



# pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum

World Brotherhood Day  
Nei Ye  
Approaching the essence  
The fire of Ba'al Shem Tov  
Building and breaking  
A contrary thinker  
Gardens of Light

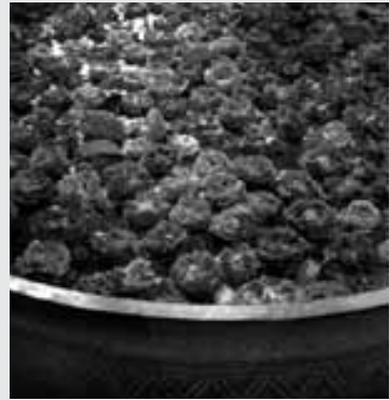
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# pentagram

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“That we leave the actual protest to the quixotic hip-pies is a clear sign of our own lack of imagination; a generation that does not want to dream loses the right to a better world,” writes Rutger Bregman, Dutch historian and publicist, in a recent article in which he attributes the cause of the global crisis to a lack of Utopian imaginative power.

In this edition of **pentagram** there are some points of view that shift the actual protest to a different level: the inner life-state of every individual thinking human being. Yes, there is a crisis – because we as people have lost the right balance, the balance between within and without, above and below, me and you; between greater humanity which is one together and the innumerable millions of individuals who are alone.

The wisdom schools of all times entreat, “Return to unity. You belong to an exalted plan, a truly spiritual humanity. Learn to know yourself as human being, as person, as *minutus mundus* – miniature cosmos – who is nothing without the water to drink, the air to breathe, the earth to nourish, the fire that gives inner warmth, and the *other one*, who is the meaning of your life.”

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# the **crisis** of **humanity** and the seven powers of the spirit

The actual condition of humanity is characterised by the fact that the I-central human being is fully grown and the human desire-nature has been given free rein; there is no longer a single active restraining force. Thus numerous lower influences throw themselves upon humanity with extreme force amidst the maelstrom. This is the cause of the crisis that has now spread over the whole of humanity.

*J. van Rijckenborgh*

I  
**E**mphatic warnings have been given about this crisis throughout all times, forewarnings of a crisis that would inevitably arrive unless humanity chose its journey of development along the only right lines: in Christ and through the Holy Spirit, both of which assert themselves on a planetary level. During the last centuries humanity has unfortunately not had the correct information and thus has been almost entirely off track. For centuries, human beings have lived as if in an ever-increasing storm in which, in their own power – that is, with their given possibilities – they must “sail the academic sea of experience” to reach the other shore, Caphar Salama, the city of peace. The reader may be familiar with the great plan underlying human existence. It is a plan that intends the development of a perfectly organised personality; this personality, upon becoming active, can work toward its further development in complete self-realization, to a broader and higher level.

The seed goes into the ground at the deepest earthly point, the nadir; and from it emerges the wonder-flower in self-realisation. This goal of divine creation then proves itself from below upwards. Along this entire course of development diverse difficulties and dangers reveal themselves, however. As we have often emphasised: the Logos makes the plan. As the plan is implemented, and when the human being can actually live, then he or she has to begin work. The human being is created and fully equipped to follow the plan. In fact, it is given to the human being to demonstrate the magnitude and beauty of the plan in its divine fulfilment. Then the person goes to work. Many people set out to this end with all the abilities they have received from the Logos, including, of course, the mind. One can use the mind in two different ways. After many experiences during the building of the personality, one can use it in its real ability to think, which reaches out from

*Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri are the founders of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross, in which they explained, elucidated and exemplified the path of soul-liberation to their pupils from every possible angle, often utilizing original texts that express the universal teachings.*



**...and there the wonder-flower  
will emerge, in self-realization...  
17th century Persian miniature**

## Living one's pupilship is for no-one an art that cannot be learned

nature to the divine for revelation. But one can also suppose one's mind to be the divine thinking faculty itself, with all the inherent consequences.

The latter is the case with many people. One cause of this among others is not understanding the meaning of the nature-religions of former times, which were intended to convey not literal but symbolic meanings to humanity. One of the consequences of the misuse of the mind that we see most startlingly in our extraordinary times, is the tarnishing of the cerebrum, making it unreceptive to higher influences and thus preventing it from being used in the right way.

Among those who recognise their given thinking abilities and use them in the right way, as to the intention of the Divine Plan, are the Rosicrucians, as they have been called throughout the ages. Their name, "Rosicrucians," indicates the path they follow in steering their mental faculties along the only correct lines.

### II

So we see moments in the progression of time when the regular patterns of development of the natural life processes are radically modified. We are now approaching such

a moment with great speed: a real crisis of world and humanity, an intense revolution. As concerns us human beings, this situation tolerates no delay, which is why we discuss these things, although at the same time we emphasize that we do not at all wish to force you.

We hope that none of you will be caught off-guard by the violence and the power of the coming developments, for it is clear that unprepared humanity faces many great difficulties. For this reason the universal brotherhood exerts itself to the utmost to save as many as possible from the violence.

This reason explains the presence and activity of the modern spiritual school. The Brotherhood of the Rosycross appears whenever the times change. It manifests itself in various ways and in a multitude of guises so that no one need be prevented from taking part in its activities, for living one's pupilship is for no-one an art that cannot be learned. When you are prepared as to your state of consciousness to go the path shown by the Rosycross, with all the consequences, then you spare yourself the downward course connected with the great natural processes, and you will be taken up in the new group of humanity referred to in the Bible as "the children of God." When

such a moment of crisis approaches, the spiritual school also comes increasingly to the fore. The spiritual school is a living body with seven aspects, in seven gradations, from membership to the sixth aspect, above which is a seventh aspect. A number of our community represent the seventh aspect. It is now proposed to this community, from the beginning pupil to the most advanced, that they accept the laws of the Holy Spirit and realize them inwardly.

Suppose you now decide to make every effort to open yourself for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; does the seven-spirit then descend into you with the enormous power of all its capacity, with all its forty-nine aspects? Who among us could bear it, or comply with it? No, the Holy Spirit reveals itself to each candidate with a power that is workable and in keeping with their state of being. We receive only what we are able to accept and tolerate.

But you do receive the spirit in your own being, in your own rose and cross. You then let the light of the community of the Golden Rosycross radiate directly into this dark world, and as world events unfold, more and more people will approach the spiritual school to participate, if possible, in this liv-

ing community. For as you go with us, this community goes a just path, a path that leads upward. The power of all is then for all. The strong then really support the weak, because the magic of divine love provides for that. There is however, one absolutely basic condition: that you decide to enter this community of the Holy Spirit and demonstrate your decision by truly living your positive mode of life. First of all then the spiritual school is formed in truth and reality. First the spiritual school achieves its objectives. Then the spiritual school approaches all who belong to the living body, to take them to their true home. ✪

# crisis, what can be done?

*The concept of Hermes, or Mercury, indicates the one who begins to awaken in the new soul-consciousness, the one to whom the divine wisdom is open and who, consequently, raises the the head-sanctuary to its high vocation. But this vocation cannot possibly be fulfilled if the pupil has not first learned to open his heart in stillness to the Spirit. The task of realizing the stillness of the heart is given to all those who are truly seeking the Gnosis. It points to the purification of the heart, to the opening of the heart, making it completely quiet and harmonious. [...] If the heart remains in its ordinary state of natural impurity (and that is the case when you remain attuned, with your entire being, to the nature of death) you cannot listen correctly, either, and so you can never understand properly. The essence of the nature of death is always chaos! [...] So we can see how the key to the gnostic mysteries lies in the heart.*

J. v. Rijckenborgh, *The Egyptian Archgnosis*,  
volume 1, chapter 29

What can be done? What if we just take a step back ... from this uninterrupted stream of information about social and economic problems, environmental catastrophes, the limitations and restrictions in every field of life. Can we inwardly distance ourselves in order to become still? Is it even possible, with our busy and intense lifestyles and with such threatening and alarming situations and problems everywhere? This is how the world is. It is also my world. I'm in the midst of it. Do I have a choice? Sometimes I'm paralysed by fear. Or I become outraged about all the injustice in the

world. Or I feel desperate because there are no solutions. My feelings and reactions are certainly understandable. But can they change anything? Becoming entirely silent deep within, I can see one certainty: how the wheel is slowly going round and round, despite all the loud calls of our leaders that we only have to get through this crisis. What can be done? Fight against it? That would be good if it would make a difference. But no, fighting against it is not a solution.

