. We are not terrorists, but that's how the world sees us. We are only defending our land. We build up organizations - we call them Jihad, Hamas or Fatah - to defend our land.

Teacher about terrorism:

Michael Maroun: We must forgive the other if he makes a mistake. And that's the way we can solve the problem. Not in fight; not in terrorism. That's what I think as a Christian.

Otman Khalib: In my opinion - all those who make terror in the name of the Islam. The Islam is so holy, that these people spoil the name of the Islam. Islam is against killing innocent people. It is far away from those who commit terror in the whole world in the name of the Islam.

Scene Flag

Reut: *And we have the flaggs of each one of the nations that are here. This is the Palestinian; this is the Austrian and this is the Israely. And in the middle there is the peace.*

Ben: *I would devote all my powers to co-living - living together, not a Palestinian state and an Israely state; all together one country. That's what I would try to do. That's the ultimate goal. I'm not planning really to go to the army. I want to open my bakery; I don't support war, so I don't really want to be part of it. Maybe I'll change, maybe I'll grow up and my opinions will change but that's what I think right now.*

Performance

Sadga: *Hello. ID please. - Have a nice time, you are welcome.*

Allah: *ID please. - Where are you from?*

Aseel: *From Kalanswa.*

Allah: *Where are you going now?*

Aseel: *To see a movie.*

Allah: *And after that?*

Aseel: *To the house.*

Yesan: *He's my friend, we study together.*

Allah: *He's an Arab and its' the law.*

Psychology-Workshop

Otman: *I asked before they came in: No, they do not want to talk.*

Evelyn: *This explains why the Arab kids do not talk here - because their teachers don't allow them to talk.*

Otman: *If they feel threatened by me I leave.*

Nili: *But Otman, they are here to clarify things.*

Otman: *No, this is too complex. This is explosive stuff. Okay, I leave, only to prove Nili, that even if I am outside, they won't talk.*

Evelyn: *If he does not allow his pupils to talk, there is no point saying that they don't talk because their English isn't good enough.*

Nili: *It's not like us. We can say everything. But the Arabs in Israel are being shut down. It's very difficult for them to express their own opinions because - the secret service is allways watching them for what they say, what they teach in the classes.*

Allah: *This is not our topic. Look, our topic is peace. We cannot attack each other here.*

Nili: *I don't know, I just feel a lot of pain. I think this is why I do these things as a matter of fact because it hurts me. The situation... and when I look at the young*

people, those young people. And I think what they are going through. How their lives are. I feel very sad also on the adults. Living in Israel is very difficult for all of us. Even though the children look very happy - the reality is very difficult.

Ben: We made amazing connections. All the kids just made amazing connections with everyone. And it was really hard to say good bye at the airport. Some people didn't cry but they were really sad including me. I was very sad to go. It was definately really hard to be in Israel afterwards. All my minds were in Austria, all the time.

Esti, psychoanalyst: In the last four years, due to the terror events in Jerusalem I've been working a lot of my time in terror trauma and children and seeing young victims of terror. And I chose to talk about Yair who was 11 when they turned to me because Yair is a boy with a lot of strength. And I think the story, even if it's not a simple one with the experience; you can see how it was possible for him to get out of the trauma and to go back to functioning. For him, for the whole family and actually for me it's an optimistic story.

So Yair is a Jewish boy who lives in a village in Israel. He's a very sweet boy with big eyes and kind of a bit dancing on the chair. But the story wasn't a simple one. It was a Saturday night. And their house has two levels. And the father and mother and the two girls were on the ground level. And Yair was sitting upstairs where the children bedrooms are and he was watching the football game. He likes football. And then they heard a bumm and - shots.

And the father immediately ran up the stairs and he grabbed Yair and together he took him to the utility kind of terrasse, and they were lying there on the floor. And then they started hearing outside the noise which they weren't sure which is the terrorists and which is the police and the army, because things were going on for close to two hours. And then at a certain time the police knocked at the door and said that they're coming in, that they're the police, of course they spoke hebrew, and that was as far as they're concerned the end of the event.

But within a week or two there was another event in a close-by village. And then he started being extremely nervous, he would jump from every little noise. He would not go up to the second floor under any circumstances. He just wanted to sleep with his parents in their bed. And even that was difficult; he needed them to be present when he sleeps with them in the bed.

Sometimes I say that the only thing they want to do is to explode themselves in a bomb. And it's really difficult to convince children that this is not a solution. And luckily in this part of the world a lot of people are faithful and they pray and they believe in God, so that often when I just remind them that being depressed and suicidal - God is not gonna be fooled by this. He will know the difference between somebody who is depressed and suicidal and somebody who is really fighting for his country and for his cause. And often, not often; allways these kids give up these notions and they say they want to learn and they want to study and they want to play and they get back into their lifestyle. The normal lifestyle for a child.

Ahmad's story:

Ahmad: When the Intifada began, our mother brought us to Doha. She had a feeling that something might happen. She took us to Grandfather's apartment. We slept there. Only my father and my brother Ammar stayed behind. After a few days my

uncle Ibrahim called and said my brother Ammar was wounded. And you know how a mother feels.

Viveca – psychiatrist: *Only your mother? How did you feel?*

Ahmad: *It's understood. Mother wanted to go to him immediately but there were a lot of tanks on the street and we held her back. I wanted to go, too. My uncles tied me to a chair.*

Viveca: *They did not want you to go to your brother.*

Ahmad: *I got myself free and left. After the curfew was relaxed, mother wanted to go to the hospital and I said I'd go with her. She said no, there are soldiers everywhere and I don't know what all. Then we went to the hospital. We saw him. Ammar's hand was wounded - shot from a plane. The next day he went home and then he was operated on four times - nothing helped. After a few months the Israelis came and took him away. They searched the house and smashed things. Ammar was studying. I heard screams. I thought there was an argument outside and went out. I saw Ammar with his book. They blindfolded him, took him by the neck and forced him to the ground.*

At Ahmad's home:

Viveca: *She's talking about - lets' go and draw a country with greenery - a very optimistic, hopeful song. He feels that he could develop a friendship or to care and feel compassion for Jewish people and Israelis. And he has had this experience where he developed a friendship with a soldier who used to come around and he used to just chit chat with him. And when Amads family was concerned about him and asked him not to go there the soldier came looking for Ahmad just to say hello. And he thought that there is a bond that could develop.*

Ahmad: *But not with someone who knowingly inflicts harm on people. I would answer in kind.*

Viveca: *But he cannot find friendship or compassion with anybody who wants to cause harm. And he says he even wants to cause harm to somebody who wants to harm somebody else. And I said 'What did we gain at the end? And he felt a little uncomfortable. - But its' a natural reaction. That's normal, what you just said. I can sympathize with that. When you see somebody harming a person, you want to smash into him.*

Ahmad: *There will be no peace as long as there are Arabs who sell themselves to Sharon and his soldiers for 2000 shekels.*

Father: *He means the collaborators.*

Viveca: *There really is so much harm in the whole world. We have to concentrate on positive things. Part of a glass is full and part is empty. We should not always see only the empty half. Despite all the problems. Despite the mistakes on all sides.*

Viveca: *At the end of our visit with Ahmad he said I have to go study. And that for me is the biggest gift from a boy who was so disoriented and confused. And now he wants to go study and continue his education and see - Violence doesn't help anybody - I don't know what that was but it scares me and I'm glad it scares me and I hope it never never stops scaring me. I hope the world will realize that violence doesn't bread but violence and that we all have to work to try to find nonviolent ways to build peace and to treat people as human beings everywhere. And if we do then nobody can harm anybody.*

Esti: *We are going to meet Yair and his family. And Yair used to live in **the village** where the attack took place but now they moved to another Moshav which is a village close by.*

Yair: *I think the terrorists that have done that attack on my house and on my Moshav were very frightened when they did that terrorist attack. And because of that, because they were frightened they didn't do their job good enough.*

Esti: *When talking to a child - even after a car accident, we ask them are you angry with the car driver who hit you. Are you feeling anger or hatred towards them?*

Yair: *Not really; I think their way was not the right way. To die in this way and kill other people. This is not a good way, this is not necessary and not useful, one cannot agree to this.*

Esti: *I do not hear much anger in your words.*

Yair: *Well, yes, there is, but more at those who recruited them. Because they took advantage of somebody else's weakness. Now I know that in the Islam, the matter of pride is very important, family-pride. And those who recruit these people know this and know how to take advantage of people's weakness.*

Esti: *Do you sometimes think of taking revenge, of retaliating?*

Yair: *No, not retaliating, because that would be like doing what I wouldn't want anybody to do to me.*

Esti and Viveca:

Esti: *I think the upsetting part is, I think both parties are totally blind to the violence. You have two parties who totally see themselves as victims. If I would not believe that there's a real chance of having a good life together, of us waking up and you waking up - I mean I couldn't take it.*

Viveca: *And these kids who can get desensitized and enjoy the shooting and the Jeeps and say I'm not afraid - when they grow up who will they try to terrorize or scare without feeling it.*

Esti: *Whether it's in their own homes or whether it's outside.*

Viveca: *Or themselves.*

Esti: And to help them. They can never fully put it behind, you know that. But to help them find enough strength to enjoy, to go back to enjoy life – playing...

