

## CHAPTER 4

### *The New Age*

**B**Y THE BEGINNING of the 1920s Mitrinović had resolved to make London the base for the life work that lay ahead. What he lacked was a means of communicating his ideas and his vision of world reconstruction to a wider audience than those friends and acquaintances that had gathered around him.

During this period one of the most influential media of communication was *The New Age* under its editor A. R. Orage. It was, according to Hugh MacDiarmid, 'the most brilliant journal that has ever been written in English, and small though its circulation was it reached all the liveliest minds in Great Britain.'<sup>1</sup> According to another commentator *The New Age* was 'an unparalleled arena of cultural and political debate' during the period of Orage's editorship between 1908 and 1922.<sup>2</sup> As such, the weekly and the circle of intellectuals associated with it represented a natural attraction for one such as Mitrinović who believed he had something to offer the world and who had always stressed the seminal impact that could be exerted on others by the highest minds.

It was Paul Selver who introduced him to Orage and his circle shortly after their first meeting in Fulham. Orage was convinced of the need to stimulate and co-ordinate the abilities of his contributors as part of his attempt to make the weekly a periodical which would mediate between specialised fields of knowledge: politics, art, literature, economics, philosophy. To this end he held literary and political gatherings where he would introduce the contributors to each other. Regular Monday afternoon meetings were held at the ABC Restaurant in Chancery Lane. There were also weekly discussions at the Kardomah Café in Fleet Street and lunches at

the Sceptre Restaurant, with the Café Royal frequently acting as the rendezvous for evening sessions. Amongst those who attended such gatherings during the pre-war years were G. K. Chesterton, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, S. G. Hobson, Beatrice Hastings, A. E. Randall, J. M. Kennedy, Katherine Mansfield, Ezra Pound, Ramiro de Maeztu and T. E. Hulme. In later years they were replaced or supplemented by Edwin Muir, Herbert Read, Janko Lavrin and Philip Mairet. Upton Sinclair and Augustus John were also occasional visitors.

Undoubtedly, to many of his new associates, Mitrinović appeared as a strange and eccentric 'Central European', just one more exile with strange ideas seeking refuge and a 'following' in London. At the same time he succeeded in captivating many of the talented people gathered around the weekly publication, even if they had only the vaguest notion of what it was that motivated him. Philip Mairet has provided a detailed description of Mitrinović as he appeared to the intellectuals and artists meeting in the cafés and coffee houses during this period.

He had the intensity of consciousness, the immediate intuition, of those few individuals whose instinctive, emotional and intellectual centres work in unison ... Physically, he was of the splendid type and proportions one so often sees in the Dalmatian and Bosnian peasantry of his forebears. The forehead was not remarkably high, but the cranium was highly domed and the back of the head rather flat. The fine, dark eyes set wide apart never struck me as truly 'hypnotic,' they had the watchful look one often sees in those born under Scorpio – Goethe, for instance. It was the mouth, of a singularly perfect form that was his organ of power; the mouth of a poet and orator. The winning beauty of his smile was in strange contrast with a fortunately rare but startlingly discordant laugh; but the weight and seriousness of his inexhaustible exhortations was often relieved by a gentle, ingenious humour. To people of all kinds and conditions he had an easy and engaging approach: cabmen and charwomen responded to his charm as readily as businessmen, artists or intellectuals. Provoked to self-defence he could be formidable ... Yet it was in Mitrinović that more than a few broken or depressed individuals felt they had their one perfect experience of Christ-like love and understanding. He had, in fact, that *abundance of being* that a number of recent writers have sought to convey in their recollections of Gurdjieff ... Widely unlike in character and destiny as the two men were, both were distinguished

from everybody one had met before by what I might call a higher magnitude of humanity.<sup>3</sup>

An insight into the life and style of Mitrinović during the immediate post-war years in London can be obtained from the memoirs and autobiographies of his contemporaries. Amongst these were the Muirs, Edwin and Willa, who had moved in 1919 from Scotland to London where Edwin was working three days a week in *The New Age* office as Orage's assistant. In her memoir Willa Muir recollected the lively times they had with Mitrinović.

(Mitrinović) ... was a source of joy to us when he came visiting at 13 Guildford Street. After discovering that empty beer bottles were as good as currency, since we exchanged them for coppers at the corner pub, he never arrived without two quart bottles of beer crammed into the pockets of his frockcoat, which, from the look of it, served as dressing-gown as well as calling kit. He would appear about six o'clock, saying that he had an urgent appointment at seven, but at ten or eleven o'clock he would still be sitting beside our fireplace entrancing us with his speculations – the evolution of Sex, for instance, through various grades of animals. We finished up, I remember, with Pan-Man, Sex harmonious. As for Scorpio, why was *he* set in the zodiac as the sign of Sex? Because he made an effort of will and turned himself Inside Out with one great convulsion, and so the vertebrates were born.

This brand of nonsense was novel to us and we enjoyed it hugely. Mitrinović made a plummy mouthful of every word he used. He did not say: Albion, he said: 'All-bion, Word of Mystery, Name of Strength.' Feeling gay, he would imitate Serbian bagpipes with zest. The only thing that irked him was the success of Ouspensky, his rival as a seer, and behind Ouspensky, farther away but more menacing, the magnetic force of Gurdjieff. Too many clever men in London, he complained, were throwing up their jobs and migrating to Fontainebleau because Gurdjieff had promised that he could raise into full bloom the merest bud of a soul. Yet after melancholy shakings of the head Mitrinović would then gurgle with laughter and cry: 'London is Looney-bin, no?'. He had an eye for a pretty woman, too; he told us that Ezra Pound's wife was like a cherry tree. We found him an entertaining companion because he was such an egregious nonsense-monger, which, we suspected, he was aware of himself.<sup>4</sup>

Edwin Muir was to recall similar scenes – the arrival with the beer bottles under each arm and then the endless talk 'about the universe, the creation of the animals, the destiny of man, the nature of Adam Kadmon, the influence of the stars, the objective science

of criticism ... and a host of other things which I have since forgotten.<sup>5</sup>

There is, in both the accounts of the Muirs, especially Willa's, more than a hint that whilst they found him stimulating and hugely entertaining, they also felt there was something crankish about him, something of the poseur. Janko Lavrin, a friend of Mitrinović's during this period, was later to describe his fellow Slav as a man with a 'home-made messiah complex', concerned to be a saviour rather than to save anyone.<sup>6</sup> However, in those post-war years in London the intellectual kinship and friendship between the two men, strengthened no doubt by their shared status as exiles, was extremely close. It was Lavrin, later to be appointed Professor of Slavonic Languages at Nottingham University, who was instrumental in introducing Mitrinović to intellectual and artistic circles in the capital beyond those of *The New Age*, including members of the 'Bloomsbury Set' who used to meet at a studio in 8 Fitzroy Street. The studio was shared between Frank Slade, a painter, and Valerie Cooper, a musician who taught dance and eurhythmics.

Valerie Cooper died at the age of 81 in 1965. Some time in the 1950s, however, she jotted down some notes of her life at Fitzroy Street and of her early encounters with Mitrinović, who she referred to as D.M. He made an immediate and powerful impression on her, and they were to become life-long friends, associates and intimate companions.

