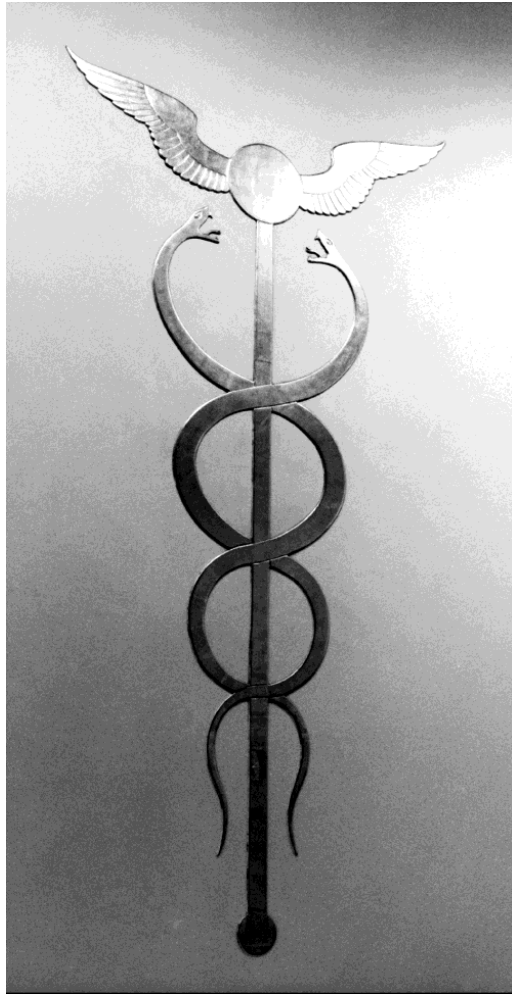


Konrad Dietzfelbinger

**The Spiritual School
of the
Golden Rosycross**



The staff of Hermes (Mercury). This very expressive symbol with several levels of meaning represents, for example, the movement of the human being and of all of humanity through the various world periods from the origin in the divine world up to the nadir in the material world and back to the origin. It also represents the spiritual path, and thus this symbol also brings to expression the development of the transfigured human being.

The Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross

LECTORIUM ROSICRUCIANUM

A Spiritual Community of the Present

Konrad Dietzfelbinger

Translated from German

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Whenever a gender-specific term is used in this book, it should be understood as referring to all genders, unless the context indicates otherwise.

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Declaration of Principles of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum has taken its name from the classical definition of “Rosycross” or “Christian Rosycross.” The Lectorium Rosicrucianum takes the point of view that this name did not belong as a family name to any person having actually existed, but that it relates to a certain spiritual directedness.

We call ourselves Rosicrucians to indicate that Jesus Christ is a living factor in our lives and that we want to go his path in practice. For that reason the name Christian is used.

The Path of Christ is a way, a method, an attitude of life, a religious conviction directed at “working on the rose.” The rose is a latent principle that rests in every person and on which basis the childship of God can be realized. One can find this principle in every human being.

“Working on the rose” in the power and the grace of Christ and according to the indications of the classical wisdom, the Universal Teaching, gives everyone who wants the opportunity to attain the great purpose for which every human being is born. As the prologue of the Gospel according to John says: “To all who received him, he gave power to become children of God.” This whole aim can be understood by the name “Christian Rosycross.”

Introduction

All falsehood is condemned to die; all that is born of the eternal sun heart of the father is called to life.

(Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Call of the Brotherhood of the Rosycross*)

Longing

The most important question a human being can ask himself is: How do I live in accordance with my true essence? How do I live in accordance with my actual identity? This true identity is something eternal in the human being of which he is generally unconscious but which still urges him to become conscious and realized: the still undeveloped “image of God”¹ as the Bible expresses it.

The human being also has a false identity consisting of his egocentric desires, interests, and adaptations. The question of the life in accordance with one’s essence does not seek to investigate how this false identity is to be realized, how the egocentric needs and interests of the human being are best satisfied, or how to respond in the most conventional manner.

On the contrary, the question of the life in accordance with one’s essence puts into question a life that only consists of the satisfaction of needs and interests and the adaptation to convention. It demands an answer as to whether such a life

really corresponds to the essence of the human being, to his actual possibilities, to his true self.

The human being can answer this penetrating question, this deepest urge to realize his true identity, in a thousand different ways. In general he projects his longing onto things that cannot possibly still this longing and goes from disappointment to disappointment. Some put their hopes on career, power, riches, and success: on aspects of their false identity. But the call from the innermost essence cannot be answered through even the greatest power, riches, security, and success.

Many hope for the fulfillment of their deepest longing through interpersonal relationships. But feelings of harmony, love, trust, and recognition, as beautiful as they may be, do not quiet the urge of the human being for the realization of his true self. The longing for the life in accordance with one's essence is also projected onto scientific knowledge, technological progress, the establishment of appropriate social systems, or humanitarian activity in service of the sick, poor, and weak. Here also the realization will fail in the long run, for even the greatest scientific knowledge, the most refined technology, the best political system, and the most self-sacrificial humanitarian help cannot enable the true self to come to life.

Furthermore, the efforts to answer the innermost urge for the life in accordance with one's essence through religious beliefs are countless. Yet even though many religious people believe they are saved in principle, they notice that in spite of their faith and the religious rituals, the

experience of a life in harmony with eternity fails to appear. Therefore, they project this life to the “time” after death. They hope that what has been denied them in this life will appear after death: the realization of the image of God, which the human being essentially is.

But why should the image of God (the divine in the human being with the qualities of infinite love, wisdom, and freedom) suddenly unfold after death if it was not unfolded during life? The projection and shifting of this condition to a life after death even prevents its unfolding during the present life—and thereby also after death.