Chana - psychotherapist: The parents and Chen were driving their own family car from Jerusalem to their home in Kfar Rimonim, when suddenly a stone was thrown upon their car. Of course the glass was all thrown around and the mother was hit very badly in her face and lost a lot of blood. Chen the kid began yelling, 'mother is wounded', and she said she was sure, she was going to die. She said, 'Mamy don't die, stay with us'. And when the father recognized what's going on he rushed to a nearby military camp and then they called an ambulance. They left the kid there and rushed to hospital.

She was so afraid, after a couple of days mother returned home and she felt she has to take care of her, so she went to bed with her mom every night. She closed all the windows at home, she locked the doors, she didn't stay alone. And before she was an independent child, very happy and - in the beginning she saw the pictures of what happened coming again and again, her mother full of blood and her face bleeding and she was terrified she was going to die. They live in a settlement and she has to go to school every day to Jerusalem. And she was very afraid to go by car, she insisted on going in a shielded car.

Chen: Yes, there are also positive changes. When I am afraid, my friends accompany me. I speak about the terror attack only with children who have also experienced something like this. The others don't understand it at all.

Chana: What, you don't speak about it?

Chen: No, I don't feel at ease talking about it with kids who have never experienced something like this. They cannot understand me. If I told them that I am scared, they would laugh at me. But those who have experienced it understand it well.

Chana: But the children from the settlement do accompany you?

Chen: Yeah, when it's necessary. There is terror around the whole world. All the Arabs are trying to get to something, but it is not clear, what they are trying to get to. I don't believe that there will be peace here soon. Maybe if they make agreements - what belongs to the Arabs and what to the Jews. I heard that they want to split the country, but I don't agree with this. God promised this land to us, it belongs to us. I feel that they suffer too because they might not have a father or mother. But I, thanks God, do have father and mother and all my siblings. I do feel a bit sorry for them, because they are children and because of the terror. I do feel a bit sorry for them. But when they grow older, they will be terrorists too. They probably do not care about us. They do not think that we will die. I believe that when the Intifada goes on much longer, and they finish school then they will be terrorists too. That's it.

Rawya, Nurse: This picture of the brother of Tarek, his name is Hamis. He drew this picture just today and this picture is after two years of trauma. He draw there the Apache, the Israely Apache, two Apache and two tanks, and here the Israely touns, and here the Palestinian struggelers. The Palestinians struggelers take guns and they shoot for the Apache. And he said that the Palestinian struggelers are stronger than the Israelys. When I asked him, 'but the Israely have more technological guns

and helicopters' he said 'no, because we have the right God with us'. I want to remind you that in 2002, especially on 22nd of July at 12 midnight there was shelling by F 16 airplane, Israely airplanes. They assasinated one activist of Hamas; his name is Salach Hishhade. And at that night 18 persons were killed. And 6 among them they were children. And one of the children, they were taking him from under the ruins of the building. And this child, his name is Tarek, his mother and two of his brothers were killed at this event.

Ahmad, Tareks' therapist: Tarek suffers from symptoms of intrusive thoughts connected with shock. He also suffers from insomnia, as well as nightmares, regarding the trauma and flashbacks reliving the incident.

Tarek: A lot has changed regarding my future. I just sit in class and think of something else, not about school. I don't care about life anymore.

Ahmad: How do you see your future?

Tarek: Normal, no matter what happens.

Ahmad: Don't you have a plan or goal for your future?

Tarek: No. Whenever somebody at school or somewhere else talks about it, I say I don't want to hear about it. I don't want to be reminded of it.

Ahmad: But why, what's the reason, Tarek?

Tarek: Because of my mother and my brothers.

Ahmad: When we talk about it now, how do you feel?

Tarek: I feel like weeping - and that's why I tell people: Do not talk about it with me.

Ahmad: You are mourning.

Tarek: I always tell my friends and teachers, please don't talk about it anymore.

Participants of the peacecamp:

Samah: There is a good relationship between me and the Jewish and the Austrians. We talking in the night, in the middle of the night. We joking, we are playing and singing - I get a good relationship with them.

Dor: I think there are some Palestinians that do want the peace but, they still use the terror system - so I don't really think it's the way to the peace.

Mor: I think Israel should evacuate the illegal settlements, and give the Palestinians their lands. And, like Itay said devide Jerusalem.

Eilam: I think the Israely side shoud just get out, all the army, everybody just come back to the eastern side, go out of the West Bank. Let them have their own state.

Samah: When we listen to others, we just listen to the opinion of anybody of them - we learn many things. I feel that something changes in my life.

Let's talk about Land Israeli and Palestinian Peace Activists²¹

Dror: *I think that people who steel some others, you know – or opress others – the architects of that system they are corrupted people. They are corrupted and they think that some people should have in principle more rights than others. The system is built in a way that the evilness is happening far enough on a dayly basis from your eye that you won't have deal on a daily basis with the evilness. And this is one of the smart things regarding this whole system – that on a daily basis when youu're driving on the West Bank or going on a bypass you don't have to see the opression – you don't have to, unless you look for it – it's very easy to ignore it.*

Sari: *I don't think either side really could see sufficiantly into the future – or could determine with sufficiant accuracy their self-interests to be able then to come to terms with each other. And the two sides are at fault. Palestinians are at fault because right from the beginning they couldn't see the whole picture. And their acts were therefore determined by very very short term considerations. And the Israelis likewise because I think the Israelis didn't see the whole picture. Now where do weg go from here? I think we will eventually reach peace and coexistence. However the question in my view always is not wheather but you know how much pain and suffering people have to pay have to go through.*

Mor: *Accross the road you can see there three fences. The first one is a regular metal fence; the second one is an electronic fence. And the third one is the wall which also has sensors that can tell if anybody goes by it. You can see between the electric fence and the wall there is a road for patrolling the area. And over there all the buildings is Tulkarem, a big city. It belongs to the Palestinian Authority.*

Ben, 2004: *Hi, I'm Ben. Right now we're in our school which is called Ramot Hefer. It's located in a Kibbutz in the middle part of Israel. Tel Aviv is south from here; so is Jerusalem. We're pretty close to a lot of Arab towns which I think is the main reason there are a lot of coexisting projects here; with Arabs and a lot of people - like our project.*

Ben 2013: *We met 9 years ago, in 2004 you said – in a peacecamp in Austria. Much has changed, more than I can think of, a lot more. It's funny for me to explain what went on in Austria, it was 9 years ago. The peacecamp was kind of a jumpstart, it was my first real significant initiative that I took part in that handled Jewish and Palestinian relations – Israeli-Palestinian relations. Well my views definately – thankfully they changed since 9 years ago, if they hadn't changed I would have been very worried.*

Reut 2004: *So you know how many Israely soldiers have died; you don't know how many Palestinians have died.*

Nili (workshop-coordinator): *Like in the Intifada now?*

²¹ 9 years after the Peace Camp Walter Wehmeyer made interviews with some oft he participans <http://members.aon.at/vanderlet/english/letstalk.htm>

Ben: *Yeah exactly. The government hides like - they bomb a lot of times and lots of innocent people die. And the government just shows the terrorist that blow up in Israel. They don't show anything we do. You don't know because the government hides it.*

Mor: *They don't just go and kill Palestinians - if any Palestinian victim gets hurt it's because something went wrong; it's not done on purpose...*

Ben: *It's not done on purpose. It's done unprofessionally.*

Mor: *It's usually a wanted people; terrorist groups. It doesn't justify but it's not done on purpose.*

Ben: *That expose, no! It's never on newspapers; never on main news on the television!*

