

Deinanthropus A New First Stasimon

Fifteen years ago or so, when I was still living in Connemara in the west of Ireland, I heard that there was a dinosaur exhibition in the zoo in Dublin. It occurred to me that Lorna and Sara my godchildren, who lived in the big house across the yard from me, might like to go and see it. I put the idea to them and instantly they were delighted and could hardly wait, and so it was that two days later Lynne, their mother, waved good bye to us in Galway train station. Three hours later a friend of ours met us on our arrival in Dublin, took us first to her home for lunch and then to the Zoo. No sooner had we entered the Mesozoic than Lorna and Sara took off, two little tots from the far evolutionary future crossing Triassic savannahs, making their way through Cretaceous forests, coming back to find me and lead me in excited safari to where he was, and yes, there he was, Tyrannosaurus Rex, terrible in his teeth, in his roaring terrible, and tall enough they told me to look in at them at night through the window of their first floor bedroom back in Connemara.

That room I knew well. In it all rabbits were bunny rabbits, all bears were teddy bears. In it all tigers and lions were cuddly and, what is more, every nursery rhyme that Sara and Lorna knew tiger and lion and rabbit and bear knew:

There was a crooked man
Who walked a crooked mile;
He found a crooked sixpence
Upon a crooked stile.
He bought a crooked cat
Who caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together
In a little crooked house.

But now, his mouth a Mesozoic slaughterhouse, Tyrannosaurus Rex had looked through their little Miss Moffet window and I wondered whether with that their Song of Innocence hadn't become a Song of Experience.

Next day, coming home in the train, they turned the table between us into a Jurassic savannah, at the heart of it all the Tyrant himself, he the might-is-right Rex in red roaring.

What I thought but didn't say to the girls is that now, a hundred million years later, kingship in killing has passed to us. On a whale-ship we see, in any of our slaughterhouses on land we see, in Verdun, in Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Dresden we see, that compared to us ichthyosaur, pterosaur and dinosaur are small fry.

Sitting at home that night I listened to two roars, the Mesozoic roar of Tyrannosaurus Rex and the Kainozoic roar of the Colosseum.

Of the two roars the more recent is surely the most frightful. But why? Is it that it has something extra in it? Something hellish? Nero's thumb turned down has in it something not found in the eye-tooth of a tiger.

I thought of Boehme's anthropology. I thought in the literal sense of his logos about anthropus:

In man is all whatsoever the sun shines upon or
heaven contains, also hell and all the deeps.

Only beings who have hell in them can make life a hell-upon-earth for others.
Only beings who have heaven, earth, hell and all the deeps in them can deepen hell.

And the big achievement of European humanity in the twentieth century is simply that: we deepened hell. Auschwitz is a tenth circle of hell that Virgil and Dante didn't go down into and that for the reason that it didn't yet exist.

The abyss that opened in Lucifer is shallow compared to the abyss that has opened in us.

On the assumption that we are what we claim to be, sapient, it behoves us to take stock.

It behoves us to hear and heed

The Psalmist who says

I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Heraclitus who says

You would not find out the boundaries of the soul, even by travelling along every path, so deep a measure does it have.

Jacob Boehme who says

In man is all whatsoever the sun shines upon or heaven contains, also hell and all the deeps.

Sir Thomas Browne who says

There is all Africa and her prodigies in us

William Law who says

Thy natural senses cannot possess God or unite thee to Him; nay, thy inward faculties of understanding, will and memory can only reach after God, but cannot be the place of His habitation in thee. But there is a root or depth in thee from whence all these faculties come forth as lines from a centre, or as branches from the body of the tree. This depth is called the centre, the fund or bottom of the soul. This depth is the unity, the eternity – I had almost said the infinity – of the soul; for it is so infinite that nothing can satisfy it or give it any rest but the infinity of God.

William Blake who says

In your bosom you bear your heaven and earth and all you behold.

Wordsworth who says

Not chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy scooped out
By help of dreams – can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the mind of Man –

Baudelaire who says

Homme libre, toujours tu cheriras la mer.
La mer est ton miroir; tu contemples ton ame
Dans le deroulement infini de sa lame,
Et ton esprit n'est pas un gouffre moins amer.

Nietzsche who says

I have discovered for myself that the old human and
animal life, indeed the entire prehistory and past of all
sentient being, works on, loves on, hates on, thinks on in me.

Emerson who says

It is the largest part of man that is not inventoried.
He has many enumerable parts: he is social, professional,
political, sectarian, literary, in this or that set or corporation.
But after the most exhausting census has been made, there
remains as much more which no tongue can tell. And this
remainder is that which interests.

