

**PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN:  
BUILDING THE EARTH  
FOREWORD**

The Extracts which follow comprise the first Cahier of the Association of Friends of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. The gravity of the present times induces us to make these extracts known immediately, pending the full publication at a later date of the whole corpus of his writings on the Future of Man and on Human Energy.

That luminous scientific mind and that great heart, warm enough to encompass the whole world, gave him the power, as long ago as 1937, to discern the rising tide of destructive forces which would threaten our planet, and led him to call upon all mankind to unite in building their universal Citadel.

The peoples of the Earth, "the natural units of humanity" must, he said, achieve terrestrial Harmony through the variety of their racial characteristics - characteristics which reciprocally enrich each other. He gave each of them this watchword: "Remain on your own line, but move ever upwards towards greater consciousness and greater love. At the summit you will find yourselves united with all those who, from every direction, have made the same ascent. For everything that rises must converge."

Just as the various cells and members of the body grow and develop to form a single living being and find their ultimate perfection only by constituting that being, so the constant goal of individual and national development should be the unity of mankind, which individuals and nations are called upon to achieve they are to live to the full.

In all countries a new ferment is working towards this end, still largely unperceived. May the countries be delivered from the fatal temptation of building for themselves alone; for the sap which is rising in them is destined for the total achievement: "The Age of Nations is past. The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to build the Earth." May there be an end to the hostile factions which whip up the forces of destruction to a frenzy, and may there be manifested instead a spirit of universal co-operation inspired by the passion to construct a World worthy of Man. The value of a Vision of the Future is demonstrated by the dynamic force which it engenders; it does not need the atom bomb in order to convince. Teilhard de Chardin knew that above all the moribund ideologies there was one incomparably vast and powerful Ideal. To this Ideal he devoted himself with all his heart and he sweeps us along with him in his train.

A social or ethnic group which could find no better answer to the tragic circumstances which hem us in than to increase its own selfish demands, would prove its moral bankruptcy; Love, the supreme form of Energy, does not make demands; it strives and progresses. It realises what the condition of mankind should be, and, sweeping all obstacles aside, leads us onward to purify, elevate and fulfil the Earth.

The substance of the new world is being born, despite the rending of internal oppositions, in the very flesh of the peoples. We must realise this miraculous expectation; we must concentrate our spiritual forces in peace; we must, in every country, prepare the men who, at first in the circle around them, and then at the head of nations, will preside over the true destiny of Mankind.

We must be the Vanguard of this Crusade for Human Advancement, the call to which is sounded in the following pages by one who, from the summit he so heroically reached, caught a glimpse of the magnificence which might be the Earth of Man.

*Max H. Bégouën*

## **WE MUST SAVE MANKIND**

There is now incontrovertible evidence that Mankind has just entered upon what is probably the greatest period of change that has ever been known. The ills from which we are suffering have their seat in the very foundations of terrestrial thought. Something is happening to the whole structure of human consciousness. A fresh kind of life is starting. In the face of such an upheaval, and actually shaken by it, no one can remain indifferent. Swept along by the tide of affairs, what can we do to see *clearly* and to act *decisively*?

The foundation of all the reactions which current events awaken in our inner selves must be a robust faith in the destiny of Man. Even if that faith is already there, it must be fortified. It is too easy to find an excuse for inaction by pleading the decadence of civilisation, or even the imminent end of the world.

This defeatism, whether it be innate or acquired, or a mere affectation, seems to me the besetting temptation of our time. Defeatism is invariably unhealthy and impotent; can we also prove that it is unjustified? I think so.

For anyone who can read the chart of facts recorded by modern science, it is now clear that mankind is not an accidental phenomenon occurring by chance on one of the smallest stars in the sky. Mankind represents the culmination of the whole movement of matter and life, so far as it is within the range of our experience. Is there any need to emphasize what wealth the believer derives from this recognition that the work of creation is being wilfully continued? The finished prototype, whose perfection owes a debt to the earlier experimental forms, the key-stone of the dome, in which all the architectonic lines of the edifice converge, Man has, in these new perspectives, a better understanding of his title-deeds to the sovereignty of the Universe.

Entirely different from the old anthropocentric view, under which Man was the static geometric centre of the Universe, this view that the "human phenomenon" is a supremely characteristic form of the cosmic phenomenon has an incalculable moral range; it transforms our values, and guarantees the permanency of the work which we are doing, or rather of the work which is being done through our agency.

The critical events of today must be a turning-point of progress. That we can and must believe; we are progressing. In what direction are we moving? And, above all, what exactly is happening in the profundities of the human mass? We are progressing, agreed, but why is there so much disorder around us? There are three major influences confronting each other and struggling for possession of the Earth.

Democracy, Communism, Fascism. Whence do these three forces derive their strength, and why is the warfare between them internecine? In the three conflicting masses it is possible to recognise clearly, though in imperfect and sketchy form, *the three aspirations* which are characteristic of a faith in the future; a passion for the future, a passion for the universal and a passion for the individual; all three of them misunderstood, or imperfectly comprehended; these are the three-fold main-springs which keep human energies in a state of tension and conflict all around us.