Ben: *I think we have a big problem of having occupied a people – and recognizing that in any way positive with what it means – not just theoretically acknowledging that we occupied a people but also – if be – practically with giving back territories or rights ore money – whatever can be done to compensate. I think acknowledging that is something very important.*

Manal: *My name is Manal and this is my husband Bilal. We are from Nabi Saleh village. It's a very small village, just 600 inhabitants living here. It's 20 km south of Ramallah. In Nabi Saleh we are resisting against occupation and against settlement specifically. Because settlers took our land and they took a spring – it belongs to people from the village – in 2009. Since then we are resisting against the occupation.*

Bilal: *In 76 we began to have the biggest problem in our area which ist he establishment of the settlement on the land from the people from the village. In 77 we had a dicision from the Israeli high court that this lans begongs to the people of Nabi Saleh and that there is no right to the settlers to take this land. But in the next year, in 78 the new government decided to give a green light to the settlers to build sttlements in the West Bank area.*

Manal: *One of the goals of course as a mother is to raise children who is able to be strong enough to face this ugliness of this occupation. Because now they are loosing their childhood they are loosing their future, they are loosing their hopes, they begin to believe that there is a good side for life.*

Bilal: *Since more than 3 ½ years I was the first one who began to film and to document what's happening in the village. After the beginning of the demonstration the soldiers Stopp us in the enterance of the village, and now you will see how they Beginn to attack the people and they don't want anybody to be in the street and in this demonstration. Now they shoot. And you can see there isn't only three people here. And they target this girl. Her name is Sarit Michaele and she's the spokesman of Betsalem, an Israeli organisation for human rights and information. And she is the spokesman fort his organization. She was hit by a rubber bullet. I called her friends and they took her to a hospital in Tel Aviv I think. We are one of the smallest billages in Palestine but we have 19 or 20 martyrs killed during this occupation period since 67 til now.*

Ahmad: *I'm Ahmad. Now I'm 24 years old. I live now in Dheisha camp. In the first movie I was 14 years.*

Ahmad 4004: *When the Intifada began, our mother brought us to Doha. She had a feeling that something might happen. She took us to Grandfather's apartment. Only my father and my brother Ammar stayed behind. After a few days my uncle Ibrahim called and said my brother Ammar was wounded. And you know how a mother feels.*

Viveca (psychiatrist): *Only your mother? How did you feel?*

Ahmad: *It's understood.*

Ahmad 2013: *My brother – the plane shoot him in his hand. They told the people don't go out your house, stay in the house, ok – and he leave with his friend – and the plane shoot him. After 3 months they arrest them – he didn't fight. We are now in the home we are 5: my big brother, my small sister, my father, my mother. My big sister she leave because she's married now.*

Viveca 2004: *Inschaallah ... She's talking about - lets' go and draw a country with greenery - a very optimistic, hopeful song. He feels that he could develop a friendship or to care and feel compassion for Jewish people and Israelis. And he has had this experience where he developed a friendship with a soldier who used to come around and he used to just chit chat with him. And when Amads family was concerned about him and asked him not to go there the soldier came looking for Ahmad just to say hello. And he thought that there is a bond that could develop.*

Ahmad: *But not with someone who knowingly inflicts harm on people. I would answer in kind.*

Viveca: *But he cannot find friendship or compassion with anybody who wants to cause harm. And he says he even wants to cause harm to somebody who wants to harm somebody else. And I said 'What did we gain at the end? And he felt a little uncomfortable. But it's a natural reaction. That's normal, what you said. When somebody is harming a person, you want to smash into him.*

Ahmad: *There will be no peace as long as there are Arabs who sell themselves to Sharon and his soldiers for 2000 shekels.*

Ahmad 2013: *I go to Dr. Hazboun to speak, to sing everything in my heart. And after that I am looking for my life form in future – with her – she gave like a program to my life, all right? And after that I think about this – ok I have my future, I have everything, I can do anything. So the life continued – there is no Stopp.*

Dror: *My name is Dror. I'm an Israely Jew. I was born and raised in Jerusalem, and grew up in this country – in this reality. Just next to the houses there is a wall, a big wall; this is actually a wall which the Israely authorities have constructed less than 10 years ago in order to block the possibility for Palestinians to get out of Bethlehem without going through Israely checkpoints. Next to the road there is a very major bypass-road which actually connects Jerusalem with the Israely settlements in the Bethlehem area and the Hebron area which is further south. – In the end of the day*

the system is constructed here in a way that the majority of people who live here, the Palestinians will be excluded from a very very big part of the land which is around them – excluded in the sense that they won't be able to do free use of their own land, in order to leave the land vacant, in order eventually to allow the Israeli state to take over the land and to allocate it to Israeli settlements.

This is actually the biggest settlement which was constructed in East-Jerusalem in the last decade. It's called Harhoma. It was constructed from the late 90s actually to make sure that there will be no Palestinian continuity in the south-eastern edge of Jerusalem. In other words it's within the area which was annexed by Israel right after 67 and had become part of the municipal area of the city of Jerusalem which is originally part of the West Bank.

The Israeli settlement activity is considered to be illegal point by the international law and there is a good reason why it's considered to be illegal. When a country is occupying another part of the country from another political entity – in this case Israel had conquered the West Bank from Jordan – it's forbidden for the occupying power, for Israel to move its population or to allow the Israeli population to move into the occupied area because in the end of the day it's inevitable that there would be a two-classes-reality. There are over 500.000 Israelis who are living today in areas which had been occupied by Israel in 1967. About 200.000 of them are living in the boundaries of Jerusalem and the rest, about 350.000 Israelis are living in areas which had been occupied by Israel in 1967 but haven't been annexed to Israel and to Jerusalem right after the war.

Ahmad: Here we are in a Palestinian place, ok. There is a wall – after the wall there is an Israeli place, there are Israeli people – we can't go there because we don't have an ID to visit. My father he has a problem in his neck and in his back. And in a Palestinian hospital there is no machine to do that – and the professional Palestinian doctors they didn't work here – they work in Israeli hospitals. So we have to go there. Because if he doesn't do this surgery he will stay and feel pain or maybe he will die quickly. So we have to go. And my father – in the first surgery we take him to Jerusalem without an ID. We asked about an ID – he will go to Israel to do a surgery; not to make a bomb. And they don't give him an ID.

Dror: When I was drafted to the Israeli military in 1986 I was actually within the age group of Israeli soldiers who were sent to the West Bank in order to oppress the first Intifada which erupted in December 1987. This was probably one of the most formative periods in my life. A period which suddenly I realized that you were used – I was used, I was brainwashed, I was manipulated, I was prepared by my own society to serve as a soldier which makes protect the system which allows Israeli settlers - minority – to live in a totally out of context reality compared to their direct environment. Enclaves of Israeli citizens who enjoy all rights and all services – and around them everything is basically under military control. I think there are some Palestinians that do want the peace but, they still use the terror system - so I don't really think it's the way to the peace.

Mor: I think Israel should evacuate the illegal settlements, and give the Palestinians their lands. And, like Itay said divide Jerusalem.

Ben 2004: I'm not planning really to go to the army. I don't support war, so I don't really want to be part of it. Maybe I'll change, maybe I'll grow up and my opinions will

change but that's what I think right now.

Ben 2013: And I think it was around the age of 16 that I understood- I just, I made a decision that I'm not going to go to the army. And I asked around, thought of ways to get out and eventually I just came to the army as everyone does – they invite you for more or less the first meeting and I just said that I'm not willing to go to the army. And there was a very smooth process from me which is something very interesting, I haven't ever heard of anyone that had such a smooth process. I just spoke with a few people, with an officer there - and he believed that I shouldn't be in that system, and allowed me to have 3 years instead of army service and I did choose to do National Service which we do here either for 1 or 2 years, so I did 2 years.

Ben 2004: I would devote all my powers to co-living - living together, not a Palestinian state and an Israeli state; all together one country. That's what I would try to do.

Ahmad: You know something, I hope really for a big family – many many children like 10 – really. You know, the important thing I need in my future – just marry the girl who I love. I will make my room here – me and my wife, and for the boys here, and bathroom here and another room for the girl here, two rooms there, chicken here.

Dror: We are in the settlement of Ariel. There are about 17 – 18.000 people who are living here which means that it's actually the fourth biggest settlement in the West Bank. And most of the population of Ariel are secular – you can see around hardly religious people living here. And on the other hand the system, the social system in Israel is built in a way that it's much easier or much cheaper to live in the West Bank. This is the barrier, what you see here is the security barrier around Ariel. You can see the Palestinian community which I spoke about before, right. And Ariel is actually constructed on the land of this community here.