Hopkins who says

O the mind, mind has mountains, cliffs of fall
Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
May who ne'er hung there----

William James who says

The further limits of our being plunge, it seems to me,
into an altogether other dimension of existence from
the sensible and merely understandable.

D.H.Lawrence who says

There is that other universe, of the heart of man,
that we know nothing of, that we dare not explore.
A strange grey distance separates
our pale mind still from the pulsing continent of the
heart of man.

Forerunners have barely landed on the shore
and no man knows, no woman knows
the mystery of the interior
when darker still than Congo or Amazon
flow the heart's rivers of fullness, desire and distress.

Joseph Conrad who says

The mind of man is capable of anything – because
everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future.

Rilke who says

However vast the outer space may be, yet with all its sidereal
distances, it hardly bears comparison with the dimension, with
the depth dimension of our inner being, which does not even need
the spaciousness of the universe to be within itself almost
unfathomable.

Cumulatively, these mahavakyas, these great sayings, enact a Copernican revolution in anthropology. In them and with them we migrate from a Ptolemaic to a Boehmean sense of human inwardness, from a sense of human inwardness as bounded and therefore containable and controllable by ego and will to a sense of it as more or less boundless and therefore un-containable and uncontrollable by ego and will.

Think of what Nietzsche discovered: that homo habilis thinks in him, loves in him, hates in him; that australopithecus africanus thinks in him, loves in him, hates in him; that pterosaur, ichthyosaur, dinosaur, crinoid, crab, trilobite, ammonite, alga – that all of life all the way back through the Kainozoic, Mesozoic and Palaeozoic thinks in him, loves in him, hates in him; that the first protein thinks in him, loves in him, hates in him; that his consciousness is Jurassic, Silurian, Precambrian; that it is Cretaceous as well as classical; that it is dryopithecine as well as Dionysian; that it is Permian as well as Apollonian.

And yet, in all of this he has merely discovered but a little of who and what he is, he has merely discovered who and what he phylogenetically is. Beyond all of this, Jacob Boehme came to know what isn't biological in us: heaven in us, hell in us, deeps in us.

When palaeontologists began to seriously classify fossils they invariably denominated them by combining appropriate Greek words. So it was that they combined deinos and saurus, thus getting dinosaur, meaning terrible lizard.

The reality of who and what we are demanding it, it would be wise on our part were we to put deinos and anthropus together, thus getting the noun deinanthropus and the adjective deinanthropic, words suggesting immensities of biological and parabiological inwardness.

To migrate from an anthropic to a deinanthropic sense of ourselves – that from our first emergence has been the next evolutionary move or mutation that has awaited us.

Western history makes one thing profusely and prodigally evident: it is perfect folly to go on devising a culture for ourselves, to go on legislating for ourselves, on the obviously false assumption that we are anthropus, the truth being that we are deinanthropus.

In cultures not suited to us it is inevitable that what is deinanthropic in us will continue to blow up in our anthropic faces.

It's a dilemma.

For the reason we have suggested, it is perilous to live anthropically, to live in and from the more or less secure sense that inwardness is, by and large, the domain of ego, troublesome at times, but mostly manageable. It is on the other hand equally if not more perilous to live deinanthropically, to live, as so many mystics have, in full exposure to inner immensities, immensities into which and over which the ego's jurisdictional writ does not run.

What to do ?

By way of an answer, initial and inadequate, I will rehearse a dream that dreamed me as I slept one night in what by day was a room with a view down along a suave salmon river.

I am walking down Charring Cross Road in London. I turn into Old Compton Street. A little way along, drawing gaudy attention to itself on the far side, is a striptease club that I used to frequent, years ago, when I first lived in this city. Crossing the street, I go in. I am immediately as it were becalmed. No effort involved, I emerge into a state of silent wonder. The