I first met D. M. about June 1919. Janko Lavrin, who had spoken frequently to me of him as a strong and gifted man – 'but somewhat erratic' – (all this by implication rather than direct statement) brought him to lunch at the Studio one Sunday.

I cannot remember what we spoke of during lunch except that once he remarked 'One can always know a woman by her cooking' and I thought 'I am glad the lunch is good' – which I knew it was.

After lunch I gave coffee and cigarettes to the two men, and Janko said, 'Now, Valerie, play Beethoven to us.' D. M. interrupted quickly, 'Coffee and a cigarette first', and I had a grateful feeling, 'Here is someone who thinks for other people.' After coffee he said, 'Now play Beethoven for me.' I said, 'I play badly.' He asked me, nevertheless, to play and I did – not well. I soon stopped and said 'Is it too bad?' and he replied, 'I find it nourishing.' However – I didn't continue.

Exactly at 3 o'clock Janko went out. D. M. and I sat quietly for a moment, then he turned to me and said, in slow English, with a marked

Serbian accent (I learnt to know it later) – ‘If, as is indeed the case, I am God and the ground of all Being, what ought to be my relationship with other humans, who are also God and the ground of all Being?’ I could make no worthy response, so I just sat and looked at him, speechless. But he only waited a moment, and then plunged, with a sort of massive but fluid deliberation, into what seemed to me like a river of speech, which flowed on without ceasing and without hurrying. A man named Milnes came in for tea. D. M. included him immediately in the talk with unperturbed, kingly and modest graciousness and when he had left, continued as though there had been no interruption.

... I struggled with all my being to understand what he said, but could only dimly follow. As though he knew that I had discarded all religion long before, he spoke mostly about Christ. Once I said, ‘But does it really matter whether he really lived on earth or not?’ and he replied, ‘It matters more than anything else in the whole universe.’

At 9 o’clock he stopped and said ‘I must go.’ I said to myself, ‘I really should offer this nice man some dinner, but I can’t bear one more word’, so I let him go.

Janko called in a little later and I asked him why he had given me such a poor description of Mr. Mitrinović. He murmured something about ‘an ordinary man.’ ‘But,’ I said, ‘you never saw an ordinary man with a smile like that, it is an angel.’

‘Oh,’ he said, ‘that’s just Slav childishness, we all have it.’ I was shocked and behaved cruelly. ‘Anyhow,’ I said, ‘*you* haven’t.’

The next day – Monday – I felt too exhausted even to stand upright, and only later realised it was probably due to the intense mental effort I had made to understand what Mr. Mitrinović had been saying the day before.

The following day – Tuesday – just as I was going to have lunch – he walked in, carrying a large punnet of raspberries – ‘I have come to lunch,’ he said, ‘and I have brought you some raspberries.’ As we ate, he continued Sunday’s talk, as if there had been no interruption. Again I tried, floundering, to understand this strange language. We had the raspberries and when his plate was empty, I said, ‘Have some more raspberries.’ He shook his head and I pressed a bit, ‘Just three. I will pick you out the nicest ones.’ He smiled, so I went to his side and found three fine ones. Suddenly, his face puckered like that of a disappointed child – ‘Oh,’ he said, or perhaps wailed, ‘that wasn’t the one I wanted!’

After that, he came fairly frequently to see me. It surprised me, for I really couldn’t respond properly to him. But, that a person such

as he could exist was a perpetually increasing wonder for me. No matter what subject I spoke of he, as it were, took me by the hand and led me along that path beyond the furthest horizon I could ever have dreamt of ...

He used, sometimes, to bring on Sunday afternoons, Petar Konjević, the Serbian composer. Together they would play and sing their Yugoslav songs and dances. For me it was like the opening of a door on to a new universe, full of nobility, colour, tenderness, strength. And when they stopped and went away I could almost hear the click of the latch as that door shut again.

Mitrinović became a frequent visitor to the Studio in Fitzroy Street, making friends with many of the artists who would gather there: including Bernard Leach, the potter; the conductor Edward Clark and the designer Sophie Fedorović who both worked with Diaghilev; Iris Tree, Matthew Smith and Augustus John. A number of these acquaintances undoubtedly responded to him in much the same fashion as Willa Muir: viewing him as a knowledgeable crank with an engaging line in 'nonsense-mongery.' To do so would be to concentrate upon merely one aspect of his public self – he did like to provoke people, he did have a sense of the absurd, and he was out to impress. But he took himself and his self-appointed mission very seriously, and he had a target. This was A. R. Orage, and through him *The New Age* and its readership. It was said of Orage that he was 'one of the most influential spirits in England although not one in ten thousand would know his name – because Orage only influenced influential people. He had no other public but writers.'<sup>7</sup> This was something of which Mitrinović was well aware.

Born in Yorkshire, Orage had moved to London in 1905 after twelve years as a teacher in Leeds to pursue his chosen vocation as a journalist. In 1907 he and his friend Holbrook Jackson bought *The New Age* with financial support provided by Bernard Shaw and Lewis Wallace, a merchant banker. The two new editors aimed to turn the journal, sub-titled '*an independent socialist review of politics, literature and art,*' into an independent forum within which all progressive ideas and schemes might be examined and discussed – something akin to a weekly debating society. After policy disagreements with Jackson, Orage was left as sole editor by early 1908.

From that date until his resignation in 1922, the development of the weekly reflected to a considerable degree the path forged by

Orage in his own search for some encompassing and coherent philosophy of the individual and society that could form a basis for the solution of not only social and political problems, but of spiritual ones also. Thus, immediately prior to the First World War he had become particularly influenced by S. G. Hobson and it was during this period that *The New Age* embraced and promoted the cause of guild socialism. According to Margaret Cole it became 'the left-wing paper, which everybody who was anybody read.'<sup>8</sup> By 1917, however, Orage had begun to suspect that National Guilds, as he and Hobson had formulated the idea, were insufficient on their own as a means of social transformation. Whilst guild socialism, based on the premise that 'men could not be really free as citizens unless they were also free and self-governing in their daily lives as producers,'<sup>9</sup> might be the ideal solution for the problem of industrial organisation, its economic theory was inadequate. There was, Orage suggested, something unsound in 'the relation of the whole scheme to the existing, or any prospective, scheme of money.'<sup>10</sup> He began to extend his study of socialist economics until, in 1917, he was introduced to Major C. H. Douglas by Holbrook Jackson. By 1919 Orage was converted and from that time until 1922 Douglas's system of social credit became one of the central concerns of the weekly. It was in the columns of *The New Age* and through the collaboration of Orage and Douglas that the seeds of the worldwide social credit movement were sown.

