THE HISTORICAL CONES

The numbers in brackets refer to phases, and the other numbers to dates A.D. The line cutting the cones a little below 1150, 1380, 1180 and 1527 shows four historical Faculties related to the present moment: May 1925.

BOOK V: DOVE OR SWAN

I

LEDA

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her cape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs,
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead. Being so caught up,
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

II

STRAY THOUGHTS

One must bear in mind that the Christian Era, like
the two thousand years, let us say, that went before it,
is an entire wheel, and each half of it an entire wheel,
that each half when it comes to its 28th Phase reaches
the 15th Phase or the 1st Phase of the entire era. It
follows therefore that the 15th Phase of each millen-
nium, to keep the symbolic measure of time, is Phase 8
or Phase 22 of the entire era, that Aphrodite rises from

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thought a long life a proof of Heavenly favour that the Greek races thought those whom the Gods love must die young, hurling upon some age of crowded comedy their tragic sense? Certainly their tribes, after a first multitudinous revelation—dominated each by its Daimon and oracle-driven—broke up a great Empire and established in its stead an intellectual anarchy. At some 1000 years before Christ I imagine their religious system complete and they themselves grown barbaric and Asiatic. Then came Homer, civil life, a desire for civil order dependent doubtless on some oracle, and then (Phase 10 of the new millennium) for independent civil life and thought. At, let me say, the sixth century B.C. (Phase 12) personality begins, but there is as yet no intellectual solitude. A man may rule his tribe or town but he cannot separate himself from the general mass. With the first discovery of solitude (Phases 13 and 14) comes, as I think, the visible art that interests us most to-day, for Phidian art, like the art of Raphael, has for the moment exhausted our attention. I recall a Nike at the Ashmolean Museum with a natural unsystematised beauty like that before Raphael, and above all certain pots with strange half-supernatural horses dark on a light ground. Self-realisation attained will bring desire of power—systematisation for its instrument—but as yet clarity, meaning, elegance, all things separated from one another in luminous space, seem to exceed all other virtues. One compares this art with the thought of Greek philosophers before Anaxagoras, where one discovers the same phases, always more concerned with the truth than with its moral or political effects. One longs for the lost dramatists, the plays that were enacted before Aeschylus and Sophocles arose, both Phidian men.