What if we accept the outer crisis and let it lead to an inner crisis? There is so much suffering everywhere, and so much ignorance. So many have no inner direction anymore. What is the meaning of all this? How far does our responsibility reach? How much compassion do we feel? If we still feel compassion, can it change anything? With our present state of consciousness we are not able to create anything other than what we see around us. Everything we consider as a probable solution to our problems only adds to our dilemma. Only with a new dimension, a new starting point on a completely different level, can we solve what we have created. Let us return to our most inner being, to the pure field of silence that forms the transition to a higher dimension. In silence, the Light radiations can work in us. We can feel this inner light as a deep certainty and hope. It shines through all the helplessness we feel when confronted with the world as it is. It is with this inner light that we can be of service to others and offer help where needed, out of love for humanity. This joy of being able to do what we can is infectious. ✨



One of the three *America Windows* (1977) by Marc Chagall in the Art Institute of Chicago

# dare to live!

Look at our present time. It is your time, it is the time you know, the time in which you are growing to adulthood. You grow up in this time and try to form your own picture of the world, just as generations before you grew up in their time and world and future children will grow up and try to understand their world. Much is said about the youth of this time. Grown-ups observe the young, the children and babies, and label them in an attempt to describe their characteristics. Generation Einstein, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, the Fun Generation.



**T**oday's generation of young people has the reputation of being quick, smart and social. Adults cannot compete with them, cannot fool them with anything that is not true. Those in their late twenties are called Generation Einstein because they are able to think on

many different levels. There is also Generation Y. They have the courage to ask uncommon questions. And the previous Gen Xers, now in their 40's and 50's, are already well established. Another new generation is emerging, Generation Z. The last letter of the alphabet is no co-

incidence. They are still children but are already regarded as global citizens. For them the new media is the new reality. Although still young, they want to do something for the world, as long they are allowed to decide what and how. Whatever they are called, all of these young women and men were born after 1985 and grew up in a digitised society where internet and cyberspace are realities. Life is determined by networks. The world is their playground; they grew up with the promise that everything is possible. They know what their value is: high, very high. They are good-looking, wonderful, amazing and very self-assured. They are happy. With everything that they do, they think how it might benefit them, what importance it has for them – not in the future, but now, in this instant. The oldest were around 20 when the economic crisis led to a worldwide recession. After a youth with nearly endless possibilities, fulfilled wishes and much freedom, their worry-free world came to a very abrupt end. Economic problems. No job-guarantee. The youth unemployment rate steadily rising, to over 50% in some countries. In other countries young people try to launch their own businesses with no employees, no office, and also often no profit. After a comfortable lifestyle in their parent's home and a carefree time at university, now life is taking a difficult turn. All of a sudden there is so much emptiness, emptiness that has not been anticipated.

Life is full, too full. There is no space for discoveries, there is no space for anything. Every-

thing is in action, everything requires a reaction. An uninterrupted stream of choices fills the atmosphere, fills the thinking, fills lives.

A human being is not only aware of the place where he is in the moment but is also connected with all the places from which signals arrive. Nevertheless within all this diversity of information, all these social networks, within all this daily stress, what emerges is emptiness – a hollow feeling. There is a deep chasm between a worry-free, carefree youth and the responsibility of adulthood. The obligation to be happy has a price. More and more people feel lonely. Parents might say: we did not prepare our children well enough for what life really is. We could also say: we ourselves are not adequately prepared for it. Who is able to handle a crisis? We tried to avoid it until it became impossible. Every person will reach a point in their life where they cannot go on like before. But perhaps we have never before confronted that all our inner crises which we have tried to drown out have now led to a world crisis.

We are doomed to fail until we have the courage to change ourselves. People hurry because they have no trust. We lead overcrowded lives with high expectations, trying to fit in as many things and activities as possible. Our expectations in every area of our life ( work, family, personal development) are very high. We talk constantly about how much we have accomplished and how much stress we have. We live in a society where we identify ourselves with this busy lifestyle and feel important about it.

## Who are you? That is the essential question in life that waits to be answered in each moment. It is the beginning of conscious acceptance of life

Who dares in this situation to ask questions about the deep meaning of life and how to live consciously?

A child needs space, freedom and autonomy for its development. But sometimes today a child becomes lost in a space that seems to have no boundaries and no limits, in a freedom that is overwhelming and with an autonomy that consists of “whatever you think about it, whatever you experience.” But a child does not yet act from experience. It still lives out of an inner knowing. This inner stronghold in a child should be sustained as long as possible and not be taken away too soon by too many expectations and demands from parents and teachers. Parents want their children to follow opportunities they missed in their own lives. They also want their children to live without boundaries, free and autonomous. Even young children have overbooked schedules. Burn-out, a problem usually associated with midlife-crisis, is now already common in those in their mid-twenties who must constantly think: is this all there is? Every generation gets a label. The previous generation always worries about the next generation, which nevertheless turns out alright, as will this generation as well. How can the the young person of this generation be characterised? As someone who longs for freedom

and wants a life that is more than a network of global contacts; a life that reaches further than high-speed communication; a life that is authentic, without updates and timelines; a life that has role models and examples.

Growing up in this time also means that established orders are no longer absolute. It is a world where nothing remains hidden, where everything surfaces and becomes obvious. Growing up with the postmodern idea that there is no truth, what then is really true? Children experience at a young age that everyone strives only for their own personal truth. What kind of worldview develops when youngsters are already surrounded by untruthfulness and deceit, when they see that everything in life is focused only on one’s own advantage and personal gain?

We do nothing without benefit or reward. Everything has its price and conditions. Competition rules our lives. Have we become less human? Will the young generation join the world of competition, or will they be able to break away from it? It is still too early to know. In the 1980’s, the high unemployment rate, the danger of an environmental catastrophe, and the threat of nuclear weapons led first to a few demonstrations and then to mostly apathy or even cynicism. People have turned inward.

Even belief in democracy is declining rapidly. Young people now are interested in authentic stories, in insights that lead to change. They have become used to what is called “true” in the morning being rescinded in the afternoon. A teenager already understands that nothing is permanent and a preschooler already knows that everything is a delusion. Precisely because of this, they can understand that the story in which they live can become real, can be true. No generation needs a label; a label cannot embrace the complexity and possibilities each generation holds. Who are you? That is the essential question in life that waits to be answered in each moment. It is the beginning of conscious acceptance of life. Searching for the answer helps to bring one’s own crisis under control.

There are many conflicts in the world. The atmosphere is tense. There is no stillness. But stillness is exactly what we all seek, what impels us, and what can be found within us – the silence to gain insight, the silence to begin to connect to unity, truth, and the Other One. A child knows that.

But as adults we often do things that we later regret. We judge, we are jealous, we are distrustful. We force others to do something we think is best for them; we give our opinion even when not asked for it. We always think we know everything better. But we do not truly listen – not to others and not to ourselves. How should we live? How can we overcome ourselves? How can we become one with the

Other, the original One, the One that truly was and truly can be? When the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk was recently asked about the crisis he said, “Live in a way that you do not have to apologise for what you do.” He calls our reaction to the crisis an “unhappy consciousness.” We feel hopeless and depressed and helpless about the current situation, yet the crisis is trying to mobilise us to become a better person – to become human. The British philosopher John Armstrong simply says, “The consumers do not think about their real needs.” The global crisis forces people to rethink their true needs and ask themselves what it means to be human. By what desires and what needs are we driven? What is our true motivation? Who or what causes a crisis, other than humanity itself? “Live in a way that you do not have to apologise for what you do.” Let the one *true* yearning be the motivation in your life. Then you will no longer be driven by desires, but you will be able to strive for what you recognise as true. Each human being can overcome their own crisis through their own inner development.

Years ago Catharose de Petri addressed a young audience: “The value of our work will be demonstrated by your activity, perseverance and example. Engage in your life. Accept the challenge of life. Whoever consciously accepts life in order to draw from its lessons, even though they be bitter, will find that all things will work for the good. Offer your love, totally and without self-interest, to the realisation of this idea.” ☸



HUMANITY IN THE OUTRAGE OF THE MASSES – COULD IT BE THE FRUSTRATION OF UNFULFILLED CREATIVE ENERGY THAT HAS TO FIND A WAY OF EXPRESSION?



HUMANITY IN THE CREATIVE REPOSE OF SELF-REALIZATION –  
UNFOLDING WORLDS OF CONSCIOUSNESS?

# heels dug in the sand or writing in the sand?

A crisis demands intense reconsideration of the hitherto prevailing values. A crisis often also sheds a merciless light on corruption and self-interest, on the guilty, deceivers and profiteers and on the call for punishment of the purported scapegoats.

**O**STRACISM People's court or ostracism, a mystery story about Jesus, demonstrates how a human being, who has reached the Jesus state, deals with these models of judgement and criticism. He addresses the human being on a quite different level.

'You judge according to the flesh, I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone that judge, but I and the Father who sent me. [...] You judge according to the flesh, I judge no one. The Son of Man came into the world not to condemn, but so that the world might be saved.' [John 8:15-16, John 3:17]

'Do not judge.' For the pupil on the gnostic path, this is often quite a job, particularly in situations of personal or social crisis. Perhaps this is why Jan van Rijckenborgh devotes a few refreshing, confrontational paragraphs to this aspect of our pupilship:

'Every human being lives in his own conceptual universe, from which he judges his environment. In this respect, we really have reached a complete state of separation. We are living in a complete I-state and in a complete I-world. We are highly abnormal, not to

say it more pithily. This is the reason of the stream of ideas that is poured out over us. This is the reason why we will never agree. This is the reason of the formidable division, the unlimited egoism, the self-maintenance and all its bitter consequences. Do you feel that this concerns the nucleus of our miserable existence?