Ever greater numbers of religious people come to this insight and therefore plunge into esoteric methods to realize the true self in the present. For example, some suppose to be able to gain entry into the essential life through the awakening and schooling of supersensible organs so that the true self would come to the fore and be active.

One can investigate the countless paths that are taken in this regard. Then one discovers that many paths already by their presuppositions alone cannot possibly lead to the goal aimed for. For example, exercises that refine the mind, feeling, and will of the egocentric human being are not suitable to the unfolding of the innermost essence.

For in this way, only qualities that are not of this innermost essence are developed further. Even though the consciousness may then also expand and new dimensions may open to the human being, with those presuppositions, however, only the old can be expanded. The longed for new true life will not come to the fore.

Other paths to consciousness expansion act in just the opposite way. They do not intend to refine and develop the faculties of the egocentric human being further, but, on the contrary, to consciously let go of them so that other powers can come to the fore that had been inactive before then. What is decisive here, however, is for which plane and which powers the egocentric qualities are let go of. In many cases they are not let go for the innermost essence of the human being but for contacts to spheres that do not belong to this innermost essence. If the human being opens himself to the world of the dead and hopes for demonstrations from it, if he opens himself to so-called “higher regions” and expects prophetic inspiration, if he makes himself a channel for influences from these “higher regions” and channels messages, then certainly in many cases, results, insights, and new sensations will appear. Thereby, however, the innermost essence of the human being is just as little unfolded as before.

Tranquility

Now if all these efforts and ways do not lead to the life in accordance with one’s essence inwardly foreseen—then how should it be recognized and realized?

It is done by recognizing that all those efforts and ways are insufficient and by no longer practicing them. For only then does the true self hidden in the human being receive a chance to become ever more conscious and then also to live. After many fruitless material, religious, and esoteric attempts, countless seekers for the life in accordance with

their essence have penetrated to this insight or are close to it.

They have a presentiment of their actual identity and have recognized through experience that it is realized neither through material nor conceptual and interpersonal happiness nor through a connection with the beyond, the so-called “higher regions.” Therefore they stop striving for these goals, ideals, and improvements and try to come to rest within themselves. For they sense that this tranquility is the prerequisite to the stirring and unfolding of the true self.

Here it is not a question of a pronounced quietism, a withdrawal into inwardness that leaves the world to itself, but of a quiet contemplation of the world without becoming party to one goal or another. Human beings who have come to this attitude on the basis of their life experience are not just resigned, but now invest all their energy—as paradoxical as this may sound—in an “attentive waiting”: an awake state in which, on the one hand, they observe and recognize the connections in everything that happens in life and, on the other hand, give more and more space to the inwardly arising impulses of the life in accordance with their essence.

Such a condition of intense, conscious wakefulness and waiting has been described in world history ever and again. The “not-doing” of the sage is spoken of in Lao Tse’s *Tao Te Ching*²: not to be idle but to abandon all activity that seeks for the life in accordance with one’s essence in the wrong direction. Only thereby does Tao receive the chance to unfold in the human being.

With Buddha, there is the dissolution of the human being's identification with the world on this side and with the beyond. He experiences that the life in accordance with one's essence is not to be found in the activities on the five planes of the ordinary life of the false identity: not on the plane of the body, not on the plane of perceptions, not on the plane of feelings, not on the plane of thoughts, and not on the plane of the ego-consciousness—be it in the coarser or in the finer regions of the world.³ Thereupon, the human being suspends all activities on these planes with which he hoped to find the life in accordance with his essence.

In the Kabbalah, this suspension of all egocentric efforts for redemption or enlightenment is called “tikkun.” It is the “doing for nothing,” a life that never expects a reward.⁴

In the “Phaedo,” Socrates spoke of the philosopher who out of love for wisdom, for the life in accordance with his essence, gives up all expectations from the transitory life and all fears arising from it and quietly opens himself for the eternal. The philosopher “dies” to these expectations and fears and comes to an eternal life.

Jesus—who is to be seen as the prototype of the human being who realizes the true self—explained that the human being had to lose his life “for my sake,” then he would keep it. Whoever loses his false identity for the sake of the true self will keep his actual identity, the true self.⁵

The Cathars of the Middle Ages designated this condition as the “endura”—which is not suicide (as this process has been misunderstood) but the attitude, born of experience, to give no more energy to activities that seek for the eternal life in the transitory world and to “wait” for the life in

accordance with one's essence to unfold.

In all these traditions, the human being withdraws from the agitation of this world and the beyond, which he had maintained through his own striving, and lets the life of his essence ripen within him. This life is another power and dimension of existence. If it ripens, then the transitory life in this world and the beyond will also change. The pupil of the modern Spiritual School of the Rosycross behaves accordingly. For example, in the book *Dei Gloria Intacta* is written: "It is suggested that, for once, he shall not associate that longing with any particular tenet, with any special trend of thought....Any desire (must be) neutralized, not by suppressing it, but in such a way that there is neither approval nor disapproval, but only vigilant, objective observation."⁶

Community

Human beings who have come to such an attitude on the basis of their life experiences have always come together in communities. On the one hand, because people with similar experiences and understanding attract each other. On the other hand, because they also want to gradually experience and realize the life in accordance with their essence from this common point of departure. They feel they are standing on a new path, which is to be explored and walked.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum is such a community in the present. Its members want to explore and walk a path

together that leads to the realization of the life in accordance with their essence. The Lectorium Rosicrucianum is called a “spiritual school” because this life in accordance with one’s essence is a life in a spiritual dimension and one that works out of this spiritual dimension into the dimension of the transitory world.⁷ The path into this spiritual dimension is comparable to a school: although not a school in which knowledge and abilities are learned and examinations taken but a school of experience. Through experiences with influences from the world of the eternal spirit and experiences in the transitory world of appearances, the pupil of this school learns to give his true essence space to unfold: “The School of the Rosycross appeals to three faculties which slumber in the mysterious microcosmic system of man as if in a sleep of death:

the faculty of the new will; the faculty of the new wisdom; the faculty of the new activity.”⁸

This book seeks to explain in detail the beginning, the goal, the path, the organization, and the appearance of this spiritual school and its members.



