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A Spider in my Room

Or Some Preliminaries for a Meditation on Wisdom and Hate

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This paper is a sequel to my earlier one on the Bee archetype (Soidla, 1998). In a personal mythology of the author, the Spider archetype embraces the Wisdom of individual mind facing the eternal Thou, but it also embraces another pole—of racist, sexist and xenophobic tendencies culminating in the practices of national-socialism. The author suggests that the ambivalence of Archetypes might be better understood by viewing them as continuums of increasing ignorance. Our minds are inclined to a pre/trans fallacy of short-circuiting the two ends of archetypal continuums. The fallacy, applied to Bee and Spider archetypes, has resulted in such popular myths as spiritual guys from the KGB or FBI, “Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain,” Nazi contacts with Tibet, and secret Nazi laboratories in the Antarctic.

Introduction

A LARGE HAIRY spider is moving along the floor of my room, communicating a feeling of being sure, competent—why not tell the truth about my 50% modern and 50% “savage” mind, about being tabooed. People in my country often say that spiders bring good luck and so one is not supposed to kill them. Or rather just that killing a spider will take one’s good luck away. I feel that I have a kind of additional, private reverence towards them. Something that is important within me seems to be at the same time hidden in these small individualists of corners. (Russian folktales speak of Kashchei—the deathless one—whose life is secured outside of his body, in a matryoshka doll-like sequence of carriers [containers]. Looking at spiders I feel a bit like Kashchei looking at one of the carriers of his life.)

I wrote earlier about the Bee archetype (Soidla, 1998)—an entity of the world of my personal mythology archetypes (Feinstein & Krippner, 1988), that in most cases acted like a mature universal myth engram that long ago left its Pure Land of the Timeless (Soidla, 1995a). It seemed to carry a

lot of my negative burden, a part of my (and my country’s) heritage, and at the same time be prone to be saved—as my sister and brother—with my Realization. In my individual memory space, the Spider archetype was as if more pure. But I understand that the dark part of the same archetype was no less dangerous than the Bee archetype, only my life story did not contact most of the dark destructive Spider forces. I see clearly enough the “inner mycelium,” the potential negative power of this archetype in me. Yes, the darker versions of both Spider and Bee archetypes seem to serve as vehicles of the Mind space destined to recognize, visualize, deal with, and maybe ultimately, carry away my (and my country’s) negative experience. At the same time, brighter parts of these archetypes serve as instruments of original purity. Spider has often served as a reminder of Wisdom for me. And this is the way I usually perceive this archetype.

Working with the contents of this paper, I recognized what a great amount of personal material has gathered around the Spider archetype in me. I would like to begin my tale—no hurry, spiders peering at me from dark corners of memory.

Alas! Again and again it feels as if on the way to my room I caught a gossamer flying in the air and searched in vain to find the end of its fine thread. Hopeless. One can only carefully turn it over and over on one's palm. There seems to be no right way to start this story, so let's be content with some inevitable artificiality in the text that follows. Let's start with what is as if most remote from the original story.

Leaving the dark corner. Opening dusty files of speculation.

I SAY SPIDER, and in the space of my rational mind this means creating a Whole (a Plenum of Memory based on many scattered memory molecules—macromolecular linear matrices. Most contemporary theories do not involve any macromolecular linear matrices, and hence—no Spider.

The most serious problem in my model of memory coding (Soidla, 1995a) is certainly the following: How is the total picture of past events reconstructed using the memory records of the Plenum of Memory recording cells? I have no answer to this question and can only say that I limit my model only to the most elementary hypothetical acts of memory recording and try to show some metaphysical implications of this simple biochemical hypothesis. But also I take a step further and propose that memory recording means not only recording all the minute events, but, at the same time—on a higher level—also editing some preexisting human life story. This means that there exists an inherited human life story engram molecule that is consequently edited during diurnal recording/editing cycles (possibly this molecule is even “individualized” in a sense that immunoglobulin molecules are “individualized” due to cycles of recombination/mutation events). This is because I feel that some biochemistry of “editing” must take part in the process of memory recording. But how would it be possible if memory recording proceeds in a large amount of postulated memory recording cells? (They are supposed just to register firing/rest patterns of neurons at some 40 Hz.) How can these obviously different records all come to be related to some unedited human life story engram? Once more I have no answer, but suppose that the unknown answers to these two questions are closely related and both

refer to some integrative molecular “Spider” function.

