

PENTAGRAM

LIES ARE DECEPTIVE

Lies rule, one might think.
Whoever searches
for inner life, however,
will not let himself be stopped
by the deceitfulness of
this world.

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REBIRTH AND ITS PRACTICAL ASPECTS

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For the serious seeker there is perhaps no problem more acute than the problem: 'How must I go the path that leads to the new life field?' We can never think and talk enough about this problem of rebirth. Eventually the psychological moment arrives at which the seeker is tired of all philosophy. All he then still wants to know is how he in his personal life, in the midst of his specific circumstances, can go the path leading to the new life field, the path of Christian Rosycross.

In the Spiritual School, based on the Christ power, firsthand knowledge is a condition for second-hand knowledge. For many this is a completely new point of view. It is generally thought that one needs to have studied the philosophy of the Rosicrucians for years (i.e. second-hand knowledge, passed on by the School) before firsthand knowledge becomes possible for a chosen few. We need to dissociate ourselves from this mystification as quickly as possible. For what is really the case? The Spiritual School indeed knows the concept of firsthand and second-hand knowledge. But firsthand knowledge is direct, personally acquired knowledge, while second-hand knowledge is transmitted by word of mouth, in writing, or by reading in the reflecting ether of the power field of the School. The latter is ac-

tually a kind of transition to firsthand knowledge, but remains second-hand nevertheless.

FIRSTHAND KNOWLEDGE DOES NOT COME WITH EXPERIENCE

Somehow the thought has become established that firsthand knowledge can only be achieved after a certain level of initiation or progress has been reached. Yet, nothing is further from the truth. It is true that firsthand knowledge of the mysteries cannot be reached without thorough preparation and without progress on the path, but all of that does not mean that the youngest, newly starting pupil cannot already possess firsthand knowledge. It is not so, that a newly starting pupil at first depends on the second-hand knowledge passed on to him by his teachers. All second-hand knowledge of the School is utterly useless, if it is not preceded by firsthand knowledge. In the Mystery School, firsthand knowledge is not based on experience in a dialectical sense. In a dialectical sense, knowledge based on experience is always the outcome of experiments, of which the results are uncertain. In the Spiritual School, firsthand knowledge is not the result of experiments, but of *enlightenment*.

Supposing that a seeker enters the School: where would he begin? In every other esoteric group he would have to begin with second-hand instruction, in

the hope of obtaining firsthand knowledge at a later stage by means of exercises. In the Spiritual School it is the other way around. The seeker or pupil bases himself on firsthand knowledge or enlightenment, before second-hand knowledge can be imparted to him. The enlightenment of a seeker who has just begun we call *memory*, or pre-memory of what once was. And whoever does not have this memory, does not belong in the Spiritual School.

For, in that case, he cannot benefit from any second-hand knowledge the School may pass on to him by oral or written means.

THE SWORD OF PRE-MEMORY

That is why pre-memory forms the basis for any second-hand knowledge transmitted by the School. If he has this memory and joins the School, then the

Golden sphere in a circle symbolising rebirth. Cyprus. Photo Pentagram.

And what use is having the means to go the path, when you do not know where the path lies!

It has no use at all, does it? Hence, the seeker or beginning pupil first of all needs to know his own path through private revelation, before he can benefit from collective revelation. In other words, he needs to know where his private road through life leads him, to the extent that he wants to place himself at the service of the light.

THREE ASPECTS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE

How can he discover this? Only through firsthand knowledge, without anything being passed on, through what we call 'the Holy Spirit'. The spiritual path has three aspects, none of which should be neglected. They are:

1. prayer,
2. joining,
3. instruction.

In other words, the seeker who wants to be liberated from this world and wants to enter through the gate must join and receive instruction. But that is not enough. He also needs to pray and learn to bend his knees. Whoever does not pray and does not bend his knees – do not take this in a churchgoing sense – whoever does not open himself up in humility, receives no new enlightenment, no new firsthand knowledge, apart from the pre-memory he already had, even if he follows all courses of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum for twenty years.

We must pray and implore, we must kneel. We need to pray, at least if we are consumed by fear that it might not already be too late to begin to understand. The fire human being, Cain, does not like to pray, to supplicate and to kneel, for he imagines himself king. But he is insane. He wants to gather knowledge and to perform acts, but his illness

School will supply him with second-hand knowledge concerning the path of Light. Expansion of firsthand knowledge then becomes important: *'Pre-memory's sword now penetrates my whole being'*. Does this happen through the second-hand knowledge of the School? No. What then is the use of the second-hand knowledge offered by the School? Let us consider this.

In our work we distinguish:

1. personal revelation,
2. collective revelation.

Personal revelation is firsthand. Collective revelation is second-hand. Both aspects of revelation have a task with respect to each other. Personal revelation is like a light shining in full glory on a path still embedded in shade. Collective revelation supplies the means by which we can go the path. For example, during a course every participant is in an impersonal way given the spiritual nourishment to enable him to go the path. But he is not told *where* the path lies for him individually.

Living water.
Relief on the
sarcophagus of
Anastasias. 4th
century. Musée
Lapidaire d'Art
Chrétien, Arles,
France.

is *that* serious that fear no longer grabs him by the throat. That he does not have that fear is a form of softening of the brain and that is why he prays and kneels too little.

STENCH IN THE NOSTRILS OF GOD

As long as we are not painfully aware that we smell in this respect, that we are repulsive in the eyes of the saints (does Meyrink not say: *'the human being is a stench in the nostrils of God'?*), as long as we do not feel deadly ashamed, we have not even entered the path. The pupil of the Rosycross is not lazy; he is prepared to work hard for the great work. But there is no work for him, because he opens himself up too little, lifts his eyes too little in humility to the hills, from whence his help shall come.

Praying, joining, receiving instruction: this is the triune condition *to become someone who is either advanced or judged*.

Whoever, for example, does not pray, but joins and accepts instruction, will not make progress and merely postpones judgement. He can possibly hold out in the School for twenty years. But he who prays, begins to see his path and when he has seen it but does not go, he will be judged. Often we do not pray for fear of seeing the path and because we are afraid of the consequences.

The triune path of the Light therefore has

1. a mystical aspect,
2. a gnostic aspect,
3. a magical or realising aspect.

The mystical aspect is the inner need for praying and kneeling. The gnostic aspect is the knowledge supplied by the School. The magical or realising aspect is the link with the Mystery School, because this link forces us to act. The point is not that pupils of a spiritual school do not tackle the great work. But whether that

saves them from death depends on their prayer life – that is, their new mode of life – and the resulting enlightenment of the path.

FAITHFUL TO HIS MISSION

This enlightenment only comes when we search and ask for it. Although this enlightenment corresponds to our state of being, it does not take our dialectical ties into account. Whoever sees his path before him through enlightenment, should not wait until his dialectical circumstances have changed accordingly. No, he must simply set out, in the faith that the dialectical circumstances will change, if he is faithful to his mission. And then he can execute his mission with the aid of second-hand knowledge.

Yet, floodlights do not light our path from beginning to end. The length of the road lighted by firsthand knowledge consists of *just one step*. That is why the Psalmist says: *'Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path'* (Ps.119:105). This light will not let your foot falter on the dangerous mountain path. Therefore, with all our praying and imploring, our path will be lighted only one step at a time right in front of our feet and not more; further on everything remains hidden in dark night.

Only when we with the help of instruction, the collective revelation, actively take that illuminated step, will light for the second step appear, because while *going* we take the lamp along. And so, laboriously, we climb the mountain, guided by firsthand *and* second-hand knowledge and linked with the School.

When we stop, no new enlightenment will follow. This leads to the following conclusion: firsthand knowledge is light on the path; second-hand knowledge is spiritual nourishment enabling us to go the path.

THOU PRAYED UPON A MOUNTAIN

*Alone thou prayed upon a mountain,
and... Jesu, not one there is to find
where I can climb sufficient high
to find thee alone;*

*the world it is pursuing me,
wherever I go
or stand
or ever cast my eye;*

*and there is none as poor as I;
not one,
who needy cannot complain;
who hungry cannot ask;
who suffering cannot tell
how fierce the pain!*

*Oh, teach me, poor fool, how I
must pray!¹*

Guido Gezelle (1830-1899)
Translation Pentagram

There is an essential difference between the two: the first, or personal revelation, is light, the second, or collective revelation, is nourishment. The former serves to *enlighten* the dark path, the latter to provide the strength to go this path. The former concerns our eyes, the latter our stomach.

NOURISHMENT FOR THE SOUL

Should we then see course work not as light, but only as nourishment? You may indeed see course work as light, as long as you do not think that cursory instruction is light for your eyes! The courses, the meetings, they are light: not for your eyes, but for your stomach. You know that earthly food contains particles of light, which we call vitamins. Without vitamins food is dead. Well, the spiritual food of the School is full of vitamins, but

this serves your spiritual eyes just as little as lettuce serves your physical eyes in the dark. In other words, when your path is not enlightened by firsthand knowledge and prayer, then second-hand knowledge will not enlighten you either.

Firsthand and second-hand knowledge: light and food. This food is the fruit of the *tree of life*. It strengthens us and helps us build a body with which to go the path, but it does not *show* the path. The path is *shown* by the *light*, but this is not done collectively, but revealed privately through prayer and kneeling. In that Light we see the path. Collective teaching is the food that supplies the power to go the path. And we go the path actively by linking up with and joining the Spiritual School.

Thus, with a dejected soul we pray for light and in that light we see a small section of the path. Then, we join and immediately begin to climb the path, praying all the time that the lamp unto our feet does not get extinguished. Then, there is instruction, receiving nourishment, in order not to fail at every higher turn of the mountain path. That is the way of a bonafide Spiritual School. Hence: *Light, walking and nourishment*.