Among other meanings, the Rosycross is the symbol of the human being on the spiritual path. On the “cross” of the natural personality—at the intersection of the vertical with the horizontal—is found the “rose of the heart,” the germ of the spirit-soul human being. At present it is undeveloped in most human beings. On the spiritual path, it unfolds and blooms: A new consciousness and being develop, and the cross of the old, mortal personality is transfigured into the new, golden cross of the immortal personality.

Principles of the Universal Teaching

External Assessment

Looking at the Lectorium Rosicrucianum superficially from the outside, it can appear strange and incomprehensible, and misunderstandings can occur. This is understandable, if one considers the basic principles of the members of this school compared to the goals of outsiders who look at and judge such a school.

A human being who is perhaps entirely caught in the conventions of society and believes he can find his happiness in riches, success, power, and security will necessarily regard to regard the member of a spiritual school who consciously separates from such striving as, at least, not being entirely “up to date.”

Mainstream psychology, which does not think beyond birth and death and reduces the human being to a bundle of biological suppositions, drives, desires, and thoughts, between which certain mechanisms are active, also sees him within this perspective. From this standpoint, a human being who searches for the life in accordance with his essence and sees it in a greater context than in the span between birth and death appears as someone who has been disappointed by life— someone who has been shortchanged, who cannot accept reality, and who has to compensate for his deficiencies. Indeed, such a psychic disposition is also very often really the starting point for a

turning to religion and esotericism, and this turning may be nothing but a flight from insurmountable daily problems. Yet in general, living in accordance with one's essence cannot be explained from such a deficiency, but rather from the deficiency of "normal" life as opposed to the spiritual life that is latent in the human being. That both deficits—the one of the person disappointed by life and the one of the person who does not realize a life in accordance with his deepest essence—often coincide and strengthen each other is something else again.

The difference between a person who is bound to a religious system of belief and a member of a spiritual school is essentially more complicated. For the question of the life lived in accordance with the essence, worked into consciousness from the true self, may yet be still or again alive in the believer, yet his faith claims he is already saved or eventually will be saved in the beyond.

The religious person senses intuitively that the pupil of the Spiritual School starts out from the same basic question as he does but comes to other answers. Thus, the religious person has to take the pupil of the Spiritual School seriously as a brother in the spirit, because the inner point of departure is the same. But as a rule, the religious person does not understand the goal of the other, because he himself projects the image of God on the transitory human being and hopes he will someday live eternally in the beyond. He also does not understand the path that the other goes because it differs from his own convictions. Any understanding would already mean a certain loosening of the certainty of faith that is decisive in his life.

In earlier times the classification of the other as a “heretic” who strayed from the “only true doctrine” and the emotional charge of this verdict sprang from such considerations.

Someone striving in an occult or esoteric manner will also recognize the spiritual student as related in spirit, as one who starts off from the same question of the life in accordance with one’s essence. But because he follows with energy and enthusiasm his own method to find this life, he will not be able to understand the attitude of patient waiting and discernment that the spiritual student has adopted after following many wrong tracks. To him also, such a spiritual student is a poor fool because he seems to pass by the great possibilities of consciousness expansion, mysticism, or magic.

Basic Experiences of a Spiritual Student

It is hard to do justice to a spiritual school like the one of the Rosycross. For the experiences of its members and therewith their views of the world and their standards do not coincide with the views of the world and standards of the majority of human beings. But despite this, all human beings can at least have a presentiment of these experiences, because they originate from the innermost essence common to everyone. They are only mostly covered over or not admitted because other experiences or goals in life are still more important for now, or because unsuitable ways to the life in accordance with one’s essence are taken. But because the experiences of a spiritual student exist as

possibilities in every human being— even will inescapably be had by everyone one day as they correspond to the inherent aim of the human being— everyone can also understand them in principle. He only has to be prepared to distance himself from his own view of the world and his own ideals at least on a trial basis in order to admit the possibility of such experiences.

Divine World

The basic experience of a spiritual student is: There is a life in accordance with the essence of the human being, a life that consists of the unfolding of his innermost, deepest talents. These talents are of a spiritual kind.

The concept “spiritual” needs to be explained. What is meant here are not intellectual faculties or mental images and thought forms but indestructible creative “lines of force” that in their totality form the eternal, divine world. They are structures, “information,” that at the same time delineate unfolding energies and that are continually active, similar to an electromagnetic field. They are simultaneously the first causes, information, power, and consciousness at the basis of all being, or also, to speak with the words of the prologue of the Gospel of John—Word, Life, and Light. These creative, indestructible lines of force are what are called “spiritual” here, and it is clear that they differ from the usual thought forms of the human being, although he can grasp them mentally under certain conditions.

But human thought forms and these spiritual lines of force

are analogous in so far as both are creative, living, and conscious structures. It is possible to designate these structures with “Word” (Logos), “Life,” and “Light,” because the common human words also represent information, forces, and aspects of consciousness. But common human words are only an analogy to the divine word and something much weaker. The divine “Word,” “Life,” and “Light” represent the totality of the spiritual force lines of the world that created the world and still continue to create the world, to develop it, to maintain it, and to urge it to consciousness.

The innermost essence of the human being is also such a “creative line of force”; only this true spiritual essence of the human being is presently latent. He is inwardly connected thereby with similar structures in other human beings, with the divine world, and with the countless beings and hierarchies therein. In the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, this original spiritual world is also called the “divine nature order” or “super-nature.” In this context, the Bible speaks of the “Kingdom of God”; Lao Tse of “Tao”; the Buddhists of “nirvana”; the Cabbalists of “en soph”; and Plato of the world of “ideas.”

