

THE ODYSSEY JOURNEYS - Scotland and Greece

An Odyssey is a journey of transformation - both outer and inner

There are places on earth which are still considered holy, sacred, numinous; where landscape was seen as the habitation of divine beings and where their weaving dynamic deeds were recognized, worshipped and invoked. Sacred precincts for them to dwell in - shrines, temples, altars were erected by the priesthoods.

Ritual and ceremony conducted there resonated in the becoming of the earth and man; they played their essential part in world history at a given moment and contributed what was needful for the rightful evolution of human consciousness.

Now we see only ruins, remains of cultures rich in spiritual meaning - can we learn to 'read' and understand them today?

What does it mean when we stand there with our 21st century consciousness, and speak, out of our striving, of our struggles, who and what we are?

Does it matter?

Is it possible to give something back in gratitude to what has been given to us in the past?

In 'The Fifth Gospel', Rudolf Steiner tells us that, before His Baptism, Jesus found the Mystery places empty, deserted by the gods, and demons in their stead.

Since that time, through the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ has united Himself with the earth, which awaits us to bring healing and recognition once more. When human beings create - in thought, music and song, in painting and in movement, we are offering up something of our essential 'I - Being', our divine nature.

For example, our doing eurythmy in such places means speaking a language there which had been known, was familiar, and was couched in forms appropriate to the age and culture.

Today we can give back our maturing human creativity in the language of creation itself, as a kind of acupuncture, with ourselves as shining needles on meridian points of the earth.

We form a vessel together.

Our intention is to trace pivotal moments of the development of consciousness, from divine awareness to the purely human, infused with the Being of Christ.

In so doing, we can be transformed

The ancient Hibernian cultures of Ireland and Scotland reveal to us the close attunement to the worlds of the stars and their movements. Mankind was still dreamily aware of divine beings. The exact alignment of the thousands of circles, standing stones, cromlechs and dolmens to the activity of sun, moon and constellations attest to their being imprinted into the earth in specifically chosen places. awareness of this was carefully guided by an initiate priesthood. The mathematical complex perfection of their construction reveals a

consciousness of the cosmic etheric working into the elemental world. The stones were carefully chosen, sometimes transported from many miles away. Through the insight of the priesthood, knowledge of Christianity was quite naturally acknowledged as the fulfilment and culmination of the Mysteries.

In Greek mythology we see how Odysseus' cleverness, Orestes' new-found conscience, Socrates' indwelling guiding daimon are prior evidence of this coming-into-being of the human I. The very names of the constellations acknowledge the imprint of the starry worlds' engagement with this process.

We consider how the Greco/Roman epoch was a unique point in world history, in which the destiny of the Gods was directly interwoven with that of mankind, since the angelic beings who had not fully completed their human phase of development on Old Moon, depended upon the deeds of men to order to do so, and interfered in them to that end. The pictorial intricacies of Greek mythology can be understood only in this light. Consciousness of the spiritual world was fading, and gradually man was awakening in his own ability to think independently, and to perceive through his senses how formative forces were active in himself and the world, and thus to give shape and form to them in sculpture and architecture. We see how Christianity came through the Byzantine culture, but was prepared for through the ancient Mystery schooling; how monasteries, chapels and churches were placed on ancient sacred sites.

On our journeys, the telling of the stories and historical information, brought skillfully and sensitively by our guides, opens our inner and outer senses for active engagement with the spirit of the place, leading to song and eurythmy together.

It seems to me that the sacred places of our earth are asking something of us when we visit them. Their tasks in time may be over, but we, who in our lives are struggling into our spiritual inheritance, can recognize and honor their part in our long journey. They are waiting for that acknowledgement from us, and that we will indeed, one day, arise.

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