A judgement is a decision, a concrete thought image. It always causes a reaction – in the world around us as well as in ourselves. We ourselves are always measured by the measure we give. This is why it is such a shambles here. What one person builds, another one

## **Crisis: I decide or I am**

It is often said that a crisis is a heightened form of personally or collectively becoming conscious. A crisis is a period of 'losing one's I', in other words: it is a form of 'expropriation' of the I, which is another, recently heard description. This latter definition approaches the etymological meaning of the original Greek word crisis: 'I decide'. From this point of view, it is not surprising that quite a few crisis



breaks down. What one person intends well is made bad by someone else. If the advice of the Spiritual School comes to you to give up your dialectical ‘right’ of judgement and criticism, the goal is to heal you from a serious disease. Indeed, then the point is to liberate you from a certain dementia, a more serious case of a mental disturbance than you had ever thought possible.’

**OVERPLAYED** We also find this ‘do not judge’ in another place, in the story of the ‘adulterous wife’, who it was proposed to Jesus should be stoned.<sup>1</sup> This fragment offers a number of clues for the spiritual path. This fragment also has topical value, if we see the adulterous wife as a metaphor of this world in crisis. This world has ‘overplayed’ its hand in financial-economic and in ecological matters.

situations can be pointed out in history that, as to their size, can be compared with the current crisis. After all, if the ‘I’ decides, we can simply predict the results. The I, the ego, is essentially always striving for self-maintenance and, therefore, by definition, is corrupt. The Bulgarian teacher of wisdom, Peter Deunov, reminded us in the beginning of the previous century of the origin of the word I. He derived this from his study of the Ostrogoths,

who inhabited what is now Bulgarian territory. Their famous bishop, Wulfila (311-383), who was considered a heretic by the dominant church of those days, laid the basis for the Germanic languages with his first Bible translation into Gothic. Of him, it is also said that he was the first initiate in Europe. When translating, Wulfila devised the Gothic word ‘I’ (Ik) from the first letters of Iesu Krist (Jesus Christ).

Linguists say that this is the root of the later German Ich, the English I and the Dutch ik. He who allows the Christ power to speak and decide in him, takes quite different steps than the ones suggested to him by the self-maintaining ego. Such a person digs his heels in the sand if the self-interest of the personality is involved, but irradiates connecting love power under all circumstances. Iesu Krist does not bring

Greed, consumerism and self-interest have brought this world to the verge of collapse. Financially-ecologically, this world leaves a bewildering perspective behind for future generations.

‘Times are changing,’ Augustine already said, ‘but we are the times,’ he added. In this time of crisis, it isn’t going too far to state that we ourselves embody this crisis, too.

Now back to the adulterous wife. Something remarkable occurs, when the purported causes of the crisis are indicted: ‘Jesus wrote with his finger in the sand.’

In the Orient, it was customary that someone, to whom a case was submitted publicly and who did not feel competent for it, turned around demonstratively and wrote with his finger in the sand, thus showing that the questioner should solve the case by himself and no longer disturb him in his activities. In the mystery story, this custom of not taking

sides receives another dimension. By writing in the sand, the Jesus man makes it clear that he is not indifferent, if he does not want to be the judge of this world. By writing in the sand, a connecting deed is thus performed and the case is entrusted to the earth.

Pronouncing a judgement oneself, as desired here, would mean that the addressee does not stand in unity with the Spirit, but is still firmly linked with the karmic realm, the training school of humanity.

**GENERAL INFIDELITY** The infidelity of the wife, who may be seen as the adulterous soul of both man and woman, may also symbolise the structural, spiritual infidelity, of which this world suffers – crisis or no crisis. This world of darkness, in which the corrupt ego rules, has no affinity with the laws of the spiritual world. The human soul lives in marital infidelity, in an ‘adulterous’ situation, and has broken

the way of ‘I decide’ into this world of crisis, but the power of ‘I am’ that is absolutely not of this world.

A crisis often places high demands on the pupil on the path. Just try to continue your path in neutrality and without struggle, if you see your hard-earned savings evaporate through mismanagement of the bank, while the responsible directors take to their heels with a big bag of money as a bonus. During the past years, we have

seen this happen in many places in the world.

This also happened in The Netherlands in February 2013. The bank director, responsible for a fiasco, was remunerated for his mismanagement with a bonus of almost two million euro. A people’s tribunal resulted! Serious threats were his share. The dismissed bank foreman had to flee abroad.

For a moment, it seemed as if the

ancient Greek ostracism from the sixth century BC was back.

If citizens of Athens believed that political leaders did not function properly or considered them too powerful, any citizen could, on a certain day, write the name of a challenged political leader on a piece of broken earthenware. If 6,000 shards had been written on, the person, who had been named the most, was exiled for ten years.



‘The earth produces enough for everyone’s needs, but not for everyone’s greed.’

Mahatma Gandhi

away from its original, divine world. The soul – the woman from our story – has torn itself loose from the marital bond with the Spirit, which vivifies the body in a completely different way. There and nowhere else, the structural cause of the fact that there is a permanent crisis here or, using J. van Rijckenborgh’s words: such a shambles, is to be found. Also in other initiation stories, the situation of religious humanity is often described as ‘infidelity’ (adultery). According to these stories, the soul of earthly humanity is determined by the blood, by the human will and that of the flesh, instead of by the divine word. It has

completely focused on the idols of the earthly world, which still have a significant influence, also in the current world of crisis. A foreshadowing parallel with our story is presented by the following fragment: ‘O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you shall be put to shame; those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.’<sup>2</sup> Further reading our fragment about the adulterous wife, we encounter another peculiar statement: ‘Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.’ This lifts the whole situation onto a spiritual level.

And again, Jesus writes on the ground! In other words, once again, the earth is called as a witness and the issue is left to the conscience of the interrogators as well as to their karmic link with the earth, and therefore, absolutely no stoning, people's court or ostracism! Apparently, the interrogators listen to their inner voice that reminds them that they are not spotlessly clean either. They relinquish their intentions concerning the woman and leave quickly. The scribe, the head and the thinking of the personality, withdraws with his judgement about the soul that is in the middle between the personality and the Spirit. 'I do not condemn you either,' the woman is finally told. Therefore, no judgement, and certainly not according to the earthly, social standards! No, no judgement either, when a crisis situation might impel us to do so.

**KARMA** The text touches a deeper aspect for us, if we relate it to a passage in the story about the blind boy who is healed.<sup>3</sup>

This happens because the Jesus man mixed spittle and earth and anointed the boy's eyes with the 'mud', made in this way. Through Jesus, the Christ has linked himself with the heart of planet earth. He is the healing, anointing force that becomes active here by mixing earth with spirit. He who entrusts himself to the Christ power in this way, will never pass judgement, but leaves it to the karmic activity: 'Whatever you may have done, I do not pass judgement about it.' This is not necessary either, because karma automatically takes its course during our development on earth. We may leave it to this supreme justice, karma, which a human being will bring over himself. We might turn to the earth and say to the prosecutors: 'Mind your own business! The law of karma already works! This is something that every human being should deal with himself. Therefore, let us write in the dust of the earth, in which it is recorded as karma. Now the meaning of the abovementioned sentence becomes clear: The Son of Man has

<p>The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in their midst, they said to him: 'Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?' This they said to test him, that they might have</p>	<p>some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them: 'Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once more, he bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. But when they</p>	<p>heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus looked up and said to her: 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' She said: 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said: 'Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again.' (John 8:3-11)</p>
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‘We are determined by the past. For good reasons, we may strive to escape from this or to escape from what is bad in us, but we can only escape from it by adding something better to it.’  
Wendell Berry, environmental philosopher

not come into the world to condemn, but so that the world might be saved.<sup>4</sup>

The dialectical equaliser of Karma-Nemesis already exists. This is not why Jesus is necessary. The Jesus power comes into a human being to open a quite new perspective.

**LINK WITH THE SPIRIT** And then the closing sentence: ‘Sin no more.’ In such a situation, we may best start by reforming our life. Then sinning no longer means: remaining faithful to the new, and simultaneously original, image of man. Sin in this world of crisis is aptly described by Mikhail Naimy: ‘It is a virtue to limit the needs of the body. It is a sin to limit the needs of the soul!’

By not judging, Jesus has anointed the woman. He has linked his liberating essence with the matter of the woman, the soul. And now it is important to no longer commit ‘adultery’, but to go up into the link with the Spirit. Not until this link has been established is the soul enabled to surpass the karmic realm of crisis, the training school of humanity. In addition to the path of experience of humanity through the world, therefore the following, threefold crisis, a liberating way of the cross, is possible.