The case of Democracy is clear enough; two faults of perspective, logically linked with each other, have enfeebled and vitiated the democratic vision of the World, one affecting its personalism, and the other in consequence affecting its universality. The social element cannot attain full originality and full value, except in a whole within which it is differentiated. Because this has not been realised, democracy has emancipated instead of liberating. With emancipation each cell has thought itself free to set up a centre of its own. Hence the dispersion of false intellectual and social liberalisms, contrary, to the genius of events. Hence, also, the disastrous equalitarianism which constitutes a threat to any serious construction of a new Earth. Democracy, by giving the people control over progress, seems to satisfy the idea of totality. In fact, it only presents a counterfeit. True universality rightly claims to bring into synthesis all initiatives, all values, all potentialities, however obscure. But it is essentially organic and hierarchic. By confounding individualism and personalism, crowd and totality, by fragmenting and levelling the human mass, democracy has run the risk of jeopardising the hopes for the future of mankind that were born with it. For that reason it has seen Communism break away from it to the left, and all the forms of Fascism rise against it on the right.

In Communism, at any rate in its origins, faith in a universal human organism reached a magnificent state of exaltation. The temptation of Russian neo-marxism for the elite consists far less in its humanitarian gospel than in its vision of a totalitarian civilisation strongly linked with the cosmic powers of matter. The true name of communism would be "terrenism". Unfortunately, on this side also, the human ideal is defective or deformed. On the one hand, in an excessive reaction against the anarchic liberalism of democracy, communism has arrived at the virtual suppression of the individual, and has turned man into a termite. On the other hand, in its unbalanced admiration for the tangible powers of the Universe, it has systematically excluded from its hopes the possibility of a spiritual metamorphosis of the Universe. The human phenomenon (essentially defined by the development of thought) was thenceforth reduced to the mechanical development of a soulless collectivity. The matter has veiled the spirit. Pseudo-determinism has killed love. The lack of personalism, involving a limitation or even a perversion of the future, and as an inevitable result undermining the possibility and the very conception of universalism; these, rather than any economic overthrow, are the real dangers of Bolshevism.

There can be no doubt that the Fascist movement was largely born out of reaction to the so-called "ideas of the Revolution". This origin explains the compromising support which it has always found among the numerous elements who, for different reasons of intellectual or social conservatism, are interested in disbelieving in a human future. But passion is not inspired by stagnation, and there is no lack of ardour in Fascism. It is open to the future. Its ambition is to embrace vast entities within its empire. The sad thing is that the sphere which it contemplates is restricted. Fascism seems wilfully to overlook the critical human transformation and the irresistible material bonds which, here and now, have already brought civilisation into the international phase. Fascism is obstinately determined to conceive and fabricate the modern world which lives within it in the dimensions of a by-

gone age. It gives preference to the race over mankind; it wishes to restore a soul to its own people, but it is indifferent to a soulless world. It charts a course into the future in the search for forms of civilisation which have for ever vanished. The forces which confront each other all around us are not purely destructive; each of them includes some positive constituents. By virtue of these very constituents, they are unwittingly converging towards a common conception of the future. In each of them it is the world itself which is struggling for survival and turning towards the light. Birth-pangs, and not the signs of death. Essential affinities, not ultimate hatred.

Once we have distinguished this, under the currents and in the turmoil, we can, realise the manoeuvre which will save us. How can we unite all the positive values of civilisation in a whole which will enhance individual values? How can we achieve that higher passion, where we shall find simultaneously combined and consummated, in a new synthesis, both the democratic sense of individual rights, the communist vision of the potentialities contained in matter, and the fascist ideal of an organised elite?

Fundamentally, and in spite of the comparative enthusiasm which carries large sections of mankind along with the political and social currents of the day, the mass of mankind remains unsatisfied. It is impossible to find, either on the right or the left, a truly progressive mind which does not confess to a partial disillusionment with all existing movements. A man joins one party or the other, because if he wishes to act he must make a choice. But, having taken his stand, everyone feels to some extent hampered, amputated, revolted. Everyone wants something larger, finer, more comprehensive.

Scattered throughout the apparently hostile masses which are fighting each other, there are elements everywhere which are only waiting for a shock in order to orientate themselves and unite. All that is needed is that the right ray of light should fall upon this cloud of particles, that the appeal should be sounded which responds to their internal structure, and, across all denominations, and across all the conventional barriers which still exist, we shall see the living atoms of the universe seek each other out, find each other and organize themselves. In the old days our fathers set out on the great adventure in the name of justice and the rights of man. Modern science has opened up to us space and time of which our fathers had no inkling, and we can no longer confine our efforts to such a limited scale, however exalting it was to them.

