

Pesach-Easter approaches as I write this in 1979, but the title is from an essay I wrote in 1943! In the center of World War II, I was overwhelmed with an intuitive conviction that something beyond holocaust and global destruction was happening. My night office was next to the night office of Robert Maynard Hutchins, then chancellor of the University of Chicago, who that year coined the pregnant phrase "the good news of damnation" to describe what had happened under the bleachers of Stagg Field where my old tennis court had been: the world's first subatomic chain-reaction.

Now, on this shrinking planet, everything has become chain-reaction, instant communication of news bad and good and of threat-promise. Suddenly, everybody is into both "roots" and sky, the search for the more profoundly intimate and local (versus the merely parochial and tribal) simultaneous with the reach for a way of yes-saying to human life, to all human life, to all life-- a way circling the globe in all directions, as no-saying clouds of radiation now threaten to circle it.

*It's an old joke that you don't ask a German philosopher a question on a day you have to do something else before bedtime, for his answer won't quit till he's concentricized the cosmos.* The joke has become fact for us all: all human problems and possibilities radiate out through every concentric circle to become global, then bounce back in waves converging on the local, the particular, the personal. Psyche and society, every psyche and all societies, now live on one pond more completely than what Western teachers of history call "ancient civilizations" lived on the Mediterranean. We live on the World Pond. ITEM: The books piling into my study bear such titles as THE HUMANE IMPERATIVE, GLOBAL LIVING HERE AND NOW, and THE NEW CASTLE: REACHING FOR THE ULTIMATE.... ITEM: This is the paragraph I wrote for this week in this year's KIRKRIDGE READINGS AND INTENTIONS: "'Spirituality' is breaking out all over the world, an irruption of repressed transcendence. We know it when we see and feel it, but we can't define it. It can't be mysticized or politicized, molded or pressured to our will. It appears, and we say *More than we are is here, inviting us to become more than we have been.*"

I believe we are witnessing what could never before have happened in human history since our scattering over the face of the earth. We are witnessing a convergence of heart, horror, and hope. If we humans try to continue to hope separately, we shall destroy all hope, and ourselves: now, we must find out how to hope together, and tool ourselves to the appropriate tasks. Now, in addition to dying one by one as we have always done, we face the horror of our potential for dying together, species suicide: we must find out how to live together on on pain of species holocaust. Always and everywhere, One Voice has spoken in every heart and been translated into thousands of tongues, ideologies, and idiosyncracies: now, we must find a way of speaking together that honors the Oneness of the One Voice forever speaking within each of us and of our tribes and of our memories and our hopes. I believe the truth behind the Amerind saying that the Great Spirit has put the cure within reach of every disease. As a biblical person, I believe that Providence provides us what we need when we need it, and that Providence now is providing us with new means for the new ends of our pan-human, global tasks. I celebrate such of these means as, while functioning for planetary ends, also cultivate and fertilize the local roots. One of these is Transculture.

We are living in the second great century. The first one, the 6th B.C., opened the great traditions to transtribal commitment: Confucius, Lao-tze, Buddha, Mahavira, Zoroaster, Second Isaiah, Pythagoras, Thales. Our century is opening our hearts and histories to each other painfully but ineluctably. As a Christian, I experience this as crucifixion and resurrection for us all....and new birth, for we are being called to become something more than we have ever been.