The spirit as Word, Life, and Light expresses itself in and through the so-called “primal substance”—matter-energy in various gradations of density. In this manner, energetic-material worlds that are pure reflections of the divine “Word” arose before the world of appearances known to us with a total harmony between “spirit” and “matter” as well as between being and appearance. The primal substance in comparison to the creative spirit is like a shell in comparison to the nucleus, the outer in comparison to the

inner, shadow in comparison to light. Although the primal substance, energy-matter, is eternal like the spirit and necessary to the self-expression of the spirit, it is nevertheless created by and dependent on the spirit, not the other way around.

Non-divine World

But there are worlds that are not exact expressions of the spiritual lines of force, the “world Word.” The material world in which we live is an example of such a world that does not purely reflect the unfolding process of the “Word,” indeed, it even forms an antithesis to it.

How is this possible? Because the creative spiritual lines of force always create new lines of force out of themselves. Divine spirit itself is untouchable and only follows its own being. It generates “creatures,” “life waves” as they are called in esotericism, just as a stone thrown into water generates waves in concentric circles that distance themselves ever further from their origin. The creatures are also creative. But they can “detach” themselves from their origin because of their creative freedom and go their own ways oriented to themselves. One of these life waves is the human life wave. A part of it is developing in harmony with the world of the original spirit. Another part has separated from its origin. This is our humanity.

Although the human beings of our world are spiritual beings in principle and live out of the spiritual world—for they arose out of it as “creatures”—they always bend the

impulses of the spiritual world and falsify them. They have made themselves increasingly independent in face of the laws of the spiritual world and because they are no longer in harmony with them, have lost their consciousness of them. From this arose an energetic-subtle-material world—the beyond—and a gross-material world—the world on this side. These are not pure expressions of the laws of the spiritual world, but mirror the egocentricity of the human life wave and the resulting distortion of the original spiritual world.

A creative spiritual line of force lies at the basis of every human being, also at the basis of every species of animal and plant. The so-called laws of nature are also such structures that regulate the unfolding of nature and its creatures and drive it forward. But because they mirror the spiritual world not in a pure but in a “broken” way through the principle of self-maintenance, the forms of expression created by them are mortal. If they would purely mirror the process of unfolding of the divine “Word,” then an uninterrupted stream of becoming would appear. The primal substance would never condense too much; a being would never harden and rigidify too much, and it would never come to an abrupt dissolution of the rigidified, to “death.”

But the processes of unfolding of the creative spiritual beings are slowed down through their egocentricity. Thereby the energy substance in which they express themselves becomes ever denser, and also their forms of appearance become ever denser and more rigid. The original spirit cannot use them any longer and withdraws from them. This is death. All forms of the beyond and the

world on this side are mortal: minerals, plants, animals, human beings, planets, and suns.

So that the human spiritual beings can unfold further and gather experiences, new forms have to be made for them ever again. In the world on this side, such forms originate from procreation and conception. In the beyond, forms of subtle matter are built up for the spiritual beings corresponding to the experiences they had in former lives. These forms of subtle matter step into the forms on this side, into the bodies originating from procreation, as into vessels fitting them and enliven them. This happens before and at birth. At death, the dissolution of the form of gross matter, they again step out of this “vessel” to die themselves in the beyond. Thus arises the constant change between birth and death, death and birth, a wandering of the human spiritual being through the world on this side and the beyond, which results in the chain of embodiments, reincarnation.

Furthermore, the self-maintenance of the beings in the beyond and on this side creates opposition between them. For the interest of one being is not that of another. If they would live without self-maintenance purely according to the divine laws, an unbreakable harmony would reign among these beings. But as one interest is opposed to another, constant conflicts are the result.

The world on this side and the beyond thus together form the non-divine world, which stands in self-maintenance in opposition to the divine world. It is a “dialectical” world filled with antitheses in constant conflict with each other and thereby held in constant movement. Its characteristics

are change, opposition, and the law of the alternation between birth and death, death and birth. “Mankind manifests itself in a dialectic field of life, both on this side and on yonder side of the veil of death. The dialectic sphere of life involves a constant interchange between the two poles of life; it involves the fact that all things, all values, all situations, turn into their opposites! Day becomes night—light becomes darkness—good becomes evil, etc., and vice versa! There are no static values in our field of life.”⁹

The Beyond—the “Reflection Sphere”

To the beyond belong, firstly, the invisible, subtle-material forms in which the structures of spiritual force lines broken by egocentricity express themselves. The subtle-material forms are the causes of the visible, gross-material forms.

To the beyond belongs, secondly, “karma” or destiny. The spiritual laws ever again correct the human spiritual beings deviating from the original spiritual laws in egocentricity, be it through “strokes of fate,” be it through death. The entirety of these corrections is called karma, destiny, or fate. It is nothing other than the reaction of the original spiritual world to the human spiritual beings’ deviations from the laws of the super-nature.

Karma is active so that in the long run, the human being learns through experience where he deviates from the spiritual law and what the consequences are. So ultimately he will also learn to unfold in harmony with the original spirit after all. Then he will again become conscious of the spirit and no longer be subject to the law of reincarnation.

All gross-material expressions of the beings in the world on this side also have a subtle-material aspect and are mirrored in the subtle-material realms. For this reason, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross also designates the beyond as the “reflection sphere.” The thoughts, feelings, will impulses, and actions of the human being have a subtle-material component and thereby belong to the reflection sphere. Moreover, they do not exhaust themselves the moment of their execution but continue to be active in a transformed way as elements in the reflection sphere. All the thoughts that were thought, the feelings that were felt, the will impulses that were lived, and the activities that were executed in the millennia of human history continue to be active as components of the beyond.