That is why our age is weary of the sectionalism which confines human sympathies in watertight compartments. The party turmoil soon drags us into an atmosphere where it is no longer possible to breathe. We must have air. We must unite. No more political fronts, but one great crusade for human advancement...

The democrat, the communist and the fascist must jettison the deviations and limitations of their systems and pursue to the full the positive aspirations which inspire their enthusiasm, and then, quite naturally, the new spirit will burst the exclusive bonds which still imprison it; the three currents will find themselves merging in the conception of a common task; namely to promote the spiritual future of the World. Only relative unanimity to start with; but real unity, to the extent to which all the world is finally at one in recognising that the function of man is to build and direct the whole of the *Earth*. Having lived for milleniums in self-contradiction, Mankind has now reached a stage of development from which it can, with all its forces, advance *forward*.

It will be objected that, in order finally to constitute a Crusade of Man, there must be an "antagonist" to oppose. For my part, I do not believe in the supreme effectiveness of the instinct of preservation and fear. It is not the fear of perishing, but the ambition to live which has thrown Man into the exploration of nature, into the conquest of the ethereal and on to the skyways. The loadstone which must magnetise and purify the energies in us, whose growing surplus is presently dissipated in useless shocks and perverse refinements, I would place, in the last analysis, in the gradual manifestation of some essential object, whose total wealth, more precious than gold, more seductive than any beauty, would be for Man grown adult, the Grail and the Eldorado in which the ancient conquerors believed; something tangible, for the possession of which it would be infinitely good to lay down one's life

For that reason, if a spiritual Human Front began to come about, it would need, alongside the engineers occupied in organising the resources and liaisons of the Earth, other "technicians" solely concerned with defining and propagating the concrete goals, ever more lofty, upon which the efforts of human activities should be concentrated. Up to now, we have rightly been passionate in seeking to unveil the mysteries concealed in matter infinitely great and infinitesimally small. But an inquiry of much greater importance to the future will be the study of *psychic* currents and attractions; a science of spiritual energy. Perhaps, impelled by the necessity to build the unity of the World, we shall end by perceiving that the great object unconsciously pursued by science is nothing else than the discovery of God.

In the face of Mankind in danger of allowing that fraction of consciousness already awakened in it by the progress of life to become absorbed in the "secondary matter" of philosophic determinism and social mechanism, Christianity maintains the primacy of reflective, that is to say, personalised, thought. This it does in the most effective of all ways, not only by the speculative doctrinal defence of the possibility of a centred, but still universal consciousness, but still more by transmitting and, developing through its mysticism the meaning and, in some sense, the direct intuition of this centre of total convergence. The least that an unbeliever can admit to-day, if he understands the biological situation of the World, is that the figure of Christ (not only as described in a book, but as realised in the concrete in the Christian consciousness) is, so far, the most perfect approximation to a final and total object towards which the universal human effort can tend without becoming wearied or deformed.

*Note: Father Teilhard de Chardin did not exclude from Christianity any one who expressly or implicitly believes in Love. He knew that the hour is not the same for every man to realise that this Essential Love, cause and purpose of the Universe, is to be found at the very heart of the Universe.*

## **THE SPIRIT OF EARTH**

The Phrase "Sense of Earth" should be understood to mean the passionate sense of common destiny which draws the thinking part of Life ever further onwards. In principle there is no feeling which has a firmer foundation in nature, or greater power. But in fact there is also no feeling which awakens so belatedly, since it can only become explicit when our consciousness has expanded beyond the broadening, but still far too restricted, circles of family, country and race, and has finally discovered that *the only truly natural and real human Unity* is the Spirit of Earth.

Stimulated by consecutive discoveries, which in the space of a hundred years, have successively revealed to our generation, first the profundities and significance of duration, then the limitless spiritual resources of Matter, and lastly the power of living beings acting in association, it seems that our psychology is in the process of changing. A conquering passion begins to show itself which will sweep away or transform what has hitherto been the immaturity of the Earth. And its salutary action comes just at the right moment to "control", awaken, or order the emancipated forces of Love, the dormant forces of human Unity, and the hesitant forces of Research.

### **a) Love**

Love is the most universal, formidable and mysterious of cosmic energies.

From the point of view of spiritual Evolution, it seems that we might be able to give a name and a value to this strange energy of Love. Could it not be, in essence, quite simply that very attraction which is exercised upon each conscious element by the Centre of the Universe? The call towards the great Union, whose realisation is the only Business now afoot in Nature... - On this hypothesis, under which (in conformity with the findings of psycho-analysis) Love is the primitive and universal psychic energy, does not everything around us become clear to the intelligence and obvious in action?

It is really the Universe which, through Woman, is advancing towards Man.

If Man fails to recognise the true nature and the true object of his love, the disorder which follows is profound and irremediable. Desperately striving to appease upon something too small a passion which is addressed to All, he inevitably tries to cure a fundamental disequilibrium by constantly increasing the number of his experiences, or making them more material in character. Vain attempts, and, in the eyes of anyone who partly perceives the inestimable value of the "spiritual quantum" of mankind, a frightening waste.