However, whilst Orage's interest in economics and monetary reform grew during the post-war period, so did his own personal quest for spiritual certainty intensify. In 1919 he announced that the weekly would undertake 'a more profound analysis and synthesis of human psychology.' It became a forum for the discussion and exposition of the new developments that were taking place in psycho-analysis, and sometime during 1920 Orage formed a study group of practising psychologists to investigate psycho-analysis. It was during this period when the religious or spiritual dimensions of Orage's mind and character were re-asserting themselves, perhaps as a counter-balance to the technicalities of Douglas's social credit scheme, that he came under the influence of Mitrinović.<sup>11</sup>

Rowland Kenney, who was a member of the coterie of writers and artists associated with *The New Age* at the time of Mitrinović's

arrival in London, was later to recall: 'We were all immediately deeply impressed by Mitrinović. Some of us were also deeply puzzled. We could never quite understand what he was, as they say, "getting at".'<sup>12</sup> Paul Selver was similarly bemused, claiming that:

Orage, to whom I introduced Mitrinović, saw in him, I fancy, even more than I did, largely because he had far more in common with his ideas than I could possibly have. Orage's interest in abstract thought and philosophical speculation was entirely beyond my range. The same remark applies to his familiarity with occult and transcendental matters, about which he was inclined to be reticent.<sup>13</sup>

This aspect of Orage's persona was something of which a number of his associates were well aware. Outwardly he was a man of the world: urbane, witty, even ruthless at times, an avid follower of political trends and events, and a brilliant editor. Inwardly, according to Hugh MacDiarmid, quoting Beatrice Hastings, Orage 'suffered from paranoid mystagoguery.'<sup>14</sup> Whilst to such people Orage's spiritual strife appeared as an aberration, a deviation from the 'essential Orage', others recognised it as a manifestation of a constant tension that had accompanied the man throughout his life. Edwin Muir recorded the range of pathways down which Orage's spiritual search had taken him since his youth.

(Orage) ... had taken up and followed creeds which seemed to provide a short-cut to intellectual and spiritual power. He had been a theosophist, a member of a magic circle which also included Yeats, a Nietzschean, and a student of Hindu religion and philosophy. He was convinced that there was a secret knowledge behind the knowledge given to the famous prophets and philosophers, and for the acquisition of that knowledge and the intellectual and spiritual power it would bring with it he was prepared to sacrifice everything and take upon him any labour, no matter how humble or wearisome or abstruse.<sup>15</sup>

It was this search by Orage for something other than worldly success, this quest for spiritual insight, that made him such a ready collaborator with Mitrinović. More than anything else Orage aspired to attain some higher state of consciousness, and in the Serb he recognised someone who could help him. At a time when Orage was feeling increasingly constrained by his commitment to Douglasism and the technicalities of social credit, Mitrinović came into his life. Philip Mairet, an intimate of both men, likened Mitrinović's appearance to the phoenix emerging out of the flames of war, 'proclaiming a gospel of world salvation inspired by the



perennial philosophy and the Christian revelation. He spoke like a prophet with a mission to convict the nations of sin and call them to righteousness, preaching in a language of transcendental idealism to which Orage's mind was well attuned.<sup>16</sup> According to Mairet, Mitrinović became 'the predominant figure in Orage's world for two or three years, and possibly more.'<sup>17</sup>

By 1920 the relationship between the two men had developed to a point where Orage felt prepared to place the columns of the weekly at Mitrinović's disposal. This was the opportunity that he had been waiting for, a means of communicating his vision of the world and the future development of humanity to a new and wider audience. In fact, the readership of *The New Age* by this time had declined considerably from its peak in 1909 when its circulation had reached 22,000. By 1913 sales were down to 4,500, and by 1920 the paper had been reduced to twelve pages and the circulation figure was probably less than 2,000. The appearance of Mitrinović's weekly column, 'World Affairs,' between August 1920 and October 1921 thus coincided with the least successful phase of the magazine's history. Indeed, it is possible that there was a causal relationship between the publication of Mitrinović's articles and the decline in circulation. This was certainly the view of Willa Muir, who claimed that Mitrinović 'finally helped to sink *The New Age* by the dead weight of the columns he contributed.'<sup>18</sup> A more balanced assessment is that of Wallace Martin who, whilst acknowledging that Mitrinović's columns did contribute to the fall in circulation, argued that the loss of the weekly's popularity could be traced to the decline of its commitment to guild socialism and the turn to social credit, accompanied as this was by the loss of much of the support previously provided by the social movement that had arisen largely as a consequence of the magazine's promotion of guild socialism.<sup>19</sup>

That Mitrinović should be accused of bringing about the demise of *The New Age* is completely understandable, especially when one considers the style that he adopted to convey his ideas and images. Even so devoted a follower as Mairet who, on Mitrinović's promptings, had begun to contribute to the paper himself in 1919 was forced to admit:

... that the excellence ... in Mitrinović's spoken English was not apparent in his literary style – or not when he wrote about world affairs. In this vein he expressed himself in towering abstractions, metaphysical

allusions and extraordinary neologisms – a style which, at its best, might achieve a kind of monstrous beauty like an elephant with wings, and was always unlike anything one had ever read before ...<sup>20</sup>

According to those who came to know Mitrinović best, the reason he adopted a style and a language so difficult for the general reader to follow reflected his own perspective on the springs of human action. For Mitrinović, only mythological notions were able to affect the human emotions and hence the human will to action and commitment. Commonsense rational ideas necessarily mirrored the world as it was, reflecting the accepted paradigms of conventional thought, and could lead only to commonsense practical action oriented to readily attainable goals. ‘Impractical’, imaginative or utopian actions which transcended the fetters of the dominant view of the world could be evoked only as a consequence of people’s emotions being moved. Their origin lay in inspiration rather than mundane rational calculation. So, in his ‘World Affairs’ articles for *The New Age*, he aimed not so much at the intellect but at those levels of consciousness above and below rational consciousness and thought. Moreover, the abstruseness of his language reflected his view of the complexity and contradictions inherent in human life and society. Numerous people have vouched for the fact that when the occasion demanded it he was able to express himself simply and clearly, to render his ideas easily understandable at a first reading. But to do so would be to imply that life itself was straightforward and clear-cut, the fundamental guiding principles of which were readily available to be grasped by the individual without difficulty or struggle.

Despite the fact that Orage acknowledged that new ideas necessitated a new vocabulary, he was concerned that Mitrinović’s contributions to the weekly would be beyond the comprehension of the readership if he was given a completely free hand in matters of style and form of expression. Consequently, the first four months of the weekly column were written by the editor himself, based largely on notes taken during conversations with Mitrinović. Eventually both men found this arrangement unsatisfactory and Mitrinović alone became responsible for the commentaries that appeared under the pseudonym M. M. Cosmoi. They do not make for easy reading, but at their core were some exciting ideas.

Underpinning the articles were two broad assumptions. The first involved the recognition of the unity and continuity of the whole universe and, derived from this, of humanity in general. Although we might experience diversity and discontinuity in the different races and nations of the world and in the different individual members of humanity, there is, in fact, a single continuous psychic thread permeating all the various forms of life. The second assumption which followed from this assertion of underlying unity was that the whole of humanity is an organism of which the different nations and races are organs, each having its own character relating to its proper function in the whole. Following on from this notion, each individual could in turn be viewed as a cell in the organism.