Since death is only the separation of the more subtle aspects of the human being—thoughts, feelings, and energies—from his gross-material body, the dead, as the thoughts, feelings and energies of the human being separated from the material body, also belong to the reflection sphere until they have dissolved there as forms.

The fact that the subtle-material forms of the beyond are invisible, “supersensible,” has led to the reflection sphere often being and having been referred to as “higher worlds,” even as “spiritual worlds,” in esoteric literature. As will be clear from the foregoing, however, these “higher” worlds are in no way identical with the original world of the imperishable spirit.

Microcosm

The human being is designated as a “microcosm” in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross. This is a concept and a truth with a long tradition. The macrocosm as the totality of the two nature orders, the original divine nature and the non-divine nature with the beyond and the world on this side, is expressed in the human being as a microcosm. As a creation of God, the highest spiritual plane, the human being is in principle a creative line of force, a thought of the divine mind, an “image” of God.

As a biological being having come forth in the course of evolution from the world of self-maintaining matter, he is a body with feelings, aspirations of the will, and thoughts—an egocentric personality of the world on this side. And as the location of the working of karma and the subtle-material mental and emotional collective creations of humanity, he is a focal point of the beyond, just as he in turn maintains and enlarges the “reflection sphere” through his behavior.

A perfect human microcosm is a spiritual being who lives in harmony with the realm of its origin, the world of the spirit, who is conscious of its lines of force and unfolds them without egocentric distortion. Its body or personality as well as its subtle-material life essence or soul are pure expressions of the spirit. A perfect human microcosm does not have any karma; it is not subject to death. But present-day human beings are microcosms who arose from a disturbed relation between spirit and matter and who even continually contribute to maintaining this disturbance. The spirits of this humanity have made themselves independent

in the face of the world of the spirit. Their forms of appearance—soul and body—express this independence.

Thereby they deactivate the creative forces of the spirit in the microcosm. The non-divine nature order of the beyond and the world on this side, active in the microcosm as egocentric soul and personality, dominates over the divine nature order. The latter is now only still present as a latent, unconscious formula in the microcosm, which can no longer realize itself or only in a very distorted way, because it is covered over by the egocentric soul and personality. It is as if the seed of a plant, which contains the creative information of the whole plant, was hindered in its growth and only brought forth a caricature of this plant.

Abolition of a Disturbance

Nevertheless the original spiritual world is working towards an abolition of this disturbance in the world on this side and in the beyond. In the microcosm, this tendency is seen in the longing of the soul to again live out of the spirit, to relinquish its egocentricity, and to let the personality become a pure instrument for the spirit. For all power in the universe ultimately comes from the original spirit and its creative structures. Egocentric beings also are maintained by this spirit and thereby continually experience a tendency towards the removal of egocentricity. As great as the egocentricity, the resulting inertia of matter, and the distortion of the image of the spirit may be—in the end, the spiritual lines of force must and will unfold. The Divine Word, Life, and Light will be experienced and

become fully effective in the human being.

Furthermore, over time the egocentric soul experiences ever again the karmic consequences of its egocentricity: death and suffering. It will gradually learn from this, voluntarily or under compulsion, that its egocentricity is the great obstacle to the unfolding of the spirit and the cause for death and suffering. It will then gradually relinquish this egocentricity, voluntarily or under compulsion.

This tendency is strengthened in the universe by all the beings who still or again live with spirit, soul, and body in their right relationships—in other words, beings who either unfolded from the beginning without egocentricity in harmonic unity with their basic structures of spiritual force lines, or beings who corrected the disturbed relationship of the two nature orders in their microcosm on a long road back. In the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, the totality of these beings is called among other names the “Brotherhood of Life” or also “the Hierophantic Spiritual School, the Mystery School of the Christ-Hierophants, the Inner Church, the Order of Melchizedek, the Order of the Rosycross.”¹⁰

The principal task of humanity and the human being is to bring the disturbed relationship of the two nature orders in the microcosm back into order. For the tendency of development in the cosmos, in humanity, and in the human being lies in this direction. In the microcosms of our humanity, the egocentric soul and personality dominate. The human being regards both of these as his identity. But in reality his identity lies in the spiritual lines of force that

are waiting to potentially unfold in him, like a seed. They are only hindered from this by the egocentric soul and personality.

The relationship has to be reversed now: The spiritual nucleus in the human being has to unfold, cleanse the soul from its egocentricity, and thereby build up a personality that gives unobstructed expression to the spiritual lines of force. Then the real order of the microcosm would be restored. Then the human being would feel to be in harmony with himself and his deepest essence. Then he would again be connected to his inherent aim—to consciously receive the universal spirit through a soul free of egocentricity, and to consciously express it through a body free of inertia.

This condition is the result of “transfiguration”: “Transfiguration is a gnostic method of accomplishing the endura, which is the process of completely replacing the mortal, separative, earth-born human being with the original, immortal, divine being, the true Spirit-Human-Being intended by the divine plan of creation.”¹¹ This spiritual human being with soul and body is immortal and free from the law of reincarnation.

Justification for a Spiritual School

In this necessity to restore order in the human microcosm lies the justification of all spiritual schools in human history including the modern Spiritual School of the Rosycross. Spiritual schools are an expression of the universal spirit’s

tendency to overcome the egocentricity of the soul and the inertia of the body. They reinforce this tendency and are active among humanity for this purpose. They attract all human beings who want to take this tendency into account in their own microcosms. The structure of spiritual force lines at the basis of the microcosm of such human beings no longer wants to wait to unfold, urges mightily to become active, and storms against the egocentricity of the soul and the inertia of the body, like a seed that finally wants to break through the hard crust of the soil. This urging of the spiritual nucleus is expressed consciously in the human being as a longing for the realization of his actual identity. Such a human being has learned through many lives that suffering and death are the consequences of egocentricity—the obstacle preventing the unfolding of his true identity.

