

pentagram



There are two kinds of thinking: analytical thinking and healing thinking. The first form of thinking is based on a boundless number of phe-

nomena and is seeking its component parts, assuming that the smallest atom will bring the greatest solution. Everything it touches, it divides, analyses, classifies, makes harmless and subjugates to itself.

The other type of thinking sees the one universal life being expressed jubilantly everywhere, in glorious diversity, with an indescribable wealth of forms and types. Everything it beholds is enjoyed by its sight; it eagerly shows its beauty and its subtle aspects; it is liberated and taken up into the higher good.

One type of thinking brings coolness and overview, while the other type brings warmth, life and insight. One type belongs to the mind, the other one to original Man. The first type is earthly-human, the other one divine.

This issue of the **pentagram**, tries to make a contribution that may increase the insight into this wealth.

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Cover: twelve roses around the thirteenth,
from the manuscript *Akhlaq-I Rasul Allah* (1708).
In the Arab wisdom, the beauty of each flower,
and of the rose in particular, reminded people of
the lofty divine Spirit, and every earthly garden
was a foretaste of the future heavenly rose garden

the awakening of the soul

The questions arising from verse 72 of the first book of Hermes' Pymander are: What does Hermes mean by 'the soberness of the soul'? Where does the departing part of the personality stay during the sleep of the body and what does it do during the hours of the night, or rather: what happens with it?

after J van Rijckenborgh

THE COMPOSITION OF THE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS During the hours of the night, the night person, if we may call him so, sojourns in the astral sphere of dialectical nature. When a person falls asleep, a division of the personality occurs. One part of the personality leaves the body, but what usually escapes the attention of the investigators is that, apart from the division of the personality, a division of the consciousness also manifests itself.

The dialectical consciousness is caused by the organic cooperation of all atoms that at a certain moment belong to the system of the personality. Accordingly, we may distinguish four phenomena of the consciousness: two phenomena that predominantly belong to the material side of things, to the physical body and the etheric body, and two that mainly belong to the tenuous, yonder side of things.

When a person falls asleep and the more tenuous part of the personality leaves the body, the consciousness is also split. The material aspect of the consciousness stays on the material side, sometimes in a state of latency, of inactivity, sometimes in a state of semi-activity. The latter state occurs, for instance, if we have excessively exerted our body during the day, or if we are very nervous or are plagued by many worries. The other aspect of the consciousness accompanies the departing astral and mental bodies. And as the mental body of all people is still very elementary, very incompletely organised, the sleeping consciousness is virtually wholly controlled by the astral consciousness during the sleep of

the body. This is why we may confidently say of people living in our time: the sleeping consciousness is the astral consciousness.

On the basis of this conclusion, it may be deduced that the conscious human night life cannot remotely be compared to the ordinary, conscious life on the material plane, when the four, concentric states of consciousness cooperate and mutually control each other.

The nocturnal human consciousness is exclusively astral consciousness. He who knows what this means, he who truly knows this, will no longer be victimised by the thousand and one mistakes, which people have made time and again in this respect and which they will continue to make.

THE NATURE OF THE ASTRAL SPHERE The astral sphere has a very strong, expressive faculty. Thoughts, desires, feelings and objects of the will are projected into it. Therefore, it is clear that, in view of life in the reflection sphere and the general behaviour of humanity living in this time, the astral sphere of dialectical nature has been heavily polluted and complicated, wholly deluded. It has become absolutely fatal for gnostic life, because astral matter is unusually magnetic. Everything that does not correspond to its nature is simply removed from the sleeping person, from the tenuous personality that enters the astral sphere. Instead, the sleeping human being receives the nature of the astral sphere and the astral substance concerned.

This is why we read in the gnostic Gospel of the



*The sleep of the body became the soberness of the soul;
the closing of the eyes the true seeing; the silence became for me as a pregnancy
of the good and the proclaiming of the word resulted in fruitful works of salvation.*
Pymander, Book I, verse 72



'His astral self will then seek its abode in the heart sanctuary. Not until then will he see the world as it really is.' The wise Babur (Hindukush, 1530), reflecting in his garden near current Kabul

Only he who is able to pull his consciousness up to the heart, will overcome his primary natural instinct

Pistis Sophia that she was continuously robbed of her light power.

The astral sphere of ordinary life is filled with unholy forces, the so-called aeons, which may be described as nature forces. Literally, the word aeon means: course of the times, unspecified length of time. With the help of this concept, it becomes clear what aeons in the context of the astral sphere are. Aeons are astral forces, astral effects that have been formed and have become very powerful during long periods of time, for instance, projections of human desires and thoughts, which were nourished for such a long time that they ultimately were vivified in the astral sphere.

Suppose that we keep a certain image in mind and agree that we will continuously maintain this image throughout the years; that we will instil it into our children, and will hold up the same image to all who want to go with us; that artists will draw, paint and sculpt it, and that poets will express it. Then you will be able to imagine how an aeon is formed in the astral sphere. It is the projection of continuous streams of human desires and thoughts that will ultimately be vivified to the extent that it controls and dominates humanity.

These aeons, which become ever more powerful because they are unceasingly nourished by

humanity, rob any gnostically inclined person entering the astral sphere of his light power. Usually this occurs every night to every pupil, once he surrenders his body to the rest of sleep.

PUPILSHIP For all who take their pupilship seriously, important consequences ensue from this, amongst other things, the logical and compelling demand that they dissociate from the astral sphere of ordinary nature. When a human being discovers that he experiences the extremely fatal influence of that field each time he enters there during the hours of the night, the obvious question will be: 'How can I become free from them? How can I protect myself against these influences?' This is the first consequence. The second consequence is that the human being, once he has become free from the astral sphere of ordinary nature, will subsequently, during his sleep, direct the tenuous part of his personality toward another astral field in which the mentioned pollution and dangers do not exist. These are the elementary demands, which no one can escape. Without fulfilling these demands, any gnostic pupilship is simply an illusion. However, you cannot force or exact it; if you would try to do so for a few days, you would be unable to sustain it. It would be a struggle ending in absolutely certain defeat. This is why we

already drew the conclusion that the key to the gnostic path lies in the possibility of providing another direction for our astral consciousness on the basis of and through the astral-conscious self. First of all, this requires that you pull the nucleus principle of your I-being up from the spleen-liver system to the heart. This can only be accomplished when you have matured to that point; when your course of life finally causes you to become bogged down in matter; when you discover that there is no prospect of liberation for a human being who continues on the horizontal line. Then you will pull the nucleus principle of the I up from the spleen-liver system, where it has its seat, to the heart.

The person whose I is concentrated in the spleen-liver system, in the solar plexus, is the type of the rock hard, I-centred nature human being who grasps and clings to matter and expects everything from it. However sooner or later, often only after many states of existence in the microcosm, one day the moment will arrive for this person that he becomes bogged down in the nature of death and discovers that his existence is a never-ending cycle without any perspective. However, as long as he is still living on the basis of the spleen-liver system, and demonstrates total self-maintenance and I-centrality, pupilship in a Spiritual School is absolutely useless. Only he who is able to pull his consciousness up to the heart, will overcome his primary natural instinct. Then his astral self will seek its abode in the heart sanctuary. Not until then will he see the world as it really is.

THE DECISIVE POWER OF THE LONGING FOR SALVATION Then a new longing, a yearning for the true, fundamental liberation will emanate from the astral self. The holy language calls this 'longing for salvation'. Only this longing opens the human heart to the Gnosis and touches the rose of the heart. In this way, the human being arrives at the gate of a wholly new state of life: through longing for salvation, as the result of pulling the astral conscious self up into the heart.

Many millions of people are standing before this gate. Throughout the ages, multitudes have already been longing for truly liberating life in this way. These millions of people, attuned in this way, also created an aeon together, called 'the thirteenth aeon' in the gnostic writings. An interaction develops between the thirteenth aeon and the longing, yearning human being, as a result of which the fire of this person's longing continuously increases, is ever more stirred up, and the sense and the notion of the state of distress in which he lives is permanently growing, for mere longing for salvation is not enough. Then, the astral self will, during the hours of the night, still sojourn in the astral sphere of polluted nature, and return from it the next morning, robbed of light power to such an extent that the distress is greater than ever before. Apart from longing for salvation, self-sanctification is needed, too. He who truly longs to be sanctified, that is, healed, will try to do anything possible, yes, even anything seemingly impossible, to approach this sanctification. You will



Toth, the Egyptian god with the Ibis head is Hermes, the messenger from the spiritual world. In his hand, he keeps a parchment scroll, symbolising the divine word that is truth

understand that this is logical. Therefore, strong self-activation will always prove that the fire of the longing for salvation purifies a human being. This self-activation will always originate in the human heart and in this way affect his whole state of life. This is why we always speak of the necessary purification of the heart in the School of the Rosycross. He who adds active self-purification to longing for salvation, receives this sanctification through the birth of the soul, with all ensuing consequences.

Countless people are begging for help and are praying for assistance for all kinds of things concerning dialectical matters. However, the human being should understand that he, in order to achieve true salvation, first of all has to exert himself and use his whole state of being. Apart from longing for salvation, self-sanctification must be developed. Not until then will the birth of the soul be able to take place.

Surveying the development discussed here again, it appears that it first of all confronts the candidate with pulling up the astral self from the spleen-liver system to the heart, so that he overcomes his nature state. Secondly, he is confronted with the development of the longing for salvation and the self-discovery of fallen nature. Thirdly, he is confronted with the self-activation, the self-purification, the purification of the heart and of his whole life, in absolute self-surrender, which will result in the birth of the soul.

WHAT IS THE NEW SOUL? The birth of the soul is primarily the birth of a new astral being. A soul being is primarily an astral being, an entity that, after its birth, is immediately communicated to the blood, to the nerve fluid, to the endocrine system, and also makes itself felt in the organs of intelligence. Once anything of this new soul being pervades a human being, once the new astral influences break into someone, a new faculty develops in him or her. Then a new power circulates through his whole being and affects all ordinary human faculties.