I personally grew up in one of the neighbourhoods which had been created by Israel in one of these settlements-neighbourhood which had been created by Israel after 67. The choices which my parents did – actually choices which many people in their generation have done in the early 70s – to move into areas which the Israeli government was interested to inhabit by Jews – but interestingly we never saw ourselves as settlers. They saw themselves as people who support the Two-State-Solution and the peace movement in Israel. And in this sense my parents were part of a much greater sociological phenomenon, they were not the only ones – living in East-Jerusalem on the one side and supporting the peace movement and the Israeli left on the other side.

Sari: Even as you mean that these places were established for the wrong reasons or established by force, by appropriating other peoples properties, lands livelihoods you now are looking at people in some of those places that are second and third generations – people have been born there – in a place where they came to believe that this is their home this is their country – and it's a very strong believe. – There's a human component to the problem.

And in order to save the less of two evils – is to simply evacuate those settlements – create this human problem by evacuating them – in order to produce this better situation of two states, one Arab, one Israeli. That's one way of doing it. But maybe there are other ways to look at it and maybe – I know people are talking now about

exchange of territories and allowing some settlements to remain in Israel and so on. But maybe, you know if if you looked into the distant future, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years down the road – maybe you should think about not a division of countries or states along lines that determine exactly who lives here and who lives there but a system of values instead and a political system of values like equality for instance where it does not so much matter where you are – as it matters wheather you have equal rights. Relationships between people can evolve in any number of different ways. They can evolve in for instance in the way of two neighbouring states. The borders between them can be anything from totally shut-up closed to totally open ports. The sharing of resources can be totally seperate or they can be totally shared again. And if that's the case then maybe one should look streight into the future to something like a federation or confederation, whatever, in which population centers are seperated, scattered, Jewish-Arab in different places throughout the country from the river to the sea.

Dror: We are actually now in the middle, in the heart of the West Bank. We're in a point which is actually between Nablus in the north and Ramallah in the south. And we are iun an area which is surrounded by both – Israely settlements and Palestinian villages. On the other side we see the settlement of Ali which has about 5 or 6 different outposts. Outposts are some kind oif nuclear settlements which had been eytablished in order to enlarge the tissue around the existing settlement back then. The idea was to establish new settlements without calling them new settlements. This is why all these outposts officiually do not exist - they have no legal status. It's clear that there's no way that this crazy system which allows 10% of the population to live on the back of 90% of the rest of the population – you have to be an idiot to think that this will last forever. It will crash and when it will crash it would be noisy and bloody probably.

Because even if eventually the settlement will remain here and Jews will be remaining in the settlements so sooner or later the question will be what do you do with the Palestinian population? And even then if the struggle is not anymore for two states so inevitably the struggle will become one-man-one-vote, it will be an anti-apartheid-struggle. So there's no way that either can win it, there is no way because even if they win they actually loose in the sense that they will have to – give up the idea of a Jewish state eventually because the vast majority of the population in the West Bank was and still is Palestinian.

Dany: My name is Dany. I'm here with a group named Ta'ayush. It's a group of volounteers who work mainly in the area of South Hebron Hills, which is where we are now, which is a very rural area in the southern part of the occupied West Bank with very small communities of Palestinians who are mainly shepards. There are many mechanisms that work towards displacing them from here. One of them is preventing access to grazing lands or on the way to grazing lands and water systems – you understand we are in the desert. And if they won't be able to go to grazing and to get water for their herds they won't be able to sustain themselves here and hopefully they'll just leave – the'll just go away and leave this open real estate to the settlements and later on to the state of Israel somehow. And the worst thing is actually the less documented part and which looks less horrible because it's not as explicitly violent as attacks by settlers with rifles and clops and stones – but the entire burocratic mechanism that works together with that of the Civil Administration which declares a plot of land as „under dispute“. Which means

that one settler came and said ,no I want to work here' so now it is under dispute. And by under dispute – this is a technical term – it means that nobody is allowed to use this plot of land until is it figured out there. But what practically happens is that Palestinians are not allowed to use it – the settlers do use it. And the way to do it is by using an old Othoman law where if you do not work your land the state can take it away from you. Or some grabbing of lands like imagining that all lands which are 50% rocky are uncultivable so nobody will work there so they are automatically state lands.

We are waiting for shepards from a community named Umechhel and unfortunately for them the road to their grazing lands passes very near a settlement called Carmel where the settlement, settlers and the military are preventing them from reaching the water system on the way back where the sheep drink. By preventing I mean they tell them not to go there, or they arrest the shepards.

And we are here to accompany them whether it might be problems, hopefully to explain to the soldiers that it's completely illegal what they're doing. The idea, the concept of a house for Palestinians in this area is something that you build for 3 years, 4 years, because then – you build it, it will be considered illegal – you can't have it legal because you have no zoning plan, if there is no zoning plan there is no permit. You know they lived here before the state of Israel, or at least before the state of Israel was here. They are unrecognized. So this ist he danger of this community are completely allowed to use that road and to get to the water system.

Ahmad: I have a good thing. Now I have ID to visit Jerusalem. Yes. Now in this moment my brother called me and told me I have ID to visit Israel just for 1 month. It's for Ramadan, to visit AlAksa and the mosc there. And he told me, 'what will you give me to give you ID to visit Israel?' 'Excuse me' I told him 'I will give you everything – just give me my ID!'

Now I work a long time for my father because he will do a surgery. So we have to pay to the hospital. For the first surgery we payed 90.000 Shekel. And he will do another surgery – we will pay 130.000 Shekel. I work, my brother and my mother, my uncles everyone from us we put something to have all the money.

Bilal: In the beginning of our demonstrations we thought that we should put the children in a safe place. But the house was targeted with 3 gas canisters. One of them was in the enterance. While they are seeing the soldiers coming and attacking, raid our houses at midnight, beat me, beat their mother, while I am just filming. Now they believe that they should refuse this occupation.

Manal: I lost my father, the Israelis killed him when I was 27 days old, I lost my uncle, I lost my aunt, my 3 cousins. Nearly 9 of my very close members of my family I lost them during this resistance. So I choose to continue their way, we choose to complete what they began. There near the spring they are playing with the water. They can go any time, that's why soldiers are protecting them, they are standing there to protect settlers. If we try to get closer just 1 meter they will begin to shoot, then after a while they will begin to shoot tear gas to force us to go back. So I think we should leave.

We have Israely activists who are participating in our protest every Friday and they are welcome to come. I'm against hosting one of the settlers in my house because I'm not welcoming this people who is always threatening my childrens' life and threatening our existance as Palestinians.

But if they are ready to remove the occupation from their minds and begin to believe that we can live together as Palestinians the same way we are living with the Christians in one land together – we have no problem with them. So you can say the biggest goal I want to reach is end the occupation.

Sari: In order to make peace one has to make compromises. One has to look at what the basic interests are and if we can come up with a Two-State-Solution I think it would be well worth then to say ok, we will accept this rather than accepting or demanding that refugees be returned to their original homes. I'm not discounting of course here the need as I said earlier psychological recognition of the problem, compensation and so on – also political implications, consequences like having to provide the Palestinians outside, say Lebanon say wherever the citizenship of those countries, so that they have those. Also the Palestinian citizenship should they wish to come to the Palestinian state, the future Palestinian state.

But if a Two-State-Solution can not be achieved – and this is the converse of what I have been saying – if a Two-State-Solution is not the solution then the Palestinians maybe what they should then look for is something else – which is for example human rights or individual rights, in which case if this is intended and pursued – why not then, yes let the refugees come back. But we would be talking about 1 state maybe, not 2 or a confederation, federation, in which all Palestinians can come and live and share equal rights with the Israelis, the Jews – a citizen of their own country, same country as – equal citizens in a federation of countries.

Ben: I don't think I'm afraid of becoming a minority, I think perhaps as part of my general take of life I kind of trust what's going to happen. If we're people with awareness and we can think a bit ahead for the future and if we see that we are going in this direction, we see that we are gonna need to come up with solutions, - not just to defend ourselves but to bring peace for this area. And on the other hand Palestinians have to come to peace with our existence here and become a brotherhood of people, not of Muslims or Jewish or whatever...

Ahmad: We have to live together. But the Palestinian police, Israeli police – if they can work together to save Israel and Palestine together – so we can live.

Danny: One of our greatest defeats is that many many people, millions of people around here, Israeli, Jews and Palestinians were convinced by the lie that we need to slaughter each other in order to survive. It is a lie.