Since spiritual schools are an expression of the tendency of the universal spirit to overcome the egocentricity of the soul and the inertia of the body, they are in harmony with the structures of spiritual force lines, “spiritual law,” and receive their power from them. “The new will is developed in the pupil by the Spiritual School by means of the spiritual law; the new wisdom by the philosophy of the spiritual law; the new activity by the application of the spiritual law....The spiritual law can also be indicated as God, from whom we have been severed; the philosophy of the spiritual law can be indicated as Christ who in infinite love emanates from God to save us, who bends down to what is fallen; the application of the spiritual law can be indicated as the Holy Spirit which applies, executes and proceeds with the entire process of rebirth.”¹²

Spiritual schools can therefore also count on the forces of

all those beings who are in harmony with these structures of spiritual force lines and who work towards an abolition of the disturbance in the universe: the “Brotherhood of Life.” Also those who found and maintain such schools can also only be human beings that move in conscious harmony with these force structures.

Development of Humanity

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross sees the development of all of humanity with this perspective: Human beings as

“images” of God originate from the original spiritual world. Now, however, due to the misbehavior of many images of God, humanity lives in the “dialectical” world ruled by opposites, which is no longer in harmony with the divine world of the spirit. In this humanity, the cosmic relationship between the divine world on the one hand and the world on this side and the beyond on the other hand is disturbed.

But because the spiritual lines of force want to remove this disturbance, one day this will happen in all of humanity and harmony will be reestablished. “Our very enlightened and godly Father Brother Christian Rosycross has labored hard and long in order to bring about a general reformation, and in his service the brothers have gone forth in all times for the same purpose, that of establishing a world order which is ‘not of this world’, the world order of which Jesus Christ spoke.

‘Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again,

he cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven.”¹³

Spiritual schools are representatives of this tendency on the plane of matter. They help human beings to carry out the process of the removal of the disturbance and the reestablishment of harmony. All members of present-day humanity live in egocentricity of soul and inertia of body. They experience the results of this disharmony with universal law in the form of suffering and death. Many still do not see the consequences of their experiences and will have to continue to suffer from them. Some wake up, perceive the tendency of the spiritual nucleus in their own being, and try to react to it. Numerous reactions that do not lead to the goal appear. Some individuals recognize that only one reaction leads to the experience of harmony with the spirit: the relinquishing of egocentricity and inertia in favor of the tendency in the spiritual nucleus of the microcosm. Eventually, all human beings will take the right steps to the realization of their actual task in life.



Eagle in the garden of the Dutch Conference Center “Renova.” The eagle is the symbol of the masculine aspect of the spirit: creative force, which sees through everything and renews it.

Origin of the Spiritual School

Those who are guided by the light know the Christ. They can no longer lose their way, for eternity lives in them.

(Z. W. Leene)

Preconditions

As it is the task of spiritual schools to give new accents and impulses to the development of humanity, their origin can only be explained in connection with this development. On the one hand, spiritual schools are instruments of the tendency of the universal spirit to unfold the spirit within all human beings who are trapped in the world on this side and in the beyond. All beings of the original spiritual world that live out of spiritual laws and forces are actively participating with this tendency in one way or another, thus contributing to the birth of spiritual schools. On the other hand, the longing in humanity for the unfolding of the spirit, the true essence of the human being, has to have reached a certain magnitude, before an impulse from the spiritual world can ensue.

It is like in a thunderstorm: Electricity accumulates in the atmosphere—this would be comparable to the urging tendency from the spiritual world—while the earth, as the polar opposite, is simultaneously expecting this electricity—such is the longing of human beings for the unfolding of

their true essence.

The buildup of such a field of tension does not occur haphazardly but rhythmically in definite time cycles. Just as the biological development of a human being follows a certain lawfulness, so the cosmos and the spiritual field in the cosmos also follow certain patterns of unfolding. The unfolding of the spirit of humanity has to orient itself to the unfolding of the cosmic spirit field and react to it because humanity is connected to the cosmic spirit field.

This can happen harmoniously and voluntarily on the part of humanity but can also happen chaotically. It is as in school: One class follows another. A certain “curriculum” is followed, and the students are inevitably confronted with it. They can learn and understand and thereby progress in harmony with the curriculum. But they can also misunderstand or even oppose it, whereby what is heard can only create chaos in them.

The “curriculum” of the cosmic spirit is its own structure. It can be indicated with the symbols of the signs of the zodiac. The signs of the zodiac, such as Taurus, Aries, Pisces, Aquarius, designate certain aspects of the original spiritual world that become active in sequence.

But these aspects also project into the beyond, and there they become “secondary” structures of force lines. In esotericism, they are what are generally referred to as the zodiac. Thus, there is a zodiac of the primary spiritual world and a secondary projected zodiac of the subtle-material worlds. The latter represents a distortion of the original qualities of the spiritual zodiac.

When we speak here of the influences of the “curriculum”

of the spiritual world, what is meant are the influences of the primary zodiac, which influence the latent spiritual nuclei of human beings in order to bring about a reaction. Whenever one aspect of the original spiritual world withdraws and makes room for the next one, a certain tension always develops, a “thunderstorm situation” between the spiritual world “above” and humanity “below.” A new spiritual impulse urges to realization, while the true spiritual essence in the human being is touched by this urge and wants to answer it.

Turn of a Century

A very incisive “thunderstorm situation” of this nature developed in the decades around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century. Materialism had reached its peak in the 19th century. As a reaction against this, a longing for the spiritual world, whether conscious or unconscious, had grown in many human beings. This created the receptivity on the earth for impulses from the divine nature order. On the other side, a new aspect of the divine nature order stepped into the foreground: the “Aquarius” aspect. The atmosphere was loaded with this “curriculum.” The structure of the world of the spirit, its laws, qualities, and forces wanted to become conscious in the human being. This becoming conscious is the characteristic of the Aquarius aspect of the spiritual zodiac.