Thus we understand that the fourth step, which

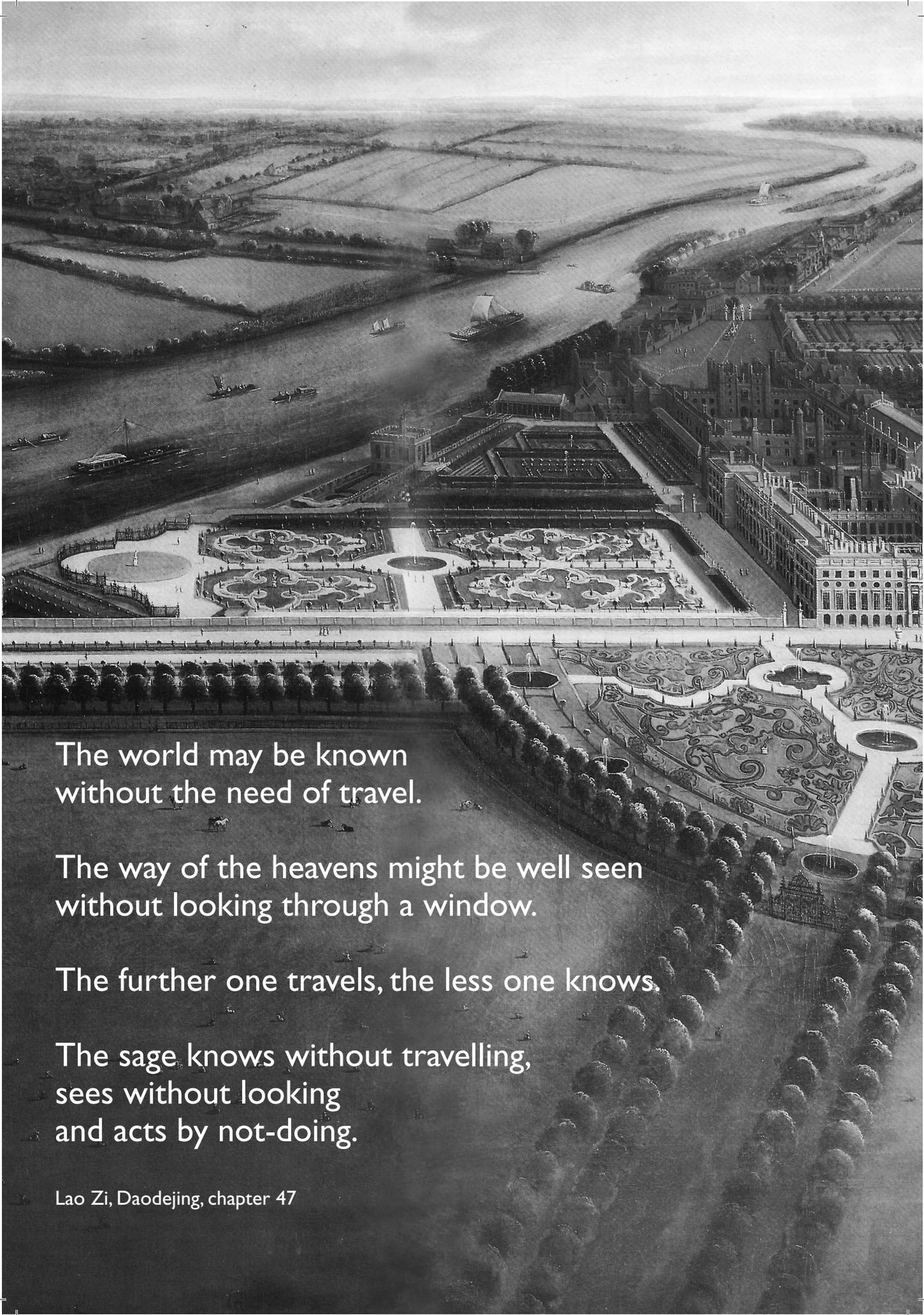
The vibration and the directedness of the astral self, when falling asleep, is decisive for the whole nocturnal life and for the daytime life of the next day

is then wholly within our reach, is formed by the consistent, systematic transfer of the control of our lives to the newborn soul within us, to the new possibilities within us. This means that our I, our natural self, wholly fades into the background, and no longer behaves according to our ordinary nature, but allows the soul to control our whole life. Then the new astral being, the new soul state within us, will grow. A newly equipped sidereal body will manifest itself, and the old desire being and desire life will completely disappear.

Then we are already involved in transfiguration! To the extent that the new development continues, we die as to the astral sphere of the old nature. At a certain moment, we no longer even have access to it; we are unable to find a place for the new astral self there. Then the new astral field of the Living Body opens: the sojourner in the earthly realms is welcomed in his new house. Everything we said before particularly intends to make it clear to us that such a new house exists, which has been specifically prepared for the young Gnosis by the efforts of many. This does not refer to a possible future salvation, to a later or perhaps even imminent liberation. No, for each of us, there is in the present, a house of freedom which we may enter, provided we are prepared to use the proper key and accept the consequences. The condition is that we possess a soul and demonstrate this during our daytime life of consistently applied, practical pupilship in selfless service, sustained by the undeniable love for humanity, of the true soul state. Every soul-

born human being should, after having accomplished his daily work, place his life absolutely into the sphere of the soul, and should, therefore, before going to sleep, not dwell on the aspects of the world of opposites.

In this way, the sleep of the body may become the soberness of the soul. He who is going to sleep, focused on the soul, makes the soul conscious, awakens it. The vibration, the directedness of the astral self when falling asleep, is decisive for the whole nocturnal life and for the daytime life of the next day. Prepared in this way, they who enter the new astral field will experience every day, with ever greater power, with ever greater clarity, that the sleep of the body implies the waking up or being awake of the soul. It implies true seeing and a new development that will be crowned by the new state of consciousness, called 'the unfading crown of glory' in the holy language ✪



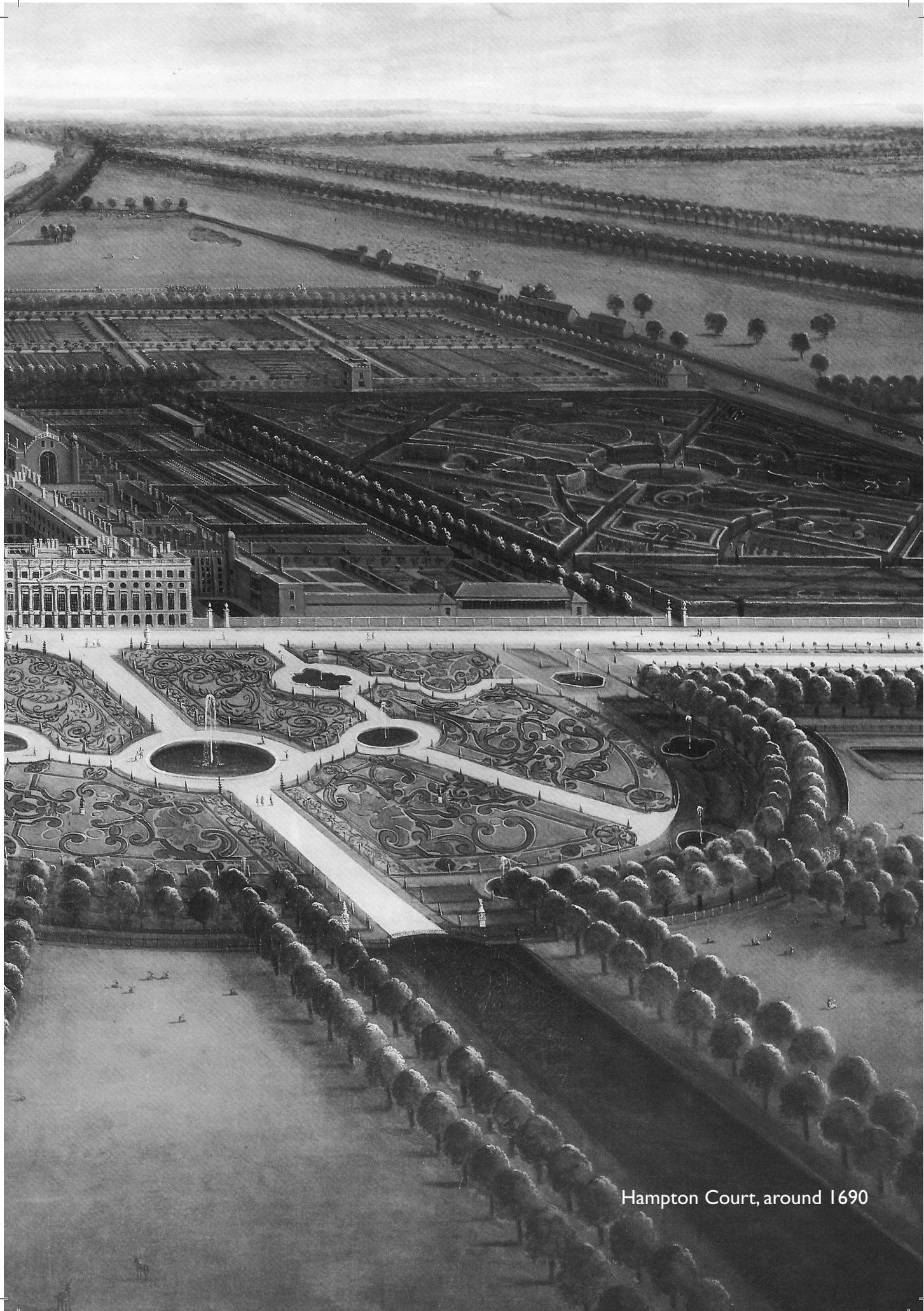
The world may be known
without the need of travel.

The way of the heavens might be well seen
without looking through a window.

The further one travels, the less one knows.

The sage knows without travelling,
sees without looking
and acts by not-doing.

Lao Zi, Daodejing, chapter 47



Hampton Court, around 1690

the fourth dimension

Catharose de Petri states that the 'genesis of intuition' is the true awakening of the soul. How is this soul able to develop the absolutely new seeing, needed for beholding in the pure atmosphere of the magnetic living body? The author compares this seeing to entering what we call the fourth dimension, the fourth aspect of space.

Catharose de Petri

A life wave of souls or microcosms is generated by and born from the divine idea irradiating the surrounding astral, original nature, in the same way as our thoughts cause the formation of sparks in our astral body. Having been born, the microcosm continues with a process of self-realisation, because the divine idea is the driving force behind the astral spark. In this way, ethers are released in the field of manifestation of the microcosm, concentrated around the nucleus or rose of the microcosm and adopting the form of the thought image underlying its creation. In this way, the true human being was once created from eternity, and was naturally and spontaneously linked with the Father.

However, the human being, who in primordial times abused his freedom and demonstrated his resisting nature, knows only too well what has become of him. The original, glorified body was unable to manifest itself. It disappeared, because an etheric-physical body has the property that, if it is not formed on the basis of an astral mother field, it will evaporate into nothingness. The original ensouling factor, the microcosm, the soul, has then become inactive and empty and is unable to manifest itself. And the Spirit that caused the miracle has withdrawn.

Through an earthly birth process, a personality is born and linked with a soul. In itself, this personality is another miracle of God's love, because it should be seen as part of an emergency order plan to revivify the original human being. The task of the earthly personality, as a temporary

phenomenon, is to liberate its soul, its microcosm, from its imprisonment by self-surrender and by merging, through the endura, with the Other One, who must be resurrected.