I suppose that this problem (let's call it, in an informal way, a problem of universal code of “molecular shorthand”) can be approached if memory recording cells consist of a rather special subset of neurons (or neuron contacting cells) conforming to certain rules. Rules of development and the resulting geometry of the network imply a fractal-like repeating pattern of different levels connecting and relating different memory recording cells and corresponding types of engrams. This hypothetical “Spider” function connects the individual cells to the overall picture. As a result some “summary” of brain activity is derived during recording and is communicated to every memory recording cell in a way translatable in this cell. This means that some information of what is taking place in the whole Brain is communicated to every memory recording cell—most likely in several different ways—and in several separate steps this information reaches its full amount at the time when the main editing steps will take place. It is due to this integrative, spider-like, holographic, and so on, function that the prerecorded memory text makes sense in every memory recording cell. (As above so below: It was said long ago.)

This means just that I believe in my hypothetical biochemistry of memory, and in a most shameless way suppose that if there remain great gaps in this hypothesis—the Brain must be just organized exactly so as to allow it all to work and to make seemingly unfitting elements to fit each other. I can attempt to restate it in somewhat different words that will possibly add something to the above that will make sense to some readers. I suppose that there exists a most interesting functional Spider that: (1) connects brain development from DNA level to overall geometry of the Brain; (2) is involved in integrating the neural activity from every single neuron level to an overall picture of consciousness; and (3) compresses the overall picture of neural activity to a very compact summary that is recorded in all memory recording cells during a recording/editing cycle and is used as a key for total memory reconstruction. Or rather there are three highly overlapping functions integrating brain development, consciousness, and memory respectively. (To put it in mythological terms—a Spider is built of three

Moiras.) This can mean that the paradox implied in my biochemical ideas is possibly a constructive one—pointing to some real key points of Brain function.

The Spider of the above speculations is a curious insect inhabiting mostly my rational mind. Essentially a form-in-formless, it is nevertheless sometimes visualized in dreams (see below) as a most curious “hybrid structure” of the rational and visual (of “idea and icon”).

Another dusty file of speculations...this time in a more metaphysical key. The timeless speaks in the language of one's life story.

HOW CAN a message pass from one State (Mode, Level) of Consciousness to another cardinally different one? I suppose that this happens mainly via the editing pathway, and involves generating hybrid structures of associative memory engrams. So even high messages can be made understandable, but at the expense of growing “too human.” Isn't it so? Everyday-consciousness is trained in several ways (riddles, deciphering dreams, understanding oracles, etc.) to restore some approximation to the “original communication”—to make a reasonable translation from the language of hybrid structures. A lot is lost at this pathway even in the best case. (What about the hybrid structures in a dream of reincarnation? Some day I'll return to this question.)

As a result, one can say that the Timeless reaches us usually via a message of hybrid structure being edited by one's life story and highly personalized forms of universal myths...or alternatively it reaches one via Silence.

A more specific hypothesis is that after uniting (fusing) editors of in-time and timeless parts of memory (“first” and “second” editors) one gets better access to the Timeless silence. Messages of the awakened (self-realized) one use not only the old vocal cords but also the old editing machinery that by now is possibly greatly simplified of all the self-sustaining crap—but still not quite rid from all the remnants of one's life story.

The above can feel like it is not so important at all. It deals with the questions my rational mind asks me—about something that transcends this rational mind. Let's only remind ourselves that to deal with all that was mentioned above, there

is one simple and radical way—to turn towards Silence, Source, Self-Realization.

Spiders, Moiras, Crystals, Individualities.

I THINK—what do I honor in Spider? (Certainly I honor him/her.) A human answer is that I honor individuality. Yes, possibly this. Spiders are most impressive in their independence, involvement of individual strategical construction works, and feeling of power and some danger. But with Spider there is always the feeling that something much deeper is involved: Moiras, constructors of one's fate...(Hence the good luck story?) Yes, and it feels like it is based not just on superficial associations but on some deeper underlying structures. And look even at the surface level—the polygonal webs—created by spiders that tend towards polyhedra! They are like Crystals that we humans feel special affinity, reverence, awe to; made of a transparent, adamant, unchangeable substance—as if of something very basic (or made of energy as some of us see it). Crystals seem to be some way involved in the Spider archetype.

