The drive to rebirth is realised by perfect inner preparation and by detaching from this world. We read in the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount:

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’

From the longing for the spirit, the prayer arises: ‘I have prepared myself, liberated my spirit-soul from the delusion of this world. Let me now understand and fathom the rebirth.’ He who in this way, on the basis of his innermost depth, opens the gate to God’s mysteries, will hear the address about rebirth, resounding from what is hidden, because what is hidden is nothing else than the kingdom of heaven itself. The inner ear will then open and be able to understand these secret words.
The study of man

‘The human being as we know him is a royal being in the universe, endowed with mighty powers. This royal figure cannot be dethroned easily. This is why it is often thought that the natural figure is the true man.’

This issue of the Pentagram begins with this quote from J van Rijckenborgh. The universal teachings often emphasise instruction: the instruction of the soul, which learns in a quite different way than the mind does.

The soul learns by wisdom; it learns by an active link with the vibrations of the living body. The personality begins to see how and why its lower nature, his mental directedness and his ego initially constitute an obstacle. However, when wisdom grows, the ego will disappear; and our lower nature along with our thinking will put themselves at the service of the glorious processes of reversal, transmutation and transfiguration. This has been elaborated in the section on the special theme: The truth about the ego.

In this issue, also attention is paid to the new atmospheric conditions, which will greatly help the human being during this process of gaining consciousness.
In verse 60, Pymander explains what the consequences are, when in the current circumstances entities continue to cling to the natural figure, that is, that ordinary dialectical humanity and soul-born entities are found in one and the same space. The world is populated by many millions of people and among them an ever more powerful group with a gnostic disposition develops, whose soul Light will at a certain moment be strongly concentrated. This soul fire and the dark-red earthly fire do not tolerate each other. When the soul fire cannot be active in a purifying, liberating way, Pymander says that it always works punitively. This is why it is written:

Them I leave to the avenging Demon. Such people need the scourge of the fire that scorches and burns and equips them for still more unholy actions.

The desire of these people continually seeks greater indulgence and causes them to rage in darkness, without anything being able to satisfy them. In this exists their torment and through this, the flame that scorches them flares up higher and higher.

This is the way of bitter experience and no doubt, you will have known it in your life. He who does not learn from bitterness, will have to go through continually greater bitterness, until it finally becomes unbearable and man, brought to his knees, becomes ripe at long last for the great lesson. This long road of experience has no other aim than to allow the spirit ultimately to triumph. He who understands this and knows that the birth of the soul is the first step to salvation, may wonder what is meant by the return into the light realm of the beginning, the upward path to the original life. The verses 62-65 of the book Pymander answer this question (see shaded box on p.4).

When the soul is born and the soul vehicle develops, the old natural figure disappears; it dissolves, as it were. But exactly as in the case of the ordinary death of the physical body, the natural figure does not immediately disappear. When the soul is born and the golden wedding garment is woven, it is true to say that at a given moment the old nature-born body declines and disappears from sight, but for the time being, its powers remain. This twofold process is called transfiguration. The powers which caused the genesis, the birth and maintenance of the natural figure must also disappear; they must be neutralised, dissolved and referred back to their place.

We have discussed before the ‘circle no farther’, as it is called in the universal teachings. This circle refers to the microcosm. In the microcosm, we discover seven rings, seven magnetic spheres, corresponding to the seven intercosmic planes. Seven aspects can be distinguished in each of these magnetic spheres. Consequently, seven times seven, that is forty-nine magnetic aspects, forty-nine differences exist in the auric being. When the soul human being is born and grows up and the corresponding magnetic states of the sixth cosmic plane are vivified, so that the magnetic firmament radiates, the seventh magnetic sphere is neutralised. Then it is extin-
Pymander, verses 62–65

First, this body is relinquished to transformation in the dissolving process of the material body, and the form you had will then be seen no more; you give your ordinary I, that in the future is rendered inoperative, over to the Demon. The physical senses return to their sources of which they once more form a part; they once more become one with its activities, whereas the passion and desire impulses return to the reasonless nature. In this way, man travels further upwards, across the cohesive power of the spheres; to the first circle he yields the power to increase and decrease; to the second circle the proficiency in evil and the artifice that has become impotent; to the third circle the now impotent error of desire; to the fourth circle the vanity of ostentation of the ruler, who can no longer be satisfied; to the fifth circle the godless recklessness and insolent thoughtlessness; to the sixth circle the attachment to riches that has been put out of action; to the seventh circle the lie continually sets its snares. Then, when he has stripped himself of that which issued from the power of the spheres, he enters the eighth sphere, in possession of nothing but his own power and sings, with all those who are there, hymns of praise to the Father and all re-

spond to the soul with the new senses. This soul human being, led by Pymander, knows that this person is not soul-born. That is impossible. He may perhaps experience the presence of the inner kingdom, but he has stopped at that point. Such a human being became bogged down in occult or mystical deception and continues to gloat in his own delusion. Such a person is then occupied in keeping his inner discovery, his vision, captive with his I. If you turn to world literature, you will find countless of these people, who may be called ‘rich young men’ in the full sense of the word. They are laden with treasures, but do not do anything but revel in contemplative, I-centred twaddle, often drafted very intelligently. But what use does this have from the point of view of liberating service to humanity? And that is what really matters: you must go out and work, and roll your sleeves up, prepared to go through the mud, if necessary, to save human souls.

God. This is the good end for those who possess Gnosis, the true knowledge that is of and

with God: that they become God. In the Gnosis, this point of achieving is always called ‘the good end’. When the Cathars were together during their services, they prayed unto each other: ‘May God lead you to the good end.’ Thus you will from now on wholly be able to understand these words, when it is said in a gnostic ritual: ‘We hope and pray that we may bring everything to a good end.’

The good end in the new state of life is at the same time a glorious, new beginning. In this way, the hermetic human being is taught the great process of return, of which he partakes, and in which he, step by step, continues to bring everything to a good end.

Let us assume that you have entered this process; that you have already taken the first step in the realisation of the rebirth of the soul. Then the words of Pymander are also spoken to you, as in verse 66 they are to Hermes:

But why do you delay? Now that you have received everything from me, are you not going to those who are worthy of it in order to serve them as a guide so that, thanks to your medi-

torship, the human race may be saved by God? And in verse 67 we read:

And I, who was now clothed with power and

instructed about the nature of the Universe and about the exalted vision, thanked and praised the Father of all things. I began to proclaim to the people the beauty of the Gnosis and of the life, dedicated to God. The soul human being, led by Pymander, knows that the number of harvesters is very small and

One with its activities, whereas the passion and desire impulses return to the reasonless nature.
Liberate yourselves from the dark light and participate in immortality by taking leave of destruction forever
The soul has three principles: consciousness, nerve fluid and blood. The Christ hierarchy tries, through its mysterious atmospheric impulse, to affect this soul being unto liberation.

J. van Rijckenborgh, *Het nieuwe teken*
The Gizeh plateau: mystery of the universe on earth

Egyptians called the pyramids 'The Light

Its builders, priests and magicians had only one goal: 'becoming a great winged one'
the possibility of happiness

The author Franz Kafka (Prague 1883 – Vienna 1924) wrote about ordinary things in an extraordinary way. His stories are unsettling; he showed people their pettiness and narrow-mindedness. But there is also another, much less-known aspect of this artist, whose death was untimely, an aspect that is interesting for anyone who feels himself to be a seeker.

From Kafka’s diaries and letters, we can deduce that he suffered from self-hatred and self-destruction due to the lack of transparency, anger and futility of the world. Franz Kafka (1883-1924) was unceasingly striving for recognition and love without ever finding it, and he felt guilty with regard to the invisible powers, virtually bordering on paranoia. He also felt that reality was fundamentally uncertain and unreliable and could also be destroyed. Although he could look after himself professionally and whilst amongst friends, he ultimately died young from tuberculosis, which might be symbolic. At the time, this disease was called consumption.