Currently, the microcosm is bound to its system of time and space, but once the Spirit, the soul and the transfigured personality are reunited, the microcosm will be ready to enter the divine state of omnipresence again. Not until then will the microcosm remain broken and damaged.

This is why the call continuously resounds to all to accomplish this great work of salvation in and through the great power of the original nature. In the first place, the great and holy light power of original nature should, therefore, irradiate our whole body. The mode of life that is now required of the human being is that of becoming enlightened. Just like Simeon, the human being must become a soul that seeks the Spirit. He must bring his whole life into harmony with that. Then, at a psychologically suitable moment, the great entrance of the light into the microcosm will occur and be seen by us.

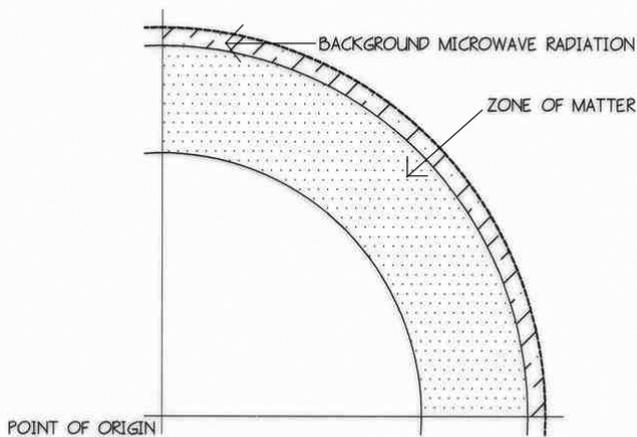
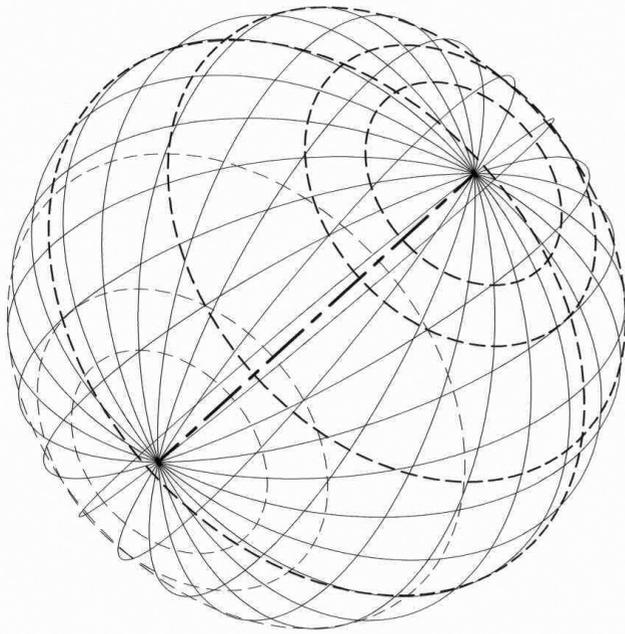
To this end, it is necessary that feeling, thinking and willing come under the radiation power of the holy breath, so that the soul can be vivified in the vital body and be linked with the Seven-Spirit. Then the inner Christ will take over the control of the Johannine human being, and because the devoted 'I' cannot succeed, the soul will be able to remove all the difficulties of the life of the personality and lead it to the great victory, to the prelude of the resurrection, symbolically referred to as the hill of Golgotha.



Then the first task of Jesus Christ has been accomplished in the human being. Perhaps you will be able to understand what happens when the candidate in the gnostic mysteries is, driven by the Spirit, able to raise his soul state up to the Father and to tear himself loose from the nature aeons. Having entered the temple of his innermost depth, he beholds. He sees the living other one. And while experiencing this pure 'vision', he also beholds the process of development of any fallen child of God, leading from fallen nature into the liberating life. The new vision is so intimately linked with intuition that it is virtually indistinguishable. You will wholly understand this, when you begin to discover the purpose and nature of this true vision. The genesis of intuition is the true awakening of the soul, and is related to the true birth of

the soul and to establishing the soul in the open space behind the frontal bone.

The awakening in the spirit-soul field and the entrance into the pure astral sphere of the magnetic living body demands an absolutely new vision, namely seeing and entering what we call the fourth dimension, the fourth aspect of space. People know three dimensions: height, length and width. They experience their living space through these three dimensions. No matter how wide we make or imagine this three-dimensional space, it is always limited, it always has restrictions and it always means imprisonment. That this imprisonment is experienced unconsciously in our time, because our earth is wholly known from a three-dimensional point of view, we can deduce from the scientific attempts to reach other planets. In the indomitable urge,



currently exerted on people by evolution, the three dimensions become too restrictive, too oppressive for humanity. The sciences react to this oppression in a three-dimensional way, by trying to make three-dimensional space as wide as possible.

It is clear that the existing difficulties would immediately be eliminated, if there would be a fourth dimension, which would be experienced as a reality by the sciences. This fourth dimension exists! It is the dimension that is sometimes called the absolute passability. We would like to refer to it as the reality of the Omnipresence. It is the dimension that wholly eliminates time,

distance and past, present and future, the present and what is to come later.

If humanity would possess this fourth dimension, there would absolutely be no need for going to, for instance, the Moon, Mars, Venus or Mercury, because reflecting on the Moon would mean, seen in the fourth dimension, being on the Moon. In short, possessing the fourth dimension means having the faculty of omnipresence.

It is very peculiar for a human being with a three-dimensional vision to imagine such a faculty. Yet, the fourth dimension is only the gate to the fifth, sixth and seventh dimensions. These seven dimensions also underlie the atom with its seven aspects. The human being, who existentially consists of atoms, is in principle and fundamentally omnipresent, but he is not aware of this, because his consciousness and his current faculties are three-dimensional.

The consciousness of omnipresence bestows the power of being everywhere with this consciousness, if so desired, though existentially being in one place, without moving from one's place. Intuition is the gate to it. The new vision is the first realisation of the fourth dimension.

After this explanation, you will understand how fatal it is to be open to the astral influences of ordinary dialectical nature. The human field of life is totally polluted. The atmosphere of human life with its astral and etheric causes and effects is saturated with them. As your field of life is also your field of respiration, you are kept prisoner in it down to your seed, that is, down to your progeny.

For the first time in his life, the pupil is truly capable of pure thinking, because his mental organs have now been opened to it

Therefore, how true are the words of the Old Testament that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and the fourth generation. Why only to the third and the fourth generation? Because a cause of sin cannot extend longer than to the third or fourth generation, but its effect usually contains a new cause. He who does not begin, practise and continue the changed mode of life on the basis of the awakened soul, will never reach any gnostic goal. All magic is achieved through the respiration. He who is unable to protect himself from harmful astral influences, will be absolutely victimised. To the extent that the form of the personality dies, that is, changes by a positive new life, and is controlled by the soul, the fifth ray of the Seven-Spirit begins to carry out its task. A new, wondrous light will touch and fill the pupil. This light is active in a purely mental way. For the first time in his life, the pupil is truly capable of pure thinking, because his mental organs have now been opened to it.

In total harmony with the manifestation of the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit, the renewal of the senses is accomplished, provided the pupil does what the inner process demands of him. Then he will be sustained by the liberating Universal Teachings.

The mind corresponds to the fifth ray. Having entered the sphere of activity of the fifth sense, you will immediately discover that the mind is much more than a sensory organ. The mind is the vehicle for and of your thinking. The mind is the vehicle of the mental body. When the rational mind is aroused, this signifies the birth of the mental body, which all people in the nature of death are still lacking. Not until this birth will true human genesis begin.

The ancient teachings sometimes refer to the human being as 'Adamas', which is related to the word man or manas, that is thinker. The cooperation between the pupil, who is practising the new mode of life, and the fifth ray of the Seven-Spirit signifies nothing less than the birth, the true manifestation of the thinking faculty, the true mental body as meant by God, and therefore: the manifestation of the rational mind ✪

Catharose de Petri, *The Living Word*

the other heritage of charles darwin

Two hundred years ago, on 12 February 1809, Charles Robert Darwin was born, and 150 years ago, his revolutionary book 'On the Origin of Species' was published. In 2009, the media paid a lot of attention to this double anniversary. However, in this article, the pentagram presents a hardly discussed aspect of the biologist: the relationship between knowledge and faith.

Darwin believed that scientific work should be carried out independently from religious ideas and that faith in a directive deity can easily be combined with the theory of evolution, because faith has a basis other than the sciences. But his very life showed how closely both are related.

During his theological studies, Darwin was confronted with natural theology. This discipline states that the effect of a loving or punishing god is noticeable in all natural phenomena. The scientist's main motivation for his five-year journey around the world was his quest for irrefutable proof of this.

This is why he carried the Bible as an undisputed authority in his luggage. However, due to the many surprising insights that he gained into the history of the earth and the development of plants and animals, his naïve faith in the Bible began to waver.

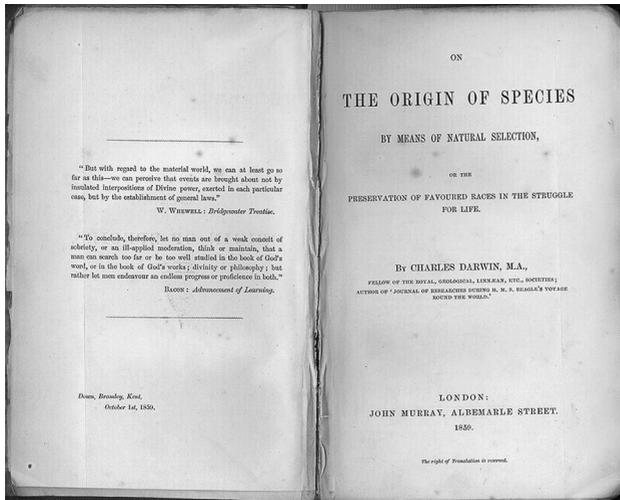
AN IMAGE OF GOD DISAPPEARS Back in England, Charles Darwin began to evaluate his comprehensive and diverse discoveries. Then, gradually, the theory of evolution developed. Simultaneously, he understood that his faith in a God who miraculously intervenes in the events in the world, was no longer tenable.

In his main work 'On the Origin of Species', he stated as his opinion that, though God created the universe and the laws of nature, he further gave them free rein. 'There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few



Conrad Martens, Mount Sarmiento, Tierra del Fuego. The depicted ship is the HMS Beagle, Darwin's famous ship, during his second journey, 1831-1836





Title page of the first edition of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, London, 1859

forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone circling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.¹

As Darwin grew older, his faith in a God waned, which was certainly influenced by his long illness, but when his dearly beloved daughter died at the age of ten, he could no longer believe in a compassionate God.

Ever since that event, he called himself an agnostic, but actually the process of evolution had already interested him all his life. His idea was that the question of the reason for it surpassed human cognition. He wrote: 'To us, the mystery of the beginning of all things is insoluble; and as far as I am concerned, I have decided to remain an agnostic.'