Multidimensional mind of M. [or whose?] in my dream.

A BIT HUMILIATING, but most revealing, was one of my dream experiences as if showing me the mind of M., my wife's former husband. It was something very complex, clearly more than 3-dimensional, immensely powerful—perceived both by seeing and some deep intuition of its functioning—I was independent and at the same time as if switched to this Mind's workings. Something powerful and pointing towards higher dimensions in this image was taken from a Crystal image, something most positive and full of superhuman wisdom of Another from a Spider and something immensely potent and functional from a Computer. These components were blended in the image that felt not composite or artificial, but most natural, impressive, and unique. I agree that in creating this powerful image my own mind was working along the lines of my own inner conflicts. But how magnificent was the resulting construct. It filled me with awe before the potential of that Mind—whatever the ways of realization of this potential in the physical world. And the multidimensional

mensional polyhedron—a thinking crystal—was a dominant visual image of all this.

In the Spider's [Rama's] Room. Awe and recognition of wisdom's space in the everyday life—baseline consciousness world. Ramana line—the Papaji's advice I needed.

THE RAMANA Maharshi line—in spite of being felt as a line unquestionably leading towards the highest spiritual level, was as if not connected with my life story. Everything about Ramana felt most important, highest—and at the same time strangely abstract, not related to my everyday reality. When I first read *Talks* (1972) with Sri Ramana Maharshi, I felt most of the text to be just a story of a different cultural reality. His basic idea felt clear to me, but just not practically applicable—being too “athletic.” (I had a kind of “spiritual athletics” in my mind: stepping up by a staircase designed for giants, not for ordinary people.) Accordingly, what Sri Ramana said seemed just to be rather superficial spiritual chat, punctuated happily by humorous provocative proposals to the visitors attempting to take his impossible highest Spiritual way—a kind of great Indian joke but not too relevant to my spiritual quest. No dreams, no synchronicities. What remained for many years after was a strange feeling that he is a human being of special importance for me. But then...what seemed gray was transformed to a festive rainbow-colored hue. By now I am taking Sri Ramana classes led by the very able Dr. Oleg Mogilever (OM). The same *Talks* (1972) are now full of significance, all life and meaning, “all eyes” to say it in a somewhat surrealistic way—but one that feels like a most true expression for it. Still it remains a matter of occasional stumbling. One day, OM asked me to translate a message by the late Papaji, Sri Ramana's now-famous pupil (Jackson-Bear, 1992–1993). Translation is not my best ability—it usually exposes the low level of my command of expressive possibilities of both English and Russian. I'll sit to translate with OM and then certainly will be soon stopped by something quite trivial but unknown to me. Impossible! Ego passionately rattled the sack of all my foul “vasanas”—having a quarter of an hour or so of a very good time. OM translated it himself, and during one of our meet-

ings read it to us. Yes, his words had directly to do with my own personal problems of this moment. Its very wording was directly aimed at my problems. And spiritual sense was implied as in parables—as a second level of the text. This was the way other people heard it. I listened also to the “naked” message of the first, everyday life level. And it made perfect sense to me! It was a wonder of communication. The next step was finding that it was not so easy to follow this everyday-level advice: as often happens his advice seemed to be against my very common sense. But I tried it and it worked! Yes, this was an absolute, mysterious, detailed fit, a demonstration of real compassionate Wisdom in action. (Possibly I sound a bit Indian here?)

Wisdom I knew. Wisdom as mother, wisdom as another. A Teacher of Reverence. T.S. & S. Who is the important long-legged hairy banana-spider of our common commedia dell'arte? Wisdom is Freedom is Source. On one's Family—lost and regained. The guardian Spirit possibly waiting.