Dror: And this is actually the core of the conflict here – two societies on one land which both consider for different reasons as their own. And this kind of conflict is very very hard to solve. Probably the only solution of this conflict is when these two groups are emerging and becoming one group – maybe one day in the future out of these two groups today Israeli and Palestinian – I wouldn't say maybe, I would say probably that will happen. That eventually in some time in the future, who knows when something new will rise here, a new group of people, new nation. And people will stop thinking in terms of Jews, Muslims, Arabs, Christians, people will start thinking in different categories. This is something which happened in many other places in the world with very bitter conflicts between two people. And this is eventually something which might happen here as well whether I will be here to see it or not I'm very doubtful. But probably this is what will happen, no?



Peacecamp 2004



Nabi Saleh, Westbank 2013

The author presents readings of selected passages from the (Indian) Rigveda in the light of modern knowledge about early pre-amnesic childhood. The ancient deities, and especially Indra, show characteristics of children, and many if not most features of religion may actually be derivative of or echoing early-childhood scenarios. In Christianity, we see the confrontation of children with their father (who is the only one to educate them, for the mother has mysteriously disappeared). Scholars of religion will find much to ponder in this learned and stimulating book.

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Where the Gods Come from

or: Why Indra came to his wedding on a tricycle²²

Why are people religious? Why are they fascinated by myths of heavenly fathers, sons who rise from the dead, or prophecies made by priests?

Today we ask what powers religious cults hold? Some are blessings, others drive people into collective madness or inhumanity: fundamentalism, fanaticism, terror, war. This was true even before the recent Islamic terror.

We must view the situation from a distance and place modern religions last. What was the theme of earlier "heathen" religions? Were they only shamanism, magic, fertility rites? Were "heathen" religions "primitive," created by people more immature than we are? Or is our "modern" interpretation primitive? Are we blinded by arrogance to the real meaning of older religions? We think the latter.

Early religions are based on a deep, hidden psychology, which was later reshaped and thus forgotten. Join us in following its traces.

Unlike Christianity and Islam, early religions were not religions of redemption. They were not about the end of the world and a better life after death. They were religions of creation, about the beginning of the world. They come to us like fairy tales that begin "Once upon a time..."

We think this concept of creation was not physical, but psychological. How was the human world created? What happens in the first year of our lives? Not seen from outside, but inside, from the perspective of a child. How did we learn to see, love, think? How did the human world open up?

Harald Strohm – historian of religion: *One of the earliest sources in religious history is the Indian Rigveda. It comes from the oldest Indo-European times and is about 3,500 years old. The most important god in the Rigveda is Indra – the sweet, or golden Indra... the first indication that this is a small child called the "one with the golden hair". He has other traits of a child as well: he is praised for his golden yellow teeth. Who but a one year-old is praised for his teeth. He is also praised for his fat cheeks; he is a mighty drinker and exaggerated praise claims he drinks 30 lakes of milk and honey. Some authors see Indra as a warrior, because he is sometimes shown with a club or bow and arrow. But Indra wanted to be seen as a small child.*

²² Compare Harald Strohm *Über den Ursprung der Religion*, München 2003 and the documentary film *Where the Gods come from* by Petrus van der Let and Harald Strohm
<http://members.aon.at/vanderlet/english/wheragod.htm>

The Rigveda songs say:

*Busy women rock the newborn Indra.
They assume care of his heroic strength.
Take words of praise to your heart
Thou golden born, with golden hair...*

Such words can only be meant for a child. Only a one year-old child can be so lavishly praised for his teeth.

*Indra shines with lovely rows of teeth...
We invite you, Indra with golden teeth, to a cultic feast
Where you will drink milk and honey.*

Also, Indra's friends and mother teach the "great" god to walk.

*Friends supported Indra
while his mother taught him to walk.
The world was covered with his footprints...
Your feet are high when you stride...
Indra supports the sky. He is steadfast.*

It is significant that he rides a tricycle.

*We sing praises to your worthy tricycle.
Ride away Indra. Climb upon your big tricycle.
Ride to your dear wife...*

The "dear wife" was his mother whom he married in a figurative sense. Indra's tricycle ride became the model for the actual ride a groom makes to his bride.

Harald Stroh: *Gods with a limp or similar impediment are a global phenomenon, such as Jacob in the Book of Moses, who dislocates his hip wrestling with God. When morning comes he limps. Think of the many Greeks such as Hephaistos, Prometheus or the most prominent, Oedipus, which means "swell foot". Freud interpreted him -wrongly, I think - as a 4-5 year-old child. According to Sophocles and pictures, Oedipus was an infant.*

One year-olds are lame. We learn to walk as a one year-old. Studies by Lévi Strauss point to the global phenomenon of limping gods. We find lame gods up to the late Ice Age. There are also divine cripples in the Rigveda. Indra especially had a number of adventures while he was learning to walk. His sisters helped him. Lovely scenes have survived: he's the wide-track bawler because he has to spread his legs apart to keep from falling over and crying. Since he has trouble walking, he rides in a three-wheel cart...according to myth little wooden horses draw the tricycle and allow Indra to have his dramatic adventures at the beginning of the world. His friend Vishnu, who is later promoted to a major Hindu divinity, is a playmate. Vishnu, fairly sure-footed at two, helps Indra on the hunt when he shoots buffalo or wild boar. Vishnu retrieves the booty with three steps and there is a big feast for father and mother.

Unfortunately we have no pictures of Indra from the Rigveda period. One of the oldest pictures is a thousand years younger. It is in Bhaja, a Buddhist shrine from the 2nd century BC. It shows Indra as a young man on his royal elephant. The relief left of

the door is interesting. A team of four horses is reined in by a god, perhaps Surya, the Indian sun god. Perhaps it is Mithra. This team of horses is reminiscent of Hellenistic-Roman portrayals of Mithra and Sol from about the same time. But Mithra was an important god who advanced into Europe in the 1st c. AD. We already know this Mithra from the Rigveda. He was close to Indra. Mithra would soon take Indra's place in Iran. We have many archeological references to Mithra.

Petrus van der Let: *Can these references answer our question? Why do so many portrayals show the divine creator as a grown youth?*

Harald Strohm: *There are different explanations. The most plausible to me is easily understood in the Iranian god Mithra, who was venerated in Parthian times in theatrical productions: theatre for kings – on certain holidays during the year. There he represented a child god, but was played by an adult actor. Therefore grown up gods appear even though they represent children.*

For several centuries BC, Mithra experienced a renaissance in India and eastern Iran that spread westward into the Roman Empire. Mithra was easily recognized by his red pointed cap. We see it today on children and in the world of dwarves.

Many kings of Iran and buffer states to the west called themselves "Mithradates", meaning "he who is appointed by Mithra". Antiochos' father, who had mighty cult sites built, was named Mithradates. Antiochos also thought he was appointed by the divine Mithra as his earthly representative. Although shown here as a youth, he is to be understood as a small child. The pointed cap is like those for children today, with flaps for the ears, suitable for a two year-old conqueror. We are at a height of 2150 m on Nemrud Dagi in eastern Anatolia. The Euphrates is visible. Israel is a few hundred km to the south.

Here in the first century BC, King Antiochos of Commagene who came into a lot of money by luck, built the colossal monuments. To mediate between his powerful political neighbors, Antiochos officially dedicated these monuments to all gods. But in fact, Mithra dominates here, and Antiochos was his representative.

Harald Strohm: *This is the head of King Antiochos, to the right of the national goddess Commagene and the divine father, Zeus – as the son of heaven and earth. He wanted to be seen as a Mithra. His pointed hat - with typically turned up ear flaps show this. Thus he complements the two godly sons on the other side of the cosmic parents, Mithra himself and Heracles Arthagnes. Arthagnes is Greek for the old-Indian term Vrtrahan, the dragon slayer.*

In Iran, Mithra was the dragon killer par excellence. We will see why Mithra had to slay dragons. All three kings were forms of Mithra: Antiochos, Mithra and Herakles-Arthagnes. They were simultaneously divine sons of heaven and earth, similar to the Rigveda description of Indra:

*The heavenly father, who nourishes the golden one,
The mother earth of golden appearance.
Between them walks the golden one.*

The pointed hats of the statues were probably painted red and visible far into the countryside. Many Iranian kings were named Mithradates; "he who is appointed by Mithra." King Antiochos of Commagene was also a part of this ancient tradition. Besides political administration, the task of these real kings was to re-enact the

rituals of the divine creation. The people of the surrounding area at the foot of the Nemrud Dagi were invited. The settlements 2000 years ago were very much like those of today.