His life actually ended tragically: his insights totally destroyed his faith and his image of God and this was not replaced by something else. When he died in Downe (Kent, England) on 19 April 1882, he fully believed that death was the absolute end. However, by his theory of evolution, he not only paved the way for a new, dynamic worldview, but he also laid the basis for a wholly new image of God, without being aware of it.

THE OTHER DARWIN Charles Darwin's premise of the survival of the fittest was soon interpreted as 'the fittest will survive'. Actually, he meant that only those organisms would survive that thrive in their environment. He deduced the 'struggle for life' from his observations; he did not consider it an ideology. To him, the cooperation and the symbiosis in the vegetable and animal kingdoms were at least as important. Eighty percent of all plants have a symbiotic relationship with fungi. Darwin's theories have been abused in an unparalleled way. The social Darwinists were the worst by turning 'the struggle for life' into a 'right of the strongest', thus taking the 'selection' into their own hands and distinguishing between a valuable and a worthless human life. According to Charles, cooperation and transcendence are much more important for human development than competition and self-interest. These were super modern insights! He considered love, fellowship, compassion, communication and creativity decisive factors of human development. He wrote: 'Moral skills should be put higher on the scale than intellectual ones. Moral properties rather develop, directly or indirectly, by the effect of habit, rationality and teaching than by natural selection.'²

In Darwin's second important work *The Descent of Man*, the expression 'survival of the fittest' only appears twice, while the concept of 'love' is mentioned not less than ninety-five times. The same numbers are reached by the expressions 'mutual affection', 'mutual help' and 'sympathy'.³

The social Darwinists were the worst by turning 'the struggle for life' into a 'right of the strongest'

During his life, he was not a champion of a rock-hard evolution machinery based on natural selection and the survival of the fittest. His message was: there is hope for a future, higher human destiny, which is implied in what is highest and best in us, namely love.

LATER EFFECTS Not until long after his death, did a new dynamic image of the world, humanity and God develop on the basis of his theory, which was further promoted by the knowledge of elementary particles and quantum physics. Spiritually interested scientists and progressive theologians tend to grow towards a concept that is acceptable to modern people, in which the new scientific worldview corresponds to a new and noble image of God, an image which sees God's activity in everything that lives, as the eternal possibility that encompasses everything and everyone and does not exclude anything or anyone. It is interesting to see how these new ideas (at least partly) approach the timeless universal teachings.

UNIVERSALLY LINKED 'The universe constitutes a whole and has originated from the big bang. It is a unity that covers the universes down to the microbes. The earth, too, is a physical-chemical system, in which there ultimately is, via evolution, as in a great organism, a coherence of everything with everything. According to Jörg Zink can the awareness of the fundamental unity of everyone with everything be described as compassion. Compassion also means placing

egoistic interests in the second place in favour of life.'⁴

'Quantum physics deals with a general relationship, in which changes of form (metamorphoses) continuously occur. However, mere 'change' actually does not exist, but only 'renewal' (modification) or 'working' or 'living'. 'Modifying' is actually 'flowing through everything' without being understood... In order to understand the world, we actually should not want to 'comprehend', but we rather should stretch out our arms and open our hands to 'receive' it. At the moment that we want to understand, we suffocate what we would like to comprehend or we grope in the emptiness. For the essence of the world is 'what is in between'.⁵

BECOMING INSTEAD OF BEING 'Being human is becoming human: the progressing manifestations of the divine spirit in the world and in man.' 'Creation is a permanent process and not an event from a distant past.' (Th Dobzhansky, evolution biologist)

'The more progress we make in life, the more we change. The more we change, the more we die. This is the law of genesis.'⁶

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION 'Many scientifically thinking people trace our existence back to the activity of a mysterious, transcendental power. They believe that a divine plan underlies the creation of our

In the Beatitudes, the usual social-darwinist patterns of behaviour are broken up

cosmos. Then God is the creative potential of the evolution.' In this context, theologians like H R Stadelmann speak of an evolutionary God, who surpasses good and evil.'⁷

'Actually no contradiction is possible between science and religion, provided science restricts itself to what, when, how and where and religion to why.'⁸

'The discovery that something, which our mind is unable to comprehend and the beauty and sublimity of which only touch us indirectly, underlies everything that we can experience: that is religiosity... Science without religion is paralysed. Religion without science is blind.' (Albert Einstein)

THE PRIMACY OF THE SPIRIT Spirit and matter are not opposites, but only different states of aggregation (complex, composite states): matter is solidified spirit, of which spirit is the primary aspect, because there was not yet matter in its current state at the time of the big bang. 'The cosmos is not kept together by matter, but by the spirit.' (P Teilhard de Chardin)

GOD DOES NOT WORK FROM THE OUTSIDE 'The cosmic spirit is realised through evolution; it incarnates during the course of the evolution of the structures of the world. Because God makes himself concrete in continuous interaction with his creation, he is part of its fate.'⁹

'God does not work in the world as the immovable mover, from above or from the outside, but he works from the inside, as the dynamic, most real reality, in the process of development of this world, because he enables, flows and accomplishes. He is the origin, the centre and the goal of the processes of the world... fully respecting the laws of nature, of which he himself is the origin.'¹⁰

'In the gnostic consciousness, every human being finds his perfect self and all discover their truth and the resonance of their different activities in what surpasses all of them and of which they are expressions.' (Sri Aurobindo)

THE MENTALITY OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT 'This also results in a new interpretation of Jesus Christ. The historical events fade into the background. Not only Jesus is the son of God, but all of us are called to become sons and daughters of that God, that is, new human beings. The appearance of Jesus may be seen as a 'quantum leap' in human evolution, just as, for instance, in the Beatitudes the usual social-darwinist patterns of behaviour are broken up. In this respect, Jesus may be considered 'the saviour', because he has liberated us from the pressure of biological selection (competitive behaviour, self-maintenance) and has, for instance, shown us, by his consistently practised, non-violent 'way of the cross', the love for all life as the path to becoming whole again.'¹¹

Evolution and involution

What is usually described as evolution is called involution by the Spiritual School, namely the chaining, and enveloping of the spirit in matter. However, true evolution means liberation, the development of the spirit from matter; the process of transfiguration.¹⁴

THE AIM OF EVOLUTION The new insights correspond to many biblical statements. For example, when Jesus says that the kingdom of God has already begun in the here and now. Or when the New Testament speaks about Jesus as the 'new man'. Or when Paul says: 'We shall not die, but be changed.' The aim of evolution would then be that ultimately 'God dwells' in his creation in the 'new Jerusalem'. 'The resurrection of Jesus is not a miracle that contradicts the laws of nature, but it concerns a wholly different mode of existence in the wholly different dimension of eternity.'¹²

The insight is growing that we, human beings, have a specific task in building the body that becomes God in his creation, the mysterious body of Christ... Put on the garment of light! Become Light! Be a new creature!¹³

BRIDGES TO THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH In this way, the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith, like Jesus Christ, creation, revelation, salvation and resurrection receive a totally new meaning. By the way, should we not consider whether or not this concerns a superficial reconciliation of the natural and the spiritual sciences? Or whether the concept of spirit is not watered down? Or whether things are not interpreted wrongly? However, it is undeniable that many statements have a close link with the universal teachings. May they constitute bridges to the universal truth ☉

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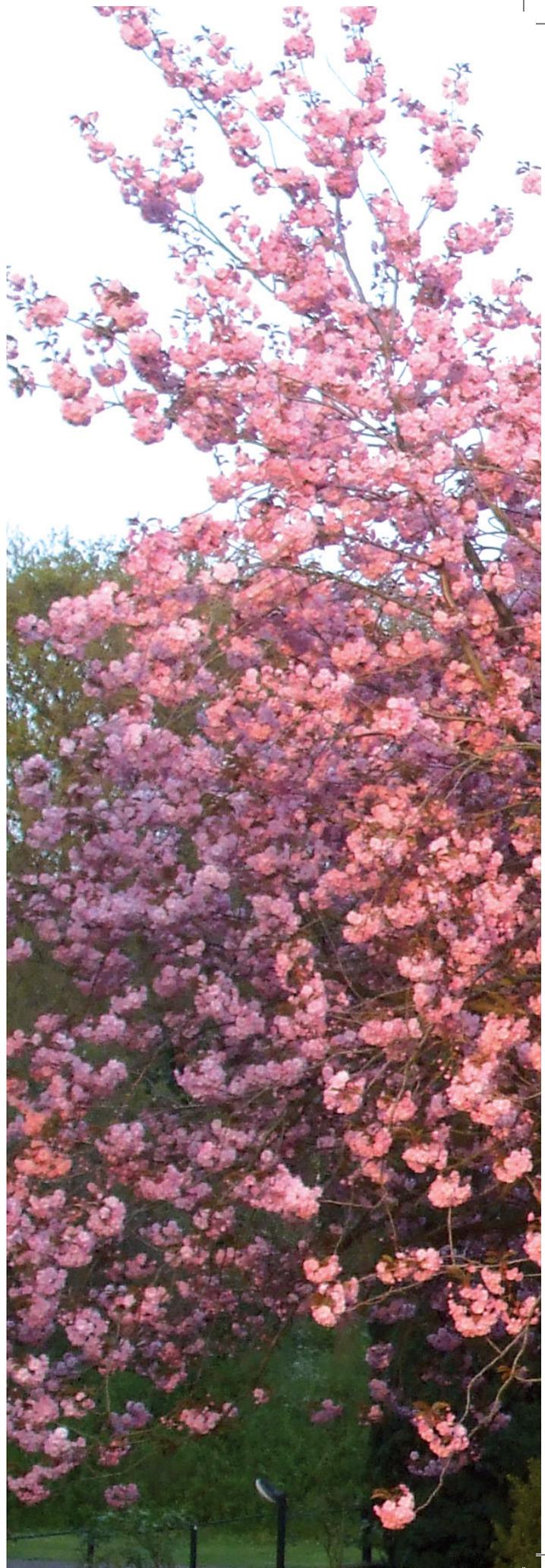
I have and protect three treasures and preserve them.

The first is compassion,
the second is moderation
and the third is not running ahead of the world.
Compassion makes you truly courageous;
moderation makes you truly generous,
and because you do not run ahead of the world,
you are able to lead it.

But being courageous without compassion,
generous without moderation,
wanting to be the most important one without
being able to obey,
truly, these things are fatal.

It is compassion that makes you victorious in
the attack
and makes you invincible in the defence;
when Heaven wants to save a human being,
it will arm him with compassion.

Daodejing, chapter 67





we will obviously not **speak of love**

When a tragedy occurs, the arts should not stay aloof. This week (October 2009), the play *The Power of Yes*, in which author David Hare tries to uncover the causes of the credit crisis, had its premiere in the London National Theatre. It was quite interesting as an accessible lecture, this newspaper wrote, but as a play, it was less successful.