SRI RAMANA'S and possibly also Papaji's wisdom in my Personal Myth resonates with definitely superphysical chords, with something that belongs to deep structures behind the physical reality itself, including all the compartments or dimensions of it. But before I really felt it all, I was slowly prepared for this lesson by being challenged by different layers of a strangely “another” wisdom, sometimes filling me with awe and humility. I even think that up to 30 years or so my baseline mind was deaf towards some 99% of real wisdom. A.V. (see Soidla, 1995b) was the first one to show me the workings of some definitely “another” mind, belonging—to borrow a metaphor from contemporary science—as if to some other world behind a black hole. Now the feeling is greatly worn out—but I remember what I felt those days. It really shook up my World. There was more to it than I had ever supposed. Then there was the feeling of greatness of the mind of M. in my dreams—but in a way this was a “nearly another,” maybe “another” in sense of some scenic great vistas of “our” cosmos, multidimensional but understandable. At the same time, just in this case, I was able to feel the immense power of a superb mind in some, say, computational sense...This feeling of contacting a “supercomputer”

was not so obviously present in other cases. There are still other cases, as if closer to me and still in some curious sense “out of my reach.” Say, for example, the case of my friend S. A hairy, slim, banana spider he is, having a mysterious power to help many different people. We have worked together on some projects while remaining at different sides of the globe. To say I treasure these contacts is an understatement. This story is not finished yet, and sometimes I feel sure that if the level of my everyday consciousness will not improve considerably (towards being in real touch with Self and Wisdom), S. will be the very focus of a baffling next lesson Consciousness will teach me. Thank You, Consciousness, for Your patience! Thank You, S.!

One can think in terms of adding new layers of wisdom to one’s understanding, to one’s individual Mind—as I did it above. Less and less room remains for ignorance, confusion, hate. So it is—and so it isn’t. One grows aware of the limitation of the above approach. I have learned how Wisdom that is “taken in” feeds spiritual materialism, is in a way largely converted to something different—say, knowledge. Wisdom is unlimited and with the growth of one’s knowledge and expertise one often grows more and more aware of the remaining cosmos of Wisdom. This is a trivial thing to read about, but impressive when felt with one’s whole being. On the Ultimate level—the only level that really counts—Wisdom is Wisdom only when it is Whole Wisdom. (That means being Freedom, being Self.) Only being with Source opens one to Wisdom, carries one beyond the paradoxes. Self-realization is the way to Wisdom, Atman, Self, Source.

Back to S. I have been told that Guardian spirits know of one’s possible return to some places. Yes? Not? Keep silence. Family members know of coming meetings and separations. Source knows of always being with us. (But must one use the limited word “knowledge” here?)

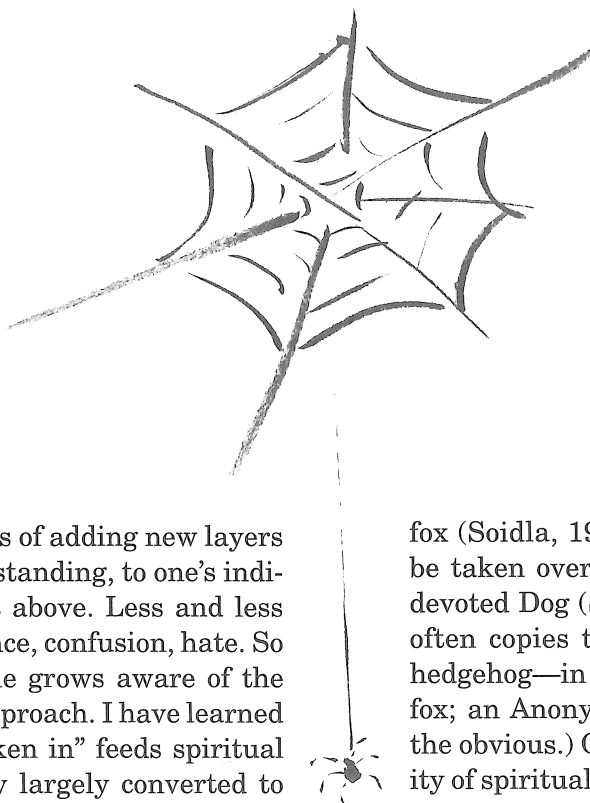
A hedgehog with red tail in the webs of wisdom and hate.

I AM WRITING all these words about wisdom and other nice things and at the same time I know that Wisdom is a thing I have not mastered in this life. I can build clever systems, but they have always turned out to be not quite related to reality. I can impress people—but some quality of real competence is lacking. All the gaps in my knowledge keep reminding me of themselves exactly in the very moments I feel quite sure of myself. Of course, many people can honestly report just the same, but still—who am I to speak about other people...or about Wisdom? And still my first answer to the question “Who am I?...” is: I am a cunning Fox who tries to be an honest

fox (Soidla, 1995b); who even can honestly be taken over by a feeling of being a most devoted Dog (Soidla, 1996); who envies and often copies the ways of both badger and hedgehog—in a way a negation of the idea of fox; an Anonymous Fox. (One cannot deny the obvious.) One just admits this foxy quality of spiritual materialism (Trungpa, 1987).