If we take the food without walking, we would be like someone who eats a lot without the physical exertion that causes the food to be digested. That is why the School does not give inner instruction to outsiders. For that kind of nourishment would lead to serious poisoning.

The spiritual food supplied by the School in the form of second-hand knowledge must serve to enable the pupil to go the path *physically*. But the pupil can only progress when he has the lamp unto his feet and he has to pray for this lamp.

We find these esoteric teachings fully confirmed in Acts 9 in the story of Saul of Tarsus. Here we see the whole process on the road to Damascus. The firsthand

knowledge of personal revelation comes to Saul, because he is praying for it: 'Lord, what will You have me to do?' Does he immediately receive his 'sight'? No, first he must come into contact with a Mystery School. In this case, the Mystery School is the city of Damascus, the community of the children of God and the teacher is Ananias. When Saul turns towards Damascus, the teacher comes to him because he has prayed for it, and takes him up in the benedictio, the blissful bond.

HAVING COME TO 'SIGHT' BY THE BENEDICTIO

Prayer, meekness before God, together with joining the School in the benedictio of the teacher, makes light appear in the eyes of the candidate to be used on his path. *'And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight.'* Saul sees his path. Initially he was blind, although he prayed for light, for firstly he had to be taken up into the benedictio. And that benedictio comes about when Ananias lays his hands on Saul, saying: *'Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me'*. Whoever prays for light receives the opportunity to come into contact with the benedictio of the Mystery School. That is why God says to Ananias: *'Rise and go to a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold, he is praying'*. It is not enough for a person to pray for enlightenment. This prayer must be followed by entrance into a School, by commitment to the Christ power in voluntary obedience.

Prayer and admittance together give temporary sight to the eyes. That is to say: the dark path in front of our feet is illuminated by the width of a hand. Hence this is not yet 'receiving sight' with respect to *the* Light, as our ritual says: *'Not until the eyes have unlearned to shed tears, will they be able to see.'* This

Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him: 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' And he said: 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said: 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.' And he trembling and astonished said: 'Lord, what will You have me to do?' And the Lord said to him: 'Arise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.' [...]
Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision: 'Ananias.' And he said: 'Here I am, Lord.' And the Lord said to him: 'Rise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold, he is praying, and he has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.' [...]
But the Lord said to him: 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.' So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said: 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptised, and took food and was strengthened. [...]
And in the synagogues immediately he proclaimed Jesus, saying: 'He is the Son of God.'
When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him.

(Acts 9: 3-6, 10-12, 15-19, 20, 23)

'seeing' refers to matters of the light of the distant kingdom. But for the time being, for Saul only a hand width of light is shining on the dark personal path of his life in the service of Jesus. But 'receiving sight' itself is not enough. Firsthand knowledge and personal revelation are not sufficient in themselves. They need to be followed by the willingness to actually go the lighted path. Immediately after the pupil has seen his private path, he must be ready and set out: *'And immediately some-*

thing like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptised.' Not a water bath, but a commission, a command of the Holy Spirit to actually go the path that has become visible, to discover after readiness and action that one has come a step closer to Jesus Christ within the gate to the new life field. This water bath of the Holy Spirit is a hydraulic pressure that forces us to take a step. But to be able to go the path commanded by the baptism and not to give up, new nourishment is needed, because our body is not suitable for the rarefied atmosphere on the mountain path. That is why we read: *'and took food and was strengthened'*.

EXEMPLIFYING CHRIST

Only now does he get second-hand knowledge from Ananias; he receives instruction and all conditions are fulfilled to go the path. Saul does exactly that. Therefore the following passage reads: *'And in the synagogues immediately he proclaimed Jesus, saying: "He is the Son of God".'* This preaching does not mean that Saul gets up to speak, but that he exemplifies Christ by his life, that is to say that he actively goes the path.

Hence we see in the Book of Acts the following consecutive, different phases of development on the path for the beginning pupil:

1. Saul prays for light unto his feet;
2. the Lord places the School in his path in the person of Ananias, who lays hands upon him in *benedictio* and restores his sight in answer to his prayer;
3. after he has thus learned to 'see', he is baptised. This means that he receives the Holy Spirit's command to go the path, revealed to him through enlightenment;
4. then he receives nourishment, in other words, by means of second-hand knowledge he receives impersonal or cursory instruction or spiritual nourishment:

5. equipped with enlightenment for *one* step, spiritual drive for *one* step and nourishment for *one* step, Saul now starts to preach the gospel himself. He is going to prove that this path leads to liberation in Jesus Christ. He is going to prove Jesus by his life on the path;

6. when he begins to prove Jesus Christ by actively climbing the mountain path, the sixth phase is that the world wants to kill him.

And as it was with Saul, so it will be with us if we understand these things. We must pray to know where God wants us to serve the work, regardless of our profession, our family which resists, and all our other earthly ties. And the School sends us a messenger of the Lord and through him we become insightful in answer to our prayer. And once we see, we will be baptised. And then we receive nourishment, the teachings of the School, and we are fed; not to start storing it, but to make us *physically* suitable for the mountain path. And when we go the path with this food and keep the lamp burning in repeated and persistent prayer, then we 'preach Christ'.

This contribution is based on an article by J van Rijckenborgh in the periodical *Nieuwe Religieuze Oriëntering* (New Religious Orientation) of 1947.

¹ Guido Gezelle, *Gedichten Gezangen Gebeden*. (Poems Hymns Prayers) 1862. In: Guido Gezelle, *Verzameld dichtwerk* (Collected poems), part 2; collected by J. Boets a.o. Kapellen, DNB-Pelckmans, 1980.

A LETTER TO MY DAUGHTER

Some time ago my daughter asked: 'Dad, I don't understand it at all. On the one hand it is said that we are autonomous human beings and that we are totally responsible for what we do and what we want to see and hear, but on the other hand I hear "Not my will, but Your will be done." How can they go together, as they seem to be exact opposites. What about it?'

At the time I had no immediate answer. I understood what you meant by that seeming contradiction, although I felt simultaneously that both statements were correct, but could not put it in words right away.

It is difficult to answer your question, because so many people have already said and written so much about the will that only great confusion has resulted. If you listen carefully to all those stories or read them, one of the first things that will strike you is that those stories only describe how the will works, in other words, what the will does or what the effect is of an act of the will, but not what the will really is. In itself, all of that is of course very interesting and practical, but it does not provide a key for solving the contradiction, pointed out by you, between being autonomous and the surrender of the will. In addition, hardly any distinction is made between the will and the desire or longing. This only increases the confu-

sion, even though this very distinction is essential.

In our daily usage, for example, the word 'willing' is frequently used as a synonym of 'desiring'. We ask someone: 'What do you want for your birthday?' We expect the answer to this question not to be a spontaneous explosion of activity, but the expression of a wish or desire. The work of the great 17th-century Dutch thinker Spinoza shows that this symbiosis of willing and desiring has already been in existence for a long time. He thought that what we usually call the will should rather be called desire. In fact, there was hardly a separate will before Spinoza. To him the concept of 'will' was an abstract word for a collection of activities and effects, rooted in the instinct of self-preservation. By the way, in the same manner the intellect was to him only a collection of ideas.

But now I am jumping in the middle of something. In order to escape from the confusion about willing and desiring, we have to start at the beginning. This beginning is the creation of fundamental nature, as J van Rijckenborgh calls it in his commentaries on the twelfth book of the *Corpus Hermeticum* of Hermes Trismegistus. In verse 5 of this twelfth book, *The key of Hermes Trismegistus*, we read:

'God's active power is his will, and his essence is the desire to call all things into being.'

The same quote is, by the way, translated by R van den Broek and G Quispel in their edition of the *Corpus Hermeticum* as: *'Well then, His activity is His Will, and*

His essence is the will that everything exists.'

This latter translation also passes over the fundamental difference between desire and will.

Many people, especially the doers among us, do not experience a distinction between willing and desiring, or just take it for granted. What they desire, they do immediately. Dreamers on the other hand, know the difference to a certain extent. They muse about the projections of their desire, but they lack the willpower to turn that desire into concrete action.

Will and desire have much to do with space and time. You might say that the will is primarily linked to space and desire to time. Concrete action stems from the will and on the basis of the will something becomes tangible reality; a desire is a projection into the future. And just as space and time are intimately linked, willing and desiring are also almost inseparably intertwined. You can discover this within yourself in the way you experience and call things. For example, we experience boundaries within ourselves. Hence we can speak of space, of inner space. We notice quite well that this space is linked with our will, when someone steps over our boundaries. Then we will certainly not react with a soft '*O no, don't do that, I do not wish that,*' but we will rather shout loudly: '*I don't want that.*' This certainly does not refer to a projection into the future, but to a clear presence at this moment and in physical space.

It is a few days later now. I have risen early and have read a bit and will now continue with my letter to you. I have not yet really answered your question, but just hang on a moment. It is very important to know the difference between willing and desiring, because that is the key.

People with burnout, for example, experience very clearly that those two exist separately. Their inner space has been consumed. Someone once said: '*I hardly had any active will left, although there was a desire, a very basic desire. I felt that it was there, but it didn't have any images. It couldn't have any images, for there was no space to form those images. Or in somewhat solemn words, the desire could not clearly manifest itself and often only after quite some delay. I could not react adequately to the events happening around me. I was not sufficiently "assertive".*'

Our will is controlled by our desire. Images are projected into our inner space from our desires. These images correspond with our consciousness and evoke emotions in us. Our thinking directs those images, seeks a way or a method to realise them and confirms them in our respiration field by paying attention to them time and again. Thus the images are charged with a force. Over and again they are given their emotional charge. Ultimately that force, that charge, releases the will to manifest the image from the inner space, and to propel it into the outer, physical space.