In his novels and stories, he recorded his experiences in life: an obscure and uncertain world, which was hostile to the individual. This world is filled with powerful organisations and their employees, which are obviously able to cope with life. That many people appreciated him as an author, is certainly caused by the fact that, not unlike a seismograph, he registered the state of mind and the attitude to life of many modern people.

However, there is also a quite different Kafka than this dark figure. In his 110 aphorisms (or short sayings), ‘Considerations about sin, sorrow, hope and the true way’, we encounter the usually unknown, positive Kafka. Apparently, he had experiences that are familiar to any seeking person. He himself once wrote that these aphorisms were the result of a state of particularly clear insight. Time and again, he speaks of the ‘indestructible’ in the human being. He apparently had experienced this himself. For example, aphorism 17 reads: ‘I never was at this place yet how differently moves the breath, a star radiates next to it, more blinding than the sun.’ Kafka breaks through to a star, a light of another dimension that radiates more brilliantly than the greatest light of the world of phenomena, which are always destroyed again. What cannot be destroyed, what is unassailable and belongs to the deepest levels of the human being, constituting his basis of life, can, however, permanently remain lying unconsciously before him.

This is why aphorism 50 says: ‘Man cannot live without a permanent trust in something indestructible in himself, though both the indestructible element and trust may remain permanently hidden to him.’ Why can it always remain hidden to him? Because he finds ‘possibilities for expression’ for it and holds onto the things that correspond to it. ‘One of the ways in which this hidden aspect can express itself is through faith in a personal god.’

The human being projects his innermost aspect outwardly and creates external conditions from which he expects salvation. To experience what is indestructible inwardly, he should rather drive back the projections and ultimately solve them. He might stop holding onto external images. Then the inner being, the unassailable, would be able to manifest itself actively, and we would be able to notice it. ‘God is dead,’ says Nietzsche. Yes, he is, because the human being is able to kill all images of an external god, to which he holds on. Not until then will he find the inner God, that which is imperishable, and become free.

Once again: ‘Man cannot live without a permanent trust in something indestructible in himself, though both the indestructible element and trust may remain permanently hidden to him.’ ‘One of the ways in which this hidden aspect can express itself is through faith in a personal god.’

An essential condition for reaching the inner aspect on the basis of the outer aspect is the longing for the experiencing of the inner aspect. ‘A cage went in search of a bird,’ we read in aphorism 16. The metaphor will certainly not escape us: as an ego, we form the cage for what is imperishable, the free bird, within us, but we do not yet see the bird. It belongs to another dimension than the world of the cage, but for this very reason, the
longing to see it, indeed to become like it, may become so strong that we resolutely set out to seek it. We are longing for what is imperishable in us, for our true identity, for this free bird, which is still hindered by us in its free flight, of which we are not even aware. Yet, without this longing of the cage for the bird, we will never find what is imperishable. But with this longing, we are increasingly able to approach it. How?

With a beautiful formula, this is summarised in aphorism 27: ‘Even though we are always forced to do what is negative, we have already been given what is positive.’ What is imperishable, what is positive, is already present in our inner being. Usually, we do not notice it. Why not? Because we keep it hidden from ourselves by our day-to-day worries, to which we devote all our energy, or by our faith in a personal god, or generally in external authorities and saviours. We expect help from them; we worship them and in this way keep them alive with our soul energies. It is therefore up to us to cause stumbling than to be walked upon.’ Life is apparently a Sisyphean labour. We believe that we have liberated ourselves from an illusion or a fear, but then it suddenly crops up again, seemingly just as strong as before. An illusion or fear seems to have been neutralised, but then others, hidden behind them, show themselves and demand our attention.

In aphorism 15, Kafka says: ‘When a road has just been cleared in autumn, it is covered with leaves again.’ This example is true, but it is also desolate because, although ever new impediments crop up in the cleared parts of the consciousness, this concern dead leaves without any real vital power or right to exist. Moreover, the tree will at a certain moment have shed all its leaves. The cleaning is not in vain. Somehow, the unsalvable, the pureness, the clarity and certainty will be consciously active in the soul. Another aspect of this cleaning is that it is done during our everyday life, in the most improbable situations. The illusions and fears may crop up in any period of life. This does not always concern great, heroic efforts or courageously dealing with great blows of fate. The daily encounters with other people, the usual attitude towards matters and situations, form the lessons that have to be learnt.

In aphorism 1 we read: ‘The true way is along a rope that is not spanned high in the air, but only just above the ground. It seems intended more to cause stumbling than to be walked upon.’ Life is the rope, along which the true way runs. This is why the seeking human being, who wants to live so gloriously, time and again often stumbles close to the ground over everyday minor tasks. In this way, he learns to know his illusions and fears. During this cleaning, the seeking human being is tossed to and fro between self-reproach and pride. Both equally obstruct self-realisation. He often has the sensation of not having made any progress and not having achieved anything. Then he reproaches himself and feels like a contemptuous loser.

Who is guilty of what? How do people react to what is unusual? Kafka lets his main figures seek possibilities, during which they unfortunately often lose their way in their own limitations, ground down by bureaucracy and mangled by uncertainty. His stories are oppressive rather than cheerful and certainly do not always offer a way-out or a solution. They give us food for thought, about the self-inflicted Pettiness of our lives, caused by following patterns of expectation and by showing desirable behaviour, while there is always a desire for freedom, for living a more glorious life. These stories by Kafka may stimulate people to comply with this impulse, and to choose for it.

Kafka is considered one of the main German authors of the twentieth century. His best-known works are The trial, The castle, The metamorphosis.
The indestructible is one: it is each individual human being, at the same time, it is common to all, hence the indivisible union that exists between human beings.

On the other hand, we read in aphorism 69: "Theoretically there is a perfect possibility of happiness: believing in the indestructible element in oneself and not striving towards it." A perfect possibility of happiness: not impatiently wanting to seize what is imperishable, to manipulate it by exercises and to support him.

Impatience is the human drive to find certainty in what is transient, to be able to be liberated by the 'apparent thing', the dogma, the illusion, the faith, by a divine human being, science, ideology, wealth or power, or by fencing in all those 'apparent' things. Impatience is also the 'premature breaking off of what is methodical, an apparent fencing in of the apparent thing'.

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the fourth dimension

With our three-dimensional consciousness, it is impossible to form an image of the fourth dimension. Catharose de Petri calls the fourth dimension ‘the reality of the omnipresence’. The fourth dimension eliminates time and distance.

We experience the world as three-dimensional. We distinguish length, width and height. Mathematicians accordingly distinguish: the line, the plane and the space. The line has no width and the plane doesn’t have height or thickness. Neither does a shadow like, for instance, our own shadow, have thickness and it is, therefore, two-dimensional. This two-dimensional shadow may be considered an expression of the form that is three-dimensional. Generally speaking, we might say that a shadow is the expression of a higher dimension in a lower dimension or, stated more poetically, that a higher dimension makes itself known in a lower dimension through the shadow.

In this way, we may also interpret the ancient statement: ‘And God cast his shadow upon the earth.’

Many people consider time to be the fourth dimension like, for example, Ouspensky did in his book ‘A new model of the universe’, which he wrote at the beginning of the twentieth century. His considerations are, therefore, based on the current scientific ideas of the time, the period just before Einstein developed his theory of relativity.

Because we are, with some effort, able to imagine time as a ‘higher dimension’, this seems a logical step, but it provides an imperfect image for it is, in principle, impossible for our three-dimensional consciousness to imagine the fourth dimension. Catharose de Petri refers to the fourth dimension as ‘the reality of the omnipresence’. She continues: ‘It is the dimension that wholly eliminates time, distance and past, present and future, the present and the soon to be.’

**TRANSITION** With our three-dimensional consciousness, we are absolutely unable to imagine what things look like in the fourth dimension. However, it is possible to say something about the transition from the third to the fourth dimension, analogously to the transition from the second to the third dimension, and perhaps about how the fourth dimension makes itself known in the third.