Harald Strohm: *About 5 hours on foot from Nemrud Dagi lies Arsameia – today's Eski Kahta – the former summer residence of the Commagene kings. Up on the plateau were the big palace grounds of Mithradates Kalinikos, literally: with the lovely victories. Later it was the summer residence of Antiochos, the impassioned builder. The mood of this cultic hill is marked by Mithra.*

There is a monument of Mithra in Persian dress. The real purpose of this big rock cave has been discussed for a long time. It is the burial place of Mithradates Kalinikos.

But there is a second cave: perhaps the place where Antiochus was enthroned. The cave Antiochos exited for the coronation, as Indra and Mithra did. This ritual was repeated every year. It could be seen nicely from this height, as in a theatre, giving the event a sacred standing. But why such a mighty cave? What was its religious meaning, its cultic function? This question brings us to the miracle of seeing the world for the first time.

We know that Indra and Mithra of old myths created the visible world from inside a cave. By breaking through the rock and crawling out, they brought plants, animals, the milk-giving cow, and all other objects into the light of day and the world we are used to seeing. The Rigveda says:

Indra split the cave ... extracting plants, daylight, trees, air.

He broke the rock... and loosened the cow's tether.

Mighty Indra! Yours is this bounty our eyes perceive.

Indra found the hidden treasures of heaven,

locked in the rock like the young of a bird in the egg.

Where does this myth come from? Why did gods create the world from a cave?

Martin Dornes - infant researcher: *A baby's visual acuity is weaker than that of an adult. An infant only sees objects well within 20 – 30 centimeters. Other images are not sharp. In brief: an infant is very short-sighted. That limits its perception of objects farther away. When I look out the window at the house across the street I can focus the image. An infant cannot. Or flowers on the balcony – at best, an infant sees a group of colored spots, but not a flower pot.*

Harald Strohm: *Visual limitations make an infant's world look like a cave of foggy, "gloomy obscurity," bound by impenetrable walls that give off flashes of light. These gloomy walls begin – around the middle of the first year – to open up to the world we know.*

The golden Indra was praised in Rigvedan songs for opening the cave and freeing the visible world, but also for expanding visual acuity. The Rigveda says:

Drunk on milk and honey,

Indra stretched the air when he burst the cave.

He pushed heaven and earth farther away...

he filled both worlds with air space...Indra created a spacious place for us!

Kings, as cultic representatives of the divine creator, had to re-enact the adventure of the cave and the expansion of visual acuity.

Harald Strohm: *King Antiochos could have left the cave like this 2000 years ago to show himself to the people They may have stood on this slope opposite. He would have re-enacted the birth of Mithra, who came out of a cave – a symbol for the visual limitations of the first few months of life – to open up the wide world and assume rule of his empire. Whether it really happened this way, we don't know for certain, but we do know from written sources that the Mithras kings staged such rituals in other places.*

Is it a coincidence that similar images survived in the west despite Christian influences? In our myths and children's stories we meet dwarves and bleak caves with sparkling walls, some set with gold and jewels. As Indra did, our dwarves chisel the objects of the visual world from the cave. The Rigveda says:

*Breaking open the cave, you, Indra,
chisel horse, cattle and grain,
as the mighty master of all things...*

Indra wore an infant beard of milk. Cultic caves all over the world show painted or chiselled scenes of divine creation on the walls. As here in 1st c. Hindu temples of Elefanta near Bombay. They show dwarves: childlike gods in scenes of creation.

Our Ice Age ancestors enacted cultic cave dramas and had chiselled or painted figures perform on the walls. Our churches have qualities of caves with glittering light and niches where saints, Jesus or Mary appear.

Could religious fascination for caves have its roots in the psychological layers of infancy? And enthusiasm for "profane" caves as well?

Peter Kuneth: *I was eleven when I first climbed in. Then I did it often with a friend. Everybody knew it was not allowed to enter the caves. The city council decided to warn me about it. But when I showed my school teacher pictures of the cave and the minerals we found, he was enthusiastic and supported us. We founded a society to study these limestone caves.*

Franz Humer - Archeological Park Carnuntum: *In the ancient Roman city of Carnuntum, we made interesting discoveries. We found a small bronze votive offering, a figure of the child-god Harpocrates.*

In many myths the opening of the original cave was followed by the separation of heaven and earth, similar to the Old Testament.

*When you, Indra, stretched out the earth,
you placed the air on heaven's columns –
that is, on the trees.*

*You, Indra, raised up the heaven with magic power,
so that it would not fall down.*

This myth – at least for Mithra – is confirmed in excavations of a Mithra shrine in Roman Carnuntum in Lower Austria.

Harald Stroh: *After completing the creation miracle from the cave, Mithra comes out of the cave into the light of day, thus opening up the human world. As here, he is often shown naked, and often as a child with bald head, but rarely with his pointed hat. Mithra not only frees himself from the cave, but also the whole world. You see the tree that came out of the cave with him. We know the tree-birth from other scenes where Mithra is a mixture of tree and human. His hair looks like the leaves in the background. Another theme here may be the separation of sky and earth. We know many myths of this type, wherein children creating the world pull heaven and earth apart to create a free space between them. We also know it from the Mithreum Barbarini in Rome.*

Separation of heaven and earth is an architectural theme in early temples and palaces. The thickets of columns copy cultic groves. In myths single trees were support for the sky as the earth and sky were forced apart. The sky was always of stone.

In the innermost and holiest part of the temple a cave often represented the home of the divinity, around which the cosmos opened up in the form of the supporting grove of stone columns. This principle is recognizable today in temples of Parsees, followers of Zarathrustra in India.

Strange creatures have always belonged to the temples: half man, half animal. In the middle of the first year, when a child opens up the visual cave and separates heaven and earth, this little god starts creating objects from the chaos.

Harald Stroh: *You also find these animals in the world of kings; here, for example is one of these. And royal lions with King Antiochus, there is an eagle. You find these humanized animals in the entire world of gods. You can also go back to human dreams, where it is normal to see such animals. There must be a layer in the human psyche where mixed creatures exist. The answer to the question is in early childhood. Children about 6 months old just start to distinguish humans from animals. From the initial chaos, they have to make gradual order. Memories of sorting this out appear to live on into the adult world and were re-enacted in the royal cults, in myths and religious cults.*

Strange animals are not the only mysterious aspects of the religious world. Belief in supernatural powers - magic and miracles - lives on today. We see it in ancient sources. The Rigveda says:

*By virtue of his magic arts, Indra changed into many shapes.
With magic, he caused the sun to rise in the heaven
And brought cooked milk to the cow's udder.*

Martin Dornes: *We have experience with gravity. If you took a match and placed a ball on it, then removed the match and the ball stayed in the air we'd be very surprised! Magic! An infant is not surprised, not until it has experienced that an object with no support beneath it falls. Then it would be astonished. At the earliest, between 6 and 12 months.*

Rigveda texts stress that Indra could only perform creation if he consumed enormous amounts of the food of the gods. In all old cultures this was milk and honey. In Rigveda we read:

Drink, Indra, the sweet drink, become intoxicated with the rich liquid.

Drink Indra, ... of the white milk ..., sweeter than sweet. – Heaven and earth, dripping with honey, should bring prosperity to the gods...

In Hinduism little blue-faced Krishna is still fed milk and honey on his birthday. The mythical relationship with earlier Indra and Mithra is obvious. Indra was revered for more than his thirst for milk and honey: namely for his fat cheeks, round belly and rapid growth:

Drink, brave Indra! ... drink your belly full, ...fill your wide belly like a lake! – Fill your fat cheeks with milk and honey – Taking pleasure in the drink, he has grown greatly... Grow, thou greatly praised one...

It is now clear that many early gods were to be seen as children. Milk is the food of small children. And honey and dried fruits were the only foods available to satisfy the child's hunger for sweets.