Hence, desires control the will by

means of our (lower) thinking. Will is concentrated thinking power!

If we 'care for' desires, 'nourish' them with our thinking power, they will certainly grow; if we let go of them and don't pay attention to them, they will remain neutral and withdraw into the background.

Whoever examines himself, will recognise different kinds of desires. There are desires that stem purely from selfishness and self-preservation and which are only focused on a high profile of our own manifestation or on amusing ourselves, regardless whether this is at the expense of others. And there are desires that only intend the best for us, for the world

around us, and for our fellow humans or the environment. We want to improve the world and if possible to turn it into a paradise, with happiness, equality, love and peace for everybody.

This whole range of desires originates from our well-known nature, in which everything is transient and in which, paradoxically, everything is striving after self-preservation and seeks a goal within itself. We ourselves are totally of and from this same nature, as is our thinking. Consequently this also applies to our will, which can be used in an unhampered way for the realisation of all these different desires.

But we still have another desire, a de-

Author with candle light. Washed pen on paper, Rembrandt van Rijn, around 1635. Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar, Germany.

sire which does not stem from this nature, and is foreign to our nature. This desire stems from the divine nature, which has no boundaries and hence has no limited and transient forms. That is why that nature cannot project sensorily perceptible images into our inner space. We experience this desire without being able to attach specific words to it. Sometimes it is only a yearning and sometimes the sensation of being silently linked for a while. Usually it means total agitation, a feeling that 'there must be more, something essential is lacking'. It does not have images that we can recognise and the will is lacking that could turn these images into reality. (An extreme form of burnout?)

The only thing we can do with our will is focus on this desire, making room for it. We have to 'will' this desire. This is a free choice; in this respect we are autonomous. There is nothing that forces us to it, nor is it something we have to do because of the laws of nature. 'Willing' this desire requires a constant alertness, a constant effort to let go of all other desires that we know so intimately.

If we succeed, we will be able to become silent as to our desiring and longing. Then, in that inner space, liberated from emotional charges, we can speak '*Not my will, but Your Will be done.*' This is the first stage. The second stage is that a *new will* can begin to develop.

This provides an opportunity. Within certain limits you have a free choice: the choice to focus your thinking, and hence your consciousness, on what is completely

'different'. That very foreign desire, which is nevertheless close to your heart, offers that possibility. A new will presents itself which works according to the principles of the original, divine nature and only then we can fully say: '*Not my will, but Your Will be done.*'

Thus there is no contradiction. The autonomous aspect of 'free will' enables you to make a choice and to clear the way for a new will.

SOURCES

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R van den Broek and G Quispel, *Corpus Hermeticum*, p.117. First edition, Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, Amsterdam, 1990.

THE POWER OF THE RENEWED EQUILIBRIUM

When we hear the word 'meekness', we think perhaps of a certain insincere softness. Meekness, however, is the power of the inner equilibrium, which comes about when we become conscious of the essence of life and of its place in the universe.

Meekness is continuously experiencing unity and complete non-resistance. And non-resistance is a power stronger than violence. This power emanates from the unity of the All-life, the unity of the universe. In it, all judgement, condemnation and criticism disappear.

In meekness, the commandment of Christ 'Love your enemies' becomes a state of being. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus imposes this requirement on his disciples.

It is a commandment found in every tradition intended to help those who want to learn to be led to perfection, wholeness and unity. But, how many have ever put that way of life into practice? Almost everyone thinks that meekness and love of one's enemies is something for monastic life and certainly not for people living in modern society.

Human relations are mainly characterised by competition, ambition, envy and jealousy. What is the reason for this? The cause can be found in the fact that the fundamental principle of this nature is competition, struggle and self-maintenance. The requirement of meekness as meant in the Sermon on the Mount can

simply not be realised by dialectical human beings.

*'Courage, as understood in this nature,' J van Rijckenborgh says, 'is always forcing and often the result of passion. With this kind of courage one is like a burglar. This courage always inflicts wounds; it is disruptive and destructive.'*¹

That is equally true for human love. If, for example, we say to each other 'I love you', it often means 'You also have to love me.' This love is an emotion, which demands something back for what it gives. It is not selfless. If the need for love is not fulfilled, aggression, violence and hatred are the result. What people call love is therefore not a pure feeling, but a tainted emotion which is focused on itself and easily turns into its opposite. Out of this love, no meekness can be born.

We live in continuous emotional agitation. Our consciousness is like a flickering candle which, because of our changing moods, is standing in the draught, and thus scarcely or not illuminates our surroundings. The reason for this is our preoccupation with our self, with the personality, which is distinct from all other persons. Most people are not conscious of the fact that they could be more than that. They have identified with parts and fragments, with their body, with impulses and instincts, or with the intellect or the occult. They are obsessed with them. And each time they are obsessed by something, be it by power, by money, by prestige or by ideology, they lose their balance. Thus people are always unbalanced because the

consciousness separates, limits, judges and condemns. Then there is neither inner equilibrium nor meekness.

The Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross teaches that meekness is born from the equilibrium of the Spirit, from a renewed equilibrium of the will. This means that the starting point is that the pupil be a disciple on the Mountain and understand the Sermon on the Mount. This involves a heightening of vibration. Through this raising we can continue with a quiet, indestructible courage as someone who walks the path and approaches a glorious, predetermined goal.

Just because a new life is experienced as a new sound in our being, the simple conditions of the Sermon on the Mount like the courage not to judge or criticise any longer, to forgive all debts and to love our enemies, can be understood quite well. If we love our enemies, they are no longer enemies. Meekness is the absolute courage, which does not want to force and

is unable to coerce. Because the root of all violence lies in the limitation of the consciousness of the personality, the truly meek person is not inclined to violence, and knows neither tension nor resentment nor aggression. Whatever the personality possesses it wants to defend. The meek one no longer lives from this consciousness. In him a new understanding has broken through. Like Lao Tzu, he knows.

*'The softest in us is that,
which most strongly resists.
Accept the great work –
cultivating the fallow fields.
Overcoming by self-discipline
what is awakened by desire.
He who overcomes himself,
has risen above every law.'*

J van Rijckenborgh says about such a person *'Like a still flame the meek one keeps burning in the name of eternity, and the*

*consolation of Christ is the fuel that flows to him with a steady regularity.*²²

VIOLENCE DISSOLVED

What power fills the meek one? How is he able to love his enemies? These are important questions. Because if the meek one does not know any enmity, he possesses the key to peace, and with that key the problem of humanity would be solved. For who does not long for peace? That is why we have to overcome the limitations of our I; in order to accomplish this, the miracle of the light birth is necessary. Because above and beyond the ordinary, personal consciousness there is the All-consciousness, which permeates and pervades all of creation. Once a human being has been touched by this All-life, his whole heart opens up.

The first thing that is perceived is our own being, and not the image we had of ourselves. Our 'own being' proves to be a dilapidated house, built of sham values. Also the inconsistent emotional life and the endless repetitiveness of thoughts are shown; the energies that cause tensions, create obstacles and harden the heart so that it tenses up and turns into a shabby stable. This whole state is being exposed by the All-consciousness that encompasses everything and does not exclude anything. It creates inner clarity about our state of being. To the extent that we entrust ourselves to the Light received, all crystallisation, souring, deformation and wear are transformed and changed. They will not be pushed away, but be transformed. Our inner space is not a dumping

ground on which all our wrecked personalities are heaped up. Inferior energies are being transmuted, just like a rusty piece of metal can be cleansed by the white heat of a hot fire.

Whoever hears the ideas and demands of the Sermon on the Mount for the first time, without turning his head away in disbelief and resentment, but drinks in the inner values as the truth, actually understands that meekness can only stem from the Spirit, from the Christ vibration, which becomes active in the pupil.

EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED WITH EVERYTHING

Love is undivided unity. Love is no theory, no attribute, but the perfection, the reality of the Spirit, from which meekness is born. It is the still, unmoved perception of the consciousness that is no longer susceptible to sympathy or antipathy, but only envelops everything with meekness. It recognises, hears and perceives that everything is connected with everything and everyone with everyone. Love is not an extension of sentimentality. It is a reality and an activity of another order, the order of the Spirit: it is strong and pure, it is beauty and truth. It is far removed from any sentimentality. Sentimentality is an unnatural activity of the heart, caused by the flickering light of an imperfect state of consciousness. The fundamental idea of the Spirit Order, the flame of the Rose, must first gain entrance to the heart, so that the heart can be restored to its true function again.

Love in a human being is born from I-

lessness, and a relationship is not an investment in the future. Love is then an expression of 'understanding' in our daily relationships. And just as intelligence is not a possession, so Love cannot be the property of any human being.

Love is a power in which everything can become 'whole', in which everything can grow and be fulfilled. That is why that power inherits the earth. In this power the earth will be changed and be led to perfection. And whoever lives out of this power, can no longer be manipulated.

MEEKNESS IS NOT WEAKNESS

Someone who is meek no longer wants to convince. That is why he is stronger than everyone else. By his very state of being he is, in the true sense of the word, an authority an autonomous being that lives out of the universal nucleus power. Because he lives on this level of consciousness, it is possible that those with whom he is in contact consider him a blessing.

But not always. Meekness is not weakness, but one of the original, beautiful attributes of the human spirit. Hence it is a great power. It is possible that this very power unleashes struggle in *others*. It is possible that egos that are confronted with meekness feel terribly uneasy and hence try to undermine this power. Meekness is a power which causes storms capable of destroying the old violence. But after the storm the serenity of infinity is perceived. That is the inheritance of every human being.