We know the second dimension as a plane, with the circle as a special form of a plane. In the third dimension, the sphere is the equivalent of the circle. This sphere consists of an infinite number of circles, all of them with the same centre. Therefore, a transition from the second to the third dimension occurs, when we join the centres of more than one circle into one common centre.

Analogously, we may therefore say that the transition from the third to the fourth dimension occurs, when we join the centres of different spheres into one centre, when we turn them into one centre. It is hard for us to imagine this, because we are so imprisoned in the three-dimensional reality. It actually also seems impossible, because our bodies are composed of cells, tension particles that are limited.

However, when we relate this to the microcosm, or rather to the microcosms, which are spheres, too, this looks different. Then we may possibly...
Shortly after the war, M. finally settled on a small island before the Greek coast. M. descended from a wealthy English family and had, during his whole life, reacted with irritation to the question: ‘What moves a human being?’ During his travels, he had collected many treasures, which had found a place in his house. M. was particularly proud of his books by wise masters, inspired poets, seeking philosophers and others. He had an extra floor built on his house for this extensive library and had a generator installed, so that he could delve in those books late in the evening after sunset.

Thus he was the only one in the village with electricity at the time. At the other side of the village, where the hills began, an old, wise woman lived, whom he met once in awhile during his frequent strolls. They were always special encounters, during which M. surmised that this woman knew the answer to the questions he didn’t dare to ask. One day, when M. was enjoying the sunset before his house, he saw this woman come in his direction. They greeted each other, talked a bit, until the woman came with a peculiar question. Her master had recently visited her and had left a kind of travel report with her in the form of transparencies. He had specifically mentioned M.’s name for her to show the transparencies at his place, as he was the only one in the village with electricity. It was only for a few people, who just happened to visit her.

M. was happy to do this woman a favour and put his library at her disposal, so that she would at the same time get an impression of his collection of books. They made an appointment for the next evening and thus, the woman, her guests and M. assembled the next evening, shortly after sunset, in M.’s library. However, he had only cleared a small part of a wall by removing a few books, attached as he was to his treasures, which he, moreover, would very much like to show to the wise woman. This is why the transparencies were mainly projected on the books, which in this way were very well visible. Quickly, a lively conversation developed about the various books, which provided all kinds of enlightening insights. M. had the time of his life. The wise woman’s profound disappointment wholly escaped him, when they took leave at the end of the evening. Long, M. waved after her and her guests and then, filled with energy, sat down in the middle of the library. It would take many years, before these two would meet again.

realise that all these different microcosms have a common centre, one common soul nucleus that makes itself known in each individual as the rose of the heart or the reflection atom. From this soul nucleus, the light of the spirit is projected onto the reflection atom, the mental body, of the microcosm. Unfortunately, we have filled this mental body with all kinds of ideas, and because we are too strongly attached to our ideas, precisely these cherished ideas will prevent our becoming conscious of the images that the spirit would like us to perceive. In other words, we should learn to know on the basis of the heart rather than by thinking with our head.

Shakespeare refers to this, in what is perhaps his most beautiful sonnet, sonnet 11. In the beginning of this sonnet, he describes how the one, separated consciousness must be replaced by the original consciousness, by turning around. He ends this sonnet with the order: ‘Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.’ This printing has a double meaning. Firstly, it indicates that we have to make room within ourselves, so that the spirit is enabled to project its image from the soul nucleus onto it. And secondly, it says that we must show this image outwardly, to the world, as a true act of life. If we do not do so, if we are going to cherish the image, if we, like M, are going to enjoy ourselves in the middle of our library, the living image will die.

The third dimension is expressed in the second dimension as a shadow, casting the suspicion of space ahead. The fourth dimension is expressed in the third dimension as a power, moving from within to without in an unlimited space, and casting a suspicion of omnipresence ahead.
Black holes in star systems are magnets, made heavy by the matter they have attracted, which can no longer escape. When we look at ourselves as a small cosmos, we quickly discover a black hole within ourselves: our ego. Its immense power of attraction paralyses everything in its sphere of influence, causing it to become a ‘lightless being’. The ego makes our life heavy, but we are able to illuminate it from within.

The black hole of the human being is his ego

All events and phenomena in our universe are determined by laws. These laws, like the law of the power of attraction, influence everything that exists. We can only observe their results, the effects they cause, and in this way, it is possible to study them. In this context, it is, for instance, remarkable that the influence of an object increases as it moves closer to the centre of the source of energy, regardless whether this concerns a visible or an invisible celestial body or an invisible source of energy: the closer an object approaches the source of energy, the stronger it is influenced or attracted.

A PHENOMENON FROM ASTROPHYSICS  This is why we should not be amazed that, when astrophysicists of the European observatory for the southern sky were able to show irregularities in the orbit of stars, the conclusion was drawn that there must be a ‘black hole’ with an immensely strong power of attraction. This black hole is located in the centre of our galaxy (Sagittarius A). Theories about black holes have been developed for decades. It was discovered that most large star systems have a super heavy black hole in their centre. Only in a small percentage of these systems, does the black hole absorb sufficient matter to cause a spectacular effect. Cygnus A is an example of this.

Although astrophysicists consider many theories already outdated, it is nevertheless assumed that most black holes are characterised by an unbelievable material density. The mass of a billion of suns can be compressed into them. In its turn, this leads to an enormous power of attraction. All objects in its vicinity are irresistibly drawn into the direction of the centre of gravity by it, becoming unimaginably hot and then disappearing into the black hole. Even light is subservient to these energies and is no longer able to spread. It disappears into the black hole forever.

The existence of such black holes, from which no light can escape, can only be detected by observing deviations in the orbits of the stars in its vicinity. These stars are, as it were, ‘cast out of their orbit’, ‘cast out of their centre’ by those tremendous forces.

It is still debated what will happen to those black holes and to their enormous amounts of energy. Some scientists assume that the black hole will dissolve during billions of years by processes, based on quantum mechanics. Others say that each black hole corresponds to a ‘sink hole’ of matter, a white hole, a source of matter of another universe.

AN INNER BLACK HOLE  Do such irregularities not sound familiar? Are these events not mirrored within us and in our outward life? If we profoundly analyse ourselves, we will also be able to locate a black hole in our own, small cosmos that attracts everything, that claims nature and fellow creatures, and that influences fellow human beings and puts them on the wrong track.

Even in a heated discussion, we may notice that a strong, centripetal power is working in us. Similar to the large cosmos, this must concern a mighty, concentrated energy. Its tremendous power of
The Greek philosopher, and immovable, enormously concentrated mass. An ego that devours everything, including the lead to a great paralysis of life in the microcosm, the original human being, from the ‘gravitational fall’ of the ego. Indeed, it is even more so, that a human being wholly changes and transfiguration, he tries to attract, preserve and make productive everything and all people, which appear useful to him. These are the fundamental properties of the ego.

He may also use the forces of altruism and neighbourly love for his own benefit, for even the ego experiences that life without those properties would be hell, particularly for others. These very efforts, so necessary in our cold world, show the deeply buried urge to be active for our own well-being, by shaping the world with our own morals, and by making countless others do our dirty work. He even tries to do so with the divine light powers, approaching him from the ‘gravitational fall’ of the ego. Indeed, it is even more so, that a human being wholly changes and transfiguring by this unearthly energy, and is enabled to lead a light-spread life.

That this is possible is only caused by the fact that the true Light, a power stream of a divine nature, makes the supreme sacrifice: it allows itself to be seized by the black hole in order subsequently to renew the whole human cosmos from within. Then the bound light is also liberated again and is enabled to pass on to its own domain, a cosmic field of great light. And the renewed human being, free from egocentricity, will, while he is transfiguring, be active in the world as a new, unearthly source of Light. What a gift! ☀

VOLUNTARY LIBERATION The possibility of allowing ourselves to be voluntarily pervaded and changed by the divine, creative energies from the spiritual nucleus would transform us as human beings into very active workers, involved in a tremendous process. We would learn to pass on what we have received. We would be standing in one ray of the divine love, which is cosmic. Instead of devouring everything like a black hole and allowing everything to become paralysed, we would begin to spread light, warmth and movement like a sun. By our presence alone, we would help people experience the ‘purpose of life’ again and our actions would then always work as an impulse, without our deliberately trying.