wonder is altogether older and deeper than I am. The individual I am, or was, is dissolved in the silent sea of it. And yet a ghostly suggestion of who I am survives in it. Independently of who I am the wonder is wondering at the great and marvellous transformation that has taken place here. Gone is the old chiaroscuro. Gone too are the lurid allurings to priapic delight. Vaguely, I am aware of striptease music upstairs, but it is the Salome veils in my eyes and mind that are falling away. They do fall away, all seven of them, and now I see what I have been looking at. On this sunlit, paradissally bright ground-floor where I am are rack after rack after rack of summer clothes all of them also paradissally bright, suggesting paradissal innocence regained. All living instincts in me are becalmed in the wonder of them. And wonder beyond words it is when I see that they are all unisexual. For a long while, forever it seems, I am timeless, charmed beholding. With no sense of loss, I turn away and come back out into the street. Walking towards Wardour Street, I am aware that I have a four-pronged farm fork in my hand. On the prongs are scales of dry dung, cow dung or dinosaur dung I cannot say. Turning into it, I walk up Wardour Street. Naturally like one state of mind succeeding another, I am in an eighteenth century city park. Here everything is reasonable, the grass perfect, the trees and shrubberies as ordered as rhyming couplets. Now again, naturally, as I am walking in it, farm fork in hand, this perfect park becomes Eocene savannah. I do not see them, but I think there are hominids in the bushes. They are watching me. Maybe Lucy is watching me. A long way into the savannah I notice a patch of ground that is older than its surroundings. Now I know why I have the farm fork, the manure fork, a digging fork it turns out to be. I begin to dig. One after the other I uncover three steeply descending granite steps. Each step seeming to be a geological era, the first kainozoic, the second Mesozoic, the third Palaeozoic, I climb down and, alarmed by what might happen next, I stand on what paradoxically is a precipitous height, on a sheer geological rock-wall height, in the depths. Below me, endlessly far down in geological time, is an old sea, mere more than sea. From where I stand everything I see is afar. So far away, down and away, is the far embankment that I could never ever reach it by travelling towards it. As from nowhere, there is a man standing at the edge of it. Bending forward from the hips, he sinks his hands down into the sea, if sea it is. The merest gesture, the merest mime, of lifting on his part is all that is needed. Up it comes, a great sea-wide iron grid, breaking the surface of the water. Up and up it comes, the far side rising, folding itself in flush with the rock-wall I am standing on. Invisibly deep in the archaic sea something tremendous is happening. Strangely, before I see it, I know what it is. Up from the depths, a tremendous, ageless, boiling, green and blue, breaking to turquoise, is rising. Even before it breaks the surface, I see that it is an immense confusion or tangle of sea zoas, zoas of the benthos. Draped across them all, undulating downwards out of view and upwards into view, in a kind of continuous infinite, is the Great Zoa himself, a stupendous, endless snake form. Seeing him, I call him a dogfish. Such a pleroma of surgent, insurgent life in any one being I have never seen. Thunders and taigas bloom under the snake-patterned, gorgeous geographies of his skin. Under it, undulating as he does, are summer tundras and tropical rainforests. All things outrageous and insolent in time and eternity are teeming there. Somehow I take my entranced eyes off him. I am standing on the far embankment, where the man who lifted the grid stood. I am barefoot. An otter comes towards me. Afraid that he will

bite my small toe I back away. I am sitting on the water, exactly where the confusion of sea zoas rose. Behind me, eyeing me, his vast canyon-coloured mouth agape, and watering for me, is a lizard-like living enormity. Not needing to look around to see him, I see that he is getting voraciously ready to lunge at me and swallow me. His mindless mind made up, he backs back so as to have a better run at me. Fully agape, his mouth a canyon, he charges forward to engulf me but, at the very last moment, as though playing with me, he veers away to the right of me. Backing furiously, he shakes auroras off himself. Showing off he is. He steadies himself. Now again, the canyon his mouth is, I see it, watering for me. He comes at me but, still playing with me, he veers away, this time, at the last moment, to the left of me. That's it, I think, the rehearsals are over. Back at the starting point he positions himself. Gaping as only a canyon at nightfall can, he comes at me. Resigned, I wait. This time, as I expect, there is no veering to left or right. I am engulfed, but somehow I am not swallowed. I open my eyes. I am sitting there, in daylight. Not needing to look, I see that the canyon-mouthed enormity has become a harmless little creature, harmless and shy, going off about his business in a nearby reed bed. I wake up.

A journey along Old Compton Street into what Joseph Conrad might call the heart of human darkness.

A journey up an inner Amazon or Congo into what D.H.Lawrence has called 'that other universe, of the heart of man'.

In a way that Lawrence for the moment doesn't seem to be, Conrad is calmly not hectically alert to the possibility of a frightful outcome. Ascend Old Compton Street or ascend the river, be it the Thames or the Congo, and you are running the risk of ending up as Kurtz did, a demon of the place, enthroned and worshipped.

The verdict on the Christian Light Bringer, the Christian Lucifer, is

The horror The horror !