Petrus van der Let: *Have memories of the former food of the gods survived today?*

Harald Strohm: *Our alcoholic drinks are not only given royal connections, a glass of beer even looks like honey below and milk on top. Wine advertisements offer "Liebfrauenmilch" and "Honigsack" which refer to milk and honey. Alcohol sipped from vessels similar to those used for children, leads to childish speech, staggering and the deep sleep of a one year-old. Like many drugs, alcohol is a regressive drug that takes one back to early childhood. It offers a certain fascination to men in particular. Adult fascination for food for the gods sheds light on the psychology of early religions. A main theme was the beginning of life as a small child. This period is not available in normal memory. It is subjected to early child amnesia. Although early childhood is the foundation of all that comes later it is locked away in the "unconscious." However, there are pores through which memories reach the surface in certain situations: religion, humor, love, dreams, psychoses and other extreme mental situations.*

Petrus van der Let: *What was the healing strategy of this religion of creation?*

Harald Strohm: *To make contact with the first years of life, through myths, rituals, and cults. And to re-enact the dramas that occurred then, through theatrical works or scenes, and to express this world in the positive spirit that we know from the Indian Rigveda. At the beginning of creation everything went well. This period of opening up was showered with milk and honey and made to feel that everything had gone well, the world had succeeded. That gives people a more positive attitude to life than later religions with apocalyptic end-of-the-world views with their pessimistic attitude that life here on earth is a vale of tears and a better world comes after the collapse of this one in the paradise to come and this world is not paradisiacal, etc. They do not transmit a positive feeling. Here a depressed mood has shaped Europe for a long time.*

Petrus van der Let: *Were these early religions a kind of therapy?*

Harald Strohm: *They were therapy in the most modern sense. Various modern therapies use similar strategies of re-enacting childhood in plays which quote themes*

from early childhood, or like Hans Carl Leuner's catathymic life in pictures. In his meditation, he takes people to a world of milk and honey on green meadows where cows graze – what children see at 6-7 months when the world opens up to them. Such re-enactments are modern therapy – different from the analytic therapy which grasps things that went wrong in childhood. Modern therapies take the line of ancient religions in trying to give early childhood a positive character concentrate on the positive resources laid down then and support them.

Practices of groups outside established medicine may have their roots in positive regression. Eveline Grandner from Diex in Carinthia tries to activate self-healing in lost layers of the mind. We make no judgement here.

Daniel: This massage was for me like passing through a birth canal, a cave. The result was just like it was 3 days after my birth. My left arm was completely lame, just like after my birth, due to a breech presentation and a jammed muscle. The same thing happened after the massage. Both arms were lame, cramped and tense. I felt a great surge of fear that subsided after a quarter of an hour. My mouth was lame, too, and my tongue. The after-effect was a total liberation. First alternating laughter and crying, feeling lighter, more relaxed. I go through life less tense now, I'm rid of a lot of ballast.

A few weeks after his birth, the jealous Hera sends Heracles 2 snakes, which he strangles.

Harald Strohm: We know similar myths from ancient America and China where they still exist today. We know them from Gilgamesh and Baal and our Middle Ages, such as the Siegfried and dwarf myths. We know those from ancient India and Iran very well about the gods Indra and in Iran Mithra who must slay a dragon named Vrtra literally the one who blocks.

When Indra and Mithra burst their cave to create the world, they faced dangers. A dragon waited at the cave exit. It had to be overcome before the world could open up. The myth of heroic dragon slayers and dwarves lives on today. For instance in puppet theatre. Like Indra, Kasperl kills a dragon.

*Harald Strohm: Who is this strange dragon facing Indra? Vrtra is actually an alter-ego of Indra: he stands in his own way, and has to overcome his own reluctance to go out into the world. Vrtra's blockages are tied to being lazy and sleepy, but mostly his lack of visual and physical skills. The visual block is symbolized in his lying around the dark cave and hissing cloudy mists. The physical blocks were caused by his unskilled arms and legs. Dragons are shown without hands and feet. The monster had to be killed before creation could take place. The Rigveda writes:
Vrtra fought Indra without hands and feet. Indra overcame him who lay drinking sweets. Vrtra, the son of mist, grew big in the sunless darkness. Mighty Indra, destroy the spirit of darkness!*

Heimo Dolenz - Landesmuseum Carinthia: More than 650 years ago, near Klagenfurt, this fossil skull was found. Since a lindworm was already in the city coat of arms, it was seen as a confirmation of the legend. In 1840, a specialist from Graz determined that it was a woolly rhinoceros from the Ice Age.

After Indra slew the dragon, his limbs became stars and the moon, reminders of Indra's fight with the dragon and the opening up of the cave. In myth, night and the night sky are equated with the rocky cave of the creation of the world. Breaking open the nocturnal cave in the twilight of dawn is symbolically associated with Indra's opening of the cosmos. Every sunrise of the visual world repeats this and create themselves anew. Objects in early morning light get clearer and clearer.

On Nemrud Dagi, the hill of creation in eastern Anatolia, King Antiochus, in the role of Indra/Mithra symbolically repeated the creation of the world when he ascended the throne. His reign was not only initiated with a ritual exit from a cave. His era was also shown as a cosmic dawn. A special constellation of stars marked the approaching dawn of his reign.

Harald Strohm: Here we see the horoscope of Leo on the western terrace of the Nemrud Dagi – poorly restored. It shows the 19 stars of the constellation Leo. Most important is the basilikus or regulus, the biggest star for King Antiochos. Above, we see 3 important stars. They stand for the Zeus Oromasdes – our Jupiter, Apollon Mithras – our planet Mercury, Heracles Arthagnes – our planet Mars. These 3 planets passed by the regulus, and the moon for the goddess Commagene. Scientific reconstructions tell us that this event took place on 7 July, 62 BC – the enthronement day of Antiochos. It means that these powerful gods passed by with a handshake, symbolizing the contract with Mithras which gave him the divine right to be King of Commagene.

There is a similarity with Christian history. The King Jesus was also announced by a stellar constellation, the Star of Bethlehem, which mysteriously preceded the 3 kings.

The reference to the Star of Bethlehem, dated 50 years after Jesus, is one analogy in the Mithra monument of the Commagene. A second is the legend of the three kings.

Harald Strohm: On the back of the statues there are inscriptions with the rules for monthly cultic festivities. The priests involved are reminiscent of wise men in St. Mathew's gospel, the "Magi from Anatolia" with gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. Magi were Persian priests. It says: The Priests are to wear Persian clothes and be adorned with golden wreaths. They are to place generous gifts of incense and aromatic herbs on the altars.

The main theme of Christianity, self-sacrifice by the son of God, is found in a different form in the Rigveda and Mithra cults, practiced at the same time and area as the developing Christianity.

In the last centuries BC Mithra gained prominence in Iran and to the west. The cult of King Antiochos with the monuments on Nemrud Dagi was one of many involving Mithra.

Another development in the Mithra religion was the Mithras mysteries. They were no longer royal and state cults, but men's cults in small congregations. The main theme was the slaying of a white bull, here on an altar from Heidelberg. This bull stood for Mithras himself. Like the slaying of the dragon, Mithra's killing the bull symbolized the transition into a different phase of childhood. After his "death" Mithras could ascend into the world of the father, the sun god. The New Testament compares the death of

Jesus with the sacrifice of a bull or a lamb: "Behold the Lamb of God," said John the Baptist. The Christian son of God, mourned by the mother, dies for the earthly cave world and rises intact into the paternal world.

A connection between the self-sacrifices of Jesus and Mithra has been discussed with no results. Early Christianity saw the Roman Mithras cults as a parody, and fought against them.

Also found in Carnuntum was Jupiter Dolichenus wearing a pointed hat. Romans named him for his place of origin, the Anatolian Doliche, today's Dülük. Doliche was a crossroads, an important center of trade and a post for Roman legions. Recently, an additional find of great importance to archaeology and religious history connected with the Roman Mithras mysteries was found here.

Harald Stroh: *We are in front of the cave which was discovered and studied in 1997-98, 2 spectacular Mithras reliefs were found in it. They show that Mithras came from the East and spread throughout the Roman Empire. The altar pictures are destroyed and do not have the fascinating expression seen in Carnuntum or in Heidelberg. They were destroyed, apparently by Christians, since the red pointed hat is chiselled away and a cross chiselled in its place.*

The Mithra myths which took over the Roman Empire in competition with Christianity, proclaimed rebirth after an apocalyptic fire, soon to end the world. Graffiti in the grotto of a Mithras community comment on the scene of the bull and self-sacrifice. *You rescued us by shedding blood that made us immortal.*

The old "heathen" motifs live on in pictorial representations of the Roman Mithra cult. The altar reliefs still reflect the world from the perspective of early childhood. The creation is shown as the dawn. Mithra is still in the dark cave, covered by earth and plants. The first rays of sun light up the darkness, while a raven crows. Mithra awakens and overcomes the darkness through self-sacrifice. Wearing a pointed hat, he looks back wistfully once more and leaves the cave holding the royal orb. Mithra's dawn-red cloak encloses the blue star-studded night and fills the world with its first reddish light. He lifts the daylight and takes part in the heavenly journey of the paternal sun god. The maternal night world sinks in the shape of Luna. In the dawn, plants become visible; grain sprouting from the dying bull stands for the fertility of the cosmos. Mithra's creation has succeeded.