In this environment, the consciousness and the insight would awaken in us that what matters is the liberation of the divine nucleus in the microcosm, the original human being, from the ‘gravitational fall’ of the ego. Indeed, it is even more so, that a human being wholly changes and transfigures by this unearthly energy, and is enabled to lead a light-spread life.

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We have a name, a date of birth, a profession and thus provide ourselves with an identity. We know, however, that this does not necessarily mean that our name and profession explain our ‘essence’. They are attributes or aspects of our personality in the world, in society. The same is true of our physical properties like young, old, pretty, strong or attractive. Character traits like courageous, sensitive, musical, irascible or resigned and the like are certainly more decisive for our understanding of the self than the physical properties are. Depending on the situation, some property of our character is more prominent, often without our really wanting it to be. Often, we shake our heads about the results of the unbridled forces of the mind, which make themselves felt again against our will.

We call the totality ‘ego’. Can we be content with it?

There are people who are content with it. We would be, too, if we would not from time to time, more or less often and for longer periods of time, and if we listen properly, be aware of a nagging dissatisfaction that does not stop, although our finances, our looks and our mood are all right. One year follows after another, results and experiences fill our days, and often something fails; that is part of the deal. Then probably the question crops up: who is it that partly causes and partly experiences this whole whirling of events in the inevitable passage of time, in all events, in our rushing, in our pleasures and triumphs, in our possessing and losing? In this context, the word ‘ego’ sounds perhaps remarkably flat and inadequate. This part of the personality, which perceives many outer and inner states and is partially able to affect them, cannot be the definitive answer to this existential question, because our ego or consciousness is just as transitory or unreliable as all other ‘movements’ or states of mind of the soul. A sudden state of fear may cause us to tense up. Then we quite easily pick up the mood of a group, and join in. And where is our ego when we are asleep? It disappears! And after death? Because our ego is inseparably linked with our life fluids and our body, it does not survive the death of the body for very long. The question arises, where can the inner, unwavering basis of life be found, which makes us rightly say: ‘I am.’

GIVE ME A FIXED POINT The Greek philosopher, Archimedes, once said: ‘Give me a fixed point and I shall move the earth.’ Does such a fixed point exist? The New Testament calls this point the father. Jesus, the Christ, says: ‘The father and I are one.’ This refers to a state, for which we, if we take our question seriously, can only yearn with all our heart, because we do not know this ‘I’ that is mentioned here. Nevertheless, there is a basis in a human being, where this higher human being is able to develop.

In human beings, this point is found in the heart. No one ever explained this point, the
The labyrinth of our soul, in which the ego usually loses itself, develops, because our soul lacks a stable centre.

Every human being possesses something of this divine element; something of the deity burns in every person, the spirit-spark atom. It is the point that links us with divinity. This divine spark enables us to realise our longing and to elevate our current world, our being and our consciousness. When the fire is ignited, a path of development begins, which fundamentally transforms the outward human being and lets him wholly merge with his essence. Step by step, the earthly human being ascends into the surrender to this other one, the true human being, the prototype of the Divine human being. He breathes eternity, perfection, and is, as Jesus says, one with the father, the wellspring of everything created.

He who walks this path, will naturally pay less attention to his insignificant personal ego. He understands that his ego is something like one of the drops in the ocean, like the seeds of the plants that are spread over the earth by the spring breeze, and like the atoms, swirling through the worlds, sustaining whole star systems. The history of humanity, the earth and the universe merges in the human soul and waits until it is vivified by the creative impulse of the spirit-born one. This is why our self is a cosmos within itself and at the same time a living cell of the myriads of radiant worlds.

The labyrinth of our soul, in which the ego usually loses itself, develops, because our soul lacks a stable centre. The three power centres of our soul are the will, vitality and feeling, which only cooperate temporarily and partially. Often, the will takes the lead, and when the mind has then thought up sufficiently good arguments for an activity, the vitality has already gone up in smoke. Or our feelings and our mental insight are at cross-purposes. In this way, the ego is only able to lead the three horses in a certain direction in an exceptional situation. Everything that develops from this proliferation in the inner being necessarily remains improvisation and unstable.

The condition for a structured soul development is a personality that has, on the basis of longing and yearning, voluntarily turned to a lofty, inner guide. Only then are we able to begin trusting our observations; only then will we be able to recognise clearly, and therefore act in a meaningful way. The will to act, the mental insight into a situation and our power of empathy to forge links, work like a seismograph. Even subtle changes will fit in harmoniously.

In this equilateral triangle, we find a stable home on earth, in which we can live and work as long as this is necessary and useful. And while we are living, we work on an eternal house, because the lofty energies of the divine universe can circulate and work in a transfiguring way in the new structures that are active in the soul. All improvised projects may be pulled down, but a new, durable ensoulment will achieve creations that are imperishable.

This concerns supernatural powers that would like to manifest themselves in human beings, and which will show them the way of the stars.
the courage to know

Human thinking is a powerful instrument. He who truly thinks, is able to learn to know the world, himself and his divine descent, in order to achieve the thinking that leads to freedom.

Thoughts are free. Most people believe this or would like to believe this. The importance of thinking is unmistakable because, since the Enlightenment, people have occupied themselves with 'using their mind without the help of others' as Kant expressed it. It was said 'sapere aude', that is, have the courage to know, and therefore also to think. Because ideas from esoteric knowledge begin to gain a foothold in all fields of life, we try to practise positive thinking and also to think ourselves healthy. And those who have recognised egoism as a problem, also try to think more of others. This means, amongst other things, that we gradually become aware of the power of thinking.

THE MEANING OF THINKING
However, what is the meaning of thinking in the light of the universal teachings? It is the instrument of the original human being, through which we have a notion of the divine idea. By thinking, the human being should gradually gain insight into God, nature and himself. He would gradually fathom the tremendous matrix, the original idea, underlying creation and his existence, and he would to the same extent become a co-builder and co-creator in the divine nature. ‘Man, know thyself’, the motto that every visitor saw above the entrance to the temple of Apollo in Delphi, in ancient Greece, primarily calls us to know ourselves. It also means: he who knows himself, knows the universe. Therefore, this does not only concern knowledge of the material world, but also concerns recognising the essence of soul and spirit.

This implies the commandment to know ourselves as stemming from a fallen world, and also to see the original human being as a potential. If a human being knows the higher aspects of his system, he should be enabled to concentrate on it in freedom.

THE TRACE OF FREE THINKING
Traces of free thinking stand out in the history of humanity. All gnostic brotherhoods concentrated on this thinking, on the notion of a higher reality. At the beginning of our era, Christianity had already granted humanity the possibility of realising a new development of the soul through liberated thinking. Christ wanted not only the faith of the human being, he also made an effort to be understood, so that people would be able truly to follow him. It begins with faith, but the song of songs of love says: ‘For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.’ Faith is being touched in the heart. Hope is the beginning of a new thinking, a new consciousness that sees the good end of the path, and enables the surrender to the inner Christ. Finally, love is the union with him. However, it is the nature of our existence that the leading powers time and again opposed and continue to oppose this path of free thinking. Free thinking leads to becoming conscious of what is eternal in a human being and to the liberation from any ties to matter. The Cathars, active at the end of the Middle Ages in
The preremembrance ultimately leads the seeking human being to the insight that the ego is not the true essence. By this insight, heart and head become silent.

Occitania, created a pure atmosphere, in which their pupils intuitively grasped the birth of a new soul and could experience it in self-surrender. The core of their teachings was focused on the immersion into the new powers, from which a new consciousness was born, through which the soul human being was able to express himself. Because it was impossible to corrupt them, this atmosphere of purity and freedom was destroyed by the inquisition.