The weakest things in the world can

surpass the strongest. Nothing in the world is weaker and more flexible than water. Nevertheless it cannot be paralleled when it attacks the hard and the strong. The meek can overcome the strong, the flexible the hard. This fact has always been known all over the world, but can only be understood, when someone sets out to understand and fulfil the Sermon on the Mount. Therefore a sage has said:

*'He who accepts his state's reproach,
Is hailed therefore its altars' lord;
To him who bears men's direful woes
They all the name of King accord.
Words that are strictly true
seem to be paradoxical.'*³

¹ J van Rijckenborgh, *The Beatitudes*, p.58. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 1979.

² J van Rijckenborgh, *The Beatitudes*, p.59. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 1979.

³ Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, verse 78, translated by James Legge, The Worldwide School.

THE PRINCIPLE OF HOPE

Those who ask themselves what motivates us to carry on in all those painful and often strange conditions of modern society, may find an answer in what a modern philosopher called 'The principle of hope'.

In fact, this principle offers many answers. Some people hope to remove obstacles from their path, while others hope to get what they are lacking. Both groups cherish the hope that life will take the desired course. Others may feel too bound to their possessions and hope to detach themselves from them and live a free life. It is typical that we humans are never content with the circumstances in which we live. There is always something we would like to change, be it material or ideal. We always hope that things will develop as we envisage them, as we think they would be good. Hope is always there and humanity will never stop looking to the future.

But what do we actually hope for? It is strange that we hardly ever ask this question. Strange, too, that the answers usually remain on the surface, and that we do not know why the future attracts us. And strange also that we have hardly any idea what occupies us and makes us so restless. *Why do we hope?*

Life is impossible without hope. Hope is our stimulus. We draw courage from hope. Whoever has no more hope, gives up, is a 'loser', becomes depressive, dies or may eventually commit suicide. In this light, the principle of hope is an absolute

principle of life. While there is life there is hope.

If we consider what really matters in life, it is not external things or other circumstances. It is life itself. It is about being truly human. Although we are hardly ever clearly aware of it, it is our great task in life to learn what it means to be a true human being.

This implies that we admit to knowing deep in our hearts that we are still far from being true humans at this moment. For example, we raise our children, providing them with knowledge and social values, so that they will be able to take up their stations in life, to gain respect or at least to survive. But behind these practical goals there is a nobler intention, namely the hope that they will become true humans.

And we unconsciously identify this hope with our idealised image of a civilised human being who has gained extensive and deep knowledge and much soul quality. Humanist efforts expressed in peace movements, campaigns for victims of natural disasters and direct humanitarian and medical aid in wars and tribal feuds exemplify this. This necessary ideal, i.e. the urge to relieve the distress of others, may quite well be prompted by the unconscious image of a true human being and the qualities that we associate with that Human Being with a capital H.

In our highly praised Western civilisation, everything is expected from technological development. At the beginning of the last century, these expectations were

immeasurable quantity. Hope always hides an unknown goal. Although we know or expect the qualities of this goal – happiness, freedom from worries and fear – the aim itself, its reality, can hardly be described. And yet, this distant and undefinable aim is contained in everything we desire, think, want and do.

And so it is quite natural that the existence of an unspoken goal causes an unconscious search. It is typically human to project this goal onto the outside, onto circumstances that will always fail to reach this goal. This explains why we are so often disappointed in our efforts in the present. This is also the reason why our efforts to do good must inevitably fail and cannot bring us the happiness we expect. Thus we experience that we pay a high

price for what we call progress. But we do not give up easily. Our hope for improvement is indestructible. We are and will remain convinced that we are on an upward spiral and that scientists will ultimately find a solution for all problems that accompany our development.

Humanity constantly explores and pushes its limits. Many of us may recognise that this causes problems, but these problems are regarded as inevitable challenges that must be confronted. That is

mainly centred on shorter working hours and the liberation from the yoke of constantly having to work and labour. Later, technology made it possible to control nature, to manipulate and travel the world. Now we assume that we have access to all information with the help of technology and that the Internet paves the way to a form of omniscience and omnipresence.

Behind all these efforts stands the image of an unlimited human being as an

Waterbearer,
stone relief in
Brauweiler
Abbey, Cologne,
Germany, 2nd half
11th century.

the essence of growth. But is this really true? Why do so many and particularly young people turn away from the compelling speed of technological progress that controls Western civilisation? Why do they turn away from this development and its ideals? An answer to this question may be that they have an idea of the *true nature* of the 'principle of hope'. They do not give up this principle of hope. They experience a strong urge to live, which is, however, opposed to the course of events they see around them. They want to express their ideals, their hope, differently, in their own way, in their own living space.

It is generally assumed that the economy must grow. Standstill is supposed to be a step back. The voices that could be heard opposing this idea in the 1960's and 1970's have fallen silent. It is believed that a company or an industrial branch that does not grow is ill. Even the growth rate is supposed to go up every year. This is maintained on the basis of the seemingly inextinguishable idea that economic success automatically implies human well-being. This idea has increasingly overruled the image of original humanness and has attained almost absolute control over industrialised societies. It is clear that the way upward is not linear, but rather knows highs and lows. However, we expect that the peaks are higher than the lows are deep. A low allows us to rest for a while before attacking the next peak.

Is there a better symbol for the immortality of human hope? There are voices which point out that life is running in smaller or larger cycles, but these voices

are becoming weaker and are gradually being pushed to the margins of the arts and the 'soft' sciences.

How can unfading hope exist, if everything in the world is transient, if everything moves in smaller or larger cycles? What then is the basis of this hope? Its origin is not found in the transient and temporary phenomena that characterise this world. Nor is it based on the personality that is just as transient as the nature from which it originated. The unfading hope stems from the last remnant of original Man who turned away from his origin long ago. Thus he exchanged eternity for time, the imperishable for the perishable. Everything that was initially imperishable and eternal could no longer be linked with him and was concentrated in a single primordial atom. And this atom emits the radiation that causes in us the undefinable longing for original greatness and eternity. This longing makes us restless and discontented with our daily lives. We directly project this desire onto our environment and into the things we perceive. We want changes and personal development. We want reforms or perhaps revolution.

We cannot let go of the idea of permanent growth, not even when our rational mind provides facts to disprove this desire. We are searching for our origin in spiritual movements and religions. We undergo therapies when looking for our inner being. We are restless and go on searching and searching. We do not and cannot understand what really lives in us and wants to grow. We have not yet learned to distinguish between the pas-

sing and the everlasting, the temporary and the eternal, between the nature that surrounds us and the original Divine nature, between ourselves and the microcosm with its spirit-spark, with which we are linked for a short time. We do not yet know or accept our task as a mortal personality. We turn the goal of the microcosm into our personal goal.

We turn the development of original man, stemming from the spirit-spark, into our evolution, just as the restoration of the original Divine human qualities degenerates into the development of our personal human characteristics. We do not understand the true nature of our memory and our hope which keep us going. This ignorance is the reason we repeatedly experience disappointment and setbacks. We withdraw into our own personal world, onto our personal island and there we attempt to fulfil our expectations and our hopes for a better future.

HOPE AS A NEW REALITY

Very slowly it dawns upon us that the development of humanity, as we know it, is not the ultimate goal but that there is a higher goal: the restoration and rebirth of the original true human being. We learn that we, as children of this earth, have a task in the realisation of this high goal and we begin to recognise this task. We discover that we cannot carry out this task in isolation and therefore join a group of kindred spirits: a spiritual school. We get to know the driving force

that stems from eternal life and we experience that without this force all our thoughts and deeds, all our hopes are futile. This discovery, the differentiation between what is really necessary, and what is not, stems from the spirit-spark atom, the primordial atom, the foundation of the original human being.

Then an inner development begins that is completely separated from earthly soul conflicts, that is isolated from the ups and downs of growth and decline in our world. When this development begins, our self-knowledge deepens and speculation makes way for the certainty of true faith. And we experience that this solid faith is the bridge between ourselves and the true goal of hope: restoration of the original human being. The hope, with which we fought the permanent uncertainty in our daily lives, has turned into an absolute certainty. Now there is room for new hope. A hope that does not stem from an undefinable longing, but one that makes us act without any expectation. Then this hope is no longer a compensation of the darkness of our minds, but finds its origin in the Light that is of God.

NEW ILLUSION OR NEW CHANCE?

When a young child is read a fairytale, the child believes it from the bottom of its heart. Not in the way that it thinks that it will be eaten by a wolf when picking flowers, or that there are little boys the size of your thumb, but it believes in the essence of the fairytale.

Confidently, the child looks at the world, and it trusts that all its desires will be fulfilled. And even if it is time and again faced with the hard reality of nature, which is in many respects often the opposite of what is good, true and beautiful, it still believes in it. That is why a child forgets so easily. Open-minded it approaches life and when it falls, it gets up and tries again.

That is exactly the mode of life Jesus propagates to his disciples in order 'truly to receive the kingdom of God' (Luke 18:17). And it is the same one with which the Spiritual School confronts its pupils. But adults, who are, after all, no longer so open-minded, must regain that faith as it were. The childish faith has been discarded, and no longer everything and everyone can be trusted. Certainly, deep in our heart it is still present, but it is torpedoed again and again by all kinds of fears and memories. Hence, what we regain in the Spiritual School as basis of our faith is of a totally different order. It has matured, is real and is focused on other things.