Before going on to follow Mitrinović's development of these core assumptions, it is necessary first of all to ask just how we are meant to treat these twin notions and the ensuing analysis to which they give rise. Was he claiming that the world is an organism as an empirical fact? Was he claiming that this is how the world might become, that humanity might develop to such a stage where it corresponds to an organism made up of interlinking parts? Or was he claiming that it is a useful heuristic device to view the world and humanity as a developing organism?

In sketching the details of his view of the planet and of humanity as an organic whole Mitrinović was putting it forward as a way of thinking about the world and its history rather than as a statement of empirical reality. His approach was the essentially pragmatist one that he had outlined in 'Aesthetic Contemplations'. 'The truth lies not in whether anything is or not, but in whether it should be or should not be ... The truth or untruth of a thing depends on our will. The will to believe is the criterion of knowledge.' Thus, when confronting the great question of how to create a world order of peace and fellowship, it was necessary first of all to believe that such an end ought to be sought, believe that it could be achieved, and then to proceed to act upon these assumptions as if they were true and valid in order to bring it about. Hence, what model or framework allows one to recognise the heterogeneity and diversity of humanity around the world, and yet allow for a commonality capable of embracing such differences? For Mitrinović, like others before him and since, the notion of an organism was the only one

in which continuity and unity could be joined together with discreteness and diversity.

A contemporary of Mitrinović's, the English socialist Edward Carpenter, had adopted a similar model when, in an essay first published in 1897, he had detailed his vision of a non-governmental society in which people would be motivated by 'community of life and interest in life' rather than by fear or 'greed of gain.' Countering the criticism that such a society was impractical and impossible, Carpenter referred to the human body:

... that marvellous epitome and mirror of the universe. ... It is composed of a myriad of cells, members, organs, compacted into a living unity. A healthy body is the most perfect society conceivable. What does the hand say when a piece of work is demanded of it? Does it bargain first for what reward it is to receive, and refuse to move until it has secured satisfactory terms, or the foot decline to take us on a journey till it knows what special gain is to accrue to *it* thereby? Not so; but each limb and cell does the work which is before it to do, and (such is the utopian law) the *fact of its doing the work* causes the circulation to flow to it, and it is nourished and fed in proportion to its service. And we have to ask whether the same may not be the law of a healthy human society?<sup>21</sup>

It seems clear that Carpenter was referring to the human organism as a model for the healthy socialist society, as did Mitrinović in certain passages of his writing. In others, however, he referred to the world as a developing organism in quite a dogmatic and assertive manner as if it were actually so. This apparently cavalier approach could be explained in terms not only of pragmatism but also the theory of 'fictions' or mental constructs developed by the German Kantian scholar Hans Vaihinger in his book *The Philosophy of As If* which had been published in 1911. In his theory of ideational shifts Vaihinger noted a discernible tendency for certain ideas, such as the religious notion of God, to be initially treated as dogma, as the expression of unquestionable truth; then for the quality of conviction to be eroded so that the dogma was gradually relegated to the status of hypothesis; and finally the idea of God to be revealed as so full of contradictions that the idea was treated as a fiction. With respect to other ideas, particularly scientific ones, there was an opposite movement: an idea was proposed and treated as a fiction, eventually taking on the status of a working hypothesis, and finally becoming accepted as dogma, as the truth.

Following the ideas of Solovyov and before him of Comte, Mitrinović put forward as a hypothesis the idea of the world and humanity as a developing organism. This could be regarded as a 'creative fiction', a source of insight in the sense in which Vaihinger developed his theory of fictions. As such the idea was not without value as an aid to the affirmation of a common humanity sharing a single world and an inter-related fate. However, if such an immanent potential was to be realised, it required people to act as if it were true. If people, through faith, could act on the idea, then it could be created as fact. As William James observed: 'There are cases ... where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming.'<sup>22</sup> So with the notion of the world and humanity as an organic whole – this could lead to world peace and justice only if people had sufficient faith in its efficacy to act upon it to make it real. Hence, once having put forward the organic notion as a way of thinking about the world, as a hypothetical model, as a basis for action which would thereby reveal its efficacy, Mitrinović proceeded to treat the idea as dogmatically true, because only by doing so, and convincing others of its veracity, would the sought-for consequences in terms of human action towards world peace ensue. In this sense, it would have been counter-productive to constantly remind the reader that the functioning of the world as a single organism was merely an idea, a mythological construct.

The essence of the organic notion is not its physical nature but the relatedness of the parts to one another and to the whole; each part operating according to its own principles whilst performing a function that contributes to the maintenance of the whole. If the equilibrium of the organism is disturbed by an outside stimulus or by the malfunctioning of one of its parts, then all the other parts adjust correspondingly to restore the balance and proper functioning of the whole. The portrayal of the world as an organism thus enabled Mitrinović to see the differences and conflicts between different groups, nations and races as comparable to the tensions between separate parts of an organism which were, at the same time, constituent elements of a single whole and contributing to the development of the whole, rather than as signs of fundamental incompatibility that could be resolved only by force and violence. Thus, he wrote, early on in the series of articles:

We have already indicated our conception of the world as one great mind in process of becoming self-conscious; and from this point of

view the various races and nations may be regarded as rudimentary organs in course of development within the great world-embryo. If such a view is correct – and any other seems sooner or later to involve itself in tragic contradictions – not only would it follow that there must be a natural world process which it is the duty of all individuals to discover, and the duty of all individuals, nations and races alike, to assist, but it would also follow that there cannot be any real antagonism between the proper functions assigned by the world-process to its various developing organs. The heart does not quarrel with the lungs in a healthy organism; and in a healthy state of world-development it is impossible that the proper function of any race or nation should be incompatible with the proper functions of its interrelated companions. Where there is war there is, therefore, something wrong. ... War is, in fact, at once an evidence of misunderstanding and an attempt, more or less blundering, to clear it up.<sup>23</sup>

In a later article he continued:

Nothing less than such a psychological view of the world can possibly enable us to form correct judgments, since, in its absence, no other criterion of value can ever be adopted than that of self-preservation or self-extension by means of force. ... Unless there is and can consciously be conceived a non-arbitrary common world-responsibility, resting equally according to their respective genius, situation, and history, upon every race and nation, nothing remains but to abandon every issue to mere force. That then would be right that succeeded in establishing itself; and every effort to survive and to dominate would become justified.<sup>24</sup>

Mitrinović regarded the doctrine of the Trinity as contained in the profession of Christian faith known as the Athanasian Creed as the most apposite expression of the dynamic principles and morphology of an organism. As such it formed an essential background to the complete series of articles in *The New Age*. In the statement of the Athanasian Creed regarding the relationship between the Trinity of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, they do not just succeed each other, they also co-exist as equals with one another: 'The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God.' All three are distinct and differentiated, and yet they are all equally God. According to Mitrinović such a doctrine asserted 'not as a theory or a wish, but as an immanent as well as transcendental fact of nature, the equal and independent yet interdependent functions of the three persons, of whom Mankind is one.'<sup>25</sup>