**Collective Thinking** Collective thinking evokes an equally strong resistance against the freedom of individual thinking. Collective thinking encompasses all people and lives through their thoughts. It is a time-space, world-encompassing powerfield that is unable to assimilate thoughts from eternity permanently. As history shows, it always exercises a great resistance against any new, even earthly ideas. New ideas are fought, until they have become common property, until they have been part of the collective thinking for so long that they have become a self-evident reality. With regard to our ideas about eternity, however, this means that always only a fraction of the actual ideas penetrate so far that they can become common property. What is then nevertheless generally accepted, is always wholly one with the time-space reality. Christian holidays like Christmas and Easter have a profound origin and can be interpreted on several levels, which most people have forgotten. In family circles, an original impulse is sometimes surmised; but only few people will have a conscious link with it.

**Dogmas and Ideologies** The twentieth century experienced an abundance of dogmas and ideologies. Socialism, communism, capitalism and fundamentalist expressions of the world religions have kept countless people captivated. These systems have not yet wholly disappeared from the world stage, but their grip seems to diminish. Was the way cleared for new thinking at the end of the ideologies? In the western hemisphere, apparently no longer is anything put in the way of free thinking. Instead of government-imposed, compulsory, uniform thinking, subtler methods bind people to desires and to wanting to have things. These are ordinary phenomena in a bi-polar world, in which there will always be friend and foe, attraction and rejection. However, he who wants to penetrate to a new, free thinking, should try to leave these ties behind.

**Esoteric Thinking** It is not only the psychologists who have realised how our thinking determines our perception of the world and our well-being. It is also those occupied with esoteric ideas who have better understood the significance of thinking. When we think, the astral body lights up and our longing is stimulated, resulting in a corresponding concentration of vital forces, in an activity. On the basis of this insight, the desire is evoked to think oneself healthy. People try to dissociate from old patterns of thinking and negative attitudes with regard to expectations. An attempt is made to break through cycles of ever-recurring negative experiences. However, in this context, the rule is often overlooked that our conscious thoughts are only the top of the iceberg. The subconscious also controls our being. The same is true with regard to so-called positive thinking: we are absolutely able to think and desire positive things. But who knows all the undercurrents, which he emanates by his positive thoughts? And who knows if what is positive for him, does not have negative consequences for others? Our thinking does not only set ourselves in motion. Our thoughts traverse our whole field of life, seeking an echo, a response. Inevitably, it returns to the true state of him who emanates the thoughts. Under certain circumstances, this does not at all correspond to his conscious desires and thoughts.

**Have the Courage to Know** Due to all of this, we learn that good and evil are inseparably linked in us as well as in the world. However, we still have to think, desire and act. The experiences, along with the results of the good for which we were striving, led in the best of cases to our becoming aware of our limitations in this respect. Dare to know! The door to becoming conscious of the divine human being is opened to anyone who daily accepts this new, inner knowledge. This occurs when the preremembrance of the spirit spark, the true self, is active in the human being. The preremembrance leads the human being to self-knowledge, to the insight that the ego is not the true essence of man. By this insight, heart and head become silent. They pass a zero point and experience a reversal. The I-directed human being, who feels his limitations unmasked by preremembrance, makes some room for the other one, who approaches. The heart is ignited again and the head illuminated. A new soul is born and its garment is the new, free thinking.

This thinking concentrates on the restoration of the divine microcosm. His higher consciousness simultaneously enables the human being to follow other paths in the world. Then he is able to pass on the flame of his thinking to those who open themselves to it.

Landscape 27 July 2008, Jerry Högnäs
Any religion is a path to God. With these and similar words, people who have shaken off the chains of the dogmatic, orthodox faith, usually emphasise their tolerance concerning the various religious movements and groups. But is this statement valid? To find an answer to this question it is useful to consider what religion actually is and to separate this essence from any misunderstanding and wrong interpretation.

**NATURE RELIGION** We are able to imagine a distinction between nature and spiritual religions. In all its forms, nature religions correspond to a biological human need. As a mortal personality, a human being would, for instance, like to achieve immortal life on yonder side. However, because a human being has also been born in this nature, he experiences time and again his dependence on the dark violence of fate and nature, by which he is threatened and which fills him with fear. In his helplessness, he seeks refuge with powers that give or promise him protection and security, and which will help him to better deal with his problems. He worships gods and spirits, makes sacrifices to them or tries to influence them, and therefore also his fate, by magical rituals. This does not only concern averting a direct threat, but with the help of heaven, he would also like to fulfil personal wishes and to achieve goals that often extend beyond death. 'Every human being projects himself in the future, in a revised edition, on the basis of a religious, occult or humanistic prototype,' says J van Rijckenborgh, and consequently, we may see all three types as forms of nature religion.

**SPIRITUAL RELIGION** What has been explained above with a few sentences, therefore concerns one side of human religiosity, namely the side whose needs depend on people. However, the second and ultimately decisive motive of religion is to be found on the level that is fundamentally distinguished from mere survival. This concerns the spiritual religion. Buried deeply in our inner being, the knowledge lives that we, human beings, are fallen beings, and that we are only a caricature of what we once were as divine creatures, in the likeness of God. But as a golden glow of hope, the suspicion dawns in us that it should, in principle, be possible to regain the lost perfection. That might be the actual purpose of our life: returning to the divine house of our Father as the prodigal son from the Gospel. Or rather: the divine element in us returning to its divine home. Originally, the way was shown by any truly spiritual religion, but over time, these true religions increasingly mixed with the nature religions. How was this possible?

**MIXTURE OF BOTH TYPES OF RELIGION** We, human beings, are bearing both in us: the biological, matter-bound nature principle, filled with the drive to self-maintenance as well as, simultaneously, a divine, eternal principle that fills us with restlessness and longing, driving us to return to the divine structures of the unknown kingdom. However, time and again the urge to self-maintenance runs off with the powers of eternity. The 'I' wants to immortalise itself and tries to do so with the help of the mighty energies stemming from eternity. This is how the original spiritual religions became dogmatic systems, subservient to the ego. The task of the spiritual religion of linking the human being with God again – after all, religio means reconnect – watered down, changed and was falsified. It was replaced by the human striving to make his earthly existence firm and solid and improve it with the help of religion. The lofty, spiritual teachings, filled with power and Light, degener-
ated to the level of the nature religions. In this way, religion was also able to become an instrument in the hands of the rulers. They cleverly took advantage of the need for certainty and the desire for immortality. Slavery and serfdom disappeared, but the ‘faithful’ were excellent material for a new form of slavery.

MYSTERY SCHOOLS Throughout time, mystery schools have been the keepers of the pure, spiritual religion. These schools can only manifest themselves where truly devoted souls and seeking people unite with great longing. In the silence of the holy places, their inner teachings showed their pupils the way, leading to the ‘freedom of the children of God’. Spiritual religion is a path of insight, of overcoming the world and of breaking up the illusion of the I. It is a way leading to the genesis of the new man. One characteristic of this yearning is that our own efforts are indispensable, although we also know that the mysteries of the soul cannot be achieved through our own efforts. We will only find them by the liberating power of the Christ atmosphere, a liberating energy that is active in mystery schools in a very particular way. It demands an always new, conscious surrender to the one, hidden wellspring of life. Moreover, a clear willingness is needed to recognise something of the fallen divine human being in our own being, and to dissociate from what might prove to be a hindrance ‘on the path of rebirth of water and the spirit’, as the Gospel of John says. Therefore, truly religious consciousness can always be recognised by the fact that a person is truly prepared to relinquish his own nature, to dissociate from his egocentricity and to entrust himself unconditionally to ‘a stream’ that will carry him further out of the world of darkness into the light of eternity. Any other motivation is open or veiled self-interest. Do we want to walk the path of a liberating, spiritual religion or do we still hold on to a nature religion, which wants to use spiritual religion for its own purposes? In this way, religions can be judged by the extent to which they open the path to the light of the other realm, to eternity, to seeking human beings.

everything transient is only a parable
Just as layers of ice turn into glaciers, something similar happens to the experiences of past incarnations in our microcosm. Like snow and ice, they are stored in the human system, after which they shift as glaciers onto the shores of the present. A human child is born, a human being, endowed with the possibility of seeking a way out, because a spiritual principle is active in a human being.