And yet the dream suggests that the repressing grid can go up and, however great the threat to us, we are in the end not engulfed, not even harmed. It suggests that we can go down into our oldest psychic sea and not only can we settle there, we can flourish from there.

The good news from the psyche itself is this: we don't have to always live superficially, from above the repressing grid. Without risk of harm to ourselves or to others, we can live from the oldest phylogenetic roots of who we are.

It is the humanism of no matter what human being walking along Old Compton street with a karmic digging fork in his or in her hand.

But Conrad is right. We can, like Kurtz, dig our way down into fantastic trouble.

On the way down, what happened to Nebuchadnezzar can happen to us. We can regress to the animal, or worse, to the beast, in us:

The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

We can lift up the repressing grid but only to see the suddenly insurgent id usurp the ego as in prophetic vision it will usurp Idumea:

But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it: the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it-----and thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation for dragons and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there the vultures also shall be gathered, every one with her mate.

A reversal of Freud's hope, that being that where the id is the ego shall be. As for Conrad, he alerts us to the possibility not just of beastly but of demonic usurpation:

The thing was to know what he belonged to, how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own. That was the reflection that made you creepy all over. It was impossible – it was not good for one either – trying to imagine. He had taken a high seat among the devils of the land – I mean literally. You can't understand. How could you? with solid pavement under your feet, surrounded by kind neighbours ready to cheer you or fall on you, stepping delicately between the butcher and the policeman, in holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums – how can you imagine what particular region of the first ages a man's untrammelled feet may take him into by the way of solitude – utter solitude without a policeman – by the way of silence – utter silence, where no warning voice of a kind neighbour can be heard whispering of public opinion? These little things make all the great difference. When they are gone you must fall back on your own innate strength, upon your own capacity for faithfulness. Of course you may be too much of a fool to go wrong – too dull even to know you are being assaulted by the powers of darkness. I take it, no fool ever made a bargain for his soul with the devil: the fool is too much of a fool, or the devil too much of a devil – I don't know which. Or you may be such a thunderingly exalted creature as to be altogether deaf and blind to anything but heavenly sights and sounds. Then the earth for you is only a standing place – and whether to be like this is your loss or your gain I won't pretend to say. But most of us are neither one nor the other. The earth for us is a place to live in, where we must put up with sights and sounds, with smells, too, by Jove – breathe dead hippo so to speak, and not be contaminated.

Over centuries in medieval Europe there was astonished talk about a single spear cast that destroyed a realm. I sometimes think that Conrad's parable is such a spear cast. Not that it has destroyed a realm but how can it not have pierced our confidence in our ability to see to it that there will never again be an Auschwitz. I think of a new Luther who would nail the parable not to a door in Wittenberg but to a door in Brussels, the one behind which Europeans are now devising a constitution for themselves.

Coming as he does from Brussels, Kurtz should be portent.

It has been said of Shelley, the English revolutionary poet, that he was an ineffective angel. It has been said of his work that it lacks greatness because he, its author, lacked a vision of evil. Yet he did say:

O thou who, plumed with strong desire,
Wouldst float above the earth, beware!
A shadow tracks thy flight of fire,
 night is coming.

Thinking of our European flight of fire to a brave new world of our own devising – not only has that flight of fire been shadowed, the shadow has many times overtaken it, has many times engulfed it, pulling it down into Verdun, into the mud of Flanders, into Sophie's choice, into Dresden.

What is this shadow?

Not lacking a vision of evil, it is likely that Conrad would initially say what we have already heard him say:

The mind of man is capable of anything – because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future.

In other words, as Nietzsche discovered, the human mind is Silurian, it is Jurassic, it is Eocene. Or, to say it yet more graphically, the raised up sea-beds of the Grand Canyon in Arizona are the still living, still active, sea-beds of the human psyche.

Notoriously, a German Biologist named Haeckel advanced the now discredited theory that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, meaning that in the womb each one of us undergoes the entire course of evolution all over again. To put it crudely, we evolve from being a tiny protozoan, to being fish, to being amphibian, to being reptile, to being mammal, to being simian, to being human.

A theory discredited by scientists might however have ad hoc value in our efforts to understand ourselves. Certain it is that some of us are born with gills and some with tails. Certain it is that the smell brain of the first mammal is alive and well in us. Also, we only have to part our lips to see our simian dentition, our simian eye-teeth. On the ad hoc assumption that we have indeed emerged through all these evolutionary stages, is it not conceivable that we will sometimes regress to one or another of them, this making us comprehensible to ourselves when we behave like sharks, crocodiles, when we show our teeth as baboons do.