- ▶ If the revealing power of the Gnosis has touched a human being, the personality wants to fathom and use this power, but this other power cannot be used according to the normal standards
- ▶ If this is recognised and we are thrown back on the fact of being unable to do any thing in a liberating sense, the human being will admit the Gnosis. Then the soul can be purified by the power of the Gnosis and the wisdom of the Gnosis.
- ▶ The soul, anointed in this way, now internalises the link with the Spirit-Soul, becomes Spirit-Soul and will no longer relinquish this unity. ✦

1. Gospel of John, chapter 7

2. Jeremiah 17:13

3. John 9:3

4. John 3:17



A PILGRIM DREAMED HE SAW THE ANGEL GABRIEL. THE ANGEL HAD A BOOK IN HIS HAND AND THE PILGRIM ASKED WHAT WAS IN IT. THE ANGEL REPLIED, "IN THIS BOOK I WRITE THE NAMES OF THE FRIENDS OF GOD." THE PILGRIM ASKED, "IS MY NAME IN IT?" GABRIEL SAID, "PILGRIM, YOU ARE NOT A FRIEND OF GOD." "THAT'S TRUE," ANSWERED THE PILGRIM, "BUT I AM A FRIEND OF SOMEONE WHO KNOWS GOD'S FRIENDS." THE ANGEL SAID NOTHING FOR A WHILE. THEN HE TURNED TO THE PILGRIM AND SAID ...



“... I AM CHARGED TO WRITE YOUR NAME AT THE TOP OF THIS LIST,  
FOR HOPE IS BORN OUT OF THE LACK OF HOPE.”

WISDOM FROM IRAN

# cross@roads

For too long, in order to turn the tide, we have continued to look up to the responsible leaders. How comfortable is an authority after all? In the meantime, the concept of leadership, in which all responsibility and governance is still in the hands of others, has become completely outdated. However, a 'real' crisis shakes us loose from our habits and gives us a possibility for something 'really' different.

The danger of a crisis, and of losing our confidence in the ruling institutions of power, is that we are somewhat casual about our own responsibilities and moral duties, and that we consider it to be more important whether we like our actions or not, leaving the greater context to its own devices. We take it for granted that we forget the deep link between ourselves and the great cosmic whole, simultaneously losing sight of the interests of others, our neighbours – if we were ever aware of them.

Then our actions may no longer be prompted by what have always been the usual ideas – borrowed or imposed – from the past. We do not, by a long shot, do what we might fundamentally prefer, fundamentally in the sense of acting in complete agreement with our deepest inner self, because this requires that we know what we really want. However, in this respect, all are seeking or doubting.

Yet, they always trust something and believe in their quest. The idea is very tempting that everything is for sale. In this way, we have entered another reality that is determined by the laws of consumerism. They want to teach us that we can only rid ourselves of our desires if we satisfy them immediately and without delay. Instead of ascertaining where these desires stem from, we have detached this part of our life from the greater whole and stripped it of any deeper meaning.

However, just as it is clear from the other articles in this issue of the Pentagram, the





If we no longer need to experience the surrender of control as unnatural, this proves not to lead to crisis and chaos, but is rather very natural and self-evident

inevitable changes now catch up with us, and we are confronted with the question, which reality and which future do we now choose for ourselves? For instance, do we let ourselves be guided by thoughts of an end time, of Armageddon, a battle of all against all?

Do we, with regard to a crisis of life, think of a final stage just like that, or is there the confidence that it is a critical turning point, a kind of separation, a period of transition with a chance of crisis? And do we, because of a chance of crisis, view this possibility like the chance of rain in the weather forecast, or do we think of the *opportunities* that a crisis offers?

**DO WE DENY THE CHANGE?** During any natural change, we are confronted with the law of inertia, with a resistance that must be overcome, but this need not involve a possible lack of understanding and the resistance that we might offer to change. Nonetheless, a true crisis of life belongs to consciously living people. Such a crisis shakes us loose from our habits and incites us to make it a real turning point, indeed, to become the turning point ourselves! However, we also make it a habit to withdraw from such a moment of crisis by relating it to the past and the future, to memories and expectations. Then we limit ourselves with regard to possible changes, to reactions of destruction or preservation. In a real crisis, we have the sensation of losing control over the course of things. With our consciousness, we are roughly pulled into the now as the only moment that

we can really experience, but because any control is taken out of our hands, an opening is also created. And in it, the natural order is restored, despite ourselves. We continuously disturb the natural balance, while nature tries to restore this balance again.

However, is this possible restoration something that we consciously trust? Do we experience ourselves as being one with this nature or does fear drive us? And if we consider it on a larger scale: do we react to the restoration of a disturbance in our field of life, in the body of our planet, by establishing another form of order, another social system, another civilisation, as quickly as possible? To what does such an order, such a civilisation, go back? And what is, after all, a civilised human being?

**SEEING THE CROSSROADS IN OURSELVES** ‘They who possess Dao are not concerned with civilisation.’ This is a statement that puts any cultural order into perspective and observes it from a greater whole, a higher reality. This is a whole that does not abandon humanity throughout all its periods of civilisation and sustains humanity on another life wave, upon which it is not used to living. It surpasses all individual opinions and attempts to explain crisis and chaos. It is beyond any form of criticism and opposition that binds humanity even more to this same crisis and chaos. However, mark: if we attune ourselves to a higher reality, it will throw us back on ourselves. It only confronts us with a possibility, a chance

that will ultimately be everybody's share. Then we learn to view the crisis within ourselves and in society as a magnetic disturbance in an electromagnetic field that we now see as an order that has been brought about by us, people, ourselves.

Another electromagnetic field of a higher reality than ours has a hidden influence on it. Apart from the restoration of the natural balance, it also insists, supported by the changing cosmic conditions that present themselves, on a reversal of polarity in our individual field, a change of reality that places us with one foot into another dimension. In the light of this higher reality, it is clear that we no longer should point our finger at the centres of external power. These centres reflect to a larger or smaller extent our own, personal reality. If we understand this, we will be able to leave our criticism and indignation definitively behind. As coexisting people, we find ourselves in the same atmosphere, indeed, we are this atmosphere and we breathe the same air. We are one body and each atom of this body contributes to it via its own path.

**WE OURSELVES ARE THE TIMES** It is time to become used to the idea that a crisis not only takes something away, but also gives us a great deal. Through our own actions, we determine what we experience. We continuously create a reality, but we are only partially aware of it – because what we create always remains quite close to our previous reality. However, regard-

less of whether we create our own circumstances more or less consciously, it completely depends on our own point of departure, where this time of transition is evolving for us. Do we choose another time again or do we go to the core, to the essence of things and do we open ourselves to the timeless being of Dao? All of us experience the current social changes, but the inner transformation to the super time-spatial existence of our true self has been equally topical throughout time. And the great criterion with which we are confronted is: are we able to surrender to this mysterious crossroads of dimensions and cross the border from sham reality to the reality of the truth? We may live a life without our own projections and without our own expectations. It is possible to enter the great silence and the inner rest, where the true self dwells. If we no longer need to experience the surrender of control as unnatural, this proves not to lead to crisis and chaos and is not life-threatening, but is rather very natural and self-evident. In this admitted silence, we will immediately pass into another reality, which is not desired, expected or created by ourselves, but by itself, by It, Dao, because It is everything and re-creates everything. And an unlimited confidence flows into us, in which our ordinary self no longer occupies an all-decisive, central place, and through which it finally, almost automatically, falls into place: that of a very willing servant in a great, never-ending process of change. ❁

# beyond the horizon

The innermost teachings show us what is virtually incomprehensible: that we already are everything in the eternal fullness of the other dimension. What is eternal also exists now. In the totality of all dimensions, any development that we initiate leads to realisation, to becoming aware of the one truth that we are everything, the whole. *Tat tvam asi*, 'that is you', the ancient wisdom says. In the light of these universal teachings, it also becomes more or less understandable that we create ourselves within the dimensions of time and space – as limited personalities, on our way to all of that, that whole.

Therefore, although we already are everything in our innermost being, we are, as people striving for a deeper life experience, nevertheless aware that our limited personality keeps the inner being away from us. This is the very reason behind what makes us seekers, pupils. It is the notion that the other, higher essence of life does not get the chance to manifest itself through us. Moreover, our personal interpretation always states a future, and thinking, we create for ourselves a time and a time interval. Our mental considerations similarly prevent us, before we might proceed to the path of liberation, from experiencing eternity in the present. He who always dwells in or withdraws from the past or the future, is unable to see the glorious and direct Light in the present. We do not have to know anything; there is freedom in the moment and the freedom remains, if we

continue to fulfil the conditions: fiery, unconditional aspiration, an inner attitude that can take up, encompass and link everything and everyone. There is nothing to know, only to experience in the present, and the present is not the result of the past. The true ideas of the Spirit, of the abstract thinking, with their possibilities for the future, do not reach us in the realm of the mind. What is mental always concerns perceiving what is happening and which of the possibilities is realised. The mind never controls what will happen, even if the human being would like to think so, in the meantime generating the time, to which he subsequently knows himself to be bound.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF AQUARIUS The inspiration for and the creation of the idea originates from the spiritual being, the other realm, linked with the fullness of being. The mind of the limited person may be the receiver of the idea to the extent that the person concerned is still receptive. Then this concerns the special mental power that is able to behold and formulate abstract ideas in an image or a series of images that is applicable and useful for us in a special sense and that represents the idea in such a way that this representation brings us into a state in which we remain susceptible to further inspiration. In this context, our state of self-forgetting I-lessness is crucial and is just like a round circle demonstrating the notion that every image is attuned to the moment and tries to be applied there. And despite its ex-



alted origin, even this idea is incomplete in us and can only be limited. Reality, the essence, always just slips behind the horizon, because a physical human is not given to walk in the garden of the gods. We will, therefore, wholeheartedly abandon a certain idea, an acquired insight again for new inspiration.