Look quite coldly, as a biologist or an engineer, at the reddening sky over a great city at night. There, and indeed everywhere else, the Earth is continuously dissipating, in pure loss, its most miraculous power. The Earth is burning "in free air". How much energy do you think is lost to the Spirit of Earth in one night?...

Man must, instead, perceive the universal Reality which shines spiritually through the flesh. He will then discover the reason which has so far frustrated and perverted his power to love. Woman is put before him as the attraction and the symbol of the World. He can only unite with her by enlarging himself in turn to the scale of the World. And because the World is always larger, and always unfinished and always in advance of us, Man finds himself embarked, in order to achieve his love, upon a limitless conquest of the Universe. In this sense, Man can only reach Woman through the consummation of the universal Union.

Love is a sacred reserve of energy, and the very bloodstream of spiritual Evolution; that is the first discovery we make from the Sense of Earth.

### **b) Human Unity**

In singular opposition to the irresistible attraction manifested in Love is the instinctive repulsion which, as a general rule, drives the human molecules away from each other. This repulsion can in fact result only from the timidity or cowardice of an individual in face of an effort of expansion which would ensure his liberation.

What an increase there is in his powers when, in research or in battle, Man catches the breath of affection or comradeship; what fulfilment when, in the instant of danger or

enthusiasm, he finds in a flash that he has attained *the marvels of a common soul*. These faint brief glimmerings should make us realise what a formidable power of joy and action still slumbers in the human layer. In isolation, men suffer and stagnate without fully realising it; they have need of a higher impulse from without to force them from the immobility of their dead point and bring them on to the beam of their profound affinity. The Sense of Earth is the irresistible pressure which will come at the right moment to unite them in a common passion.

The love of interaction, above the love of attraction - elements which merge, to undergo Union. Who can speak of the still almost unknown fulfilment of quality, the immense exhilaration of fraternal love which, in the Noosphere, would accompany the conquest of its residue of internal multiplicity, that is to say the achievement of ultimate consciousness of human Unity for advancement?

### **c) Research**

The Spirit of Earth comes to explain to Men the reason for their superfluity of love, and the way in which it might be put to use. By the same stroke, it reveals itself as the force which is destined to set under way and organise the overwhelming mass of human production and discovery.

Is the World condemned, in growing, to perish, automatically stifled by the excess of its own weight?

By no means; but it is in the process of gathering the elements of a new and better body. The whole question, in this crisis of birth, is the rapid emergence of the soul which by its appearance will organise, lighten and vitalise this mass of stagnant and confused material. This soul can only be a "conspiracy" of individuals associated in order *to add another storey* to the edifice of Life. The resources now available to us, the powers we have unleashed, *cannot be absorbed* into the narrow system of individual and national compartments which has so far served the architects of the human earth. *The Age of Nations is past. The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to shake off our ancient prejudices, and to build the Earth.*

The more I look at the World as a scientist *the less I see any other possible biological issue except the active consciousness of its unity*. Life can only progress on our planet in future (and *nothing* will prevent it from progressing, not even its own internal servitudes) by throwing down the barriers which still wall off human activity, and by giving itself up without hesitation to Faith in the Future.

We must put *in the forefront* of our *concrete* preoccupations the systematic arrangement and exploration of our Universe, understood as the true country of Mankind. Then material energy will circulate, and, more important still, spiritual energy, corrupted by the petty jealousies of modern society, will find its natural outlet in the attack launched against the mysteries of the World. The time has come to realise that Research is the highest human function, embracing the spirit of War and bright with the splendour of Religion. To keep up a constant pressure on the surface of the Real, is not that the supreme gesture of faith in Being, and therefore of adoration? All that is ours, if we understand how to avoid stifling within us the Spirit of Earth.

Whoever wishes to be part of this spirit must die and be born again, for others and for himself. In order to reach this higher plane of humanity he must bring about a complete transformation in his whole sense of values and his whole action.

Yet a little while and the Spirit of Earth will emerge with its specific individuality and its own character and physiognomy. And then, on the surface of the Noosphere, gradually sublimated in thought and passion, ever striving to solve more lofty problems, to possess greater objects, *the tension towards being will be at its maximum.*

What will happen at this critical stage in the maturation of terrestrial Life? Shall we be able at that moment to link up with other centres of cosmic life, to continue the labour of universal synthesis on a higher scale? More probably, something else will happen, something which can only be glimpsed when the influence of God is brought into the reckoning.

It would be nursing a great illusion if the Man of our times were to think that, having attained a fuller understanding of himself and of the World, he had no further need of Religion. There has been a multiplication of systems in which the existence of religion has been interpreted as a psychological phenomenon associated with the childhood of Mankind. At its maximum when Civilisation is beginning, it should gradually fade away, giving place to more positive constructions, from which God (particularly a personal and transcendent God) would be found to be excluded. In reality, for anyone who has eyes, the great conflict from which we shall have emerged will merely have consolidated in the World the need to believe. Having reached a higher degree of self-mastery, the Spirit of Earth will experience an increasingly vital need to adore; *out of universal evolution God emerges* in our consciousness as greater and more necessary than ever.