There are Greek myths that know what we aren't always consciously willing to know.

Think of Pasiphae regressed to bovine all- fours.

Think of the Minotaur her bull -chested, bull-headed, bull -natured son. In him all that we phylogenetically are has outcropped more or less all over all that we ontogenetically are.

Think of Actaeon, he a hunter of animals suddenly and overwhelmingly engulfed by the animal in himself. Think of his great antlered head looking down from his chimney breast at his cousin Antigone.

Think of Oedipus: the fins they have evolved from have outcropped in his feet, and that is what has lamed him.

The fin in the feet with which we walk to the Bastille, the fin in the hand with which we write the Communist Manifesto, that is the shadow that tracks our flight of fire. In an intuitive way, Greek myth is on Haechel's side. As European history repeatedly is.

The authors and executors of the French Revolution dismantled a socio-political ancien regime. But what of our inner phylogenetic ancien regime? What of what outcropped in the Minotaur? Quite simply, it took over and ran the show, as it did later in revolutionary Russia.

Will the Minotaur sing our Marseillaise with us?

Will Nebuchadnezzar regressed sing our Hymn of Joy with us?

In his efforts to describe the enormities of the spermwhale, Ishmael called out, give me a condor's quill for a writing pen and Mount Vesuvius for an inkpot.

Similarly, when we come to write our revolutionary handouts, shouldn't we, remembering guillotine and Gulag, write them with an eagle quill moulted by Nebuchadnezzar, he who was King of Kings and Lord of Lords but who also, regressed to all-fours, did eat grass as oxen.

While what Conrad says implies the possibility of such regression he doesn't overtly talk about it. He talks rather about demonic possession. Not so much that. More alarmingly still, he talks about a man, a citizen of Brussels, who became a devil.

A modern European, heir to successive enlightenments, no fool, and yet, there he very visibly is, believing in powers of darkness, in demonic agencies, in devils, in human devils, in devils in human form – how can this cultural throwback be anything but a scandal?

The question is: how anomalous is he to Europe in recent times?

In these same recent times we are in the habit of saying that evil is banal. The choice Sophie is forced to make isn't however banal. Not to her, not to her children.

If nothing else, recent European history is both an opportunity and a demand to estimate ourselves anew.

One thing is sure: we will repeat history if we continue to make history on and from the assumptions of an inadequate anthropology.

Turning into Old Compton Street in the dream, we graduated from an anthropic to a deinanthropic experience of ourselves. But how secure are we in this graduation?

Are we fooling ourselves in thinking that it is a graduation? Samuel Beckett has said that progress is in depth. Have we in this dream progressed in depth? Can we, by consciously re-enacting it, habituate ourselves to all that we are below the repressing grid? The grid gone up, can we live from the roots of who we are? Can we devise a culture that will enable us to flourish from the roots of who we are?

Are such hopes delusions? One thing is sure: any part of the human psyche that isn't coming with us isn't behind us, it is ahead of us, waiting to trip us up.

Boehme again:

In man is all whatsoever the sun shines upon or
heaven contains, also hell and all the deeps.

How can we legislate for such a being? How can such a being not be at odds with culture, no matter how hospitable? What hearing if any will the hell in us give to Pericles and Pico? What hearing if any will the deeps in us give to the Beatitudes?

Be it our smell brain or our reptile brain, is there in us something that will always be recalcitrant to culture ?

Speaking to him out of a whirlwind, the answer his God guided Job to is, yes:

Canst thou draw out Leviathan with an hook ? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down ? Canst thou put an hook into his nose ? or bore his jaw through with a thorn ? Will he make many supplications unto thee ? Will he make a covenant with thee ? Wilt thou take him for a servant forever ? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird ? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens ? Shall the companions make a banquet of him ? Shall they part him among the merchants ? Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons ? or his head with fish spears ? Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more. Behold, the hope of him is in vain....

The hope of Leviathan in vain. And the inwardness that outcropped in the Minotaur and that engulfed Actaeon, the hope of that in vain. And this God's answer to a man who has been broken down into his deinanthropic enormities, a man who, in the course of his forced disintegration into deinanthropus, cries out:

When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams and terrifiest me through visions, so that my soul chooseth strangling and death rather than my life.

A spirit passed before my face and the hair of my flesh stood up.

Hell is naked before me and destruction hath no covering.

I am a brother to dragons and a companion to owls.

Only to be told in the end that his reptile brain will not sing his Psalms of Ascent with him.

What then of the dream ?