In our thoughts, we go up north, to Greenland. A large ice floe bumps against the coast. With a moaning, groaning sound, a glacier gives way and then the enormous wall of ice breaks away, crunching as in slow motion. Gurgling, the blue giant sinks into the leaden sea and rises up again, rigidly turning around in order to occupy its place in the procession of the enormous flos of ice along Greenland’s coast.

Only one seventh of the iceberg lies above the water’s surface. The rest, submerged and virtually invisible, has the most diverse, bizarre shapes. Therefore, icebergs are very unstable structures. The Inuit, the people living near the North Pole, know this. The seal hunters in their kayaks avoid coming close to these giants, because the slightest movement, like dipping a paddle into the water, may cause such a giant to burst asunder or to topple over. When such a block of ice turns like an ice cube in a glass, enormous waves develop that are able to topple any vessel.

Just as ancient snow and layers of ice on the coast turn into glaciers, which time and again give way, this also happens to the sediments of the results, experiences, tensions and unsatisfied desires of past incarnations in our microcosm. Like snow and ice, they have, throughout the ages, been stored in the human system, layer after layer, after which they shift like glaciers onto the shores of the present. One day, this glacier will give way. Then a new human being will detach from the great karmic stream with a birth cry. At the moment of birth, the newborn one will be cut off from the experiences of thousands of years. He loses the memory of his past. And yet, all these experiences are active in him.

Then the ‘iceberg’ begins its journey through the sea of this life, until it is involuntarily absorbed by the sea. There it becomes part of the water, after which it is pulled up by the sun, and ultimately falls back onto the original glacier as snow, later turning into ice. Only a small part of the crumbled iceberg is visible, like the ego, which is more or less conscious of his self. However, the submerged part, the unknown shape, the subconscious, determines the stability of the human being, his behaviour.

Near an iceberg, the Inuit even refrain from speaking a single word, ‘because the ice takes revenge, if its silence is disturbed’. We all know how often the smallest word is able to destroy our silence, our rest. Our self-assurance and conceit appear to be only sham silences. We are living in an unstable equilibrium. If this equilibrium is disturbed, we cause great problems for ourselves and for others.

Are we aware of what an inappropriate word is able to bring about? How often do we not make an unconscious remark that hurts someone else terribly? And in this respect, we may be painfully hurt ourselves, too. Then we experience this like the toppling or bursting apart of our ‘iceberg’. Do we therefore allow ourselves to be dragged along in the sea of life, unconsciously and continually worrying about our unstable, inner and outer equilibrium? Or do we finally attempt ‘to experience things profoundly and consciously’?

We put our allegory of glaciers and icebergs aside for a moment, because this image is no longer adequate for the tasks which the human being is able to accomplish as a conscious being. We are able, in contrast to the iceberg, to recognise ourselves, analyse our situation and seek a way out. The reason is that a dimension works in us that does not stem from this nature, a spiritual principle! This principle enables us to rise above the forces that keep us bound in this nature. It enables us to become free from the law of reincarnation and the karma, which drives every personality, with his conscious and his unconscious ego, through life, until it is dissolved by death again. This is possible! We are able to entrust ourselves to the high spiritual energy of this principle, which is a power that wholly encompasses us like the iceberg is surrounded by the sea. This happens at the moment that we understand the hopelessness of these natural laws and that we, thinking and acting on our own, no longer make any progress.

Then a new stage in our life begins: focused on this energy, we receive, for example in the power-field of a spiritual school, the necessary warmth to cause our iceberg to melt, consciously and voluntarily. In the warming rays of the divine love, the coldness and the rigidity of the ego and the subconscious, in which the experiences of thousands of years play a role, no longer hold their sway over us.
nirvana: the highest void and wellspring of life

Hardly any concept is so misunderstood as nirvana. It is considered the extinction of everything that exists, but it is the opposite: the human being, whose old ego submerges into nirvana, will certainly find the wellspring of life there. He allows the original energy to be active in him.

In many teachings of wisdom, the concept of an empty space appears. In Buddhism, one often speaks of, amongst other things, nirvana (literally: extinction of the notion of a separate existence). Also in Taoism, in the Egyptian wisdom and in the original Christian teachings, the importance of people on a spiritual path becoming empty is explained. What do becoming empty and an empty space mean in the context of walking a spiritual path?

Jesus’ statement ‘My kingdom is not of this world’ provides a key for understanding this. Generally speaking, a human being is filled with the things of this world; his consciousness, thinking and feeling form a varied and unique potpourri. His observations, desires and fears, his considerations about all kinds of contingencies and the thousands of external things, which daily wash over him, often do not leave room for anything of this other kingdom to be experienced. This is why he is wholly one with the transient world. Then the other realm, the kingdom not of this world, does not exist for him. Now it is understandable that, if a person does not create room within himself and does not become empty with regard to the matters of this world, he will not experience the kingdom of God. The first step to becoming empty with regard to our dependence on transient nature is to step into the silence. In the Daodejing, it is said: Before heaven and earth existed, there was an indefinite being. How peaceful and calm. How incorporeal. It stands alone, by itself, and does not change. It pervades everything, and yet is not endangered. It may be called the Mother of everything beneath the heavens. In the silence and the empty space of this nature, the primordial basis of the universe is experienced: unassailable and formless. The rose of the heart links every human being with the divine field of life, so that he is able to experience in silence that he is inseparably linked with this field of being, a field that goes back to the origin of all creation. If we are prepared to do so, we learn to trust what is formless, ‘the Mother of everything beneath the heavens’. This is trusting the primordial principle of everything that exists and that we are unable to fathom with the human consciousness. To us, people of a transient nature, the step into the empty space of a transient nature is not easy, because only a human being who combines intelligence with self-surrender, will succeed in experiencing nirvana, in which the perishable is extinguished and simultaneously the imperishable develops.

UNEASINESS At the beginning of this path, we will notice that the voice of the silence would like to make itself heard in us from time to time, not only as sound, of course, but as elevation, anxiety, uneasiness, astonishment, or as a feeling of peace that overcomes any resistance. If we are honest with ourselves, we will ascertain that we are absolutely unable to respond to this turbulence or to make it part of our life. We actually have no power over it, and we get the feeling that we are certainly not worthy of it anyway. Yet, we increasingly learn to be open to the other ‘genesis’ developing in us. We are also bound to investigate all powers and insights approaching us on this path. Seeking (the atmosphere of) the silence is a great help in this context. From the point of view of this nature, the empty space indeed seems to be a void. This might evoke anxiety. However, it we have the courage to enter this empty space, guided by our spiritual longing, we will experience that the empty space of this nature actually means a fullness, the absolute, from which everything that is relative receives meaning. Lao Zi says about this: The thirty spokes of a wheel unite around the hub, but only because of its empty space is it of use. The vase has been moulded from clay, but only because of its empty...
From the darkness to the Light; the journey to the absolute everything

space is it of use. Doors and windows are made for the benefit of the house under construction, but only because of its empty space is it of use. Therefore: being, that which is material, has its merits, but true usefulness depends on not-being, on what is immaterial.

The eleventh verse explains in symbolic language that it is the empty space that makes things useful. The hub in the centre of the wheel, in which the axis revolves, enables movement. The whole of creation is kept in motion by the empty space in its centre. Through the empty space in the centre, the divine energies flow in. Creation and human being are only truly alive when they consciously bear this empty space within them. In this sense, the doors and windows of the room are the opposite of the openness of the formless origin.