Following the doctrine of the Athanasian Creed in his articles, Mitrinović envisaged human global society as one and yet containing within it three dynamic elements. He wrote of 'Man as the *consciousness* of God with God as the *unconscious* of Man.'<sup>26</sup> According to Mitrinović's reading, God the Father was the unconscious, that mysterious power within the universe and within the individual human being. It was not endowed with attributes of personality and self-consciousness. Rather, the personality and self-consciousness of God resided in the Son. It was Jesus of Nazareth who declared himself to be the Son of God and 'was to become, by his own Promethean act, the individual consciousness of God.' In a style that is not untypical of much of his writing of this period, Mitrinović went on to pronounce that it was Humanity, in and through the person of the Son, Jesus Christ, who was to:

... declare himself divinely omnipotent with the Father ... announce himself as the 'saviour of God,' God's consciousness, and as indispensable to the Father as the Father is to the Son. ... Man was to declare himself the equal Son of God, and to enter upon the responsibilities as well as privileges of one of the Persons of the Trinity.<sup>27</sup>

So, according to this cosmic overview, it was Jesus Christ who was both Man and God. As the universal or archetypal man, he was the self-consciousness of the three-fold God, the second Person of the Trinity, of which the first Person, God the Father, was the world unconscious. What of the third – the Holy Spirit?

Drawing upon the work of Solovyov, Mitrinović interpreted the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, as Sophia, the establishment of the 'Kingdom of God' on earth, the creation of Universal Humanity. The Holy Spirit would be incarnated as the organic ordering of the world in which races, nations and groupings of all kinds would be functionally related to one another.

The final revelation of the Eternal in the human kingdom, however, will not be the incarnation of the Universal Man in Christ Jesus but of Universal Humanity itself in the organised and harmonious life of the world. ... It is approaching swiftly, providentially and inevitably; for God Himself became Man in the Logos Incarnate in order that Man himself might transcend and break his individualist, egoist Ego and explode into cosmic Socialism, into the ecstatic life of divino-human consciousness ... The absolute Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Tri-unity, proceeds, as Western Christendom has understood, from both the Logos and the Eternal Unconscious. The concrete,

ultimate, individualised third Hypostasis of God, the personified God or Humanity is, also, and entirely, a collaborator, a co-operator with the Infinite Unconscious. For humanity itself is the Eternal Son of God, the Incarnated Son, the individualised Son. Thus the freedom of humanity becomes incommensurable. The scope of human action and guidance becomes broadened into the abysmal and the boundless ...<sup>28</sup>

The challenge is how to bring into being this Universal Humanity, the harmonious ordering of life.

The problem confronting mankind today is the mystery of the third Testament, of the incarnation of the third Hypostasis itself on earth. And this Third Hypostasis or Holy Spirit is Universal Humanity itself. It is the incarnation of Sophia herself, of the Sophia of Man that is the mystery of the earth today. In the problem of the organic wholeness of the world all the problems of classes, races, sexes, even of individuals, are included ... the problem of the world is one, and because it is one the solution of every sectional problem has its consequences for every other section and for the universal whole ... every organ of the world has its specific function, irreplaceable and essential to the whole ...<sup>29</sup>

The Trinity, then, for Mitrinović was not merely a theological abstraction, a religious myth – it also expressed synchronically the pattern of organic wholeness, whilst diachronically it represented an archetype for the development of humanity towards that wholeness. God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity and taken as representing the unconscious creative power immanent throughout the world and through which, at the level of the collective unconscious, all humanity is one. The second Person of the Trinity, Jesus of Nazareth, was both God and Man who proclaimed ‘I and my Father are one.’ The emergence of the Son from the Father represented the emergence of the self-conscious individual from the unconscious unity of humanity. The Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son – so, from the natural unity of humanity and the self-conscious decision of individuals would emerge the conscious unity of humanity, the Holy Spirit incarnate as Universal Humanity, ‘cosmic socialism.’

The notion of humanity as a self-conscious organism can be realised only through the consciousness of its constituent cells. It can be brought about only by the will of individuals. Mitrinović wrote:



It is freedom and the human race that rule the earth's fate as much as Providence and Destiny. ... Man is thus the very heart of the world and its plan. It is out of the mystery of human sovereign indefiniteness that the guidance of the species must come. Freedom, however, means voluntary and rational obeying of Providence. It means realising the creative needs of Providence ...<sup>30</sup>

The notions of Providence, Destiny and Freewill run right through the 'World Affairs' series of articles. In developing the concepts Mitrinović drew upon the work of the French scholar of the early 19th century, Fabre d'Olivet. In his *L'Histoire Philosophique du Genre Humain* d'Olivet had sought to explain the development of world evolution and history as a consequence of the interaction of these three factors or forces. Providence is that incomprehensible power operating to give any being its potential life and the form in which it can be perfected. As such it can be compared with Mitrinović's portrayal of God the Father as the unconscious power in the universe. Providence is what ought to be, its end is the perfection of all beings. Destiny, on the other hand, is what must be. Destiny can be compared to the laws of nature. As such, Destiny can be grasped by the intellect whilst Providence can be known only through intuition, by the soul rather than the brain. Providence is what can be if humans make the effort to realise their powers to the full. Destiny is what will be if humans fail to intervene to affect the course of history. In this sense, Freewill means the freedom to act towards the realisation of the best that is possible; as such it is most powerful when it is guided by a sense and a vision of what ought to be. Consequently, for freewill to be exercised to fulfil its potential, it must be founded on a belief in the existence and immanent power of Providence. In the language of Mitrinović:

There must be necessity and logic in the world. There must be Destiny. And it is this all-mighty power that in its working precedes the most precious of powers and dominants, the Freedom of Man; this eternal antithesis, this Satan, however, is ever grounded in the abyss of the creator's will in Providence. ... What ought to be drives and leads that which must be; not contrariwise. Freedom, the end of God and Man, ultimately realises its own most inscrutable function ... Humanity can obey Providence and can use Destiny.<sup>31</sup>

Failure to follow the promptings and possibilities of Providence leaves us as passive instruments of Destiny, and chaos is the result.

Obedience to Providence and heroism against Destiny is the meaning of Freedom and of men. ... Obeying Providence is the calling of Man. In this consists his co-equality with the Eternal. The Unconscious is the Father. It is supra-consciousness, the indefiniteness itself, the divineness itself, that the Son makes possible. It is Pleroma and Holy Spirit that results from the co-equality of the Son ... Man is consciousness and is conscious. ... To Humanity Universal, however, to Holy Spirit, individuality and personality is the gate. Freedom is the condition. Consciousness is the condition, while Creator the Father is the foundation and the ground.<sup>32</sup>

The key to the creation of an organic, harmonious world order lay with the Freewill of humanity acting in 'obedience to Providence and heroism against Destiny.' This was the task that faced humanity in general, and the people of Europe and the west in particular.

In his general scheme of the evolution and history of the world and humanity Mitrinović adopted the framework expounded by the theosophists in the West as outlined by Madame Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, which was subsequently developed more methodically by Rudolf Steiner. This scheme envisaged a pattern of world development by cycles or spirals of birth, growth, decay and death; with each cycle succeeded by another. In each cycle or phase in the continuing spiral some new faculty or quality emerged to characterise the people of that epoch. Such qualities, developments in self-awareness and knowledge about the nature of the world, were usually expressed by and through certain exceptional people who were 'ahead of their time' – key individuals with a more developed consciousness than their contemporaries, who expressed truths about the origin and nature of reality in mythological language, and who thereby helped guide humanity 'forwards and upwards' towards the next phase of development.