A week earlier, I had more luck, not in London, but in Enschede (near the Dutch/German border). There the Nationale Reisopera (National Touring Opera) gave an impressive performance of Wagner's *Rheingold*. I attended the opera with a friend, and after the performance, we looked in bewilderment at each other. The decision to produce this opera had of course been made long before the beginning of the crisis, but it seemed a conscious and directed comment on the recent dynamism of the economy.

Chief god Wotan is rather busy with all kinds of matters beyond his wife Fricka's horizon. She feels anxious about it and thinks that she can keep him more at home and hearth in a palatial dwelling of the gods, the Valhalla. The idea appeals to him – a house that expresses his power and glory – as a kind of country estate on the Vecht (a Dutch river), but then on the Rhine and bigger. Although he is the chief god, he is unable to build anything himself, so just as any other patron, he hires labourers, the giants Fasolt and Fafner. He promises them, without Fricka's knowledge, her sister Freia, the goddess of love and life, in exchange for their wages. When they come to claim these wages, it becomes clear to Wotan that he should not have disposed of Freia, and in addition, that the gods themselves would wither and die without the goddess of love. As a ruse, he therefore offers to buy the giants off with something that isn't his property, the ring of the black elf Alberich, although he had not obtained



Columnist Johan Schaberg in NRC Handelsblad of Saturday 9 October 2009



In the past, love was one of the seven cardinal virtues, together with courage, righteousness, realism, moderation, faith and hope

it honestly either. He had heard that he who gets hold of the Rheingold and is able to forge a ring from it, will acquire dominion over the world. This sufficiently stirred his desire to steal the gold, even at the cost of an extra condition – renouncing love.

The scholars do agree that greed underlies the financial crisis. I never heard anyone mention lack of love. We do not speak about it in the world of finance and business. Love is for pop songs, lovers, mothers and babies. Love is something for the personal sphere; businessmen and bankers are only involved in it in their spare time. This is a serious mistake. We equate love to the emotion that belongs to certain expressions of it, to the sweet feeling of being in love or to tenderness, but it is much more than that. In the past, it was one of the seven cardinal virtues, together with courage, righteousness, realism, moderation, faith and hope. Virtues were attitudes, modes of life. They were quite different from emotions, which are like waves that make you lose control. Virtues are conscious, active, controlled, and we are able to practise and train them. Thus, we can also decide to love – or not, out of sluggishness, ignorance or deliberately, like Alberich.

Love, as a consciously practised virtue, is the notion that we are tied to others by all kinds of strings, knowing that we ourselves will be damaged when something happens to the beloved. The ancients expressed this in countless ways, from the ‘You are that’ of the Indians to the ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ of the Jews and the Christians. However, we reduced love to something of the heart, the belly and lower. The head does not play a role in it, to our detriment.

He who steals the Rheingold and renounces love, will dominate the world. Perhaps this is not so much due to any magical quality of gold, but

rather to the character of him who is capable of these deeds. Nothing is immune to the combination of a lack of love with greed. It is the poisonous mixture of the scorched earth, of the plundered society. ‘It is easy for us to get out of the crisis, provided we are able to control our greed,’ one of my friends recently said. However, this project does not seem to have a chance. Genetically, we are inclined to grabbing, grasping and seizing. Look at the eagerness of the infant at its mother’s breast – the baby who does not do so, will die; it is a vital reflex. Perhaps another possibility is to redevelop love, but not enforced by decree, for that is the way of domination, of Alberich, which will lead to even more misery. However, what each of us can do individually is to practice it, creating an environment that nourishes and cherishes such an exercise.

However, we do not speak of love in a business environment or do we? Perhaps we should. It is as with taboos: what should not be said has a hidden power of attraction. There is a fair chance that our very being silent is part of our problem. Anyway, one prominent, common feature of all banks and companies recently gone bankrupt, is that they have not been treated with love. None of the members of their boards and their supervisors said: ‘We belong together, and when you suffer a loss, I will lose, too.’ Though love was needed, they surrendered their companies to the desires of their rivals.

Therefore, next Monday, ask your manager, colleague or staff member: ‘Tell me, do you love this company, and how is this demonstrated?’ Or first ask yourself ♣

the light is the life of men

Much has been written about the relationship between God and man, but the certainty that he exists can only originate in one place: the human heart. What is the relationship between this knowledge and the consciousness? What is consciousness? A plea for the study of man, his composition and his relationship to the other one is the most fascinating study possible.

Anyone who ever spent a night in the Sahara under the starry sky and let the infinity of all those billions of galaxies with their myriads of stars or suns sink in, is no longer the same person afterwards.

Such a person is filled with a holy awe, and deeply experiences the infinite grandeur of creation and his own relative insignificance.

However, the experience of looking through an electron microscope which enlarges up to a million times and through which the wondrous life in every cell becomes visible, may also fill a person with reverence.

Then we are able to agree with the statement of the thrice-great Hermes, the father of the hermetic writings, to his pupil Aesclepius: Man is a great miracle. This is why it is not surprising that, when the telescope and the microscope had been invented four centuries ago, a great hunger for knowledge, for ever more knowledge about the cosmos, the earth and man developed. It was the beginning of the familiar western sciences. Subsequently, these sciences penetrated ever further both into what is large, with the modern conclusion that more than 400 billion galaxies can be traced, as well as into what is small, concluding that the number of electrons in a single human body is many times larger than the number of stars in all the galaxies combined. Yet... what or who controls all of this cannot be observed by the sciences.

What or who controls all of this is described in the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Vedic writing from 3,000 years BC:

*I am the spirit, who lives in the unfathomable depths of the soul of every creature;
I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all things,
their origin, their life and their decline.*

I am the active element in the kingdom of powers, the wisdom and the light in the eyes of the sages; the creator and nourisher of the Universe; the origin of the universe and also its death, the end of all things.

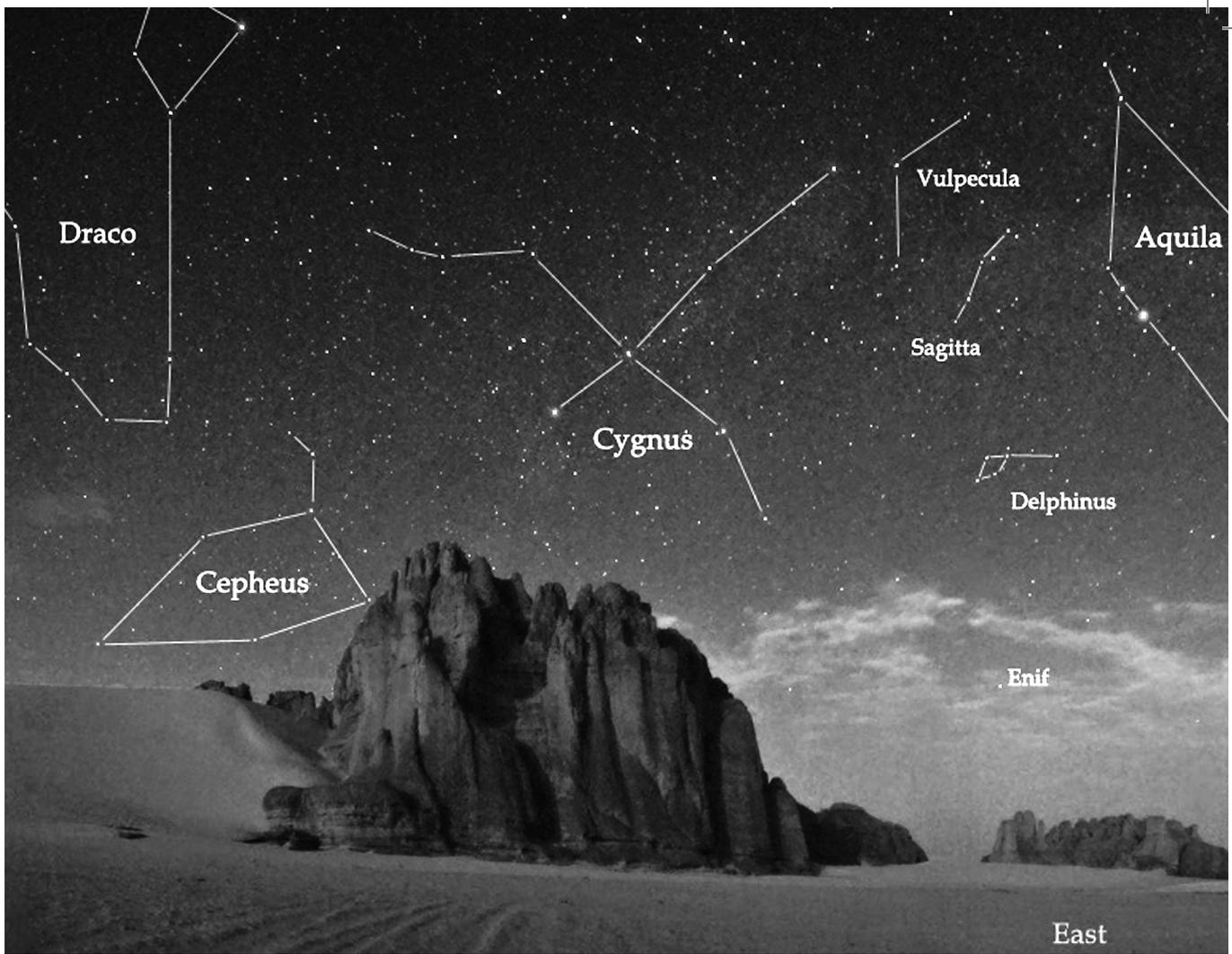
*I am the silence in which the divine secret dwells.
I am the seed of every creature.
In every power, I am the primordial power of all powers.
I am the origin of existence in everything that exists;
for I am everything: without me, nothing exists.*

*I am the self in all creatures.
Yet, from me the entire universe emanated as a manifestation of my self.*

*I am the spirit, the beginning, the middle and the end of all things;
in every power, I am the primordial power of all powers.
I am the origin of existence in everything that exists.*

And in the beginning of the Gospel of John, it is said:

‘In the beginning was the word. In the word was life and the life was the light of men.’
Without light, no life is possible on earth. Thus we can read in a modern magazine:



‘Every human being is created from the earth, eats earth and returns to the earth after death. However, every human being eats what has been generated from the earth with the help of heaven and, therefore, he eats sunlight, via the photosynthesis in the plants.