Then it is no longer ‘first seeing, then believing’ – because creative believing is ‘seeing’. This is what life is: always first exhaling, applying, realising, and then, in doing so, inhaling again.

And particularly these new insights, this new power, may cause us to surpass the limited possibilities of our personality. The power of beholding – that is rather a seeing, an experiencing of the whole being – begins with an initial spiritual touch in the heart centre, the place where the purely spiritual centre, the

heart of the microcosm, can also express itself. From this, a luminous energy is released, to which the Spiritual School often refers as ‘the kundalini of the heart’.

The new thinking faculty, resulting from the spiritual touch, then generates images in us, metaphors that vivify us again. Then we need not do anything special ourselves, apart from accepting the essence and its creative synthesis.

This is the true meaning of the words ‘taking our responsibility’. This is going up into the All-unity of Dao. Its touch results in the confidence of the faith, unaffected by any crisis or by any chaos. Then any worry and fear is replaced by an all-encompassing joy.

Then any crossroads become a gate to the complete transformation of realities. Then we realise an atmosphere, in which the whole of humanity is sustained and safe. ❀



...THE PERSON WHO STRIVES:  
HOW MIGHTY THE WHEELS OF HIS THINKING...



... HOW UNSWERVING THE STEP OF HIS MODE-OF-LIFE,  
ON THE WAY TO THE LIGHT

# be not afraid of shadows

it only means that light is somewhere nearby

We cannot ignore it, there is much anxiety in this world – absurd, incomprehensible, frightening. Sometimes it is far from home, sometimes unpleasantly near. Indignation, pity, sadness, revolt, desperation – these are only a few of the emotions which assault us over and over. Nevertheless we are told: Become passers-by.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to that “becoming,” we are obviously not passers-by but rather participants, interested persons. We must repeatedly choose sides in every conflict that comes our way. We do so until we figure out that, strange as it may be, all these conflicts are repetitions of similar scenarios costumed in a present-day guise – the club of yesteryear is now a high-tech firearm, but the hand that directs it has remained the same. When we realise that in the decades that we spend on this earth we are continuously served the same muddle on our plates – “definitely can’t be done” and “urgently needs tackling” – then gradually we know for sure that very rarely does it give solace to complain about the abuses. However the dark side of this world can make us aware of the fact that there is also Light. Or it can show us the indivisibility of what we would so much like to separate.

Abuses presume perpetrators and victims; perpetrators must be prosecuted and victims compensated, at least, one would think so. Often the victim is neglected or is left holding the pieces. That is food for thought. The world turned upside down? Who is ultimately the victim and who the perpetrator? We see more and more efforts to get victim and perpetrator to start a dialogue, as in the case of Bill Perke. He forgave the woman who had murdered his grandmother. In 1985 she was a girl of fifteen, sentenced to the death penalty;

in 2013 he helped her to become free and build a new life. This is *one* example of how, every now and then, this world is touched by deeds originating from a consciousness that knows no right or wrong, no difference between victim and perpetrator.

An attack, a social bloodbath, maltreatment – desperate people.

What choices does a person with a heart have when he beholds such horror? He can watch from the sidelines, paralysed by emotions; he can shout his disgust and criticism; or she can once more explain how to deal with “that mess they have created.” An audience is guaranteed, for relishing a taste of bitterness is part of human nature when it comes to others. On top of that it is always good for our image to be *against* something.

All this is part of being human, but where is the added value? In the first case neither the spectator nor the passer-by remain standing, for all functions are disconnected. The shouters and the spouters of criticism – and almost all of us catch ourselves at this – only thicken the black cloud above humanity. An invisible, mostly unknown concentration of all greed, hatred, deceit, envy and such is chased into the atmosphere by humanity; an air pollution that, as a stealthy poison, is able to incite even the most honourable person to unexpected deeds in a moment of weakness. The person who finally has to appear before the judge is only the product of what we as a community

## Ruth Renkle

have constructed, unnoticed, day after day. Who is the perpetrator? Who is the victim? This confrontation with ourselves may perhaps lead to the thought, “Am I any better?” – a question that perhaps only leads to a new antithesis but also indicates a new track in our thought processes.

As insight into our selves increases, we may recognise traces of the Light more and more clearly around us. Streams of wisdom from all times indeed point to a world that knows no better and worse, no pro and con. Whether one is conscious of it or not, both live and work within us – the point of contact is the human being. The human being who experiences and discovers that field of Light (Hermes calls it the soul) in himself, sets foot

*“If you connect yourself with the spirit, o soul, your light will increase, so that with your spirit-eye you will see the right course of action; but if you turn away from the spirit and connect yourself with the senses [...] you will be surrounded by darkness. The material world below, o soul, is the domicile of unsatisfied desire, of fear, devaluation and sadness; above is the world of the spirit, of rest, inaccessible by fear, but of great dignity and joy. You have seen both worlds, you have lived in both. Now make a choice in accordance with your experience. You can live in both, on account of neither will you be thrown out nor neglected.”*

Hermes, The admonition of the soul

on that new track. A mild compassion free of any judgment or paralysing emotion grows within him. With a clear eye he perceives through the oppressive shadows the rising clarity that he himself has helped to feed: the signs of a new time where everything has its place and function, pro and con, perpetrator and victim.

Just as every human being in ignorance can make the cloud heavier, similarly with the aid of the awakening new one in us, we are able to change a small piece of darkness into Light for those who long for Light. Thus every moment of crisis, individual or collective, can cause one to think in a new way and offer a fresh start. This choice lies in our own hands. We can *once more* let the new wine become stale in the old wineskins, or we can create the space to lift the earth and its inhabitants to a higher spiral, on the path to their destiny. ✪

I. The Gospel of Thomas, saying 42

# circles of light

‘... but, thanks be to the Author of our health, the light of nature has not yet left you [Boëthius] utterly. In your true judgment concerning the world’s government, in that you believe it subject, not to the random drift of chance, but to divine reason, we have the divine spark from which your recovery may be hoped. Have, then, no fear; from these weak embers the vital heat shall once more be kindled within you.’

**A**lthough the ancient wisdom assures us that we may know ourselves to be surrounded by a circle of divine light, a black curtain apparently exists between this circle of light and our consciousness, a circle of darkness that absorbs all the light. In various writings, this darkness is explained in more detail. In the *Gospel of Truth*, attributed to the gnostic Valentinus from the second century AD, we read: ‘This ignorance of the Father brought about terror and fear. And terror became dense like a fog, that no one was able to see. Because of this, Error [the Demiurge] became strong.’

And in *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boëthius, who lived from 480 to 525 AD, it is said: ‘The mind is manifestly so constituted that when it casts off true opinions, it straightway puts on false, wherefrom arises a cloud of confusion that disturbs its true vision, I [Lady Philosophia] will now try and disperse these mists by mild and soothing application, that so the darkness of misleading passion may be scattered, and you may come to discern the splendour of the true light.’

The *Gospel of Truth* speaks of ignorance and fear that prevents us from seeing and Boëthius speaks of misleading passion, so that we are unable to discern the true light. Because the human being has even forgotten that he has forgotten – and no





longer knows that he lacks Light – periodically, external attempts are undertaken to break through this forgetfulness. The human being is made aware of the Light. John 1, verses 6 through 8, say: ‘There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the Light, that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but came to bear witness to the Light.’

From the circle of light that surrounds everything, one or more witnesses come to proclaim the glory of the Light in our darkness. However, they only have a chance of success with the person who has a resonance, and with the human being, in whose being a particle of the original light is still active.

In *The Consolation of Philosophy*, this is expressed as follows: ‘But, thanks be to the Author of our health, the light of nature has not yet left you [Boëthius] utterly. In your true judgment concerning the world’s government, in that you believe it subject, not to the random drift of chance, but to divine reason, we have the divine spark from which your recovery may be hoped. Have, then, no fear; from these weak embers the vital heat shall once more be kindled within you.’