Working within this tradition Mitrinović conjectured that in the history of world development there had been a continuous process of change in human consciousness.<sup>33</sup> Initially people had led a relatively instinctive form of life, 'at one' with the rest of nature in a state of collective unconsciousness. This was followed by a stage during which each person felt their sense of being as inextricably linked to their membership of a collectivity or group – whether a tribe, a caste, a clan or family. The third phase was when individuals began to experience the freedom and significance of the separate self, when they began to believe they had the power to control their own lives as individuals.

Mitrinović maintained, in the spirit of Vaihinger's fictions, that each successive stage of development was associated with, or carried by, a particular race. He likened the course of human development to:

a series of racial stages of transformation ... Each of the races in embryological succession may have been, so to speak, eugenically developed and bred under the tutelage of what mythology describes as Culture-heroes, race builders, Manus or what not. Or, again, these figures may represent movements, revolutions inspired by the common mind of developing mankind which seized upon this or that people of each succeeding race as the most promising ground for the development of the next racial stage.<sup>34</sup>

According to this view, the development in human consciousness had moved, geographically and racially, from East to West – from China and India, through the Middle East, Greece and Rome, to Europe and America. With a confidence that reflected not only his beliefs but also the assumptions of his own time, he maintained that 'Westwards the course of consciousness takes its way,' claiming that 'the unconscious is related with the East, while the conscious is the characteristic of the "progressive" West.'<sup>35</sup>

In the current phase of development, according to Mitrinović, humanity faced a critical turning point. Each cycle or stage in the developmental spiral was characterised by a period of growth followed by one of decline. With the growth of western civilisation humanity had emerged from the collective unconscious stage, and individuals had developed a consciousness of themselves as separate, free agents. This had reached its peak, its limit, in the twentieth century in what Erich Gutkind termed 'the zero point of pure isolated individuality' – the narrow competitive individualism characteristic of the West where people sought to increase their individual status by the acquisition of possessions of every sort. This was a major source of conflict and hostility. It was vital therefore that a new kind of consciousness develop to supersede narrow egotistical self-seeking individualism, a consciousness of the individual not as separate but as an integral and functioning part of a wider whole. This was the meaning of Mitrinović's claim that the world was 'one great mind in process of becoming self-conscious.'<sup>36</sup>

He traced the emergence of this self-consciousness as the developmental spiral traversed from East to West. Thus, it was the religions of the East that expressed the intuitive awareness of

humanity as one. Guided by these belief systems and mythologies, the people of the East led a life ruled less by their conscious analytical reason than by their virtually instinctive sense of being a natural part of a single, divinely-ordained order.<sup>37</sup> Christianity, by contrast, was the religion of individuality and reason. No other religion placed the individual person at the centre of its faith, as a vehicle into which God could incarnate, thereby enabling the individual to become an actual aspect of the Godhead. It was through the influence of Christianity that people, especially in Europe and the West, had taken on a degree of conscious control over their individual lives, thereby assuming 'what had before been only God's responsibility.'<sup>38</sup> Socialism would rest on the foundation of these two orientations towards the world – the synthesis of the instinctive sense of oneness and the will to independent existence.

In stressing that different peoples and races were characterised by different orientations to the world, held different visions of the nature of reality, and thereby had different functions to perform within the world, Mitrinović maintained that he was not attempting to rank one race or nation as superior to another. He claimed that in the functional organisation of the world 'every race and nation has its indispensable part to play.'<sup>39</sup> Moreover, his observations regarding 'racial psychology' were guided solely by his commitment to the vision of Universal Humanity.

It is not the virtue of the world-student to take sides in a partisan strife, even when the strife concerns whole races. It is altogether a question of values; and, above all, of values in relation to the intention of the world spirit. The world, we believe, has a divine dharma or purpose ... it can be summed up in the phrase, the functional organisation of the world as one. Looking at the problem before us in the light of this affirmation, our judgment of values must depend, as we have said, on their value in relation to this end. ... There are no criminals in our court ... only races and nations of relative service or disservice to the functional organisation of the world. ... there is no world-advantage in a mere comparison of races to the prejudice of one or the other. ... The problem is a practical one, though it involves the study of racial psychology; and the end in view is no other than the welfare of the world.<sup>40</sup>

Whatever protestations Mitrinović might make about the functional integrity of the races, however much he acknowledged the tentative, hypothetical status of his conjectures, there is something

deeply disturbing to those of us living in the early 21st century about this notion that it would be possible ‘to discover the natural, the intended functions of races’ through ‘the intuitive study of history, of science, of philosophy and religion.’<sup>41</sup> There have been too many genocidal consequences of such a preparedness to make distinctions between people on the basis of ethnicity, culture and associated functional role in the wider scheme of things. It is crystal clear that for all his prophetic utterances, Mitrinović was also a product of his time. His overview reflected the approach of Rudolf Steiner and other influential figures in occult circles of that period in his embrace of a kind of Cosmic Social Darwinism, in which different races and nations had particular historical ‘tasks’ to perform in the spiritual evolution of the world. The implications of such a world-view became all too clear as the 20th century unfolded, but if we are to understand and grasp the development of Mitrinović’s thought and vision, then we need to follow its evolution, however distasteful some aspects might seem to our ‘post-genocide’ sensibilities.<sup>42</sup>

As we have seen, Mitrinović maintained the view that ‘westward the course of consciousness takes its way.’ The East was associated with the unconscious of the ‘one great mind’, the West associated with individual consciousness and rational thought. Just as the human unconscious can be understood as exerting a formative influence over the nature of an individual’s conscious thought and feeling, so Mitrinović wrote about the development of the white race from out of the coloured and black races of Asia and Africa. He referred to Asia as the father-aspect and Africa as the mother-aspect of human consciousness. Between them they gave birth to Europe, the child that was to attain self-consciousness. As we have also seen, he held that Christianity was the prime bearer of that self-consciousness which characterised European culture. This being so, then the Jews had played a vital historical role as the bridge between East and West. Viewing them through the racist lens that was all-too-common amongst occultists of that period, Mitrinović affirmed that:

... from the coloured race of ‘Egypt’ a particular people, the Jews or Israel, was ‘chosen’ for the ‘mission’ of becoming White ... this tremendous eugenic task necessitated ‘exodus’ from ‘Egypt’ (in other words, segregation from the inferior race) ... It is as a bridge between the East that was, and the West that was to be, that the Jewish race

must be contemplated. Its exodus from Egypt was an exodus from the East, from the unconsciousness of Man ...<sup>43</sup>

It was the Jewish people who gave birth to Jesus, 'the greatest event in psychology as well as in history.' Through the birth of Christ 'God was born of Man, and the race that had performed the prodigy was the Chosen people.'<sup>44</sup> Once Christ, the 'Individual and Personal Deity, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone', had emerged, the mission of the Jews had been completed, they were 'no longer anything in particular; they were only one of the races of Mankind...'<sup>45</sup>