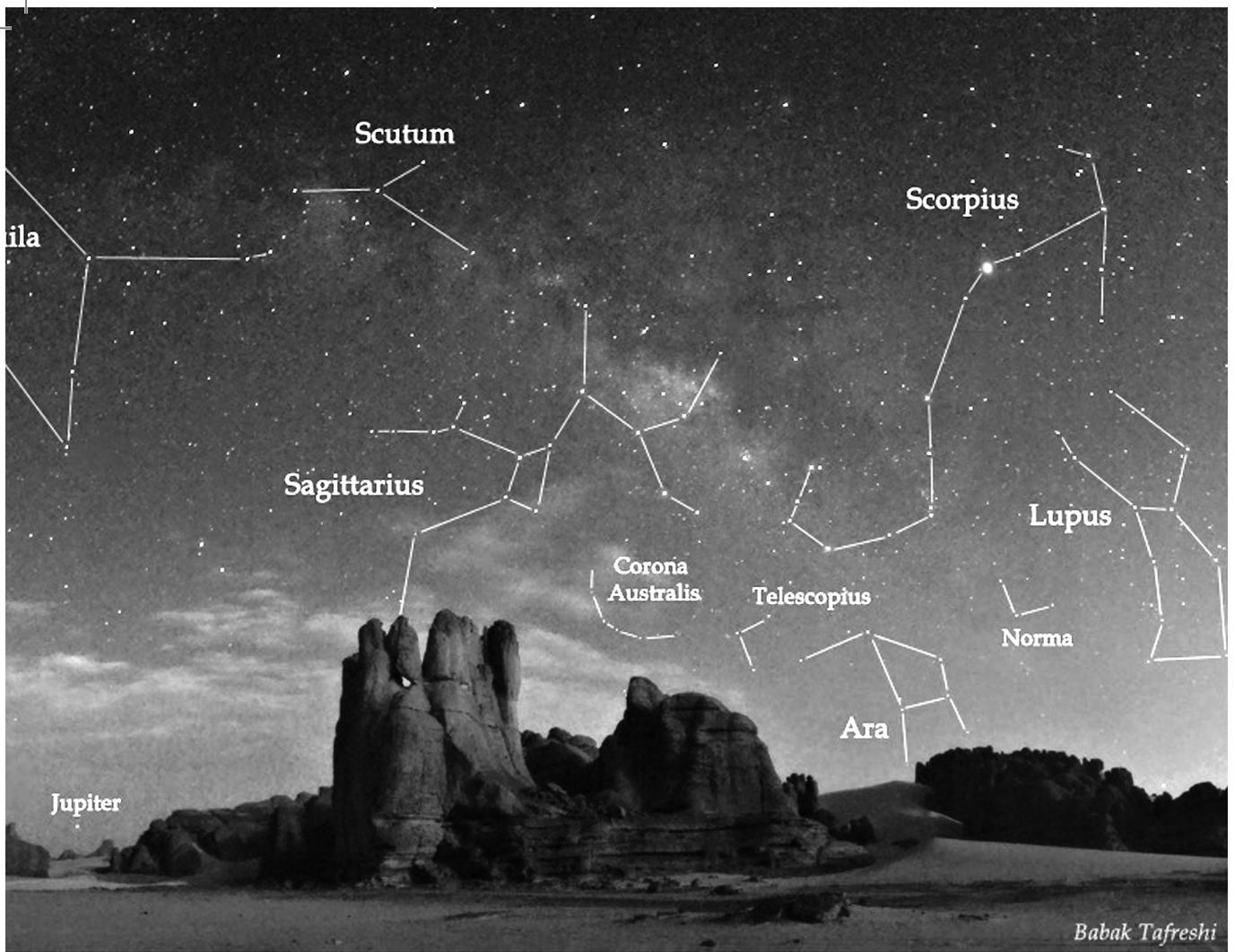
Light makes all life possible. Everything that lives is surrounded by a light field of coherent or ordered light, the biophotons. In this way, the visible sun affects the visible body that itself also has an order. The food, obtained through sunlight, continuously orders the physical body, so that it stays healthy.’

‘The light was the life of men,’ the Bible says. And modern science says: ‘Life is light.’

Quantum physics has shown that life may be compared to light or, in other words, to electromagnetic interaction or exchange between cells of virtual photons or packets of energy. Therefore, in our universe, there is, apart from gravitation, also an electromagnetic power, the power of the conversion of energy, the power that determines

all earthly life, that maintains the earthly order and that can be briefly described as light. But there is also the infinitely higher Light, the power in the cosmos that generates the cosmic order and of which the Bhagavad Gita says: ‘I am the spirit, in every power, I am the primordial power of all powers; I am the origin of existence in everything that exists.’

Max Planck, the founder of quantum physics, says: ‘There is not something as matter per se. Not the visible, perishable matter is real, true and actual, but the invisible, eternal spirit... However, spiritual beings cannot exist by themselves; they must be created. This is why I am not ashamed to call this mysterious Creator, as all ancient cultures have done: God.’ In this why, we arrive, via modern quantum physics, at the source of all religion, God. Many have turned their backs on any religion, have had enough of all the dogmas, with which the religions kept them in their grasp, and have embraced science. About them, *The Gospel of the Holy Twelve* says:



Babak Tafreshi

And there were certain men of doubtful mind, came unto Jesus, and said unto him: "You tell us that our life and being is from God, but we have never seen God, nor do we know of any God.

Can you show us whom you call the Father-Mother, the one God? We know not if there be a God."

Jesus answered them, saying: "Hear this parable of the fishes. The fishes of a certain river communed with one another, saying: They tell us that our life and being is from water, but we have never seen water, we know not what water is. Then some among them, wiser than the rest, said: We have heard there dwells in the sea a wise and learned fish, who knows all things. Let us journey to him, and ask him to show us what water is.

So several of them set out to find this great and wise fish and they came at last to the sea wherein the wise fish dwelt, and they asked him. And when he heard them, he said unto them: O you

foolish fish that consider not! Wise are you, the few, who seek. In the water you live, and move, and have your being; from the water you came, to the water you return. You live in the water, yet you know it not. In like manner, you live in God, and yet you ask of me, "Show us God." God is in all things, and all things are in God."

'Wise are you, the few, who seek,' Jesus says. Therefore, what matters is that we seek, and do not reconcile ourselves to merely existing.

In the book *Perfect Light*, essays on the science of the soul, we read:

'Much has been written about the relationship between God and man, but the certainty that he exists can only originate in one place: the human heart. Even if we see a worldwide seeking and many people have a great longing for a liberating perspective, it can only be found in the heart. The now approaching era will show



that ever more people are finding this mystery again.' This certainty is an inner knowledge, the knowledge of the heart, Gnosis. This knowledge stems from a new consciousness.

CONSCIOUSNESS Yet, what is consciousness, and what is this new consciousness?

In the book *The Gnostic Mysteries of the Pistis Sophia*, Jan van Rijckenborgh says:

'The sum total of human thinking, willing, feeling and desiring forms the consciousness. And this sum total is the electromagnetic principle out of which and by which a person lives. This electromagnetic principle is head and heart together, and the form aspect of the human personality is created and exists on the basis of that principle. This principle controls and attracts, combines and splits the four ethers. It brings them into a certain state of vibration, and therefore this principle makes the human personality what it is as to its form aspect.'

And he continues: 'We as creatures of nature all possess a dialectical vesture, woven from the electromagnetic field of undivinity. We cannot meet the bridegroom, the Holy Spirit, with this vesture. With this electromagnetic principle, we cannot partake of a life that is not of this world. This is why we need to start living on the basis of a new electromagnetic principle, practically, bodily, and in an organically demonstrable way. All universal teachings, any holy language, testify to this.'

Then the text explains how a human being can renew this electromagnetic vesture or, in other words, how he can achieve the rebirth of the soul: 'When a person goes the Johannine way of self-sacrifice, he evokes a great energy, the source of the Gnosis. At a certain moment, this energy will ignite the primordial atom to a chain reaction that will bring all the atoms of the personality into harmony with the nature of the

The human being who is touched by reason, will never experience anything else than affections of joy and intense longing

primordial atom. When a human being is able to achieve this unleashing, he has attached the rose to the cross. Then he has become a bearer of the soul vehicle.'

The path of self-sacrifice is the path of John, of 'I must decrease, and the inner other one must take over the control in my being, in my microcosm.' This path is only possible on the basis of, on the one hand, understanding, the knowledge of the heart, and on the other, a deep longing, a longing for salvation.

Spinoza says about reason and this longing: 'The human being who is touched by reason, which is in the middle, will never experience anything else than feelings of joy and intense longing.

Why joy? Because for the first time, the path of perfection will radiantly open to him in absolute beauty. Why an intense longing?

Because after untold suffering and visitation, after being damaged down to every fibre of his being, the wisdom and fullness of the liberating life is now clearly dawning and is spreading its aspects so widely that its immeasurable longing makes the heart leap with joy.'

He speaks about the reason that is in the middle. It is the reason that unites head and heart, and which shows the human being the universal truth. *The Gospel of the Holy Twelve* says about this truth:

'As you keep the holy law of love, which I have given unto you, so shall the truth be revealed more and more unto you, and the spirit of truth

which comes from above shall guide you...

Be faithful to the Light you have, till a higher Light is given to you. Seek more light, and you shall have abundantly; rest not, till you find.

God gives you all truth, as a ladder with many steps, for the salvation and perfection of the soul, and the truth which seems today, you will abandon for the higher truth of the morrow. Press you unto perfection...

Let each hold what they see to be the truth in love, knowing that where love is not, truth is a dead letter and profits nothing.

As I have received the truth, so have I given it to you. Let each receive it according to their light and ability to understand... For truth is the might of God, and it shall prevail in the end over all errors. God gives you all truth, as a ladder with many steps, for the salvation and perfection of the soul.'

We should climb this ladder, for, as J van Rijckenborgh says in *The Chinese Gnosis*:

'After a period of preparation, called involution, the human being is faced with a task, called evolution. Contrary to what many people think, evolution is not an automatic process. The human being is not evolved, but he needs to evolve by self-realisation. He needs to magnify the divine aim in himself and by himself, voluntarily, and with understanding and love.' ❀

AN ADDRESS TO YOUNG PEOPLE



Mural around a window in Pompeii: reflection of an ideal world?

reflect the spirit

Moments of meditation and reflection are essential to gaining more insight into our own inner being, for universal wisdom surpasses our own thinking, our own feelings and motives, provided we are able to penetrate the silence. This demands space, peace and silence. If a person does not find them one day, it is impossible to fathom what is really important. On the basis of this background, a few young people asked the question: What is the essence of silence and why is it so important?

Silence is something peculiar, something that cannot be seized. If we think about it, we will soon discover that there are many kinds of silence. At least, there are words that describe the concept of silence, like deafening silence, deathly silence, oppressive silence, deep silence, serene silence, lofty silence...

Silence is not something just like that, or even a kind of nothingness. Silence is something great, so great that it is called by many names.