Just as John, Boëthius speaks in the same breath of Light and life. The Light spark within us coincides anatomically with our heart. This is why it resounds from the ancient Egyptian wisdom, by the mouth of Pymander and addressed to Hermes: ‘Now direct your heart upon the light and know it.’ And in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this advice is repeated in *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, where we can read: ‘Farewell,’ the fox said. ‘This is my secret, it is quite simple: you can only see

properly with your heart. The essence is invisible to the eyes.’

This is why the witnesses to the Light do not primarily address head and heart, but the inner heart, the spirit-soul. For this reason, we experience many concepts and points of view from the holy language as veiled: our ordinary thinking and reasoning does not have any grasp of it and neither has our ordinary feeling. But the even slightly sensitive person is touched and enchanted by it, because the language of the messengers of the Light fuels the spark that slumbers in the heart of the human being.

Geometry teaches us that a circle is determined by three points. This means that, if we put three dots on a piece of paper, only one circle can be found that passes through all three points. It is quite remarkable that this law can also be found in the circles of light, formed for the benefit of humanity, sunken in darkness. If Jesus calls his first two apostles, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, he speaks: ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ (Matth.4:19)

We recognise such a magical threesome, representing the life-giving triangle from the circle of eternity, at the beginning of the seventeenth century in the Tübinger Kreis of the classical Rosycross in the key figures of Tobias Hess, Christoph Besold and Johann Valentin Andreae. The modern Rosycross is initially sustained by the brothers Wim and Jan Leene and Cor Damme, and after WW II, Antonin Gadal, Catharose de Petri and J. van Rijckenborgh represented the Triple Alliance

of the Light: Grail, Cathar and Rosycross. Just as the manuscripts of the classical Rosycross already spoke of 'the House Sancti Spiritus', this house of the Holy Spirit has been erected again in the modern Spiritual School. It is a purely astral field that offers the candidate in the mysteries an opportunity to become acquainted with his own inner being and to make a start with purifying it. It is a field, in which the seeker may open his heart to the Light, both protected and in freedom.

We find this fact explicitly in the reports of the Inquisition of the thirteenth century (*Practica inquisitionis*, p. 238), which gives us an impression of the ideas of the Cathars: 'With regard to the birth of our lord, Jesus Christ, from the womb of the blessed Mary, who always remained a virgin, they [the Cathars] deny it. They claim that Christ neither had a real human body nor real human flesh like other people. They deny that the Virgin Mary has really been the mother of our lord, Jesus Christ, and they even deny that she was a real woman. They say that their own sect is the Virgin Mary, in other words: the true repentance and chastity that makes the sons of God arise in the world.'

We discover that the Cathars had a gnostic vision of the Christmas story, in which the spiritual leaders of the initiation school, referred to as a sect, represented the begetting aspect, 'Joseph'. The initiation school itself, the 'church', represented the bearing principle, 'Mary'. And each of the children, born from it, may be called 'son of God', the believer in this church who had broken through to liberation. The Cathars themselves referred to these liberated ones as 'parfaits'. In logion 10 of the

Gospel of Thomas, Jesus says: 'I have cast fire upon the world, and see, I am guarding it until it blazes.' As a helping hand of the Gnosis, three rays, three witnesses to the Light from the darkness of our existence, emanate from the universal circle of Light that encompasses the whole of creation in order to awaken the sunken light sparks. Once a first circle of light has been formed, new circles of light can be formed within this 'castle of Light' by combining, 'assembling', all Light sparks that are eligible for liberation. Seized by the Light, the human mind will relinquish its dark mist of confusion and the sight of the truth will become clear again. ✪

The quotes from Boëthius' book have been taken from:  
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14328/14328-h/14328-h.htm>

# ayn rand – the virtue of selfishness

A Library of Congress (U.S.) survey found the book *Atlas Shrugged* (1957) by Ayn Rand to be the most important book of the 20th century, apart from the Bible. Ayn Rand is the originator of the philosophy of 'objectivism' in which the individual and egotism are glorified.

**B**orn in Russia, the philosopher Alissa Rosenbaum (1905–1982) had a tumultuous youth first in St. Petersburg, then in the Crimea and again in St. Petersburg. After her father's pharmacy was confiscated during the Russian civil war, the family fled to the Crimea to avoid Lenin's Bolshevik government since the Crimea at that time was ruled by the Whites.

After studying philosophy and history in St. Petersburg she managed to procure a visa for America to visit some relatives. She never went back to Russia, changing her name to Ayn Rand. The system of philosophy she developed, known as *objectivism*, can be seen as the foundation of Neoliberalism, in other words, maximising profits with power to the shareholders. She wrote seven books of which *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged* became the most influential. The effects of her followers' interpretation of her philosophy have seriously contributed to the present crisis. A warning: there is no spirituality in her thinking, but the reader of the pentagram who wants to get to the roots of how we have become so enmeshed in a world crisis will discover that she has profound insight into the laws governing nature. In her philosophy she postulates that true love is possible only for those whose sense of self-worth is completely unimpaired. Someone who has insufficient self-worth, who doubts himself in any way, is unable to love truly, for true love means that you love some specific virtue in yourself equally in another. She calls this the virtue of selfishness.

This is the meeting point between egotists and altruists. Ayn Rand states that love is “*a spiritual payment in return for a personal, egotistical pleasure, derived from the virtues in the character of another man or woman.*” In other words people who say that love or friendship or affection is an unselfish action, not for the self but for another human, could just as well share this love with any other person, a vagabond, a criminal, a clown or a hero. It would not matter who it were directed at since the outcome or reward would not be for the giver.

This very interesting approach to love shows us some painful truths which you could test by asking people in your surroundings what they appreciate the most in their partner. You will hear answers like: “he makes me laugh,” “she takes good care of me,” “he gives me the feeling I am his princess,” “he makes me happy.” For the most part the values one appreciates in another are mainly of profit to oneself. That is both the earthly side of love and at the same time the difficulty you find in yourself when meeting another human being. It is surely not easy not to be egotistical. Aboard a plane the crew will tell you that in an emergency you are to first take care of yourself before you go and help someone else. If this rule is not observed, both may die.

Therefore it is a wise word from Tao: creation is not altruistic, for creation is objective and neutral. In that sense it knows no love. It does not cushion man with sentimental principles. For 99 per cent of the human population the world is hard and difficult with no end to suffering in sight.



**A flattering  
portrait of  
Ayn Rand  
by the artist  
Leonebel Jacobs**

There is nothing wrong in helping others,  
when and provided they are worthy  
and you can afford to help them.

Ayn Rand, 1964



Could it be that her philosophy constitutes a better approach to life? Or, even better, should it be the *only* approach?

However, this wrestling with egotistical good deeds is not very relevant. Does it matter if your love for someone else makes you happy at the same time? A gift to a homeless person may make you feel good at the same time as making the vagabond happier. Everyone's a winner. Nor are altruists barbarians, as Ayn Rand states, for the paradox in her writings is that if there would be no people to undertake good works without benefiting from them in some way, then "brute altruists," as she terms them, would not exist either. For altruism serves the self-interest of the altruist – it gives him a good feeling. Thus the altruist makes an effort in his existence, taking responsibility for it. As Lao Tzu teaches, "Although they can see their neighbours and hear roosters crow and the dogs bark on the other side of the road, still they live and grow old and die in peace."

Naturally the altruist will maintain that his good deeds for the needy will hardly be motivated by self-interest and this may well be so. Altruists hold that individuals have a moral duty toward each other and these obligations may exclude self-interest or rewards or at least move them to a secondary level.

"It is wisdom to meet your obligations and to be hesitant in demanding your rights," says Lao Tzu. "A man who lives out of inner strength takes responsibility for himself. A man who lives less from inner strength demands of others that they

take responsibility. Heavenly Tao does not choose sides. Tao always sides with the Good."

At this point you may refer to the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau who distinguishes between arrogant selfish love (*amour propre*) and the natural, healthy love-of-self (*amour de soi*). The natural love-of-self has as its instrument, or rather its engine, our conscience. This engine is in essence good in original natural man. The quality of our inborn conscience is stronger than the quality of our reason, states Rousseau. Here he diametrically opposes Rand who discards all this and propounds that this sort of reasoning stems from tribal times. She thus justifies both the brute conquering of the territories of the Indian tribes as well as the right of Israel to keep the Arabs outside its territory at all costs.

Ayn Rand puts it crudely and says it straight. It is the kind of thinking that appeals to the followers of Nietzsche: the forceful self-assured western man, living according to the dictum of his own free will, taking what he needs and thereby shaping his own world. Her fans have somehow forgotten, however, that "take what you need" is followed by "but you will also have to pay for it." In one sense it is a variation on "survival of the fittest," which may sound healthy but here the followers of Ayn Rand can in no way approach her superior sense of nuance and balance. These followers are alas no thinkers but managers, bankers, CEO's, controllers. That is where it goes astray for they are the originators, the constructors and creators of the many world crises in



**Rand's first publication, Pola Negri, an essay about her favourite actress of the day. Moscow, 1925**

practically all sectors of society, for there is no system of checks and balances.