A NEW REALITY

Faith, the remnant of the soul garment that enveloped the pupil as a small child, is in fact knowledge, is having a 'conscience'. A thick crust has grown around it, created from external and inner conflicts, broken illusions and the resulting fears. But that faith stirs over and over again; it cannot be totally suppressed. The soul constantly touches the personality, a touch that is accompanied by suggestions of a better, higher life. Human beings then try to express those suggestions in many ways, usually *outside* themselves. But they cannot avoid being disappointed time and again. Thus perfect love proves to be not always perfect, innocence is unmasked and ultimately everything goes wrong, in spite of all good intentions. It often happens that the more the I exerts itself, the worse things become, until the I becomes so tired, so terribly tired that it gives up all its efforts, while the desire remains! At exactly this moment the voice of the soul can be heard. Just at the moment when the I is sitting defeated on a heap of ashes, the phoenix begins to stir. At first the personality does not notice it, but faith, the voice of the soul, drags it along through all kinds of experiences of a totally different nature than the past ones. These experiences in turn reinforce faith. And if the personality – perhaps still hesitatingly – then begins to act according to that faith, great changes are on the way. Acting on the basis of faith *creates a new reality*.

Why doesn't this happen with all people who believe, or are at least convinced that they believe? Why do so many believers constantly run into the same problems and apparently can't speak of great changes? Why doesn't it work, if someone sincerely believes in the historic Bible stories or the *Bhagavad Gita* and acts in the way he thinks is right?

Of course, ultimately it *does* work, just as all sincere intentions work to someone's benefit. But what happens with regard to faith is that it has to be of exactly the right quality. It should be the undiluted faith, the power of the soul. The personality with its interpretations should not be involved in it. As long as that is not yet the case, every desire is broken against the walls of dialectics.

In the child desire is still pure; it is truly amazed, or even upset, that the world is not as expected. As the child

grows up, things usually have turned around: the human being expects misery and is surprised or grateful, when he is treated with true love. You can notice this on the distrustful reactions of people to a truly well-intended proposal. Just when all results seem beneficial to all parties, a trap is suspected. Isn't that sad? Such a situation is almost the deathblow for faith, for the trust in the fundamental goodness of life, in *Love*, in God.

But true faith cannot be killed. At all occasions, when the I withdraws for a moment, this faith steps to the fore and creates a new opportunity. Depending on the consciousness of the person concerned, this is a new illusion or a truly new chance. If the experiences have not yet become full, another blow will follow, because the new chance proves to be a new illusion. However, he who has become mature through experience and be-

All cling to their illusions. Medusa's raft, Jean-Louis-André Gericault, 1819.

gins to suspect how life and the nature he belongs to are working, can set out on a truly new path and *begin to act differently*. And then, if the right action follows, a new opportunity is immediately offered. This faith means knowing from within, it is an activity of *that which is original* in a human being. This faith can develop into *knowledge* of the New Life.

WHAT ONCE HAS BEEN, WILL BE AGAIN

It grows into a radiant power that can be overwhelming, a power that can move mountains. When a number of people with a strong faith and a corresponding mode of life are united in a group, their combined power is so large that the whole of humanity can experience it and can even go along in the process of change. Then the Light of true life irradiates everything and everyone. That is the dream and the desire, but above all it is the memory of every human child. For *'what once has been, will be again'*. One day the whole of humanity will be living again from the

original soul, on the basis of a faith that *'can move mountains'*. (Matth.17:20)

In his book *There is no empty space*, J van Rijckenborgh remarks about this: *'The condition of faith to which the Gnosis refers, does not tie in with our or any other state of nature whatsoever. It concerns the touch of the rose of the heart by the power field of the modern Gnosis. Who can make this link? Only the seeker who has stopped his natural inclinations, either through insight or out of despair. He who has forged this link, has been ignited by the Spirit of God. A force is poured out over him which in every respect and in every dimension stands diametrically opposed to every previous personal inclination. Whoever obeys that force, whoever follows that voice, is a true believer in the sense of the Gnosis.'*¹

Perseus brings
Medusa's head to
Athens. Apollo
Temple, Rome.

¹ From: *There is no empty space*, J van Rijckenborgh. Haarlem, Rozekruis Pers, 1979, p.49).

PRAYER AS A MODE OF LIFE

A personal reflection

Every minute, thousands of prayers rise up from the earth. These prayers vary from habitual prayer, said at the beginning and the end of a meal, when going to bed and at daybreak, to prayers out of distress, rising up from anxiety, worry and fear for a future or present fate.

The first category is based on a habitual activity, often transmitted from one generation to the next and based on a certain natural respect for 'something higher'. Such a prayer can be said privately, but also organised in spaces designed for it or in the open air. The second category, with the human being in distress, consists of prayers from fear, for preservation of life, for themselves or for their beloved ones.

It is remarkable that a human being in distress appeals to a higher power, even if he is not a believer. He appeals to God or a higher power, he expects help from outside. He knows, therefore, that he himself is unable to turn the tide. Yet, it shows that the human being is, in spite of all possible denial, sensitive to – and essentially also approachable by – what is still hidden. At moments of extraordinary anxiety, worry or grief, human beings no longer use their so-called rational intellect, but, from within, grasp at a straw. And that something is of a higher order, something or someone that might save him from his dire position. The most popular prayer of someone in distress is: 'O God, save me

from this crisis.' Perhaps the hidden idea behind it is: 'then I can continue with the things I was occupied with.' This is not a deliberate nonchalance, but it is the way things usually work.

PRAYING FOR WEALTH AND POWER

Generally speaking, there are four motives that stimulate people to maintain their earthly nature: love, wealth, power and honour, or matters derived from them. Someone can be driven by 'love' for everything belonging to him in several ways. He may long for wealth, so that he can live a carefree life. He may also want to exercise power and attach great value to honour. In order to achieve all of that, he then asks for God's blessing. But in that way, two warring nations can have their weapons and men blessed by the same church. Also during sports events quick prayers are said and signs of the cross are made. People who have to perform, often feel that they can't manage on their own and are depending on the goodwill and blessing from above. Then they draw strength from habitual rituals and receive support.

We may wonder whether this is the purpose of praying. The ways of praying described above only show the shadows from the distant past, when human beings were still living in harmony with the divine intentions. At that time, all of life was a prayer, a mode of life expressed in sound. At that time the human being

Virtue and lust,
Peter Visscher,
1515.
Kupferstichkabin-
ett, Berlin.

lived in pure, unsullied dialectics, some-
times called 'the Garden of the Gods'.
However, he could not stay in it, because
he diverted the high energies of his origi-
nal field of life to lower ends. Now a rock-

hard earth is his reality and his life is for-
eign to perfect harmony. He no longer
knows omnipresence and lacks uninter-
rupted inner happiness.

Yet... although the earth is a limited

The physical body together with the tenuous vehicles forms the instrument with which the human being has to learn to work in order to bring about true life. If we use that instrument in the right way and cleanse it by a pure mode of life, a new, continuously renewing life can originate from it.

PRAYER FOR HUMANITY

The Christ offered humanity a prayer, by which all aspects in a human being could answer their true destination and the link with the origin could be restored. The introduction of this prayer, '*Our Father who art in heaven*', attunes the consciousness to the universal source, the Father power of life. From that source stems the spark in the heart that calls, helps, guides and saves the human being. The addition '*for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory unto eternity, Amen*', is the acknowledgement that this is the goal of all striving and desiring. Here we pray for the healing and purification of all vehicles. '*Give us this day our daily bread*' is the prayer for nourishment of the physical body and for light for the developing spirit-soul human being. '*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors*' refers to the vital body, in which all experiences are recorded as in a memorial book, Also the sum of all experiences from all lives in the microcosm are expressed in it. Hence it is a prayer to annul all 'karmic debts'.

'*And lead us not into temptation*' is the prayer for the desire body. Desiring is the powerful impulse to acting. What does a

and closed field of life, it is enveloped in and saturated by divine life. Hence the human being is certainly not left to his own devices. In order to help, guide and save him he has been given a spark of divine life that can be stirred up at any time. Once that happens, prayers may work as a special help. It may have a tremendous effect, if it is spoken in the right way or rather: if it is lived; if it is a vibration of high, pure aspiration that rises up in one's being. Such a vibration can purify the tenuous human bodies. And because nature then calms down (for a short while) and remains in the background, it is possible that a being experiences a touch from the original field of life.

Praying woman.
Mural in
Catacombe
Jordanorum. 4th
century, Rome.

human being desire? Which choices does he make?

The prayer for the thinking faculty is: *'But deliver us from evil.'* Make us use the undivine thinking for the true goal, learning to understand the purpose of life.

This prayer, if said and understood in the right way, creates a link with the Christ Spirit. The understanding human being prays for the spiritual well-being of his whole being and that of humanity. The prayer wells up from a loving heart and not from selfishness. It is focused on the creative power of the universe and it prays:

- for love that encompasses everything and everyone;
- for wealth of being in order to be able to serve from the fullness of inner possessions;
- for strength that enables him to remove ignorance;
- for honour in the sense that his life propagates *God's glory* through the deed.

LIVING 'TRUE' LIFE

The quality and the power of prayer depend on the inner state as to consciousness, soul and body of him who expresses it. That is why he will, with all the strength within him, *'live life'*. Hence the pure appeal is not focused on his own self, but arises from complete surrender to the divine command: *'But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be yours as well.'* (Matth.6:33)

We might wonder: *'Do such people exist? And what kind of people are they?'*

What should I imagine with regard to them?' The answer might be: They are people who quietly go their way, almost unnoticed. Whoever is going to work with the light, will not be noticed. He 'always wears the robes of the country he works in' as is stated in *The Call of the Brotherhood of the Rosycross*. Thus there is nothing extravagant or unusual in his behaviour or appearance. His broadened and sharply observant view, however, will fathom many situations and by understanding and the right action he will be able to steer much in a favourable direction. His cheerful mind can solve heavy and irrelevant impediments in a light, even humorous way, so that the sun is going to shine again and the atmosphere is lightened. That is a blessing for his environment. He releases light power, because he unconditionally maintains the link with the inner, the soul, in perfect directedness. That is why the true prayer is not a collection of sacred words, but the result of an absolutely revolutionary, but non-violent mode of life. Praying is working.