The term “morphogenetic field”¹⁴ coined by Rupert Sheldrake can clarify these circumstances. A morphogenetic field is a structured field composed of

mental, emotional, or energetic elements that acts on all those receptive to it, so that these contents become conscious or at least active in them. Sheldrake's morphogenetic fields are nothing other than structures of the subtle-material world. But one can also use this concept analogously on the structures of spiritual force lines. Then such a morphogenetic field of the spirit was active in the atmosphere in the decades around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century—"Aquarius" impulses from the original spiritual world were waiting to be transposed and to become conscious in humanity.

Like bolts of lightning in a thunderstorm, impulses from this field now struck and were processed by human beings receptive to them: processed in varying degrees of purity and with different stamps depending on the clarity of consciousness and the preconditions of soul and body of the recipients. One knows of similar phenomena also elsewhere in the realm of thoughts and feelings, such as when several human beings simultaneously come up with the same invention independently of each other. It "is in the air." Everywhere the soil is prepared when receptivity is present, and the "morpho-genetic field" of this invention discharges in the form of various flashes in different places that have the right polarity. C. G. Jung spoke in this context of "synchronicity."

The stirring time around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century bears witness to this spiritual thunderstorm situation and its discharge. On the one side, below, there was the feeling that everything old had lived itself out and become rigid. A "new human being" and a new society had to come. A mood of departing to new horizons was

everywhere. On the other side, above, there was the “morphogenetic field” of the spirit with contents that could nourish the longing below. An aspect of the spiritual world was becoming newly active: Aquarius demanded a related reaction from the spiritual structure within the human being.

When a flash from the spiritual atmosphere strikes a human being receptive to it, then first the rigid shell of the soul (which habits of thinking, feeling, and acting have erected around the spiritual nucleus of the human being) begins to weaken. The personal ego, the egocentric consciousness, that is, the soul trapped in the beyond and the world on this side, is broken up. Now, not only do the spiritual impulses stream into the consciousness of this human being but also impulses from the beyond that are their distorted reflections. Perhaps he projects these impulses to the outside and expects the fulfillment of his longings from changes in the social, economic, and political situation. Many ideologies in society, politics, and economics arise in this way. But if these impulses are really evaluated as a summons to change within, then there are still many possibilities to mistake the impulses from the beyond with those from the original spiritual world. It may come to a long inner struggle until an unequivocal clarity has been achieved.

All persons who react to the “thunderstorm situation” are at first wrestling consciously or unconsciously for clarity. The impulses from the world of the spirit, which lead past the world on this side and the beyond, want to be realized in a pure way. But influences from the beyond that want to put human beings under their spell are always pushing to the

fore perhaps under the pretence that they are spiritual influences.

What reactions are possible and what a process of clarification (at the end of which the impulses from the spiritual world become manifested in a pure way) looks like are here represented by way of a series of reactions that have shaped the modern world and still shape it.

Psychoanalysis

A very strong reaction to the spiritual “thunderstorm situation” was psychoanalysis. In evaluating this phenomenon, one can well recognize that the condition of the human being who receives such spiritual “flashes” decides how they are transposed. An adequate transposition can only occur if the human being develops a consciousness with the spiritual

“organs” that are adequate to perceive the field of the spirit. He will then be able to form a “world picture” that corresponds to this field of the spirit.

Sigmund Freud

A human being can also be receptive to the impulses of the spiritual world and the beyond, however, and nevertheless maintain his old materialistic picture of the world. Then he will seek to describe the spiritual impulses, if he does not altogether shut them out or repress them, and the

structures of the beyond in the framework of his materialistic picture of the world. Sigmund Freud is an example of someone who did this.

As clearly and correctly as he may have described some psychological mechanisms—their interpretation, their classification in the whole psychic picture, and the resulting therapeutic aims remain nevertheless unsatisfactory if the larger frame of the beyond working into the soul with its own laws and especially the all-encompassing world of the spirit are not taken into consideration. With the patients treated according to the Freudian method, a process of becoming conscious arises that is a caricature of a path to spiritual realization: Besides psychological mechanisms purely belonging to the world on this side, influences from the beyond come to consciousness in the soul but are not recognized as such and therefore cannot be adequately processed.

Above all, the impulses from the world of the spirit that influence the soul are then not admitted or are explained away as reactions of the human being to disappointments in the world on this side. But in reality, the decisive soul conflicts arise due to the soul not answering or not being able to answer to its inherent aim, which is to live in harmony with the spiritual world. It would depend on the soul developing a consciousness that perceives and transforms the spiritual forces active in it. Then it would gradually fulfill its inherent aim and be whole and free. Whoever denies the innermost longing of the soul for a life in the spirit and does not show it a way to fulfill this longing—even limits the soul life expressly to the world on this side—destroys instead of healing.

C. G. Jung

In contrast to this, C. G. Jung tried to include layers of soul lying deeper than the material-biological into his theories and therapies and to take into account the influences in the soul from the realities of the beyond and the spirit. He investigated old traditions and contemporary dream contents for symbols of such influences and hoped to solve spiritual crises through the interpretation of these symbols. Thereby, however, he could merely determine the psychic precipitates of the spiritual experiences of the individual and of humanity and lift them into the light of a limited rational consciousness. But becoming conscious of these precipitates without a new intuitive consciousness open to the spirit world means only a connection of the soul with its own world of images and with the past of humanity.

The appropriate answer to the world of the spirit would be that the human being develop an intuitive organ of perception that corresponds to the world of the spirit and that can perceive it purely and directly in order to recognize and dissolve in the spiritual forces the entrapment of the soul in the world on this side and in the beyond.