Usually, we define the word silence as a moment during which there is no sound or during which we do not hear anything. This is what our ears tell us. This is why silence is actually something that we can hear, and for which we need our ears to ascertain it. This implies that silence is not simply the opposite of sound, but rather a form of sound that makes our ears very alert. Silence is a mystery. 'Without silence, there is no music,' people sometimes say. It is the silence between the notes that gives form to the music. Silence is something similar to the phenomenon of space. Without space, there can be no creation. In space, everything has its place. Silence is another form of space. In the space that is silence, we perceive something. We listen to what speaks in it.

'There is no empty space,' the seventeenth-century Rosicrucians said. Although they meant it slightly differently, this is nowadays confirmed by modern science. Everything is energy; matter is energy; the whole universe consists of a sea of primordial, vibrating energy. Therefore, we might

also say: there is no empty silence. Or there is no silent silence. This has been discovered, too. The formula for it is: everything is sound.

Silence is a form of sound. The highest form? That depends. 'Anxious silence' refers to the basic feeling that is closely related to an animal existence. 'Inner silence' refers to our inner being, to the heart. But it does not say anything about what resounds in this silence. Light is what is able to pervade and fill all space. The same applies to the silence. In the silence, the world of what is abstract begins, the world of the light of consciousness, or spirit.

Before we continue, there is one other question: what do we think when we look up to the starry sky on a warm night, this deep dark-blue sky, in which millions of stars are burning? Do we not think: something is happening up there? Something is going on between the stars. As in a foreign language, the stars are speaking with each other, and we hear the sound of the silence. Pythagoras spoke of the melody of the spheres... Silence is everywhere, but we usually do our utmost not to listen to it. We produce a lot of noise and are busy with all kinds of things, but what we often do not realise is that it is much ado about nothing. The place that we occupy in space is only very small. Our sound does not reach that far, in fact, it soon fades away in the air. And above it, and in between, silence is everywhere. Even if we know why we want to be silent, this is still not simple.

There are, therefore, two things that a pupil has to learn to know thoroughly: the soul and the powerfield. In the world, both are linked with us as human beings, but neither has its basis in this world

In Japan, at the time before the development of Zen Buddhism, there were the tendai schools that, guided by the sage T'ien-t'ai Chih-i (538-597), belonged to the most important group within Buddhism. Four pupils of this school wanted to practise meditation and, therefore, agreed to observe seven days of silence. The first day, all of them were silent. Their meditation had started favourably, but when evening fell and the light of their oil lamps became weaker, one of the pupils was no longer able to prevent himself from calling to a servant: 'Fix these lamps.' The second pupil was surprised that he had heard the first one speak.

'But we wouldn't say anything,' he said.

'You are both duffers. Why did you open your mouth?' the third one asked.

'I am the only one who didn't say anything,' the fourth one finally remarked.

What happens in a spiritual school? It is not what we do here with each other, or the buildings, the rules if you like, the words, no, what is so special is this field, this specific sphere that surrounds us and which corresponds to the innermost depth of our being. We cannot see it, or describe it, but only experience it. However, it cannot be found anywhere else either.

The essence of our school is the powerfield, as we call it, and it is of a very special nature. It is something that cannot be described; it is a field that leads to a mystery, because its nucleus, its heart, lies in a field of existence not of the earth, but in the realms of the soul. He who truly wants

to enter this mystery school and turns its powerfield into a field of life for himself, he knows his soul. The soul is the element within himself, in which he finds himself and this special field of the school again.

There are, therefore, two things that a pupil has to know thoroughly: the soul and the powerfield. In the world, both are linked with us as human beings, but neither has its basis in this world.

The living body of the school, or its powerfield, has been built in such a way that the pupil's soul is able to assimilate the wholly different, high ethers, of which a soul consists. If such a field is not available, the soul depends on what a human being himself is able to attract, perhaps through an extremely pure consciousness.

When we look at ourselves, we know how difficult this is, because we are ignorant, and due to this ignorance, we keep our soul imprisoned, as we can also read in the small book *The Voice of the Silence*:

'Yeah, ignorance is like unto a closed and airless vessel; the soul a bird shut up within. It warbles not, nor can it stir a feather, but the songster mute and torpid sits, and of exhaustion dies.'¹

The powerfield of the school has been created and built, through enormous perseverance and intelligence, and above all, with loving patience for and by the pupils, who exerted themselves persevering in the high mode of life that was necessary for this construction. Gradually, they caught a glimpse of this other, new Light dawning, like a glimmer of soft light, as it may ap-

pear early in the morning, before sunrise. For a long time, there was this one ray, still a glimpse, waiting as a border between two realms. However, this small group of people, who felt their soul leap up in their hearts, did not let go of this subtle, hardly visible glow. Time and again, they reached higher in the direction of this light. Their hope for and attention placed on this realm, nearby and yet so far away, caused them to change. And the glow that this gave to their soul was able to merge, first with this subtle light, and then with the border, where they saw this first light, until a passage had been opened.

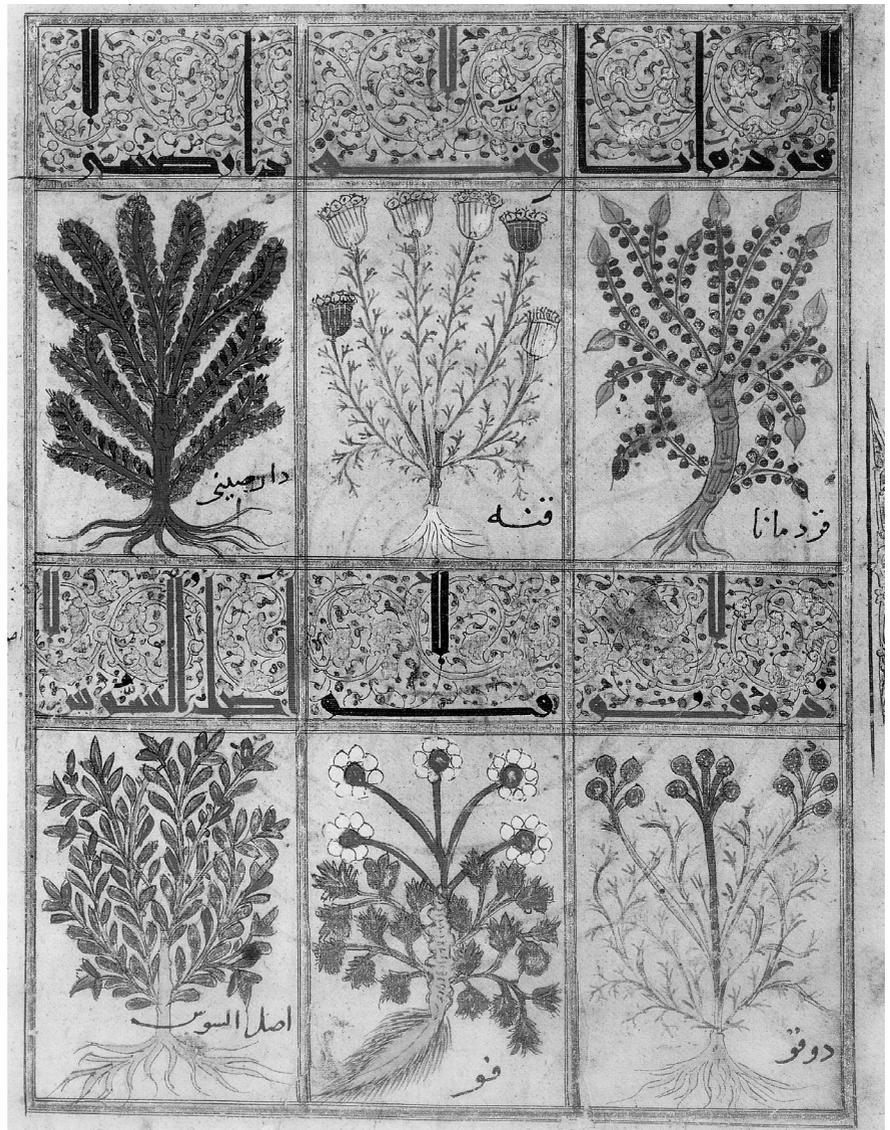
This passage is what we experience when we have assembled during our conferences. This is what we cannot describe and what we experience as very special.

This is why it is nevertheless also your task, even if you have recently become a pupil or are a beginning pupil, to understand this special field, and not only to appreciate it, but also to cherish it. Sometimes doubt crops up in your soul. Oh, the sadness of this doubt: it is caused by the fact that you doubt your soul.

However, know that if you have not seen it, you

cannot say that it does not exist. This brings you to the second point: you have to know your soul to be able to overcome this doubt.

People often say that they want to experience something, simply like a blind man who cries: 'I want to experience the light!' or a deaf man who cries that he wants to hear sound. They should first find a doctor to cure them, so that they will be able to perceive with their senses again. Getting to know the soul is the process that we call pupilship, which leads from recognition to knowledge to action, that is, to life renewal. It demands a certain power to deal with these two beings, these two different aspects within us, intelligently.



The new soul is exceptional. It is able to lift our human state far above our natural state

This confronts you with something extraordinary: understanding that, through experience, a person discovers the hidden, inner kingdom! Throughout life, you gain experiences. Now while you are still young, you have not gained many of these experiences. Yet, you already know this kingdom; you have heard about it. Therefore, you don't need these experiences to find it, but you do have to gain experience in how to deal with it! This is quite something else. This is why you should not allow any doubt to crop up, like: 'I am unable to do all of this, this is not something for me, it is all so serious...' No, to this end, you must have faith in yourself and self-confidence that life itself will give you this very opportunity! It is learning to utilise the key, and thus utilising the power to liberating action, that is, to a life in which human being and soul really work together.

We would like to speak further about the soul. The true man, imprisoned in his natural figure, was not made of life and Light, but he is life and Light. It is said: 'The kingdom of God, this divine human being, is within you!' Karl von Eckartshausen says it as follows: 'The spirit-soul is a spark of light that is buried in our inner being and is the image of God, the inner kingdom of heaven. This spirit-soul is the innermost sanctuary in the human being. The curtain and the cloud, hanging before the sanctuary, constitute the closed nature of this spirit-soul. In him who wants to open the entrance, the Light will spread. This spreading of the Light is the illumination of the human being.'

The curtain and the cloud, hanging before the sanctuary, constitute the closed nature of the soul, just as ignorance constitutes the vessel in which the soul bird is imprisoned. It is the directedness toward this nature, and we have it, because our perception is limited to it. And this denies the soul its true *raison d'être*.

In the Sufi teachings, this is described as follows: 'The soul has two aspects. One aspect is the experience with the psyche and the body; the other aspect is the experience with and of the spirit. The first one is called the outer experience, the second one the inner experience. The nature of the soul is transparent like glass. If one side of the glass is covered, it becomes a mirror. In this way, the soul becomes a mirror, in which the outer experiences are reflected, when the other side is covered.

