

TEMENOS ACADEMY SPEECH  
THURSDAY 15TH JUNE, 2006

*A Speech given by HRH The Prince of Wales, Patron of the Temenos  
Academy, at a Concert and Reception held on June 15th 2006*

I often wonder why it is that I should feel drawn to the work of the Temenos Academy and to its message of perennial wisdom – especially when it would appear that so few others *are* drawn to it? It must go back to excessive fascination – ever since I can remember – with the knowledge and experience of older people. I *always* wanted to learn from them; to sit at their feet and to imbibe wisdom before it disappeared. Perhaps it explains why, as a teenager, I minded so deeply about what was taking place in the 1960's all about me – yet another burst of iconoclastic destruction which *finally* completed the logic of the Enlightenment; a logic that saw the idea take hold from inference involved with scientific method that scientific method *alone* was the path to knowledge.

What I was witnessing as a teenager – with mounting despair – was the final demolition of the remnants of a traditional world view. Of course, I didn't realize it at the time, but the sheer brutalism of the sixties which so disfigured the environment, turned agri-*culture* into agri-*industry*, tore apart the remaining integrity, harmony and *beauty* of our towns and cities and replaced them with unrestrained uglification; which tore the heart out of an ancient approach to medical care that had seen the human being as consisting of a subtle unification of mind, body and spirit (a universe in miniature) and which blew apart a well-tryed system of education that had ensured the transmission of a body of knowledge from one generation to another and *some* appreciation of a cultural, historical and moral identity – all this, I hadn't realized at the time, was the result of modern scientific enquiry becoming invested with an ideology. In other words, the belief was established that the empirical investigation of Nature would prise open the secrets of Nature Herself and place them at human disposal.

The importance, therefore, which the Temenos Academy has for me has been the gradual discovery through listening to the remarkably enlightening lectures of its members – such as Dr. Joseph Milne, the late Dr. Martin Lings, Professor Sayed Hossein Nasr and many others – that what I *felt* so intuitively and at such a simple level had been expressed so beautifully thousands of years ago in, for instance, the understanding that the soul, or psyche (dare I mention these words in the secular dictatorship in which we live!), was in fact the link between body and mind and therefore the link between *the particular and the universal* – the bridge

between the intelligible world and the body. As Dr. Joseph Milne has reminded us in his recent lectures, it was *once* understood that there was a continuation and correspondence between Nature and human society – and its understanding was *key* to situating humanity within the cosmos. Plato sought to understand how much law was in fact the natural extension of the laws of Nature. All my life I have witnessed the fragmentation of the world around us and the reduction of the essential unity of things to its mere component parts – in other words, the natural consequence of ignoring natural law.

Why, then, do I mention all this – to what I suspect is a sea of troubled faces who have come to what they *hoped* would be a jolly concert of Kyrgyz music?! I do so because I want you to understand, in short, that the current global and environmental crisis we face is chiefly the consequence of arrogantly ignoring the laws of Nature and *deliberately* creating chaos and fragmentation, *dis*-harmony and *dis*-integration, *de*-construction and dissonance – even *diabolism* as opposed to *symbolism*. In other words, the ideology of Modernism has gone too far and upset the inherent balance and order that even “New Science” itself is now beginning to discover – empirically (God forbid!) – lies at the heart of the universe. To restore that balance will take more – *much* more – than just clever technological “fixes” (important though they will be). It will take the *re*-discovery of those abandoned, abused and abnegated parts of our human consciousness – the crucial *intuitive* parts that have been brainwashed out of us during the latter part of the twentieth century – and their *re*-integration with our technological genius. Only in this way will we be able to sing in tune with Nature once again and restore the harmony that has been lost through an “atonal” and asymmetric world view.

*This* is why the Temenos Academy is of such crucial importance, for it is the repository of so much accumulated and priceless wisdom about the true nature of that harmony. It is the lifebelt we need to clutch at to stop ourselves drowning in an ocean of egocentricity. It is the Health and Safety Executive of the soul – and, as Sir Nick Pearson will now explain, its glass should be broken in case of emergency!