LIVING FROM SILENCE

*Fragments from a lecture given during a Conference day
at Noverosa on December 13, 2003.*

Words can never completely describe the one great silence. They can only give an indication of what silence can mean; they can create conditions to experience this wonderful dimension of life in the heart. This silence can be found by everyone, as it exists, is innate in every human heart. Even in the greatest noise and turmoil, this silence in the heart can be experienced.

A tone, a melody can lead to silence. Every sound arises from silence... and fades away into silence... The question is: Do I know this silence? Can I live from this silence? On the basis of texts and poems we will try to find an answer. In the teachings of the alchemy of the process of transfiguration, as passed on by Jan van Rijckenborgh in a masterful way, silence plays an important part. In his book *The Chinese Gnosis* he explains *wu wei*, the method to achieve stillness and detachment, as it was taught by the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu many centuries ago. *Wu wei* means: not-doing, leaving behind the world of opposites. However, this does not mean that we have to dissociate from daily life and neglect our duties. That would be a complete misunderstanding. Not-doing in the sense of Lao Tzu means that we should not hold on to the values, the powers and the essence of the Immovable Kingdom with the I. For whoever tries to seize the Immovable

Kingdom with the I, and leaps onto it, will be thrown back. *'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.'* (1 Corinthians 15:50) Driven by his nature, the human being wants to possess. It is his nature to do so. However, as it is impossible for human nature to possess the divine, every effort to try and do so, will result in misery and disappointment. Not-doing is the life which results from inner silence. It is a complete surrender to the divine principle in the heart.

SILENCE BANISHED FROM DAILY LIFE

Living from this silence is only possible as far as there is openness, interest and willingness to undergo silence. Our daily life is so pervaded by noise, racket, rumbling and talking that, for many, it has become impossible to know, to appreciate, to respect silence and to deal with it. Technology, which controls society, has banished silence. Noise can make human beings and animals ill, even kill them. Everything in and around us is involved in avoiding silence and drowning it out with noise. It even seems as if people flee from silence. In western culture, which is attuned to wealth and possessions, noise determines daily life. Silent persons are surpassed by talkers; breaks in conversation quickly become embarrassing. For many people noise or much talking is a way of avoiding inner silence. Noise makes us insensitive, ill and disturbed; it leads to high tension. A tense

person can hardly stand silence. He can even experience silence as threatening. This is also indicated by the different adjectives used to characterise silence: unfathomable, chilling, abysmal, frightening, sinister, deathly.

But why are people so afraid of silence? Why do they regard silence as dreary? Is it because of the insecurity that creeps up whenever they are overwhelmed by silence? During absolute silence there is no incentive to keep the I going. Then there is no frame of reference for the I, and that gives rise to an oppressive feeling. The intellect banishes silence

to the sphere of nothingness, thus indicating that it has become something that can be arbitrarily called up and experienced or rejected. Is this perhaps one of the reasons why there is so little light in human life and why many people no longer recognise and acknowledge any true higher life principle?

RATHER NOT ADMIT SILENCE

Silence is inhibited by busyness, that continuous stream of fixed thought patterns and memories, boosted and controlled by the life and turmoil taking

place in the human astral body. The noise there is added to the noise around us. And the noise in and around the human being is a projection of the noise in his head. In this way the tension increases ever more. The human being does long for silence, but as soon as he finds it, he closes himself off from it. The human being does not like to let the *essence* of silence penetrate into him.

Some authors summarise this in a few very clear images. In the book *The little Prince* by Antoine de Saint- Exupéry, the narrator meets the little prince in the desert. The desert is a good symbol of the barrenness experienced in earthly existence, and the little prince very clearly represents the purity of serene silence, a living principle from another dimension. *‘When the little prince fell asleep, I took him into my arms and went on my way. I felt touched. It was as if I was carrying a fragile treasure. I even had the feeling as if there would be nothing more fragile on earth. In the moonlight I looked at his pale forehead, the closed eyes and the curly hair that moved in the wind, and I thought: What I see is merely a cover. The most important is invisible... While his lips slightly opened into a smile, I thought moreover: “What touches me about the little sleeping prince is his faithfulness to a flower, the image of a rose radiating in him, also dur-*

ing his sleep, like the flame of a lamp...” And I regarded him as even more fragile.’

The most important is invisible... or... state of life is state of consciousness... Driven by an inner faithfulness to the Rose, which incessantly tries to be activated in our hearts, many become conscious that they lack something in their lives. They live with an unfulfilled desire in their hearts. They lack rest, silence. And they seek for new life fulfilment, something by means of which they could regain their peace of mind. And then there is the great supply of words, books, lectures, courses, training sessions and workshops. Who can say how many of such impulses and experiences a human being has to gain, how rich in insight he has to become, before his consciousness can grasp where that desire stems from and understand what the silent voice of the Soul wants to tell him or her?

THE HEART OF HEARTS IS THE ORIGINAL SOURCE

Thousands of people have a need for silence and attend silence centres, silence retreats and silence zones. Even a silence museum exists, founded in order to make the rare commodity *silence* something that can be experienced. The therapeutic results are often enormous, but over and again the control centre in the brain refuses to admit this essential silence. In his book *Ontwaken in de droom-illusie of werkelijkheid* (Awakening in dream illusion or reality), Leo Hartong wrote: *‘If we perceive an object in space, we don’t think that this space is affected by it. In the same way silence is not affected, if sound appears in it. Silence contains sound, just as space contains objects. When you recognise this, you will discover that every sound is enveloped by silence.*

All teachings of Pythagoras were laws for his disciples, who regarded him as an envoy of Jupiter. They maintained silence about the manifestations of divinity...; they had learned that silence is also a language.

Phylostratus (AD 170-249), *‘Apollonius of Tyana’*

Space and silence both are clear signposts to – and appear in – something even more subtle: the silent space of Pure Consciousness. The eye of the cyclone or the heart of the storm is quiet, as is the hollow space in the axle of a wheel. Seen in this light emptiness is full of potency; it is that, around which the storm whirls and which makes the wheel turn around its axle. [...] If we try to fathom this emptiness, we won't discover any end or limit to it.

Emptiness surpasses all description, surrounds us entirely and is at the same time our true heart. Speaking about the heart, we often mean the centre of emotion and intuition as opposed to the intellect. It is important to recognise that both heart and intellect originate from the same source. We may refer to it as the heart of hearts, the original and true source of all being, an absolute and silent not-something that escapes all efforts of the intellect to comprehend it. When the intellect tries to imagine this filled emptiness, it comes

to an abrupt standstill. This may be an impenetrable wall for the intellect, but for the not-thinking it is a cherishing, a coming home to the heart of hearts.'

We read in the Bible book *Kings* (1 Kings 19:11-13) about this homecoming: *'And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. And in the whispering of the silence there the Lord spoke.'*

THE BRAIN WORKS IN TWO DIRECTIONS

The Essence of God, Truth, is silence. And whoever seeks Truth and truly loves it, is silent. True silence is a 'dimension' of the divine Soul. It cannot be perceived with blunt and hardened sensory organs.

Babhravahana fights the king of the Nagas. Mahabharata, 14th century. South India.

Hence inner rest and silence are qualities of a heart that is being purified, of a ripening of the soul. To be able to approach this dimension of silence, the human being has to become aware of his thought processes. How does the brain work? The brain is a magnificent instrument. It is refined, sensitive and agile. But only a small part of this instrument is used for thinking.

The brain has already been trained for ages to move in two directions: inwardly towards what is known, and outwardly towards what is still unknown. Thinking is permanently in motion. It determines our daily life, all life patterns and our behaviour. Everything perceived by the senses is determined by descent and experience, by the parental mode of life, by the roots of race and religion, by national heritage, by education and training and by the experiences gained, and, not to be forgotten, by everything accumulated in the microcosm during many lives.

Regarding the mental activities rationally and objectively, we will have to notice that human thinking is not creative but automatically follows patterns which are nourished by astral impulses. Imagination is sometimes said to be nothing but shadows of astral beings and images.

As already mentioned, the brain is directed both inwardly and outwardly. Outwardly it denotes and orders that which is known and experienced, everything that has form, colour and sound. This outwardly focused thinking has formed civilisations, societies, science, technology, literature, philosophy, theology and a broad range of concepts and ideas as shadows of astral beings and images. Now it appears that people regard their behaviour, formed according to these conditioned thought patterns, as 'life'. It is usually said that life is movement, action, directed outwardly towards everything that can be known or inwardly

where much could still be learned from the invisible, the astral/etheric, the occult, and everything still unknown to many. But both movements originate from I-centrality, from avarice, from the drive to get something, to appropriate something. As long as the movement or action results from the consciousness (the I, the ego, the body, the sensory organs, the thinking), there is no silence. Movement is created from the motive of the I. Our time is so eventful because millions of egos stand up against each other, with political, social, economic, religious and above all personal interests. In this way the thinking of the I is weaving a web of illusions, and the human being identifies with his illusions.

As soon as the human being who says 'I' gets the slightest chance, he begins to move. He takes hold of something, reacts to something, changes something, says something, hears something, looks at something and wants to be in contact with something in order to nourish his illusion that he 'lives'.

IMITATING SILENCE BY SECLUSION

Generally speaking, life is thus equated with the movement of energy, which is conditioned by the I. This is a dangerous error. As long as the soul is not detached from this error, talking about silence is without result. As said before: every movement, every action and reaction of the conditioned thinking, all identification with that thinking must disappear before silence can be perceived. And of course this cannot happen as a result of forced or imposed methods but only voluntarily, through the insight that thinking has become the great adversary of true life.