Form and formlessness have a purpose: when we bring them into harmony by walking the path, we experience the meaning and the usefulness of both. The laws of life of this world become our friends when we are open to the still formless other one. Rising, shining and fading lose their dominant power. The form aspect still controls things, but the human being, who concentrates on and surrenders to the space that is still empty to him,subjects himself to another law, the law of the original kingdom.

The Buddha says: ‘Friends, the highest bliss is this nirvana.’ The apparent emptiness is the house of imperishable peace, love and wisdom. From the empty space that makes the ego fearful, the ‘highest emptiness’, perfection, develops.

In this way, we walk a path of becoming empty, the path to nirvana. The more room for the original energy we create in the silence, the less the matters of this world will affect us in a compelling way. We understand that our old being is affected by our lack of consciousness and that we are a plaything of the forces within perishable nature.

We unmask them! They are a sham, and because the other, divine aspect simultaneously awakens in us, this will lead us to nirvana, to extinction.

MISUNDERSTOOD  Hardly any concept is so misunderstood as nirvana. It was considered the extinction of everything that exists, and it was believed that Buddhism was going up into the absolute nothingness. However, nirvana is only empty to the consciousness of the form-bound human being. On the contrary, the human being, whose old being submerges into nirvana, will find the wellspring of life there. To him, the form of all things is empty, if there is no longer a link with what is absolute, his origin. The illusion, ‘maya’, stops, when the human being, whose true being awakens, enters nirvana.

‘Extinguishing’ in the sense of the oriental teachings of wisdom may be compared to the endura of the Cathar brotherhood and of the
from science fiction to reality

A journey around the world in eighty days, or a journey to the moon. It is not that long ago that such journeys were pure science fiction. In the development over time, humanity is faced with tremendous changes. The influences of Aquarius will manifest themselves, and it is still to be seen, whether predictions are really that imaginary.

A ccording to human standards unimaginaryly long ago, the male-female, heavenly human being generated seven subtypes, seven main races, as the universal teachings explain. These seven main races not only populated the earth, but also the solar system and the whole universe. During the subsequent processes, divine humanity was gradually bound to its own creation and creatures. By amongst other things, the separation of the sexes, ultimately the current human situation developed.

During the nineteenth, but particularly during the beginning of the twentieth century, quite a number of books were published in the field of science fiction. They often describe adventures of people in space, in the future, or in an impossible kind of journey of discovery. People were open to it, and to many people, these were appealing fantastic stories, echoes from a distant past. The better authors of science fiction drew their inspiration from the densifying astral and ethereal spheres. They wrote about activities, which opened up new horizons and were even revolutionary. Sometimes they had an open eye for a higher stage of human development or a path of evolution. They anticipated future developments in the etheric-material field and were linked with more than one reality.

Many of those stories stemmed from the new world, which is nowadays called the United States. Who did not read, for example, the books by the Frenchman Jules Verne, like From the Earth to the Moon, Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea, Journey to the Centre of the Earth and many others?

UNLIKELY Nowadays, many of these fantastic stories appear to be much less unrealistic than when they were first written. Much of what was then still unimaginable has now become reality and has descended into the material sphere. And who knows, if this is in its turn not the springboard to make what now still seems unlikely a part of our reality. After all, frontiers have increasingly to be shifted and broken through. To outsiders, J van Rijckenborgh might to a certain extent also have been such a person. Didn’t he also write about absolutely other, future developments, and about rather exceptional facts, explained in minute detail, which were as yet unimaginable for the current ideas? In his view, the sciences would at a certain moment prove his statements, and this is what we now see.

Obviously, all of this depends on our own consciousness and also on the level of the underlying science. Is what can be demonstrated in matter, based on purely empirical results which are subsequently further developed, our point of departure, with the risk of continuously running after the facts, while our own mind does not play any role? Or does a wholly different, higher science underlie all of this, namely a science that is not experimental or that cannot be checked by what we have thought up ourselves, but which is nourished from other sources? Decisive is the astral field from which we draw. The variations within this field are very large.

current Rosicrucians. During this process, the form-bound being declines and the spirit-soul human being wakes up. It is the path on which we learn how the energies of the kingdom can work through us. This is the profound meaning of a verse from the Daodejing: I do not act and the people will change; I love rest and the people become rich; I do not have desires and the people return to their original nature.

Activity Perhaps we were somewhat amazed that we became silent and experienced the activity of our liberating, inner forces. It strikes us that we let go of things, which our ‘I’ would never have been able to do. During this process of letting go, an all-embracing love simultaneously flows into the human being, like an energy that sustains everything. Yet, the source of this change remains forever invisible. From the empty space that frightens the ego, the ‘highest void’, perfection, develops.

The person in whom the ‘highest void’ is in this way activated again as primordial spiritual principle, does not withdraw from his environment. He works and acts, but is no longer ‘the person who is controlled by the form’. He allows the original energy to work in him and knows that he does not act as a nature-born human being. Only in this way, can the original power, which is the same for everyone, be active through the personality and awaken the memory of the eternal origin in other people. This is why the Daodejing says: ‘I do not act and the people will change.’ The eternal origin releases and liberates the possibility of change in others. ‘I love rest and the people become honest.’ What should a human being, into whom the rest of the link with the eternal origin has entered, pursue? By virtue of his true essence, he is one with all, and he stimulates this insight in other people. ‘I do not have desires and the people return to their original nature.’ Initially, the return to the original nature is incomprehensible to the human being of this nature. However, if he seeks the silence, he creates inner room that can be filled by the voice of the silence, the voice of eternity, resounding in the human heart and thus being able to transmit its energy. The human consciousness opens to what is unlimited. He knows that he is linked with the Light and the power of eternity, and he sees the return to this Light ever more clearly as his goal. He experiences something of the ‘highest void’, the primordial basis, from which all Light, power and being stem.

He who knows the ‘highest void’, is someone who ploughs the field of matter in order to liberate the spirit from it. The way produces life. Virtue educates, develops, cares, provides refuge, heals, nourishes and protects. Gives birth without possessing, acts without imposing demands, allows to grow without checking. This is the original virtue.
A renewing power is poured out over the solar body, and therefore over the world and humanity

but provided that they concern sources within the time-spatial universe, the results will testify to this. However, some people testify to a certain induction from another, much more subtle, and probably higher, universe. In our Spiritual School, we speak of a Living Body, a scintillating field of energy with a Gnostic inspiration and with another type of consciousness, linked with a realm of higher soul life.

AQUARIUS Throughout time, humanity has been inspired by various teachings of wisdom, particularly by the stories about heaven, from which the soul purportedly stems. The star systems and their influences have always played an important part in them. During the last decades, people increasingly speak about Aquarius and its influences. A renewing power is poured out over the solar body, and therefore over the world and humanity. A stellar year lasts about 26,000 years, divided into twelve periods of 2,160 years. However, with regard to the activity of a certain astronomical period, time is not the decisive factor, but rather the flow of energy with a certain tensile curve. The law of dialectics is rising, shining and fading. During the past centuries, the tensile curve of the Age of Pisces as a whole has diminished, first gradually, but later ever more strongly, sometimes rapidly, sometimes seemingly stopping, sometimes in leaps. During the initial decrease of a certain period, the beginning of the next ascents presents itself. In this way, the tensile curve of Aquarius already announced its influences centuries ago.

Although the Age of Pisces, seen in a time-spatial context, still has to continue for a period of almost two human life spans, its influence is almost finished. Although humanity will still pass through the necessary convulsions in various fields, new values like unity, openness, truth and justice will become clearer and almost daily gain power in our field. And how often has the era, currently approaching its end and interpreted as the end of the world, not been announced by various groups? However, at a certain moment in the near future, the radiation intensity of the increasingly powerful influence of Aquarius will definitely be stronger than the decreasing influence of the Age of Pisces. This moment in time, which will occur in this century, will be essential. Seen in time and space, there is still a relatively short period of transition, to which some civilisations already testified thousands of years ago and which they announced in calculations or magnificent buildings. Who does not know or has not heard of, for instance, the calendar of the great pyramid and that of the nowadays often-quoted Maya calendar? On their basis, it seems that between 2001 and 2012 a concrete start will be made to pull up the veils, darkening our power of distinction. Quite a few people, within and outside the Spiritual School, surmise or think that in the middle of the previous century, J van Rijckenborgh must have been mistaken with regard to 2001 ~2012 as 2012 was not yet quite in the picture at the time. However, this certainly need not be the case.