The psychology of the Jewish people reflected their history. On the one hand they were a 'chosen' people with a divine call and mission – the origin of their sense of their distinctive uniqueness amongst the races of the world. On the other hand, they finally betrayed their mission when they rejected Christ and what he symbolised, the assumption by humanity of what had previously been considered to be solely God's responsibility for the guidance and development of the world. The practical choice facing the Jews was 'Zion or assimilation.' Mitrinović likened the pull of Palestine to the hold that a father exerts over an individual, even in adulthood. The Father, in the case of the Jews, was the unconscious of the world represented by the East. The alternative to Zionism was assimilation, the abandonment of Judaism and 'the assimilation of Jewish with Aryan blood by deliberate intermarriage of Jews with Aryans.'<sup>46</sup>

To contemporary sensibilities there is a deep repugnance to all this, even whilst acknowledging that Mitrinović was writing before the Holocaust. Subscribers to *The New Age* also expressed their distaste at the anti-semitism of M.M. Cosmoi. He responded:

... we ask them to believe that we do not belong to the anti-Semitic school that has, as its chief characteristics, either a national chauvinism as 'tribal' as that of the Jews themselves, or a cult, nominally catholic, that is Judaic in spirit. ... Nor are we pro-Aryan on tribal or even racial grounds.

He went on to warn such 'chauvinists' that:

About the Aryan race we shall have something critical to say in due course; we trust that our Aryan readers are not purring with too complete a sense of complacency, since they will certainly be disturbed in it if they do us the justice of reading these notes to the bitter end.<sup>47</sup>

What, then, was the proper role of Europe and the 'Aryan world' of the West in the development towards a functional ordering of the world? To put it crudely, and perhaps we should not be too surprised at this: it was the mission and responsibility of the white race, the Aryan world, to organise the functioning of the world. But to understand the reasoning behind this we need to go back once more into Mitrinović's overview of the historic role of the different peoples and races of the world.

Universal Humanity could be achieved only through the conscious will of free individuals. It was in Europe, in the western world, under the influence of Christianity, that individuality and reason were most developed and valued.

The character of independence and of Promethean self-realisation are the gifts of the European to the humanity of all men; self-government of the individual; god-consciousness in the individual soul; identification of the ultimate personal awareness with the Sonhood itself.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, if the world was to be consciously organised as an organic whole, it was Europe, the brain of the world, that must take the lead.

If there is a focusing force in the world and a need and a want of a synthetic humanness, these, surely, are revealed in the culture of Europe. If there be a specific and natural organic function of concentration; of thought; of consciousness, in the human whole, there is no doubt that this divine function is performed by Europe. Europe is chosen ... both by Providence and Destiny, and must be finally chosen also by the Will of Humanity, to become the continent of the world's synthesis, the organ of the unification of the body of man.<sup>49</sup>

This, then, was Europe's mission in the development of the world. Only Europe, the white race, the western world, could 'establish a functional world system in which each of the races and nations is called upon to play its natural and organic part.'<sup>50</sup> This was not to say that Europe had a divine right to rule and determine the course of the world in pursuance of her own narrow interests. The solutions to the problems of world-ordering, Mitrinović wrote, 'must be such that while they satisfy the European mind they satisfy the best minds of all the other races; for it is contrary to both reason and justice that the brain should dictate what the other organs do not find it easy and natural and proper to carry out, namely their own highest functions.'<sup>51</sup> Moreover, he acknowledged that 'there are individual minds in all races and nations that are "universal"',

and capable of taking a world-view of world-affairs.<sup>52</sup> It is hard to dispel the notion that for all his commitment to 'cosmic socialism', Mitrinović shared the same imperialistic arrogance of his contemporaries, claiming the élite role of guiding the next stage of human development to the Europeans who, in fulfilling this role, would draw upon the cooperation of the élite of other races and nations.

One of the few things that can be said in his defence at this stage is that he was prepared to acknowledge that up to this point Europe had failed abysmally in its responsibilities. Europe's history revealed 'an almost unbroken story of chicanery, greed and ill-will'.<sup>53</sup> Thus, with regard to China, 'incredibly little of all that Europe has hitherto done to China lies outside the definition of crime.'<sup>54</sup> The history of her dealing with Africa and Asia revealed a similar story. It was, Mitrinović claimed, 'unimaginable to the complacent European mind what crimes have been perpetrated by Europe on the Black race.'

All-in-all, since the re-discovery of Africa alone, a hundred million Blacks have been enslaved or put to death in the supposed interest of Europe, not to mention the example of America. It would appear, indeed, as if the governing purpose of Europe were to divide up the Black race and administer it solely to Europe's good. Europe has not come to her senses in the full meaning of the word. There is no organised European mind; Europe as a cultural entity has not yet been developed. It follows that Europe's relations with the Black, as well as with the Yellow, race have been largely instinctive – in other words, not specifically European; for to be instinctive and not intelligent is to be essentially non-European.<sup>55</sup>

Europe, in general, had revealed herself as 'too exclusive, too small-minded' to discharge her proper duties towards the rest of humanity.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, within the continent itself, relationships between nations and groups were conducted in a 'satanical and terrible way.'<sup>57</sup>

Despite the abject historical failure of Europe to fulfil her responsibilities to the rest of the world, the inescapable fact was that Europe represented the 'the consciousness of the species', and consequently was the only agency capable of initiating the process of global integration and world synthesis.<sup>58</sup> Within the model of the organism as embraced by Mitrinović:

... no organ, other than the brain itself, can possibly discharge effectually the work of the brain ... as the world is only the individual writ



large, what is true of the individual is true, though on a larger plan and scale, of the world-mind itself. No other racial organ than the European can possibly discharge the intellectual and spiritual function of Europe.<sup>59</sup>

As a first initiative towards the organic ordering of the world, Europe needed to begin with herself and make herself whole. 'The Federation of Europe, the synthesis of Europe, is the primary condition of the Alliance of Humanity, of the world-synthesis.'<sup>60</sup> But by a federation of Europe (and in Europe he also included Russia, the Balkans, Britain, and the mediterranean countries) Mitrinović was not advocating merely a formal political unification. If Europe was to become 'the instrument of the intelligent organisation of the world',<sup>61</sup> then its future unity needed to be a spiritual or cultural one rather than founded on a political or military basis. The world needed a spiritual Europe:

a Europe consciously and self-consciously one, a Europe whose parts freely consent in a harmony of Christendom, a Europe worthy of the world's reference of values. That is the constructive idea for a new Europe. ... Assuming that the intention of the world is to become born in the consciousness of mankind; and that on Europeans, as the most conscious of all the races, the duty and responsibility of exemplary leadership falls – the spiritual task before Europe is to realise its obligations, before it is too late, and to create an all-inclusive European culture, as a preliminary, not to imposing it upon the world, but to maintaining it as the world's standard of reference.<sup>62</sup>

Mitrinović was calling in the first instance for 'new Europeans' rather than a new Europe. The responsibility of exemplary leadership lay with individuals to make Europe, and eventually the world, 'consciously and self-consciously one'. Whilst so much of the 'World Affairs' series was an attempt to sketch out imaginatively, mythologically, the nature of an organic world order and the role of different races and nations in such a morphology, an enterprise which therefore could not avoid being 'racist' in every sense of the word, the movement towards such Universal Humanity was indivisible from the transformation of individuals and individual consciousness. Mitrinović defined socialism not as 'any particular system of organisation, dictatorial or anarchist, but a self-ordering of man, based on the nature of the individual and collective soul of mankind.'<sup>63</sup> As such, the attainment of socialism, Universal Humanity, required changes in individual thought, feeling, and

action. It could never be achieved so long as the jingoism and individualistic ethos characteristic of Europe and the western world was the ruling one. For socialism to be created it was necessary that individuals identify with the rest of humanity as a whole rather than with their own particular nation, class or tribe.