In Rand's thinking capitalism, in its pure form, would engender a healthy society. Her thinking propounds a maximum use of capital giving a high return for the capital providers. She adds that this can only be achieved by a business-oriented marketeer, by a leader who goes straight for his goal and is at the same time fair and just. Since the year 2000 in both East and West her followers have had their way, and we are now on the threshold of the end of our culture if we do not heed the signs of the end of our civilisation. But so it must not be. "This is my secret" says the fox to the Little Prince. "It is very simple. Only with your heart can you see clearly. The essence of things is invisible to the eye. That is a truth that has been forgotten by humans. But you, do not forget it. Always remain responsible to what has tamed you. You are responsible for your rose..."

If you do not let your heart have a say in everything you see, experience and undertake, then your world will become a desert. Indeed we often say that our world is intended as a house of passage, a field of development for soul-consciousness. But those who do not take good care of the place they inhabit at the moment will presently have no place at all to live. ❀

# the trees and the forest

*In the midway of this our mortal life,  
I found me in a gloomy wood, astray  
Gone from the path direct.*

At the beginning of the first Canto of his immortal *Divine Comedy*, Dante gives us a very specific description of the circumstances in which we live, that being a deep existential crisis. We no longer see the forest for the trees. We are disoriented and we don't know where to go. We ask ourselves questions that have no answers. For example, we ask ourselves at what point our life went wrong. We only know that it went wrong, that we took the wrong path, that we are lost. We have regrets and wonder if it could have been different, however we doubt that we could have been able to act differently. Ouspensky's story about Ivan Osokin tells about a soldier for whom a magician gives many opportunities to begin his life over again starting from the moment where he thought he had made a wrong choice. The soldier, after many opportunities and many afflictions, is astonished to find himself brought to the same point. Even so, he was ready to be initiated into true wisdom by this magician.

With regard to our actual situation and the actual state of our society, it would be preferable to abandon our analysis and our research trying to find the ones who are responsible. The general conclusion may be that it must turn out badly, but it would be better to inquire as to the root of evil. In reality everyone carries evil within, individually as well as collectively. This is not due to a misstep in the past but because of the structure that has been an essential part of our being for a very long time. Although we always wish for more, we never feel satisfied, resulting in a depletion

of ourselves, others and, by extension, the entire planet, its products and raw materials. The passion for possession that we see at work everywhere is part of the structure of our nature. Even if we had to carry our guilt until the ends of our lives, we could not do otherwise because we are what we are! We don't have to look far for an explanation. We suffer from a desperate deficiency, from the lack of real life, a lack similar to that of the people who were lost due to lack of knowledge. It is understandable that we wish to fill this deficiency in all possible ways, to calm down the passion of life at all cost! Now, the more we get, the more our hunger seems to increase. Simultaneously, our search for adequate food causes depletion of resources. For a long time we cherished the dream that we would succeed in the measure that more sophisticated methods would offer us the possibility to obtain the nourishment we sought. We thought we had made a good start and that everything would finish as we wished.

In the meantime, we have gained some experience. What science and technology offered seems, for the moment, unrealisable. The promised "carrot" is situated within the limits of time, and yet it is the limitations of progress that have become evident. Apparently we can only step back.

Our human nature cannot accept that, however. Despite the course of things, we continue our mad rush, pointlessly wasting a lot of energy.

It has become crystal clear that we are fighting against the fate of natural laws which, long disrupted, have forced us to descend from the summits we have climbed by trickery.



**Engraving by  
Gustave Doré, 1890,  
for “The Inferno”  
by Dante Alighieri**

this good news which gives us some hope? Shall we not welcome it with outstretched arms and open hands, not hanging onto the old truths we think might rescue our existence, but adopting a new form of life, preparing for an absolutely new life – one connected with a world radiating light, a world that begins to illuminate the old world?

In physics, we talk about entropy: everything that increases must decrease. Isn't it what we called a “crisis”? We hold on to possessions even as we are losing them; we want to block the movement of everything that leads to change. It is better to follow the change that is happening and be ready to give up what must be given up, otherwise it will brutally be taken from us.

The most powerful symbol to represent this existential crisis is the cross. A crisis is really nothing other than a crossroads. It places us at the intersection which leads to the extreme point of total self-surrender: going with the decline or with another turn of the wheel. Every person must make an inner choice. We can accept this decline in order to put a definite end to the cyclic rotation of the wheel by choosing a deep inner life, one overflowing with love, a full and meaningful life for the soul.

In the middle of all the disastrous news, isn't

Dante already foresaw the vision of the current crisis resulting from the temporary blindness caused by an increase of the radiation coming from the new world. As he had anticipated at the beginning of his dark *Inferno*, he found the answer at the end of his long path of initiation. He understood that behind the world's agitation works the driving force of divine love:  
*But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel  
In even motion, by the Love impell'd,  
That moves the sun in Heaven and all the stars.* ✪

# evil and the lord of the sea





*“What is beyond measure perishes in the evil without measure...”*      Torrentius

Sometimes, evil is referred to as ‘the smallest part of the good’. We also read sometimes: ‘No one is good, not even one’ or ‘Nothing is good; even in the good, there is something of evil.’ In what does it hide, and what does it hide from? Apparently, it keeps hidden from the Light, but where does evil sojourn then?

Is evil only caused by what people do to each other, or is it also caused by what people do to the environment and to nature? Or do these two things overlap? Or is it even possible that evil is an independent evil energy outside people that is able to infect people or to seduce them to ill-temperedness, an ‘evil salniter’ or ‘spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places’?

Is the outward appearance of evil the smallest part of good? A legendary pop song suggests: ‘Please allow me to introduce myself, I’m a man of wealth and taste.’ Are there indeed ‘spiritual hosts of wickedness’ in the heavenly places as in some of Shakespeare’s plays and in Paul’s warnings? Evil purportedly is ineradicable and cannot be traced. Or is evil much more ordinary and may we speak of ‘the banality of evil’, as Hannah Arendt discovered? Does evil need an evil genius to mani-

fest itself, because the 'ordinary' can be found in every human being? And is it manifested then in this ordinary human being, if he ends up in dilemmas, for instance in a time of crisis or in wartime situations?

Are we not aware of any evil? Do we suppress it? Or do we simply not believe what we may know? This certainly concerns a more or less global crisis, like the one from the 1930s with the question whether it has something to do with evil or whether evil is the cause or the effect. At the time, fascism and Nazism appeared to be two evils that could not be kept in check and that broke out on an unprecedented scale. In the current crisis, things are less clear, but it can no longer be hidden that a cynical professional and life ethos plays a large role, if only due to a digital world that can no longer be kept 'locked': sooner or later, everything becomes known and nowadays, this is sooner rather than later.

As human beings, we cannot avoid deciding for ourselves what our limit is. Does evil exist? Would evil like to keep us away from good? What, then, is good? Does good exist? Why do we allow evil to keep us away from it? What do we want to experience?

And next: is the link between evil and death too simple? Are death, rigidity, crystallisation and ultimately the dissolution into elements results of the effects of evil?

In the hermetic and gnostic tradition, evil is ignorance, lack of true knowledge. As gnosis, 'the knowledge of the heart', fills and forms the consciousness, so that there is no longer any place for ignorance, for evil.

Where is the paradox of evil, the paradox that high and great quality may nonetheless be the bearer of bad and evil influences? 'I'm a man of wealth and taste.'

Is it in culture, in the sciences that claim to be neutral, or in a culture that goes up into ostentation and technical perfection?

Is information, gained from chaos, the key to the farewell to evil? Do evil and good consti-

tute a seemingly ethical contrast, because no life is possible without these two, without the two, without duality? But if this is the case, are good and evil not one then? I do not even dare to think further... Once I tried to formulate aspects of evil without 'in' or 'un' in it, so therefore no unreliability, impotence, ignorance, incompetence, nonsense, and also without other negative formulations, like crime, adversary and counterforce.

I ended up with hatred, destruction, imprisonment, torment, death, terror, darkness and the like, heavy terms for 'an ordinary, good person'. All these concepts may exist, if we let go of the heart, when it becomes too uncomfortable to let the heart speak...

On the other hand, I heard that many teachings of wisdom and religions attribute a significant, even divine role to the destroyer. Shiva-Shakti, for instance, is energy that destroys what is transient... And I heard of martyrdom as if 'evil' is necessary for the manifestation of 'good'.

Arjuna wondered: 'Why should I fight?', but even the divine Krishna did not consider struggle and war to be evil in a world of delusion and impure insight. 'The human being does not escape the fetters of acting by refraining from acting, nor may he achieve perfection by mere self-denial, for no one is able not to act, if only for a moment, because every moment he is urged to action by his innate properties.'

'Is the army a necessary evil or not?' a major, who was a medical officer, asked a potential military officer during an 'examination'. 'The army is a not-necessary evil,' the candidate replied, who was then no longer allowed to become an officer, because the answer was not on the answer sheet, about which the major therefore complained...