Off: We have discussed Indra and Mithra, but not the people most important to them: father and mother. They hold the key to understanding further development in the history of religion. We take a look at the mother's world from a child's viewpoint.

Heinrich and Ingrid Kusch have been studying caves all over the world that were early cultic sites. In the Heathen Temple near Köflach in Styria, a relief was found showing 2 female heads with no facial details.

Martin Dornes: *The typical facial features – eyes, nose, mouth – are explored by an infant starting at 5-6 weeks. Before this he only sees the outline of the face. Experiments tell us that from birth onwards, infants can differentiate between the face of its mother and its father. They do not discern this from facial features but from hair*

color – father is blond, mother a brunette. Mother has a certain shape of hair-do, father another: So that they are identified by outlines – not by facial details.

Harald Strohm: *In the Old Testament, Moses is placed in a basket and put out on the Nile by his original mother. Soon a second woman, the king's daughter, finds him and raises him. This myth of the abandonment of a child, a son of god or another hero, occurs frequently all over the world, also in ancient India.*

In our Rigvedian source prior to Hindu influence, this myth is nicely worked out. The original mother of the first months from the child's perspective – as a goddess named Aditi. She is a visually unfinished, faceless goddess in the Rigveda. Her fullness and softness represent the child's grasping sensations. She is a nourishing goddess; bursts with milk, lives in a cave and is closely associated with the dragon. Aditi means: she who does not bind.

This goddess abandons Indra one day and he is found by a king's daughter, as was Moses. She differs greatly from the first mother. This corresponds with the child's development: Its sight is fully developed by the 5th to 7th month. Before that, it was imperfect. Imagine how fascinating the mother, the most beloved object for the child, must be. She is described as a goddess with an enchanting face, beautiful hair, beautiful figure and emphasized from the child's perspective, her feet and legs.

The reclining demon of Bhaja with a blank face symbolizes the ur-mother. The Rigveda's Aditi also stayed behind as a threatening, reclining earth mother when Indra und Mithra set out to open the visual world and free their enchanting second mother, the goddess of dawn from the cave. Although defeated, Aditi, like the earth, remained the foundation for their entire life.

Many heroes in legends and fairy-tales are half animal, half human. It occurs in Beowulf, the Anglo-Saxon epic the literature professor, Tolkien, used as a model for his "Lord of the Rings." Already in Beowulf, the "Lord of the Rings" is a dragon slayer. Beowulf himself has to slay a monster and then its mother, who stands for the ur-mother during the first months of life. Afterwards, usually a princess is freed from the cave as a sort of second mother. The hero can fly and nothing more stands in the way of his wedding.

Even more interesting, and important to religion, is the confrontation in ancient myths of little gods with their father. The father begins to dominate when a child reaches 18 months and learns to speak. The Indo-Iranian myths say Mithra not only represents the opening of the world during the first year, he is also a god of speech acquisition.

An ancient Iranian text reads:

We revere Mithra, whose word is true, the eloquent one with a thousand ears, who knows all...

Mithra's name shows that he was a child of speech. Mithra means "contract." Mithra is a god who knows rules, makes contracts, keeps agreements and deplores and punishes breeches of contract. Mithra is often shown shaking hands to seal an agreement. The cultic song continues in this vein: *We revere Mithra; he makes no mistakes and no one can deceive him.*

Harald Strohm: *We know from the texts on the Roman Mithras, that he was a god in diapers, even in the same words, to sparganon – diaper. We also know this term for the baby Jesus from St. Luke's gospel in the New Testament.*

In Iranian and Indian sources that Mithra was closely associated with the word payu – anus – and that defecating was known as an act of Mithras. To this extent, Mithras can be placed in the anal phase in Freudian systems. It is the phase in which children learn to talk, begin to think in speech categories and learn commands and prohibitions, that is, are able to make contracts with their parents. Mithra was the god of the contract. This is nicely proved in pictures – the anal phase extends from 18 months into the third year – exactly the time Mithras is shown here. The museum's director told me that viewers often say he looks like a small child. Here he's either peeing on a tree, or caring for it.

Mithra's adventures as he enters the paternal world are illustrated in the ancient Persian-Roman caves. In Klagenfurt, we also see Mithra riding into the sky with the sun god and offering his hand in contract. Here Mithra hits him with a golden bull's shoulder. The meaning is not clear. It appears that the father is handing over some of his supremacy to the child.

The final entry into the paternal world is shown in this altar relief in Ladenburg. Mithra and the sun-father eat a cultic meal and seal their agreements. They stand at the cave exit. The bull has been slain. Its legs are the feet of the table, its skin covers the bench. The ritual food is bread and wine. There is no doubt that these, as in Christianity, are the flesh and blood of the son of god, sacrificed and now arisen from the dead into the paternal world. This scene closes the drama of the dawning: early childhood hidden behind the curtain of early childhood amnesia, ends and Mithra enters the adult world, shaped by speech and rules.

Similar father myths are seen in various cultures. They hold a danger of becoming absolute. As soon as the father-myth splits off from the drama of dawn and enters a higher truth, the world of early childhood is threatened with rejection and condemnation. This happened in Christianity's period of witch hunting fanaticism. The main offense in the crime of witchcraft was taking part in a witches' Sabbath. Witches were said to have flown to green pastures on brooms or animals to meet the devil in the form of a goat – sometimes described as sweet or golden. They were said to have fornicated with him, even kissed his behind – like a mother does her young child.

In league with the devil, these "witches" practiced evil magic: tormenting clergy with sexual fantasies or putting spells on milk in the udder – like Indra. The more Christianity got caught up in castigation and negative clerical rules, the more the pre-paternal phase, surrounded by the magic of love, became the embodiment of evil.

Harald Strohm: In myths that deal with early childhood, the play of light and darkness is very important. In early religions, the darkness is not as negative as in later religions. In modern ideologies, such as Nazism and various sects of gnostic origins, this dualism of light and darkness is accentuated.

Darkness is considered negative. By comparison, early myths classified night as the first part of child development, especially in connection with the mother. Darkness belonged to the mother, night. A later phase was attached to the father, that of acquiring speech: father, light, speech, good and bad – you may or may not do this. The time before this belongs to the mother and to darkness – and if this darkness is damned, it means that a very important part of inner life – earliest childhood – is devalued with taboos and negative accents.

Another example of the danger of absolutizing paternal myths is political religion. Its followers see themselves as defenders of paternal light, a higher truth and world redemption. They call for global war against alleged powers of darkness, who are generally people blind to paternal transcendency and devoted to a maternal world of naive joy. The mythical world of darkness often gets out of control among such zealots. In the Ku Klux Klan the leader is called the "Imperial Wizzard". His underlings are the "Grand Cyclop," the "Grand Dragon with six Hydras" or "Grand Titan with six Furies." The Klan's regional centers are called caves.

Harald Strohm: *Since Freud's time, infant researchers speak of early child amnesia that adults are not able to remember the first years of their lives. But this world has not vanished. It surfaces as through a porous wall in different situations: in creating art, in humor, love, the imagination, dreams. Crucial for a healthy person is the ability to let both worlds exist each in its own realm – but the person is still aware which belongs where.*

If the two worlds intermix this subconscious world threatens to break through into everyday life as a world of madness – and threatens to become pathologic.

Aside from the Egyptian pharaoh, Echnaton, the Iranian prophet Zarathustra was the first to proclaim an absolutized paternal myth. Texts from 2000 BC go back to him: the Gathas verses from the same period as the Rigveda songs. Written in Iran, they presume similar living conditions and the same world of divinities. But Zarathustra declared the most revered god of the Rigveda, Indra, a devil and ruler of darkness, to be destroyed since the end of the world was approaching.

Zarathustra revered the mythic world of the phase of speech acquisition: a paternal monotheism, the "Word of God," the light of the sun, truthfulness and binding contracts.

Zarathustra's father-monotheism and his light-dark/good-bad dualism spread across ancient Greece and Israel into Christianity, the gnostic sects and later Islam. The results were obvious...



Breastfed baby



Child-God Mithras