The only possible Motive Power of a life which has reached the stage of Reflection is an Absolute, or in other words a Divine, Term. Religion has sometimes been understood as a mere antidote to our evils, an "opiate". *Its true purpose is to sustain and spur on the progress of life.* It is the profound need of an Absolute, sought from the start through every progressive form of religion. Once this starting point is realised, it becomes evident that the "religious function" born of Hominisation and linked thereto is bound to grow continuously with Man himself. The more Man is Man, the more he will feel the need to devote himself to something which is bigger than he is. Is it not that which we can ascertain around us? At what moment in the Noosphere has there been a more urgent need to find a Faith, a Hope to give meaning and soul to the immense organism we are building?

By the capital event of *Hominisation* the most "advanced" part of the Cosmos found itself *personalised*. This simple change in a variable introduced for the future a two-fold condition of existence which cannot be escaped.

Since everything *in the Universe*, starting from Man, takes place *in the personalised being*, the ultimate Term of the universal Convergence must also possess (in a supreme degree) the quality of a Person. *To super-animate, without destroying*, a Universe made up of personal elements, he must himself be a special Centre. Thus re-appears, no longer instinctive, but closely linked with contemporary ideas on evolution, the traditional conception of a God exerting an intellectual influence upon immortal monads, distinct from himself.

The current which raises Matter should be conceived less as a simple internal impulse than as a *tide*. The Multiple rises, attracted and incorporated by the "Already One".

In the first phase - before Man - the attraction was vitally, but blindly, felt by the World. Since Man, it is awakened, at least partially, in reflective liberty, and it sustains Religion. Religion, which is not an option, or a strictly individual intuition, but represents the long unfolding, through the collective experience of all Mankind, of the existence of God - God reflecting himself personally on the organised sum of thinking monads, to guarantee a sure issue, and to lay down exact laws for their hesitant activities.

## HUMAN ENERGY

Human Energy presents itself to our view as the term of a vast process in which the whole mass of the Universe is involved.

In us the evolution of the World towards the spirit becomes conscious. From that moment, our perfection, our interest, our salvation as elements, can only be to press on with this evolution with all our strength. We cannot yet understand exactly where it will lead us, but it would be absurd for us to doubt that it will lead us towards some end of supreme value.

From this there finally emerges in our twentieth century human consciousness, *for the first time* since the awakening of Life on Earth, the fundamental problem of Action. No longer only, as in the past, for our small selves, for our small family, our small country, but for the salvation and the success of the Universe, how must we, modern men, organise for the best around us, the maintenance, distribution and progress of human Energy?

The first object which should attract the attention of the technician of Human Energy is to ensure to the human nuclei taken in isolation, their maximum of consistency and efficiency as elements. To perfect individuals so as to confer upon the whole the maximum of power, that is the obvious line to follow for the final success of the operation.

The organisation of the human Energy of the element, whatever its general methods may be, must culminate in forming at the heart of each element, *the greatest possible amount of personality*.

But today, while the mass formation of the human layer is taking place under our eyes and in our consciousness, Man, assuming him to be henceforward fixed in his individual nature, can see a new and boundless field of evolution opened up before him; the field of collective creations, associations, representations and emotions.

How can we lay down any limits to the effects of expansion, penetration and spiritual fusion, which would flow from the coherent ordering of the human multitude? To dominate and canalise the powers of the air and the sea is all very well. But what is this triumph, compared with the world-wide mastery of human thought and love? In truth, no more magnificent opportunity than this has ever been presented to the hopes and efforts of the Earth.

We are very ready to pride ourselves on living in a century of enlightenment and science. And yet the truth is quite the reverse; we are still lingering among rudimentary and infantile forms of intellectual conquest. What proportion of activity in the world today, in money,

manpower and effort, is devoted to exploring and conquering the still unknown areas of the world?

At present most men still merely understand Strength, the key and symbol of super-being, in its most primitive and savage form of War.

But let the time come, as come it will, when the masses will realise that the true human successes are those which triumph over the mysteries of Matter and of Life. At that moment a decisive hour will sound for Mankind, when the Spirit of Discovery absorbs all the momentum contained in the Spirit of War. A capital phase of History, when all the transformed power of fleets and armies will come in to reinforce that other power which the machine will have rendered idle, and an irresistible tide of liberated energies will mount towards the most progressive circles of the Noosphere.

A substantial part of this tide of available energy will be immediately absorbed in the expansion of Man in Matter. But another part, and that the most precious, will inevitably flow back to the levels of spiritualised energy.

Spiritualised Energy is the flower of Cosmic Energy. It represents in consequence that part of human strength which there is the greatest interest in organising. What are the main directions in which we can imagine it tending and in which we can help it to develop, starting in the heart of our individual natures? - No doubt in the direction of a decisive flourishing of some of our old powers, accompanied by the acquisition of some additional faculties, and some extended consciousness.