Silence is a sphere which is inaccessible to the grip of the brain. It is well possi-

ble to imitate silence by self-seclusion and living 'like a hermit in the desert', but that would not solve the problem. Someone can close his eyes and stop speaking, while his I is full of desire to perceive something of the invisible world. Then the I keeps quiet, waiting intensely. Full of expectations it is focused on itself... and thus it is directly linked with the whole past which has formed it. That is not silence! Although silent to the outside world, the I thus causes immense noise. In the Tao Te Ching, paraphrased by C van Dijk, we read:

*'In harmony with the Infinite.
From idle, motionless silence
the breath of life sighs.
And from the wellspring of the Absolute Will
the constantly moved striving flows.*

*An example of order
is what the breath controls.
'It' inhales life
and it exhales life.
Between it the profoundest mystery lies
sealed:
the bridge spanning the development
from silence to sound.*

*Tho everything in motion
may go wrong;
unwavering I am,
as I turned to silence.
Tho worldly knowledge may
crystallise the intellect,
what more should I wish to know,
I have unlearned everything.*

*Not before the Ego
has lost its selfishness
and people are standing side by side
like the grass on the field,
equally touched
and reborn in one soul,
only then the idea of true brotherhood*

*Love the silence in your being.
Seek for the silence which inspires.
They who fear all silence,
have never read in their heart,
have never knelt.*

*Learn to feast on silence.
Wherever life may lead you,
silence is your safe haven,
as it is the great gift
of Eternity.*

C S Adama van Scheltema (1877-1924),
From: *Stilte en strijd* (Silence and
struggle), 1909.

has grown to deed!'

Silence can be achieved by inner change, not by merely considering and regarding it as an object, but by bidding farewell to all illusion created by the senses. The immobility of our thinking gives new vitality. Mikhail Naimy wrote in *The Book of Mirdad*: 'The silence I would usher you into is that interminable expanse wherein non-being passes into being, and being into non-being. It is that awesome void where every sound is born and hushed and every form is shaped and crushed; where every self is writ and unwrit; where nothing is but IT. Except you cross that void and that expanse in silent contemplation, you shall not know how real is your being, how unreal the non-being. Nor shall you know how fast your reality is bound up with all Reality.'

(Mikhail Naimy: *The Book of Mirdad*, p.69.
Watkins, London, 1974)

LIES ARE DECEPTIVE

Lies rule, one might think. Whoever searches for inner life, however, will not let himself be stopped by the deceitfulness of this world. He wants to liberate himself from it, and entwine his life with the soul that loves simplicity and truth, and yearns for the spirit. But the quest also shows that lies are deeply rooted and turn out to be more than a bad habit.

When people shake their head and discuss the decline of standards and values in society, certain striking issues remain unnamed. Striking, because they can be indicated with words that meet with universal rejection: lies and deceit. Politicians talking about standards and values mostly address the lack of respect for authority and not calling each other on 'wrong behaviour'. Lies and deceit seem to be generally accepted. They are not often named, yet it is certain that almost all are guilty of them. Including people who think they are honest or who try not to lie. People lie to secure their I. They hope to avoid outer and inner problems. That I, which is completely focused on self-maintenance, stands in the way of simplicity and honesty, the Light that people carry in their heart.

Where does this Light come from? It comes directly from Truth, from the Spirit, Hermes Trismegistus says. To the hermetic consciousness truth, the all-encompassing truth, is God himself. It is

the Unchanging One! But, Hermes says, in the space of the All-manifestation everything continually changes. One thing goes, another thing comes. And when it comes, change is already on the horizon. When you confront these two, change and constancy, the changeable will be completely *untrue* compared to what is constant. For Truth, according to Hermes, can only reside in *eternal* bodies. Seen in this light, the modern human being, especially because of his changing nature, can safely be labelled 'untrue'! And in this light it is perhaps not so surprising that there is so much deceit.

Lying destroys a person

When we think, energy flows through our brain. Electricity is a force, energy. Every thought creates an electrical impulse in the brain. From the brain this impulse is passed on to the nervous system. All the nerves terminate in or originate from the brain.

The nerve paths run throughout the entire body, to the fingertips, to the soles of the feet. They reach all organs: the heart, the stomach, the liver, the abdomen, the gallbladder, the eyes, the muscles. A thought doesn't remain in the head.

What we think is expressed in our body: in our eyes, our face, in movement, in posture, in our blood, in the heart, in the stomach, everywhere.

Every thought electrifies the body. Our body is as

we think, for thought energy is charged with the nature and quality of our thoughts.

An evil thought brings about destructive electricity.

In this way the human being harms his body. Even though evil thoughts are directed at another person, he damages himself. That is inevitable, because our thoughts are active in our own body.

A positive thought also creates energy. This can have a healing effect on our body and on others, if the thought is loving, po-

sitive, forgiving. Lying is having two contradictory thoughts in your head. The first thought is the one that arises from the truth, and which, for example, knows how a situation really is or was. The second thought is based on deceit. The sensitive person certainly notices if he is or isn't lying. In the brain these two thoughts are opposed, as enemies.

The lie detector is based on the measurable differences in tension that arise from this. As soon as the two thoughts are confronted, a tension is created in the brain, an extra strong electrical charge. Via the nervous system this charge travels through the body. The whole body becomes charged: the heart beats faster, the stomach cramps, the muscles are tense, the eyes move restlessly, the pulse increases. The glands produce an extra substance, creating acids that are harmful to the body. You may be able to mislead other people, but you can't mislead your own body. That is impossible. When you lie, a number of things happen, even when you are not aware of them or suppress them. Even when you think nothing is happening, or believe you can lie unrestrained. Lying eats away the body, it fills the body with harmful energy.

UNIVERSAL AND JUST

The Light that human beings carry in their heart is an electrical force of a very high vibration, charged with wisdom and love. The lie and the Light cannot radiate from the heart simultaneously. Hence

Human duality.
Charles
Delporte,
Damme, Belgium.
Photo Pentagram.

lying is twice harmful: it harms the body and it forms an obstacle to the Light. Lying and wisdom never go together. Lying starts with minor alterations of the truth, with exaggeration. When this is successful, it is repeated. Repetition binds. Exaggerations become white lies, white lies become lies, lies become deceit – it starts as a pebble and ends in a destructive landslide.

We carry our own lie detector with us. Every inner conflict is unfailingly expressed and has a destructive effect on our body, our life and the lives of those around us. Whoever really wants to know if something is true, can consult his own detector. If he can not feel it, he can relearn by being observant of his body's language. That language is universal and always just.

In this way the body, the many innermost feelings of the soul, speak to us in their language. Through this detour, the nature soul tells us what is and what is not good for us. The language of the new soul, the tongue of the soul, ema-

nates from the Light: It has been forgotten for so long that the human being can often hear no more than a quiet whisper of it. That language is always true, it is always aimed at the most noble, the innermost depths of the human being. If any of that language resounds in the personality, it will start listening ever more. It would like nothing better than to encompass its truth. Truth is often heart-rending, but it cleanses. Whoever admits truth feels initially defenceless. But after a while a deep longing for truth grows, because it is both 'sweet' and provides a great sense of freedom. In this a great joy can be found!

In this reclaimed space one's own situation can be clearly perceived. And exactly in those moments, when all defence mechanisms of the I-being are powerless, the human being experiences the first impressions of the original, coming new man. He knows that there is a long path of development ahead, but the certainty that this is what he has been longing for so long encourages him. Thus it is clear that time and again truth emerges victoriously.

INSPIRATION

Whoever has had the opportunity to enter the Pantheon in Rome will have been touched by the huge dome, in the middle of which there is a circular opening measuring over nine meters. The light entering through this opening evokes a wonderful atmosphere. Immediately the question arises: what has inspired the creator of this special dome?

Inscriptions only indicate that the first patron was Agrippa, son in law of the emperor August, who started it around the year 27 BC. He had the Pantheon built as a temple for all Gods. The building the visitor enters today is at least a century and a half more recent, as, through the ages, many embellishments and renovations have been realised.

Yet even the change from a 'pagan' temple into a Christian church has not been able to remove the wonderful atmosphere. A contemplator may inadvertently wonder what the builder wanted to express, what inspired him. Could the light have inspired him as it inspired Jacob Boehme, who broke through to new consciousness, when he saw the light reflected in a tin bowl fifteen centuries later?

For the Spanish painter Salvador Dali a visit to the Pantheon led to two paintings. About his 'Pantheon of damned barrows' he says: *'It is the most glorious demonstration of my mystical vision. I am*

fully convinced that heaven is located in the centre of the bosom of the human being who possesses faith, for my mysticism is not only religious, but nuclear and hallucinogenic as well. In gold, in painting the weak clockworks or in my visions of Perpignan railway station I discovered the same truth.' The other painting, the 'Cracked Raphaellesque head' shows the head of a saint. On the inside it looks like the Pantheon. One might conclude that the hole in the dome coincides with the place of the fontanel. Could it possibly refer to an opening for the light? To a consciousness other than that, which is determined by the senses? Might it also have been the intention of the painter to express this? In this respect, Dali himself says simply: *'As a surrealist painter I myself never have the slightest notion of what my paintings mean.'* Herewith he contradicts his own view reflected above, but does not necessarily deny the meaning of the painting.

Can an interpretation of a painting then still make sense? In his diary the painter Johfra writes: *'Within me supplies always seem to exist. For when I only think of painting, I almost drown in a flood that surges up from my unconscious. I just have to open up and ideas start flowing.'* That to which the painter has opened up, can be seen directly on the canvas. Johfra indicates that his inspiration stems from the unconscious. He names it and the contemplator does the same. *'If you think that I painted a chicken, it is a chicken.'* But, these notions do not always coincide, as

Head of Raphael,
Salvador Dali,
1951. Private
collection,
England.

is reflected in another remark in Johfra's diary: *'I believe that Pierre Borgue (author of the book 'Johfra, on the border of adventure' about the life and work of Johfra – ed.) sees his gnosticism-dualism embodied in my paintings. And in the way he explains everything, he is perfectly right. It is only such a pity that it differs so*

very much from what I intended to express in these paintings.'