Dare we believe that it has found a way for us ?

Dare we believe that, although it will threaten to engulf us, our reptile brain is in the end amenable to amelioration ? Look at it, how shy it is, how harmless it is, going about it's business among reeds at the edge of our oldest psychic sea. Hindus assure us that below what is oldest in us is what is immortal in us, is what is eternal in us.

What is immortal in us they call atman, what is eternal in us they call Brahman.

Going further, they assure us that Atman is Brahman, Brahman being the Eternal Divine that grounds all things. It grounds them not just by being floor to them. It grounds them everywhich way, from above, from below, from within, from without. All that we are, wherever we are, however we are, it grounds.

So there we have it - - - the humanism of turning into Old Compton Street and walking along it with a karmic digging fork in our hand.

The humanism of letting our nature happen to us.

The humanism of living, of flourishing, from Eternal Brahman in us.

The humanism of being willing to let our humanity dissolve into Eternal Brahman in us.

Meister Eckhart describes this final transition:

Comes then the soul into the unclouded light of God. It is transported so far from creaturehood into nothingness that, of its own powers, it can never return to its senses and faculties or its former creaturehood. Once there, God shelters the soul's nothingness with his uncreated essence, safeguarding its creaturely existence. The soul has dared to become nothing, and cannot pass from its own being into nothingness and back again, losing its own identity in the process, except God safeguarded it. This must needs be so.

Now again, this time in fancy, I travel by train with Lorna and Sara, my godchildren, to a dinosaur exhibition in the zoo in Dublin. I am happy for them to come back and find me in the Cretaceous, to lead me forward through thirty million years into the Jurassic, all the way in to where he red-roaringly stands, the Tyrant himself, tall enough to look in at them asleep in their first-floor bedroom back in Connemara.

Coming home in the train, in a continuing fancy, I look at them, at Sara and Lorna, across a Mesozoic savannah, and I wonder both ways: what if the dream lied? but, altogether more challengingly, what if it didn't?

What if humanity is possible?

Taking in a yet deeper breath of Jurassic air, I ask

What if humanity is deinanthropically possible?

What if we can be who we are,

Deinanthropus?

Assuming that we can be, it is, I believe, a desirable ambition only within the providential care of a religion great enough to meet our need. That Christianity can be as great as we would deinanthropically need it to be I have no doubt. Let me say why.

To be deinanthropus is to be natively and almost infinitely available to immanence. It is to be natively and almost infinitely available to transcendence.

Now I speak of Jesus.

From the moment he crossed the Torrent, Jesus lived and was lived by this double availability as one simultaneous availability. Moreover, it was consciously, as microcosm, in Boehme's sense, that he lived and was lived by it. Saying the least we can say about this, it is the next big event in the evolution of our planet since the origin of DNA. And I can imagine nothing better for ourselves as we microcosmically are and for the earth in all its geological ages, past and to come, than that it would become encoded as a permanent evolutionary attainment in our DNA. A hope not so fantastic as it would at first sight seem when we think that metamorphosis has become genetically encoded in insects. Relevant here is something J.B.S.Haldane has said:

It is my suspicion that the universe isn't only
queerer than we suppose, it is queerer than we
can suppose.

Queer and improbable things can happen in it and to it. But, be that as it may.
Coming back from the liberalities of science fiction, there he is, Gerald Manley
Hopkins telling us that man is no-man-fathomed man.
Listening to the Passion narratives, as Holderlin listened to Sophoclean tragedy, I
think I hear, I am sure I hear that man, in the gender inclusive sense, is being man-
fathomed. A Christian, I think I hear, I am sure I hear, that man is being redemptively
Godman fathomed.
Let us look at ourselves.
Let us look at

Godman-fathomed humanity

Let us look at a wonder neither seen nor foreseen by the prophets and sybils of the
Sistine ceiling, neither seen nor foreseen therefore by Renaissance humanism -
let us look at

Deinanthropus

In the beginning, Goethe said, was the deed.

What Jesus undertook to do and undergo is, I believe, an originating deed.
Given a chance, and with our good will, it would, I believe, generate a culture that
would accommodate us as we have never previously been accommodated. Wouldn't
only accommodate us as an accomplished ontological fact of course. Would
religiously and ritually accommodate us all the way into our further and final
evolution.

If it wasn't offensive because presumptuous, I would, here in this museum, invite us
all to embark on a Kon-Tiki voyage from the humanism of being human to the
humanism of being who we are

Deinanthropus

Godman-fathomed Deinanthropus