One of course attempts also saying it one way or another—but one cannot really transcend one’s foxy nature before Self-Realization.

So I recognize the veil of ignorance around the farther—not too distant—reaches of my wisdom. On the other hand, there is an another end as if on the same continuum—hosting blind hate and potential violence against “enemies” of the kind of “digested” wisdom that I automatically honor, against real expressions of religious convictions that feel distant from me. Yes, I am prone to reactions of irrational hate towards things I do not understand, do not know. This often takes place in public transportation—in too close contact with too many different, other people; or when meeting people of certain national and social minorities acting in ways that seem not to be acceptable to me: rather aggressively asking for alms, or involved



in some obviously not too legal business. I grow just stiff...How I hate them all in these brief moments—some seconds or minutes before returning to normality again. Well, I will just relate one relatively innocent but—for me—quite important story along these lines. In a streetcar in Tallinn, I heard upset voices, and then a young boy ran towards me. My reaction was instant. Some way I found myself standing up and giving a punch to the boy who was trying to escape from an enraged, older woman. You possibly cannot believe it, but the boy managed to stop in his flight and to say to me—“What are You doing? You just don’t know anything”—and resuming his pace of a flying hare, he fled the streetcar just few steps ahead of the woman. “You don’t know”—the right words were spoken! How thick can my ignorance grow? and to what actions can this ignorance lead me! Ignorance implies hate. Yes, this was my vision of Burning Babe—this timeless running boy—who half-opened if not “my eyes” then certainly some unconscious whole personality reactions of mine towards something important and healing.

The Totalitarian Bee—The Totalitarian Spider—Looking for the other side of the familiar coin. Diseases of collective and individual psyche.

TOTALITARIAN IS not compatible with total individualism, but it can allow for a limited “as if” individualism—to allow one to act out one’s phobias and aggressive impulses (maybe a bit channeled according to State interests) in a legally safe environment. I do really know only one realization of the idea of Totalitarian State—one that I witnessed for 45 years or so. But I also remember something of another totalitarian state. Having been born in 1939, I seem to keep some memories of the time when my native Estonia was occupied by Nazi troops during WWII. Something of the spider qualities seems to associate with this time. Maybe this emerges as a visual association with the swastika—but even the very postures of the Nazi leaders of those days seem to be spider-like—or to imitate the swastika—according to the photos of these days. To say it other way—Spider was present in the very style that permeated half of Europe those years. Of course, there are the political cartoons and pamphlets of postwar years—yes, they must be partially responsible for

my imagery (both visual and fake-visual), but they themselves borrowed something from the hybrid structures of human collective psyche. Being safely vulgarized, these images are still powerful signatures of this state of mass psyche, still attempting to communicate some important truths. Killing Giant Bee (KGB) and Sanguineous Spider (SS)—dangerous, dark, ignorance-colored versions of important human archetypes. So are they labeled in my Memory repositories.

When compared with the 45 or so years I lived under communist rule, my memories of the “another totalitarianism” are rather scarce—I was only 5 years old when WWII ended. Later, as a youngster, I found a lot of newspapers published during the Nazi occupation of my native Estonia—in a hidden box in the home we lived in. It was forbidden reading in those communist years, and so in a way, attractive—but still I remember how nauseating was the feeling of Nazi propaganda of these former years—an unwanted parallel and still so clearly different realization of Lie and Hate of the postwar years in the Soviet Union. There was no time to analyze. But I was old enough to understand that this stuff had to be destroyed, and so I did not protest the decision of my parents.

Basic Archetypes as Continuums. The effect of increasing ignorance.