But humanity is not an abstract category; it is represented by one's neighbours, colleagues and all other disparate individuals. For socialism to work, then, it was necessary for each individual to acknowledge that their neighbours and all those with whom they came into direct and indirect contact were of equal significance and value as themselves. They must really feel, as the writer of the Epistle to the Romans phrased it: 'As we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another' (Romans 12, 4-5). Sophia, the Holy Spirit, could only be incarnated by and as a community of free, self-conscious individuals; individuals who had transcended the individualistic ethic to a new 'supra-human' consciousness, something akin to Solovyov's depiction of love: 'The meaning and value of love as a feeling consists in the fact that it makes us actually, with our whole being, recognise in another the absolute central significance which owing to egoism we feel in ourselves only.'<sup>64</sup>

It was only through the consciously creative action of those who valued others as much as themselves that Universal Humanity could be realised. 'Self-resurrection and self-creation are the infinite need of the human race today,' wrote Mitrinović. 'Beginning from the individual self-transcendence and ending with the resurrection of Sophia from her chaos, human consciousness demands in this hour a new and holy breaking up and a new mystery.'<sup>65</sup> If the world was a single living organism with the different races as constituent organs, then the cells of these organs and the organism itself were made up of the individual members of the different races. The organism could not change without the cells themselves changing; and the cells would not change unless they recognised that they were all parts of a single body sharing an indivisible fate and future.

The bulk of Mitrinović's energy in the 1920s and '30s was devoted to working with others on ways to develop such a 'supra-human' consciousness. Having sketched out the grand schema in

*The New Age*, he was henceforth to work towards Sophia/Socialism/Universal Humanity with individual friends and associates through a constant stream of public initiatives right up to the outbreak of World War Two.

## NOTES

1. H. MacDiarmid, *The Company I've Kept*, London: Hutchinson, 1966, p. 271.
2. W. Martin, *The New Age Under Orage*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967, p. 1.
3. P. Mairet, *A. R. Orage*, New York: University Books, 1966, pp. vi-vii.
4. Willa Muir, *Belonging: A Memoir*, London: Hogarth Press, 1968, pp. 40-1.
5. E. Muir, *An Autobiography*, London: Hogarth Press, 1954, p. 175.
6. Quoted in P. H. Butter, *Edwin Muir: Man and Poet*, London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966, p. 74.
7. Ramiro de Maetzu, quoted by MacDiarmid, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
8. Letter to *New Statesman*, December 26th 1959.
9. G. D. H. Cole, *The Second International*, London: Macmillan, 1963, p. 244.
10. Quoted by Philip Mairet, *A. R. Orage: A Memoir*, London: J. M. Dent, 1936, p. 73.
11. Orage had been involved in Theosophical circles during his time in Leeds.
12. Commemoration meeting, January 29th 1954.
13. Selver, p. 59.
14. MacDiarmid, p. 273.
15. E. Muir, *The Story and the Fable: an Autobiography*, London: Harrap, 1940, p.206.
16. Mairet (1966), p. xi.
17. Mairet (1966), p. xii.
18. Willa Muir (1968), p. 40.
19. Martin, pp. 274-5.
20. Mairet (1966), p. xv.
21. From Edward Carpenter, 'Non-governmental Society,' in his collection of essays, *Towards Industrial Freedom*, 1917. Reprinted in *Freedom*, *Anarchist Review*, vol. 42, no. 4, February 27th 1981, p. 13.
22. W. James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919, p. 25.
23. *The New Age*, August 26th 1920, p. 255.

24. *The New Age*, September 9th 1920, p. 279.
25. *The New Age*, November 25th 1920, p. 40.
26. *The New Age*, September 2nd 1920, p. 268.
27. *The New Age*, November 18th 1920, pp. 27-8.
28. *The New Age*, March 31st 1921, p. 255.
29. *The New Age*, April 28th 1921, p. 204.
30. *The New Age*, April 21st 1921, p. 293.
31. *The New Age*, March 17th 1921, p. 232.
32. *The New Age*, June 9th 1921, p. 63.
33. *The New Age*, October 28th 1920, p. 364.
34. *The New Age*, October 28th 1920, p. 364.
35. *The New Age*, September 9th 1920, p. 280.
36. *The New Age*, August 26th 1920, p. 255.
37. This is one of the main themes of V. S. Naipaul's *India: A Wounded Civilization*, London: André Deutsch, 1977. See especially pp. 102-3.
38. *The New Age*, November 18th 1920, p. 28.
39. *The New Age*, December 9th 1920, p. 64.
40. *The New Age*, September 30th 1920, p. 316.
41. *The New Age*, October 14th 1920, p. 342.
42. For a brief overview of the racist side of occultism during this period, see Peter Washington, *Madame Blavatsky's Baboon: Theosophy and the emergence of the western guru*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1993, espec. pp. 163-167.
43. *The New Age*, October 28th 1920, p. 364
44. *The New Age*, November 4th 1920, pp. 3-4.
45. *The New Age*, November 4th 1920, pp. 3-4.
46. *The New Age*, October 7th 1920, pp. 327-8.
47. *The New Age*, November 18th 1920, p. 27.
48. *The New Age*, December 23rd 1920, p. 89.
49. *The New Age*, February 17th 1921, pp. 138-9.
50. *The New Age*, September 30th 1920, p. 315.
51. *The New Age*, October 14th 1920, p. 342.
52. *The New Age*, September 9th 1920, p. 280.
53. *The New Age*, September 30th 1920, p. 315.
54. *The New Age*, December 9th 1920, p. 63.
55. *The New Age*, October 21st 1920, p. 352.
56. *The New Age*, September 30th 1920, p. 315.
57. *The New Age*, February 17th 1921, p. 184.
58. *The New Age*, June 9th 1921, p. 62.
59. *The New Age*, October 7th 1920, p. 328.
60. *The New Age*, May 26th 1921, p. 40.
61. *The New Age*, September 2nd 1920, p. 268.
62. *The New Age*, September 2nd 1920, p. 268.

63. *The New Age*, January 20th 1921, p. 136.
64. *A Solovyov Anthology*, arranged by S. L. Frank, translated by Natalie Duddington, London: S. C. M., 1950, p. 162.
65. *The New Age*, July 7th 1921, p. 111.