

Life as interpreted by the five great movements of life—Fire, Earth, Metal, Water, Wood—the Five Elements, the *Wu Hsing* cycle, is embraced and expressed in the following passage I wrote in 1974, three weeks before giving birth to my son Blaize. I include it here in the chapter “Great Oneness” as an illustration of the personal-nonpersonal dance that we are forever dancing, as the completion of heaven-earth, one primrose-two primroses that life “is.”

**THE FIVE ELEMENTS —
REFLECTIONS BEFORE BIRTH:**

Dear Baby beneath my heart. I write this to you while you are in my belly. What I know about you is that you are Nature—the elements so mixed in harmony—blended in balance—simple mysteries. I am united with you forever, though soon you will leave me.

How do I know the ways of all things
at the Beginning?
By what is within me.

— Lao Tze

Earth: In the centre of me—in my earth—rich and fertile you are nourished. I feel your touch from the inside and I am fed. We sing together the hymn of the universe.

You can not put a fence around the planet earth.
I am the land. I wait.

— O. Ortiz

from spiralling ecstatically this

proud nowhere of earth's most prodigious night
blossoms a newborn babe . . .

mind without doubt may blast some universe

CHAPTER TEN

*Great Oneness**

(To the students)

When the ten thousand things are viewed in their oneness, we
return to the origin and remain where we have always been.

— Lao Tze

You don't live in a world *all alone*. *Your brothers are here too.*

— Albert Schweitzer

Rain is no respecter of persons
the snow doesn't give a soft white
damn Whom it touches

— ee cummings

*"Great Oneness" is a translation of the Chinese characters for the acupuncture point known as Stomach 23.

your homecoming will be my homecoming

— ee cummings

. . . . Novalis said: "Philosophy . . . is strictly speaking a homesickness."

It is not a discipline that can be learned. The sciences are only servants in relation to it. But art and religion are its sisters. He who does not know what homesickness is, cannot philosophize. It is only possible for us to philosophize if, and because, we do not feel at home anywhere, because we are unceasingly being pushed up against Being, against that in Being which is total and essential, because we feel at home nowhere except on the way to total and essential. We are without a native land and are restlessness itself, living restlessness: it is because of *this* that it is necessary for us to philosophize. And this restlessness is *our* confinement, in us who are finitude itself. And we are not allowed to let it pass away, to comfort ourselves in an illusion about totality and a satisfactory infinitude. We must not only bear [this restlessness] in us, but accentuate it, and when we are not only confined but entirely isolated, only then do we strive more to incite ourselves to be important, civilized; only then are we in a position to be "gripped."

And when we thus make ourselves grippable, by handing ourselves over to reality, our homesickness makes us into human beings.

— Martin Heidegger

It would be very good if we would wake up before we die.

— Old Hindu Saying

Harry's mother calls him to get up for school. The conversation goes as follows: "O Ma, do I have to?" "Yes, Harry, you have to. Come on now and get up. It's a school day." "Aw, Ma." "Harry." "Ma, give me two good reasons why I