The Smith of the Gods

4 - «Life is a question of proportions that lead to the heaven of the very great man: the city without violences.»

40- For Charles Fourier, the passions, far from having to be reformed or repressed as the philosophers of past centuries claimed, tend only towards the concord of individuals, ordering themselves naturally into series according to a mode analogous to that of geometric proportions. Thus goes the “Garden Democracy”. The Liberty that Fourier wishes to bring to plants is more complete and more coherent than the one he intends for men! His generative order, “gear-like” or composite, preserves the diversity of plants and leaves them the initiative of their movements. It is they who, starting from the place where they are planted, develop roots and branches, and go wherever their soil suits them: “Each branch of cultivation seeks to push divisions among the others; the kitchen garden, which in our lands is confined around the dwelling, throws out branches throughout the whole canton”. In such a landscape, there is neither fence nor barrier. The “marriage of plants” leads to the marriage of groups of humans and then to that of couples. It is an agriculture not of quantity but of the diversity and abundance of varieties.

With Fourier, one must distinguish two types of democracy: the “Garden Democracy” or “Agrarian Democracy”, and the “Industrial and Domestic Democracy”, which have divergent workings. Industrial democracy tends to vote for the concentration of means, whereas garden democracy demands the distribution of resources. Agreement is achieved through “Gastrosophy”.

This “Garden Democracy”, just like the “Domestic Democracy”, leads to that “Gastrosophy” which Charles Fourier wanted to be of a Pantagruelian essence. “Gastrosophy” is a philosophy not only of gastronomy arising from this diversity and this abundance, but also a science of natural good health and of the pleasure of the senses: the pleasures of taste, of smell, of sight, and of conviviality. For in “Harmony”, the name Charles Fourier gives to his society having passed the stage of evolution from barbarism to civilisation and from civilisation to the state of harmony, it is not necessary to be seated to eat, the groups drawing closer and agreeing serially on the pleasure one takes in sharing one's dishes and one's culinary impressions.

41- With Charles, it is “Versailles” on every floor. But see clearly that for Fourier, “Gastrosophy” is the highest knowledge of society: “according to him, it takes 140 years to form a good Gastrosopher”. It involves the activity of all its actors, from the agrarian producer to the cooks, passing through every type of health, cultural and industrial agent: “Designers”, “nature-loving dieticians”, “event organisers”, “artists”, “editors”, “mediators”, and thus the whole economy. “Gastrosophy” is a serious matter that arouses the healthy emulation of the whole social body through “Coopetition”, pure disinterested competition.

Charles Fourier thinks of things in a global and planetary way, astral one might say, by imagining an Olympism of gastronomy in which all the populations of all the “Vortices” of the world, about one thousand six hundred people per group of autonomy, compete internationally with one another. Thus, see how much one must rejoice today at the rise of all these culinary programmes in the universe of the media, fostering healthy social emulation. A “Thierry Marx” would be its little prince. What of “Astrosophy”?

“Astrosophy”, greatly ridiculed in his time by all the experienced detractors, remains a notion still difficult for our contemporaries to conceive. The substance of its discourse on the world of the stars is as much concrete as surrealistic, as much built by experience as abstractively modelled, and vitalised by the intuition of happy analogies and sensual metaphors. In the manner of Goethe, starting from the principle of “the Agent-the Acting-the Acted-upon”, beyond gravitation, the stars act upon one another through the intermediary of specific hormones that he names “Aromas” (subtle essences catalysing the formation of Beings through the constitution of a lithosphere, biosphere and noosphere, initiating the ideas of Vladimir Vernadsky). He thus creates a taxonomy made up of a weaving between analogical metaphors of nature and sensual and sensitive analogies, imprinted with mythology and poetry, to transcribe the variety of forms.

In return, always through the principle of “the Agent-the Acting-the Acted-upon”, we absorb through our “coenaesthetic nucleus” these “celestial Aromas”, which we assimilate and which we react out again through the intermediary of styles of being, of mimicries, of gaits, of gestural manners and of words (this is the mechanism of the “Mimism” of the anthropologist Marcel Jousse). It is thus by answering the “celestial Aromas” that we can harmonise or disturb the great cosmic concert, and so bring good or bad influxes to the planet.

42- One understands to what extent André Breton, the pope of “Surrealism”, in “Ode to Charles Fourier”, like Antonin Artaud in his time, approved of him on the idea that for man it can be a question of the relevance of his gestures in his actions and of the quality of his attitude on the surface of the globe, to regulate our relations with the Cosmos. But who is this Charles Fourier? A great humanist, assuredly, advocating the awakening of the senses of his fellow citizens as a principle of social and individual evolution. Baptised a “Utopian Socialist” by the sceptical crowd, with the word utopian from which he defended himself, arguing that to walk upright and proud, one must advance with a clear gaze fixed on the horizon of destiny, lodged far beyond Utopia. Born on 7 April 1772 in Besançon, he would found in 1830 the Societary School with the help of his numerous followers who would rally to him throughout his life. He sought to describe the nature of a social science based on the proportions of the “very great man”, symbolising the heaven of humanity made up of eight hundred and ten different motivations, which are as many expressions of the one thousand six hundred Souls forming the “Vortex” of a community. There are the motivations arising from the pleasures of sight, then those of hearing, of touch, of taste, of smell, then the friendly affective passions, the passions of heroic deeds, those of the love of one's alter ego, and those that have the phylogeny of groups and communities, plus those of composite humours that

develop gearism (enthusiasm), those of cabalistic humours that practise emulism (those who prevent one from turning in circles), and the butterfly humours practising alternatism (the hyperactive). These are the twelve great classes of motivations producing these eight hundred and ten shades of a vortex. These proportions are drawn from various sources such as Greek “Gematria”, alchemical “occult traditions”, ancient theosophy and the “Illuminist” spiritual movement, like that of Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, figure of the movement, and above all Emanuel Swedenborg (a Swedish philosopher), who would hold his attention with his essay on “correspondences”, to constitute the principles of “Astrosophy”.