ONE CAN say that Archetypes are ambivalent and this is certainly true. But many things are more clear if we visualize Archetypes as continuums. This has helped me to understand my own complicated relations with Bee and Spider. One can imagine two continuums of increasing ignorance: one of them, guided by the Bee archetype, starts at the deep-level principle of form, passes unconscious links cementing group psyche—then, together with rising ignorance, comes at last to the dangerous practices of communist governments. Second one—starting from wisdom of individual mind facing eternal Thou, proceeds along the path of darkening ignorance to the other pole where it materializes in a host of racist, sexist, and xenophobic tendencies, culminating in the practices of national-socialism. (I suppose that Nazi practice is a short-lived fruiting body on the underground long-living mycelium of

xenophobic and racist emotions.) Of course, the national and international (communist) versions of socialism were so ultimately hostile and at the same time borrowing from each other, intertwined—and still for me they remain separate—guarded by different emblematic figures of Killer Bee and Slayer Spider.

One way to see the workings of this psychological machinery appears when we follow some of its deeply rooted mistakes. There is a popular tendency to fancy a Uruboros-like convergence between the ends of each of these continuums. Yes! All dualities are indeed transcended in realizing Self (Source). I have felt it for very short times. But the instinct for self-realization grows usually misplaced in the complex world of ours (in the world of Maya and Mara). As a result, we attempt imitating the overcoming of dualities on a wrong level. What results is a version of the pre/trans fallacies so lucidly described by Wilber (1980). This is a crazy thing, but what is important is that this indicates the existence of some real deep structures corresponding to these continuums in our psyche. So the repeated attempts of our minds to short-circuit the two above continuums are clearly behind the contemporary popular myths of all the very spiritual guys from KGB or FBI, “Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain,” Nazi contacts with Tibet at end of WWII, and secret Nazi laboratories in the Antarctic—whatever the reality behind each of these pop-myths. Popular imagery is as great in pointing at right things—as it is usually misleading in its conclusions.

In the above passage I didn’t want to state that spiritual people cannot have existed or still exist in the KGB or FBI etc. etc. What I was saying is that we seem to *need* them to exist (and in most unlikely ways). This need shapes and distorts the stories and creates a pressure to believe in most silly pieces of this kind of stuff. Am I to add that this need is greatly exploitable, and hence potentially most dangerous—proportionally to totalitarian tendencies in a given society?

But I must stop here, as I am not able to say much about the negative end of the Spider archetypal continuum—especially if compared with the Giant Bee archetype (Soidla, 1998). I can only hope not to be forced to gain more expertise along these lines. Alas, our country feels not so stable a place as to exclude this possibility.

I feel tired with all the fighting of the dark ignorance-loaded principles of Bee and Spider in my Memory. They have approached me both in the World and in my own mind. Possibly the difference is not so great. I try to forget Killing Giant Bee and Sanguineous Spider. (I know that the only radical way to do it is...you know what.) Must I add that I honor both the principles of Bee and Spider that grow more and more radiant with lifting the veil of Ignorance? I cannot stop gliding on the continuum—in this way or another. The brighter end at least shows up for some moments and allows me to feel the greater truly majestic picture. Yes! Self-Realization, only this makes the real difference...So I tell myself once more—in words I have gotten from compassionate Sri Ramana (and Papaji) and that the fleeting contacts with the Source have confirmed.

We’ll overcome these blocks when we’ll have no need to do it. (Any sense in a sentence like this?)

ONE LIVES in a polyhedron (or Hoffmannian magical bottle if one prefers it this way) of sweet limitations/possibilities (both the same and opposed to each other). And there comes a time to break the bottles (and quite likely being wounded during this stage). This means once more to start (rather resume) searching for other realities that turn into new illusions, as one will recognize—again and again. Wisdom means to understand the polyhedron, the room. No, it means to understand Oneself. Simply Self, Atman, Brahman, Source. This means to transcend illusion and ignorance.

Remembering it in everyday life, yes!—one sees it as if in a mirror, as if through a misty glass... Once more one waits in the world of the bottle, one breaks the bottle, sails the waters.

How slowly Wisdom of Source blends with my everyday understanding. Maybe not blend, better say penetrate, transform. Many illusions are created on this way, yes. The most basic one possibly involves the very idea of transformation. One *is* with Source or one isn’t. The gradations of everyday consciousness do not have anything to do with this Master story of one’s life. Yes! And no! I feel a slow transformation is taking place. And—I listened to myself—it doesn’t feel unrelated to my contacts with Source. But yes—how good it

would be to forget it at the moment of final irreversible merging. This is the way I feel about it today.

The Wisdom-in-the-Source.—In Thy silence.

... ..

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