When he was sixty-nine, Johfra emphasised that inspiration is received: *'My work gains in intensity, when I can empty myself entirely.'* The fact that it may be hard for an artist to work out whether his

inspiration comes from the outside or from within becomes clear from the following fragment in his diary: *'I am the plaything of diverse forces in my being that alternately gain the upper hand. I don't believe that it is paranoia or consciousness splitting nor influences from outside (as occultists would like to believe), but an abundance of possibilities, inspiration and notions.'*

INSPIRATION FROM ESOTERIC LITERATURE

Usually, in esoteric literature the basic assumption is that inspiration comes from the outside and that we thereby connect with a thought, a feeling or an entity. Depending on the kind of inspiration, concepts like overshadowing, psychic, and prophetic channelling crop up. The first two concepts refer to compulsion and lack of freedom. Johfra speaks about what overshadowing can effectuate after he has met the painter Giger: *'He is a genius, totally original and convincing. Although still very young, he looks like a small, frightened and completely extinguished old guy. Bent, with timid blue eyes, pale face and grey hair, he makes an impression as if bled dry and of not having very long to live. He gives the impression of being heavily overshadowed. I have read that he makes all his work intoxicated by opium.'*

The inspiration received by a medium extinguishes his own consciousness. The will is temporarily switched off and the bodies of the personality are taken over

by a disembodied entity. The price paid here is very high: a great loss of energy and the will being tied to the whims of the entity concerned.

In channelling – a person then serves as a channel for inspiration – we can also speak of (strong) ties, while one's own consciousness is maintained. Then the question what one opens up to is very relevant. Because the quality of the inspiration is determined by the level of inner development of those who serve as channels. It is very luciferic: the purer or more sublime his or her inner state, the more impressive the book, the more beautiful and imposing the work of art and the more melodious the music that he or she reproduces.

But however pure or sublime, the Old Testament yet distinguishes between true and false prophets. Here, too, the question crops up: with which spirit is the prophet linked? The pure meaning of the word 'inspiration' indicates just that: inspirare, (Latin) meaning to inhale. The derivative word 'spiritus' means breath as well as spirit.

In this respect, prophetic works may hold remarkable surprises. Regarding the Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross, J van Rijckenborgh writes in *The New Sign* that J V Andreae was not the author of this work. He says: *'This alchemical wedding of the symbolic Christian Rosycross has always accompanied humanity as a sublime part of the Universal Teachings. [...] Andreae has, the day "shown to him", and based on the develop-*

The Pantheon in Rome. In the dome with a diameter of 43 meters, daylight enters via an opening in its summit.

ment of the work of the Universal Brotherhood, done nothing but take care of the publication of the eternal truth in his way. And we focus on this publication to propagate the same truth in the Modern Spiritual School.’ Rudolf Steiner also remarks in this context, that it would be nonsense to believe that the spirit of J V Andreae created this work. *‘Johann Valentin Andreae can be compared to the secretary who wrote Napoleon’s letters. But Napoleon was alive when he dictated his letters, while the one who dictated the Alchemical Wedding was not a physical personality. A young man lends his hand, so to speak, to a spiritual being and is then able to write down such lofty thoughts.’*

Thus a human being is left to his own devices. He has to make up his own mind, he has to decide for himself from which source he will be nourished, from which source he will receive his inspiration. He can only recognise what is living within himself, although perhaps only in principle. That is what matters to him at that very moment. To have knowledge of the

ultimate goal and to just leave it at that will not bring this recognition any closer, but it does stimulate taking a step in the direction of the goal. To achieve this recognition, his mind should be clear. Not be tainted or besmeared by thoughts or desires, the source of which he cannot retrieve. Clarity, purity and emptiness are the basic qualities needed for pure inspiration stemming from impulses from the original, divine life field. This inspiration can have a different effect on different people. Paul remarks about this: *‘To one the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.’*

Thus we may conclude that one is inspired to create and another to explain. Experiencing a work of art may relink a spectator with the source of inspiration.

SOURCES:

Johfra, *Hoogste lichten en diepste schaduwen* (Highest lights and deepest shadows). Kosmos 2001.

G. Bordewijk, *Commentaar op de Chymische Bruiloft* (Commentary to the Alchemical Wedding), Zevenster 1987.

1Corinthians 12:10.

SPEAKING IS SILVER, SILENCE IS GOLDEN

*Whoever entered the school of Pythagoras was not allowed to speak for the first two years. It was assumed that the human being usually spoke out of turn and should first learn to listen to the 'voice of God within himself'. This is pointedly illustrated in the tale of young Samuel, who is called three times and only recognises the voice of God the fourth time at the direction of his master Eli.*¹

Speaking is lead. Alchemy reveals how the base metal lead can be transformed into the precious metal gold, or how an impure human being can change into a human being in which the divine light has been liberated.

In various religions it is said that human speech can be so base that it is better to remain silent. In the proverbs of Solomon it is written: *'When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is prudent.'*² And when Jesus speaks of purity he says: *'Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.'*³

These texts show us that speaking easily brings forth impurity. The inner impurity is made visible and tangible. Even more so when you notice that thinking uses 'thinking matter' or 'thinking ether', just as emotion is linked to the astral forces.

For the person who listens, this means that he is linked with the forces emanating from the speaker. He may for example partake of the discontent and the pro-

blems of the speaker and is thereby influenced in his own way of thinking, feeling and acting.

Speaking is silver, silence is golden. This proverb indicates that remaining silent cannot be surpassed by speaking. In numerology, silver is the semiprecious metal that symbolises duality. So does the number 2. Silence, however, is golden and symbolises unification: the number 1. When someone begins to recognise that in his speaking and listening he has the choice to link himself with impurity or with purity, his consciousness may change because of that realisation. Imagine that he decides to link himself exclusively with pure thoughts and feelings and is capable of doing so. Then his speech will also reflect this purity. Of this speech it can be said that it is silver. It will create a sparkle. His speech shall be as silver. Speaking becomes even more impressive if we realise that the voice is a creative organ.

SPEAKING IS CREATING

Ordinary speech is nourished by consciousness forces in the spleen-liver system. Here desire, lust for power and self-maintenance rule supreme. Speech that is silver, on the other hand, is nourished by the purified heart and the purified mind. That this is not an easy task is shown by the tale of 'The three foolish wishes'.⁴ A poor woodcutter is granted three wishes by the god Jupiter. He takes council with his wife, and both imagine themselves to

Basin with three
streams entering
and five streams
flowing out.
Photo Pentagram.

be rich. They decide to sleep on it for a night before formulating their wishes. But while enjoying a glass of wine they lose themselves in trifling thoughts that they express as wishes. The fairytale therefore ends with the words: *'And hence it does not befit, for miserable blinded folk, imprudent, hasty and insecure, to express wishes and call upon the gifts of heaven, which most are ill equipped to use.'*

In this fairytale it is shown that thinking, feeling and speaking are not noncommittal, but subject to the law of cause and effect. Hence speaking is creating. Of decisive importance is the question on which level that process of creation takes

place: is it a constructive creation or a destructive one? That is why for example Lao Tzu says: *'He who speaks little is "spontaneous" and natural.'* *'Those who speak little, because they are conscious of these things, because they know what they are doing and are aware of their responsibility, remain themselves and are completely natural. Then the foundation is present for liberating self-realisation.'*⁵

Not every word can always be spoken just like that. This is shown by the use and the name JHWH or Jahweh. This name is never spoken by the adherents of the Jewish faith but replaced by 'Lord' or 'the Powerful'. That is not only a form of re-

spect, but stems from the realisation that human beings are not capable of correctly pronouncing the name of God. When he received a new consciousness the apostle Paul said: *'And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise [...] and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter.'*⁶

SPEAKING IS GOLDEN

Speaking that is golden is not for the earthly human being. God has made creation by speaking the Word. The words *'And God said'* precede every act of creation in the first chapter of Genesis to indicate that His speech has creative power. And the Gospel of John starts: *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.'*⁷

In the New Testament Jesus speaks with creative power. To the leper He says: *'I will; be clean.'* To the cripple: *'I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home.'* And to the wind on the lake: *'Peace! Be still!'*⁸ And it was done.

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

The words of Jesus receive a special meaning in the human being who has become inwardly still. Then, silence is not only keeping one's mouth shut, but especially the calming of thoughts and emotions. And these can only become calm if one is inwardly cleansed. In this silence another, divine consciousness is addressed. Then he hears *'I will; be clean'* and *'rise'*, return to the Father's House in

new strength. And to the storm in his own being he hears the words *'Peace! Be still!'* spoken in order for a new consciousness to spring forth. *'Whoever works with that power creates something, makes something come into existence, calls something to life. He manifests something. [...] That is the foundation, the one absolute basis, of all gnostic activity: the Word. Wherever the Gnosis manifests itself, there the creative Word is spoken, there exists the fundamental force.'*⁹

¹ Samuel 3:1-10

² Proverbs 10:19

³ Matthew 15:11

⁴ Charles Perrault, Tales of Mother Goose.

⁵ J van Rijckenborgh, C de Petri, *The Chinese Gnosis* Haarlem, Rozekruis Pers, 1996, p.246

⁶ 2 Corinthians 12:3,4

⁷ John 1:1-3

⁸ Mark 1:41, Mark 2:11, Mark 4:39

⁹ J van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnosis in Present-day Manifestation*, p.146. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 1980.