Apart from all, currently published, speculative nonsense about stories of and about Indians, it was already predicted thousands of years ago that no day would ever be the same after 21 December 2012. Perhaps you think, and who knows rightly so, that this is also rather speculative. Perhaps you think: shortly, time will show. By the way, these kinds of changes in time depend on many factors. However, perhaps a very careful, more or less veiled discourse and explanation may provide more insight or clarity.

MAYA A few facts. The fact that the tribes of both the Mexican Yucatan and Guatemala are currently known under the name Mayas, is purely the result of injudicious naming by the Spanish. They have nothing to do with predictive calendars. The original Maya, or rather the Mayab, came from across the tops of the Andes, a symbolic but not less proper hint to another kingdom. This is an approach from quite a different time and of quite a different consciousness. The name ‘Maya’ or ‘Mayab’ means the individ-
After alternately having been destroyed twice by fire and twice by water, now the fifth transition will follow, by fire and twice by water, which the spiritual forces are manifested in a universal or the few. It was in a time that the gods, as our philosophy also points out, lived among the people and worked for and later with humanity. They were the great ones who, proclaiming this wisdom and these teachings in the days of the distant past, predicted that the world would perish by fire around this time, or at least, would experience a transition. After alternately having been destroyed twice by fire and twice by water, as several stories about the genesis of humanity relate, now the fifth transition will follow, by fire, at least its beginning. However, this transition and ascent of humanity will not be automatic, at least according to the original Maya, but this will depend on the human consciousness, that is, it will depend on the extent to which the consciousness will be able to express a higher spiritual power.

Everything manifested can be traced back to many gradations of energy. In this respect, the official sciences restrict themselves to the external universe, although here, too, a change seems to be approaching. Esotericists base their considerations on the existence of more than one universe, which constitute the driving powers behind the external one. The cosmology and the philosophy of the Rosicrucians speak of seven universes of which the spiritual forces are manifested in a centrifugal way. ‘The inside’ manifests and expresses itself in the outside by stages. This means that, amongst other things, in the continuously progressing course of development, a high, energetic power of another dimension pervades and affects the current atomic structure in the currently rapidly approaching Age of Aquarius. Or perhaps we should rather say ‘manifests itself from within on the etheric level’ instead of ‘pervades and affects’. And similarly, the fifth property or function of the atom becomes active in time.

We see this released, fifth energy as an electrical energy or fire ether, in addition to the four, more familiar ether states: the chemical ether, the life ether, the light ether and the mental ether. It is a manifestation, to which many ancient writings, amongst which is the Bible, refer as ‘fire’, and about which we often speak in our circle. In our time, its power is increasing again. However, this fifth power of the atom is no longer a material power, although it colours and determines the material structure of the atoms and might even be its bearer, albeit in a transmuted form. This does not occur automatically, because particularly the natural astral forces in the material domain and in human behaviour are still in charge. They concretely determine our whole life. We react to them by a wide range of feelings and emotions. In their turn, our thoughts react to them, from which all kinds of actions result, to which we react again, etcetera.

**FIERY POWER**  
In this jumble, suddenly this new fiery power appears, to which we sometimes refer as the soul ether, as the bearer of the soul, the new soul that is. By cosmic developments, these and other powers are very strongly combined and activated in our atmosphere. Many veils will still be removed during this process, while people will be confronted with planetary changes of all sorts. They demand our active and particularly positive reaction to the newly ensuing factor. We may experience it as a blessing and help to raise the world and humanity to a higher level. It is not without reason that there is a Spiritual School in our time, an instrument of the brotherhood that is always used at crucial moments in world history. Such schools have an essential task. Its participants are able to act as workers for this Brotherhood of the Light.

It is often said that Aquarius will facilitate everything, particularly unity, openness, freedom and equality. But is this really true? Is this expression of Aquarius not merely a shadow of the underlying, driving, intercosmic, true spiritual power from the pitcher with Living Water? Is not this power driving the consciousness of the human being, who is susceptible and matured to it, to a higher level?

In the coming times, no longer what is material, but what is etheric will be emphasised. The etheric human being is the human being of the future. And our consciousness will be faced with the task of gradually developing in that direction. Change of consciousness is changed etheric activity.

When we speak of the fire ether, we are now able to see this in our mind as the mentioned fifth manifestation of the atom, which is no longer material. To us, it is the building material of the new soul. What to many people still looks like scientific fiction, is then transformed into scientific reality.

**NEW DIMENSION**  
What matters in a spiritual school is nothing less than this reality of the new man. Therefore, we should gain pure insight into a new dimension, in which a wholly new soul life is moving. In such a truly new world order, freedom and equality are then the logical consequences for the soul human being. It could not be otherwise. The result of this development for the current materialistic worldview is also subject to many changes. The following may serve as a simple example.

Due to the positive nature of the female ethereal body, women will come more to the fore, stimulated by the changing atmospheric forces. In a relatively short time, this has caused quite a few social shifts. In a number of Western countries, 60% of women are working in a managerial position. And this number will further increase in the future. It is therefore essential that women, now that they are sailing with the wind, are able to imagine and realise their great calling as ‘Eve’, that is, ‘mother of the living souls’ and prototype of the original soul human being as to its female manifestation. Catharose de Petri says about this in The Living Word: ‘Without the priestesses in the process of ascent, there can be no harvest of liberated souls.’ And about the spiritual communities from the past, she says that the success of the Siddha, the Essenes, the Manichaens and the Cathars was due to the female members of these orders. Men have a drive to manifestation in a universal...
sense, but this can only be accomplished through the activity of the universal love of women. This is why good cooperation of both within a Spiritual School is not only self-evident, but is even essential.

The human consciousness depends on the ethers that fill the seven brain cavities. Are they ether values of this nature or holy ethers? In other words, do they express a purely biological consciousness or a developing spirit-soul consciousness?

What therefore matters is how and on what basis we act and live. Look diligently around you, but above all within and at yourself. The path of the soul leads to eternity, the path of the personality to what is finite. A choice does not seem to be difficult, but how does this work out in practice?

**LIVING SPACE** The atmosphere will increasingly be determined by ether activity, resulting in the process of human respiration beginning to change. It becomes more conductive and magnetic. Instead of only air through the lungs, we additionally and above all increasingly inhale pure ethers, needed for our conscious progress and ascent.

The living space is changing, becoming different and therefore more compelling.

This is why it is said that the world will be destroyed by fire, that is, by fire ether. The human being, who does not have the same vibration, will literally be gasping for breath. All living space will be filled with the activity of the pure, higher ethers.

The fifth ether is the soul ether, the bearer of the soul body. The sixth ether enables the soul body to raise itself consciously into the new field of life. The seventh ether ensures that the soul body wholly liberates itself from all earthly bonds.

Ours is a period that the esoteric researchers saw predicted in the Cheops pyramid. The Bible calls such a period the millennium. This expression refers to a period of humanity, in which all who are etherically eligible for it, will leave this material world and are pulled up into the dawn of the resurrection, into another, a New Kingdom. They are pulled up into another sphere, the next sphere of our sevenfold earthly chain. Any fiction has then gone up into reality, and the spirit-soul human being will be able to continue to walk the path of evolution.

It is a magnetic process, the result of a sustained, other mode of life, based on purifying, sanctifying ether values. It is a process for people who go up into self-surrender on the basis of a pure heart and a truly positive longing for liberating light and life, a truly pioneering ascent.