Love, as well as thought, is always in full growth in the Noosphere. The excess of its expanding energy over the daily diminishing needs of human propagation is daily becoming more evident. This means that love is tending, in its fully hominised form, to fulfil a much larger function than the mere call to reproduction. Between Man and Woman, a specific and reciprocal power of sensitization and spiritual fertilization seems in truth to be slumbering still, and calling to be released in an irresistible upsurge towards everything which is truth and beauty. Beyond a certain degree of sublimation, by the unlimited possibilities of intuition and interrelation which it brings, spiritualised love penetrates into the unknown.

In every field we are beginning to live constantly in the presence and with the thought of the Whole. There is nothing more capital, from the point of view of human Energy, than the spontaneous appearance, and, ultimately, the systematic cultivation, of a "cosmic sense" of this kind. Through such a sense, Men cease to be self-contained individuals, and make common cause. In them, thenceforth, the spiritual energy of the element is finally ready to ingregrate itself in the total Energy of the Noosphere. But we must not fail to bring out an important point; the perfection and usefulness of each nucleus of human Energy in relation to the whole depend in the last resort upon whatever is unique and incommunicable in each of them. The great point to which the technician of the Spirit should direct his attention in dealing with human units is to leave them, in the transformation which he is seeking to bring about in them, the possibility of finding themselves, and the freedom to differentiate themselves ever more and more.

The first lineaments of a common consciousness contain in themselves a vital need to make themselves clear and to prolong themselves internally. *Intellectually*, the progress of science is proceeding to construct a synthesis of the laws of Matter and Life, which, fundamentally, is nothing else but a collective act of perception; the World seen in the same coherent perspective by the whole of Mankind. *Socially*, the fusion and intermingling of races are leading directly to the establishment of an equally common form, not merely of language, but of morality and ideals.

The organisation of human Energy, taken in its entirety, directs itself and impels us towards the ultimate formation, above each personal element, of *a common human soul*.

The *conjunction* of activities out of which comes the collective human soul, supposes as its principle, a common *aspiration*, actuated by hope. To set in motion and sustain human Energy, there can only be at the origin, the internal attraction to a desired Object.

Since there is neither fusion nor dissolution of elementary persons, the Centre which they aspire to rejoin, *must necessarily be distinct from them*, that is, *it must have its own personality*, its autonomous reality.

For its maintenance and operation the Noosphere *physically* requires the existence in the Universe of a real Pole of psychic convergence; a Centre different from all other centres, which it "super-centres" by assimilating them; a Person distinct from all other persons, whom it fulfils by uniting them to itself. The World would not function, if there were not, somewhere outside time and space, a cosmic point of total synthesis.

We have just recognised it: by Hominisation the Universe has reached a higher level, where its physico-moral powers gradually assume the form of a fundamental affinity which links individuals to each other and to their transcendent Centre. In us and around us the elements of the World go on unceasingly personalising themselves more and more, by acceding to a Term, itself personal, of unification; so much so, that from this Term of ultimate confluence there radiates and to this term in the last resort there flows back all the essential Energy of the World - that energy which, having confusedly agitated the cosmic mass, emerges from it to form the Noosphere.

What name must be given to such an influence?

One only - Love; Love, the supreme form and the totalising principle of human Energy.

Picture a man who has become conscious of his personal relations with a supreme Personal, with whom he is led to merge by the whole interplay of cosmic activity. In such a man, and starting from him, a process of unification is launched, marked by the following stages:

- \* the totalisation of every operation in relation to the individual;
- \* the totalisation of the individual in relation to himself;
- \* and lastly, the totalisation of the individual in the collective Man.

All these "Impossibilities" come about under the influence of Love.

Omega, He towards whom all converges, is concurrently He from whom all radiates. Impossible to place him as a focus at the summit of the Universe, without at the same time diffusing his presence in the intimate heart of the smallest movement of Evolution. What does that mean, except that, *for anyone who has seen it*, everything, however humble, *provided it is placed in the line of progress*, warms, enlightens and animates itself and in consequence becomes the subject of total adhesion.

The fact that under the animating influence of Omega every one of our individual actions may become *total* is in itself a marvellous use of human Energy.

But it transpires that, barely launched, the first transfiguration of our activities tends to prolong itself in another even more profound metamorphosis. By the very fact that they become total, each one individually, our actions logically find themselves induced to totalise themselves, taken all together in a single act.