This is why a human being, regardless of how gifted he is with outer knowledge, need not necessarily be gifted with inner knowledge. To achieve inner knowledge, he has to cover the other side of the soul, so that the reflecting part is directed towards the spirit instead of towards the external world. When he is able to do so, he receives inspiration and revelation.'

Perhaps we see the similarity with the construction of the powerfield or living body of the school, and with the development of the soul. We are surrounded by the powerfield, and are allowed to use it as a respiration field for our soul, in which it can live, so that we may use the time we need to realise this revolution, covering one half of the mirror, within ourselves. However, our

interest should continue to go out to it, so that this possibility will also exist in the future.

The new soul is exceptional. It is able to lift our human state far above our natural state. If everything is good, it returns to the human being his dignity, which distinguishes him from everything else on earth. The soul has a very high, refined vibration. The soul, which maintains a link with us through our heart, at the same time affects this heart; it changes the heart and subsequently the head.

To the extent that the heart is opened, it not only attracts people, but also what we call the Divine. Continuously, thoughts and feelings emanate from us. Everything that we do and say is also a vibration, like a language, a language of the silence. It goes from person to person, from heart to heart. The vibrations of the soul are strongest and extend furthest; like an electrical current, they flow from soul to soul. Let us not underestimate our soul, or overestimate ourselves and our powers.

Hermes says about the soul:

‘Thus the soul is a being that is perfect in itself, choosing in the beginning a life in keeping with fate, and attracting to itself a form brimming with life power and desire.

The vital force serves as a material for the soul. If this vital force creates a state of being in accord with the soul’s imagination, it becomes courage and does not yield to cowardice.

Desire also offers itself as a material. If it has

created a state of being in accord with the soul’s considerations, it becomes moderation and yields not to voluptuousness, for the soul’s rationality completes what desire lacks.’²

We might actually say that the soul is the cause such as in a reflection, whereby higher and nobler properties are possible in us, like patience, love, friendship, courage, sincerity and beauty. All these properties contain the signature of the immortal soul. This is also meant by the text about the Christ light in the human heart, as it is expressed in the book *Reveille*:

‘Who is Christ?

Christ is love, wisdom, power, the source of pure attraction that brings forth inner power, for where the Christ light is, there is the human dignity that blesses the pure and sensitive heart.’³

Therefore, do not abandon your soul, and do not turn your back on it; rather accompany it and question it about what it contains. Hermes says: ‘Know the Light, and befriend it!’ ★

Notes:

1. H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, Fragment II, verse 15

2. *Corpus Hermeticum*, Book 16, verses 21-22

3. J van Rijckenborgh and C de Petri, *Reveille, A call to fundamental life renewal as a way out in a hopeless time*, chapter 4 (not published in English)

alchemy today

On heroism, courage, the struggle for truth and inner change

Heroism is deeply interwoven with the fabric of our human state. Among the ancient myths, we always find stories about heroic deeds. Not only is the brave, unselfish knight a hero and the chaste virgin a heroine, but this is also true for the human being who proves his deep friendship for a fellow human being by self-sacrificing deeds. And what should we think of the person who possesses special knowledge? Every year, high awards are given to scholars with special merits for the development of human knowledge.

He who fights for truth, may also become a hero. Here we must say 'may', because only if he courageously perseveres in his ideal and his mission is successful, will he gain hero status.

In the various stories, the hero is always the person who subordinates his self-interest to deeds that benefit others – animals, nature, people, sometimes many people. His deeds stem from a certain degree of love for his fellow human being or he is inspired by religious motives: love for God and man. His properties are: pureness, friendship, knowledge, truth, courage.

THE FIRST FIVE STAGES OF ALCHEMY Pureness, friendship, knowledge, truth, courage. Who would not long for these properties, either consciously or deeply hidden subconsciously? These characteristics do not seem to have been chosen randomly and will not have been put into this order without a reason. In each of these properties, we recognise an alchemical task. In alchemy, the opus

magnum, the great work, is divided into seven processes, into seven main works. The five mentioned properties more or less correspond to the first five main works of alchemy, namely: calcinatio, solutio, coagulatio, sublimatio and mortificatio.

If we see alchemy as an allegory of the development of the human soul, these concepts refer to the important first five steps of rebirth: the Light pierces the darkness and fills it; the forces of the sixth cosmic plane are linked with the seventh and finally, the vertical aspect is linked with the horizontal one: the cross, on which the symbolic rose of the heart will blossom.

The human being who is touched in the heart by the divine spirit, will initially receive an impression of pureness, of purification. He is confronted with the radiation of a pure, unsullied field and must react to it by seeking. In this stage, the calcinatio, the first ray of the Seven-light touches the human being. In alchemical terms, we might say: 'Lovingly separate what is pure from what is impure and become aware of your current state, of the path you have to walk, of your beginning and of your goal.'

He who seriously starts with this first task and consciously admits the unmasking light into his life, will discover that he, from that moment, experiences life differently. For some people there will be a stage of sorrow, farewell and loneliness, for others a stage of sometimes violent confrontations and intense contacts. In all cases, friendships will change and be put to the test.





There is not something like a good mood. Both a good as well as a bad mood drive away our pure objectivity

Then it is clear that we inadvertently have set out on a path. Then we are soon confronted with the second alchemical task, the *solutio*, which we may, in the language of our five properties, interpret as: 'Heed your emotions. Accept all people in pure friendship. Do not let yourself be guided by feelings of antipathy and sympathy.'

Through love, the second ray of the Seven-light enables the human being to liberate himself from too great emotional turbulence. This implies rest as to our moods or, as we may learn from alchemy: 'There is not something like a good mood. Both a good as well as a bad mood drive our pure objectivity away.' The basis of this friendship for all cannot be emotionality, but stems from the rest and the balance of the living new soul. This balance, this pure objectivity, is also the necessary basis for the next step on the path.

Franz Kafka, the renowned author from Prague, expressed the essence of this as follows: 'You do not have to leave your room. Remain seated at your table and listen. You do not even have to listen, only wait. You do not even have to wait, only learn to become quiet, silent and alone. The world willingly offers itself to you to be unmasked. It does not have a choice: it will make itself known to you in exaltation.'

We now reach the next alchemical stage. He who has become aware of the state in which he lives, and to a certain extent dissociates from the turmoil in which he must act, will want to achieve knowledge. He wants to know who he is, and how his life charts its course, what moves him and what keeps him imprisoned. This concerns another type of knowledge, the knowledge about what is the driving force behind things. He is no longer satisfied with the traditional explanations by nature religion and the sciences, but he tries his utmost to penetrate to true knowledge. Many seeking people in whom

the longing for this knowledge, Gnosis, has been aroused, no longer want to hang onto outward teachings and texts. They no longer want to sharpen their intellect only, because they are well aware that such an approach would not help them further on the path.

The knowledge of the Gnosis works as power, as vibration. He who directs himself toward this knowledge, with the help of the eternal element within him, receives it as a suggestion in his heart and in his blood. During the stage of *coagulatio*, the merging of two influences, the pupil-alchemist increasingly realises: 'The highest knowledge is that we know nothing.' Apart from experiencing life differently, it also gradually changes course. To many people, this third main work of alchemy is a stumbling block. There is a risk that we hold onto all the knowledge we have acquired. Like the rich young man from the biblical story, we prove to be too heavily burdened to continue on the path. Rich, that is, our heads filled with outward knowledge, we lapse into complacency, because he who is unable to give up his 'own wisdom', cannot partake of the all-wisdom. If relinquishing our own knowledge is too great a sacrifice, the seed, formed during the first two steps, is unable to take root in the great mystery of not-knowing.

Our great work began with faith in the possible truth of the transformation of lead into gold, or of earthly life into spiritual life, with the return to the original field as our point of departure. The applied concentration enabled universal love for every creature. Now a constant and certain basis is necessary to continue on the path. This steadfastness, this faith, is like a burning fire in the heart that should become inextinguishable during the next stage. This is why the fourth main alchemical work is the *sublimatio*. It is the stage of the entrance of the spirit, and doubt is the great impediment in this process.

He who does not overcome doubt, cannot discover the truth. Doubt is the negative pole of interest and of the drive to investigate. It is the very instrument of the counterforces, accumulated in our inner being, while an active mind is necessary to keep us alert and sharp. In this way, we are

An active mind is necessary to keep us alert and sharp. It protects us from delusion and illusion, while it is a help par excellence for the truth

protected from delusion and illusion, while this active mind is a help par excellence for finding the truth.

However, doubt is the last straw of the dominance of the intellectual power over the whole human being. After all, the mind wants to hold onto something of what is old and is unable to surrender trustingly to faith. True faith shows unexpected vistas of new life to the inner being, and incites the mind to explore the ways leading to it. This is why we can express the fourth alchemical task by: 'Behold the truth and accept it. Let truth take possession of your being. Let it burn away any doubt from your being.' He who reflects on the truth, realises that it can only be accepted without any reservations.

With the powers of the sixth cosmic plane, the truth descends into us, so that we become thoroughly true, so that our horizontal directedness is really and literally thwarted. What now matters is that we do not extinguish the fire; it should become inextinguishable. It is important to allow the process to occur in self-surrender, by absolutely accepting that 'without me, you can do nothing.' Therefore, it is not accepting the truth with our I, it is not a personal struggle, but it is the faith that, motionless and without doubts, goes up into the truth. That is the sublimatio...

The ultimate sacrifice of the personality is death.

This is why the fifth main work of the opus magnum is the mortificatio: putting the soul body above the physical body, the fundamental victory above the I of the old nature. In this stage, courage is required and the Seven-Spirit enables the human being 'to muster up courage' by holding onto the one principle of life. He who consistently follows this principle, will clear away all impediments. Then seemingly automatically, room is created in life, room and time to do what is necessary, and to serve the world and humanity, to serve our neighbour. However, this does not mean that first room will be made, so that we can devote ourselves to this one principle later. He who, in the middle of the chaos and despair of daily life, nevertheless follows the one principle, will discover that the original powers of the micro-cosmic human being are released. In this way, the path is also cleared, because it is lying within us, and forces are released to which others can react.

Courage belongs to the great, original powers of the Spirit-Soul. It is the realising power of the hero who takes all the consequences of the cross upon himself. It is not the compelling power of the I-human being, but it is the meek power of the 'humble person', who fearlessly faces death, knowing that the hour of his liberation is near. The mortificatio, the hour of death, is actually the liberation from death, the ascent into immortality.

Therefore, the fifth task of the opus magnum is a decisive task. In the words of our five properties, we might express it as: 'Accept with joy the tension between the earthly and the original nature within you. Accept the sorrow of this cross. Allow the power of love of the sixth cosmic plane, the love power of the Gnosis, to accomplish its work within you. Be courageous, remain steadfast.' ✨