The crisis of the 1930s resulted in the destruction of millions of people. Evil is energy anyway, and energy needs a balance. The human heart forms this balance. If its voice is

not heard, evil will have too much room and become too large. And this energy dissolves in a 'slow explosion', as it cannot be otherwise, into untold suffering of countless millions. This is why we cannot say either that excessive evil is necessary for the development of the human consciousness. No, it is straightening a balance. If there is equilibrium and the voice of the heart is heard, a time of peace may continue on a large scale, in society, or on a small scale, in our own being. Then the way of peace is enough. Then the way of harmony is spiritually excellent and exceedingly promotes spiritual growth: the growth of the only good, which wells up from the heart spiritually. If we have the courage to accept and apply this fact, this crisis need not become the cause of a new wave of violence, inhuman suffering and new darkness for the soul.

The inner fire has a mild nature; it does not wound; it is tremendous without being violent. This fire does not need traumatic and shocking experiences to be ignited, on the contrary, the equilibrium of the soul, in which this mild fire of conversion can flare up softly, is only disturbed by acts of violence by malicious persons.

The danger that the current crisis involves is that an excess of opportunities is created for a new form of evil to express itself in world history. Money is the root of all evil: 'Inclined to all evil', Paul says about us and he can say so, of course, because he recognises it within himself. And he explains that there are 'spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places'. Now, I see them, too, strong seducers, which try to get a grip on my mentality and often already have.

What chance does a crisis offer in this context? Currently, there are not only 'spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places', but there are also atmospheric forces that try to nourish a desire that surpasses avarice and egoism. They tie in with another 'banality':

with simplicity, peace, cordiality, and the longing for the One, but I speak rather of the 'geniality' of the good, the ordinary, simple good. And it can always be simpler and purer. There is a sea of space for this 'banal geniality' of the good. And the channel to the lock gates to this sea is a healthy mentality. The lock itself is the heart and the lord of this sea is the unifying power.

A healthy mentality possesses an unencumbered thinking, without market thinking, product thinking or performance thinking, but which, striving, lifts itself up. The lock in the heart functions, in a spiritual sense, so that the lock gates open and the unifying power of the lord of this sea and the respiration field turn serene blue. Ah, Neptune, the planetary power, the renewer of the head sanctuary, who dissolves all those spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places...

Is this the 'to be or not to be' that dissolves my crisis? I dare to think again. 'I am,' says my soul, 'for my world and my humanity, and for myself, briefly for life.' It is Light, now that it is filled with the One. After all, in it, it is real. ✪



THE HUMAN BEING IS A PENTAGRAM, A SYMBOL, WHICH IS ALSO AN OBJECT OR A DIAGRAM. TRY TO PENETRATE BENEATH THE OUTER MESSAGE OF THE SYMBOL, OR YOU WILL LULL YOURSELF TO SLEEP. A PLAN IS IN MOTION WITHIN THE SYMBOL! CONSIDER THIS PLAN TO LEARN TO UNDERSTAND IT. TO DO THIS YOU NEED A SCHOOL.

BUT BEFORE IT CAN HELP YOU, YOU NEED TO BE PREPARED – BY STANDING IN ALL HONESTY BEFORE THE OBJECT OF YOUR QUEST ...



...THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF "SOUL": WHEN YOU SEEK TRUTH AND KNOWLEDGE, YOU RECEIVE IT. WHEN YOU SEEK SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF ALONE, YOU MAY RECEIVE IT, BUT THEN YOU FORFEIT ALL YOUR HIGHER ABILITIES ...

WISDOM FROM IRAN



“Turn your heart toward the Light and know it.”

Hermes Trismegistus

## Called by the World Heart

A dissertation on the origin and the development of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross and its founders, J. van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri.

In *Called by the World Heart*, Peter Huijs presents an account of the development of the spiritual pursuits of the past one and a half century, during which the great spiritual organisations played an important part. In this complex esoteric field, the Leene brothers rediscovered the seventeenth-century manifestoes of the Rosicrucians in 1935. Huijs describes the history of the Rosicrucian Society that they founded before World War II.

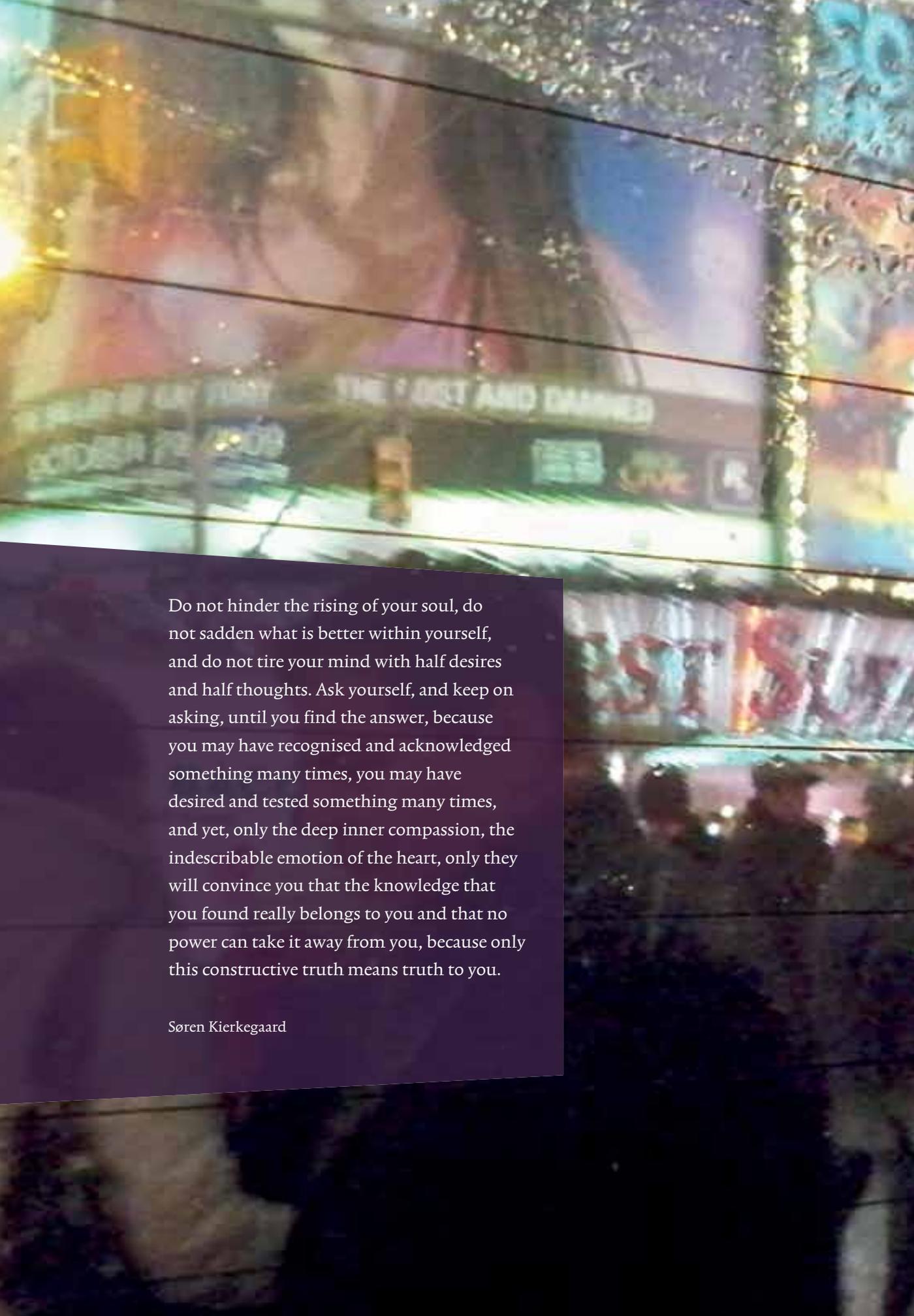
The second part of the book describes the period after 1945. The genesis of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, the International School of the Golden Rosycross. This initiation school is wholly devoted to the liberation of the higher life in the human soul. As an anthology, the author shows the spiritual and literary development of J. van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri on the basis of extensive quotations. In a natural way, the reader gains insight in the way in which their inspiration and inner task developed into a sevenfold world work, always inspired by the chain of universal brotherhoods.

The author also presents a survey of the further development undertaken by this School after 1990. In a preview, he describes the development until 2024, during which the spiritual development of the past period may be recognised and activated in broad sectors of society.

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Do not hinder the rising of your soul, do not sadden what is better within yourself, and do not tire your mind with half desires and half thoughts. Ask yourself, and keep on asking, until you find the answer, because you may have recognised and acknowledged something many times, you may have desired and tested something many times, and yet, only the deep inner compassion, the indescribable emotion of the heart, only they will convince you that the knowledge that you found really belongs to you and that no power can take it away from you, because only this constructive truth means truth to you.

Søren Kierkegaard