It is a veritable synthesis which the love of Omega operates on the combined cluster of our faculties:

In the superficial course of our existences, there is a difference between seeing and thinking, understanding and loving, giving and receiving, growing and shrinking, living and dying. But what will happen to all these oppositions when, in Omega, their diversity is revealed as the infinitely varied operation of the same universal contact? Without radically disappearing in the least in the world, they will tend to combine in a common resultant, where their plurality, still recognisable, will flourish in ineffable richness. Why should this astonish us? Are we not familiar in a less intense degree with a perfectly parallel phenomenon in our own experience? When a man loves a woman nobly, the result of this overmastering passion, which exalts the being above itself is that the life of that man, his power to create and to feel, his whole Universe, become specifically contained, as well as sublimated, in his love of that woman. And yet, Woman, however necessary to Man, in order to reflect, reveal, communicate and "personalise" the World to him, is still not the Centre of the World!

If, therefore, the love of one element for another shows itself powerful enough to fuse (without confusing) into a single impression the multitude of our perceptions and our emotions, what vibration would not be drawn by our beings from their encounter with Omega?

When, by the progress in our hearts of this love of the Whole, we come to feel, extending above the diversity of our efforts and our desires, the exuberant simplicity of an urge in which are mixed and exalted, without loss, the innumerable gradations of passion and action, then in the heart of the mass formed by human Energy, we shall each be approaching the plenitude of our effectiveness and our personality.

To totalise without de-personalising; to save at the same time the whole and the parts. Everyone agrees on his twofold aim. But how do existing social groups grade the values which in theory they are agreed in wishing to preserve? Always by regarding the person as secondary and transitory, and in placing at the head of their programme the primacy of pure totality. In all the systems of human organisation which confront each other before our eyes, the underlying assumption is that the final state towards which the Noosphere is tending is a body without an individualised soul, an organism without a face, a diffused Humanity, an Impersonal.

But this starting-point, once admitted, vitiates the whole subsequent course of the operation to the extent of making it impracticable. How, if the Universe finally tends to become a *Thing* can it still find place for a *Person*? If the summit of human evolution is regarded as impersonal in character, the elements which reach it will inevitably, in spite of all efforts to the contrary, see their personality shrinking under its influence. And that is exactly what is happening. The servitors of material progress or racial entities strive in vain

to emerge into freedom; they are fated to be drawn in and assimilated by the determinisms they are constructing. Their own machinery mechanises them. And from that moment there is nothing left to control the operations of human Energy but brute force - the force which, quite logically, some people today would again like to make us worship.

Not superior force, but Love, and therefore, *as a start*, the recognised existence of a Transcendent which makes universal Love possible.

What will happen on the day when, in place of the *impersonal* Humanity put forward by modern social doctrines as the goal of human effort, we recognise the presence of a conscious Centre of total convergence? At that time, the individualities caught up in the irresistible current of human totalisation will feel themselves strengthened by the very movement which is bringing them closer together. The more they are grouped under a Personal, the more personal they will themselves become. And that effortlessly, by virtue of the properties of Love.

Picture an Earth where human beings were primarily concerned to realise their global accession to a passionately desired Being, a lively participation in whom each of them would recognise in what is most incommunicable in his neighbour. In such a World coercion would become unnecessary for the purpose of retaining individuals in the most favourable order for action, of orienting them in the full play of free will towards the best combinations, making them accept the restrictions and sacrifices imposed by a certain human selection and deciding them in the end not to squander their capacity for love, but to sublimate it jealously to the end of ultimate union.

*We have reached a cross-roads in human evolution* where the only road which leads forward is towards a common passion.

To continue to place our hopes in a social order achieved by external violence would simply amount to our giving up all hope of carrying the Spirit of Earth to its limits.

But human Energy, like the Universe itself the expression of an irresistible and infallible movement, could not be prevented by any obstacle from attaining freely the natural term of its evolution.

Therefore, in spite of all the apparent improbabilities, we are inevitably approaching a new age in which the World will cast off its chains, to give itself up at last to the power of its internal affinities.

We must believe without reservation in the possibility and the necessary consequences of universal Love.

The theory and practice of total Love have never ceased, since Christ, to become more precise, to transmit and propagate themselves; so that with two thousand years of mystic experience behind us, the contact which we can make with the personal Focus of the Universe has gained just as much explicit richness as the contact we can make, after two thousand years of Science, with the natural spheres of the World. Regarded as a "phylum" (a branch of the tree of life) of love, Christianity is so living that, at this very moment, we can see it undergoing an extraordinary mutation by elevating itself to a firmer consciousness of its universal value.

Is there not now under way one further metamorphosis, the ultimate, the realisation of God at the heart of the Noosphere, the passage of the circles to their common Centre, the apparition of the "Theosphere"?...

### THOUGHTS ON PROGRESS

It has become fashionable today to mock or to treat with suspicion, anything which looks like faith in the Future. If we are not careful this scepticism will be fatal, for its direct result is to destroy both the love of living and the momentum of Mankind.

Firmly based on the general history of the World, as revealed to us over a period of 300 million years by Palaeontology, we can, without losing our foothold in dreams, make these two assertions:

- a. First and foremost, Mankind still shows signs of *a reserve*, a formidable potential of concentration, that is, of progress. Think of the immensity of the powers, ideas and persons not yet discovered or harnessed or born or synthesised... In terms of "energy" and biology, the human race is still very young and very fresh.
- b. The Earth is still far from having completed its sidereal evolution. True, we can imagine all sorts of catastrophes which might intervene to cut short this great development. But for 300 million years now, Life has been going on paradoxically in the midst of improbability. Does that not indicate that it is marching forward, sustained by some complicity in the motive forces of the Universe?

The real difficulty which faces Man is not the certainty that he is the seat of constant progress; it is rather the conception of how this progress can go on for a long time yet at its present rate, *without Life exploding of itself* or blowing up the Earth on which it was born. Our modern world was created in less than ten thousand years, and in the last two hundred years it has changed faster than in all the previous milleniums.

#### The March Forward

Progress, if it is to continue, will not happen by itself. Evolution, by the very mechanism of its syntheses, is constantly acquiring greater freedom.

In practice, what steps must we take in relation to this forward march?

I see two, which can be summarised in five words: *a great hope, in common.*

- a. *First, a great hope.* This must be born spontaneously in every generous soul in face of the anticipated work, and it also represents the essential impetus without which nothing will be done. A passionate love of growth, of being, that is what we need. Down with the cowards and the sceptics, the pessimists and the unhappy, the weary and the stagnant.
- b. *In common.* On this point also the history of Life is decisive. There is only one way which leads upwards; the one which, through greater organisation, leads to greater synthesis and unity. Here again, then, down with the pure individualists, the egoists, who expect to grow by excluding or diminishing their brothers - individually, nationally or racially. Life is moving towards unification. Our hope will only be operative if it is expressed in greater cohesion and human solidarity.

The future of the Earth is in our hands. How shall we decide?

A common Science merely brings the geometric point of different intelligences nearer together. A common interest, however passionate, merely brings beings into indirect touch, through an Impersonal which destroys personality.

It is not our heads or our bodies which we must bring together, but our hearts.

The generating principle of our unification is not finally to be found in the single contemplation of the same Truth or in the single desire awakened by Something, but in the single attraction exercised by the same Someone.

### **ON THE POSSIBLE BASIS OF A COMMON CREDO**

Once the reality of a Noogenesis is admitted (the concentration and collective march forward of human Thought) *the believer in the World* finds himself obliged to give a growing place in his thoughts on the future to the values of personality and transcendence. Of personality, since a Universe on the road of psychic concentration is identically a Universe which is becoming personalised. And of transcendence, because a last pole of "cosmic" personalisation, if it is to be supremely consistent and unifying, can hardly be conceived except as emerging from elements which it super-personalises by uniting them. Still in the same perspective, assuming it is admitted that there is a cosmic genesis of the spirit, the believer in Heaven realises that the mystic transformation of which he dreams presupposes and confirms all the tangible realities and laborious conditions of human Progress. To be super-spiritualised in God, must not Mankind first be born and grow in conformity with the whole system of what we call evolution?

The sense of Earth opening and flowering upwards in the sense of God, and the sense of God rooted and nourished from below in the sense of Earth. The transcendent personal God and the Universe in evolution, no longer forming two antagonistic poles of attraction, but entering into a hierarchic conjunction to uplift the human mass in a single tide. Such is the notable transformation which the idea of the spiritual evolution of the Universe implies *in theory* and which is beginning to come about *in practice* in a growing number of minds, freethinkers as well as believers. The very transformation we are searching.

#### **The new spirit for a new world**

To unify the vital human forces, so lamentably disunited at this moment, the direct and effective way would simply be to sound the alarm and to form a block of all those who either on the right or the left, believe that the great affair for modern Mankind is to break its way out by *forcing some threshold of greater consciousness*. Whether Christians or not, the men who are animated by this conviction form *a homogeneous category*. Although in the march of Mankind they take their stations on opposing wings, they can advance hand in hand, because their attitudes, far from being exclusive, virtually prolong each other, and ask only to be completed. What are they waiting for, in order to set up the common front of all those who believe that the Universe is moving forward, and that it is our task to make it move forward? Would not this be the solid nucleus around which tomorrow's unanimity must develop?

In spite of the wave of scepticism which seems to have swept away the hopes (over-simplified and over-materialist) upon which the nineteenth century lived, faith in the future is not dead in our hearts. Better still, it is this hope, deepened and purified, which seems bound to save us. It is not only that the idea of a possible awakening of our consciousness

to a super-consciousness becomes daily scientifically better based on experience and psychologically more necessary to keep alive in man the zest for action; in addition, pushed to its logical conclusion, this very idea seems the only one capable of making ready for the great event which we are awaiting; the discovery of a synthetic act of adoration in which are allied and mutually exalted the passionate desire to conquer the World, and the passionate desire to unite ourselves with God; *the vital act, specifically new, corresponding to a new age of the Earth*.\*

*\* These thoughts, written on the occasion of the New York Congress on Science and Religion, were designed to map out the ground on which all men who desired progress might begin to understand and help each other to attain the highest truth which full co-operation would bring within their reach.*