But Jung believed he owed it to the rational empirical science of his time to renounce statements about direct spiritual experiences and their special laws that could only be grasped intuitively, even though he himself and his patients often had such experiences. It is also indisputable that he turned to his patients with an unprejudiced love of humanity and prepared to make sacrifices and opened doors to the beyond and the spiritual world in them and

with them.

But his absolute clinging to the empirical method of science hindered him to freely acknowledge that objectively there is a beyond and a spiritual world and that they work with their own laws. (It is only a matter of learning to distinguish between objective manifestations of these worlds and subjective projections of the soul.) The spirit world is also objectively perceptible—only with an organ of perception different than the mind bound to the senses.

Artists

Some authors and artists of this time were sensitive to influences of the light of the spiritual world and influences of the shadows in the beyond related to it and fought for a distinction. They include: Friedrich Nietzsche, Gustav Meyrink, Alfred Kubin, and numerous composers like Scriabin, Satie, Debussy, as well as symbolist painters, etc. Partly spiritual impulses, partly impulses from the beyond shine through everywhere in their works. For example, Count Hermann Keyserling founded his “School of Wisdom” as a reaction to a touch through the field of the spirit without, however, in his own words, being able to gain direct access to it. We are also here reminded of the unjustly forgotten Eugen Heinrich Schmitt of Berlin in whose consciousness this field was clearly reflected.¹⁵

H. P. Blavatsky

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891) can be seen as the first great purveyor of the Aquarian impulse who recognized that it had as its goal a complete reorientation of the consciousness of humanity: a conscious directedness to the original world of the spirit as the actual home of the human being and a conquest and dissolution of the materialistic and dogmatic orientation of the egocentric soul that knows only the sense world and—after death—the transitory world of subtle matter. The actual task of the human being in the cosmic development was to become clear to humanity and to the human being who in modern times had matured principally to an individual, responsible consciousness and could consciously recognize his place in this development and cooperate in it.

This impulse was felt worldwide, in the West as well as in the East. This can be documented already by the fact that the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875 occurred in New York, that the headquarters of the Society was moved in 1882 to Adyar in India, and that H. P. Blavatsky worked the last years of her life in London.

The spiritual world from which H. P. Blavatsky received her inspirations and that worked through her also let the great traditions of the past come to life again. Madame Blavatsky drew from two great sources: from the spiritual Christianity of the West and the Eastern traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism, whereby the emphasis was placed more and more on Eastern wisdom in the course of time.

The personality of Madame Blavatsky worked like an

icebreaker in the frozen sea of dogmatic religions and materialistic science, which increasingly ruled over the thinking and feeling of humanity in the 19th century. Filled with the forces of the spiritual world, she broke through this crust and through all enmity and slander with tremendous energy.

No outer religion or dogma had priority for her. Decisive was only the inner experience with the living truth, which comes to expression in all religions ever again with other symbols and more or less veiled. Thus her motto was: No religion stands higher than truth. Essential for modern times was the formulation of this experienced truth in a living philosophy. All later, modern esoteric movements took up this first wave of the Aquarian impulse.

Isis Unveiled (1877), H. P. Blavatsky's first great book, as well as the following *Secret Doctrine* (1888) showed these components of her work: She took position against religious dogmatism and materialistic science and presented on the other hand the universal wisdom religion of all times and the philosophy of antiquity and the middle ages pertaining to the spiritual world, as they have perpetuated themselves as an underground stream up to the present.

Madame Blavatsky was also the first who began to fight against "lower occultism" in the form of spiritualism and the desires of some human beings to acquire "supersensible" faculties for ego gratification. If the cover of materialism is pulled away, the impulses from the original world of the spirit as well as the influences of the world of the beyond in the form of lower occultism, at first almost

indistinguishable to the human being, come to the fore. Madame Blavatsky at first believed that spiritualism was a useful medium to make human beings generally aware of non-material realities—and therewith also of the original spiritual world. She soon recognized, however, that spiritualism, the occupation with the beyond, only distracted from the spiritual world and broke consequently with this movement.

She was furthermore sensitive to parapsychological influences and herself possessed the faculty to generate supersensible “phenomena.” In the first years of her activity, she felt such phenomena could serve as a bridge to the spiritual world, but then noticed that the human beings’ belief in miracles was a great obstacle to their own experience of the spiritual world, and so she gave up the production of such phenomena. Indeed, very soon she took a very decisive position against spiritualism and supersensible phenomena as supposed means of spiritual development.

Her last book, a translation of old Tibetan precepts for the spiritual path, *The Voice of the Silence*, is an expression of pure influences from the original spiritual world and characterizes the worlds of the beyond and on this side in their limitations from this spiritual perspective.

Rudolf Steiner

After H. P. Blavatsky and her coworkers, Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), founder of the Anthroposophical movement,

was a human being who reacted directly to impulses of the spiritual world but also perceived influences from the beyond and struggled for a clear differentiation.

He first tried to systematically bring order to the contents of the spiritual world and the “supersensible worlds” of the beyond of which he became conscious. He brought the cosmological and anthropological developments that H. P. Blavatsky presented still very unsystematically into a comprehensible order. On this basis, he founded a “path of knowledge” that was to lead human beings into the spiritual worlds.¹⁶

His striving was in the direction of anchoring the Christ impulse as a pure impulse from the world of the spirit in the consciousness of human beings and to emphasize the esoteric traditions of the West. He did not do this to assert the priority of Christianity over other religions but in order to characterize the new step in development that all of humanity has taken since the Christ became flesh in Jesus.

According to Steiner, the task specific to the present in this connection is that the human being experiences the Christ as the true self within his own being. This experience becomes exemplary and visible precisely in the path of Jesus. The lower self “dies” in favor of the true self, the Christ, and this in the full consciousness and responsibility of the pupil. This is exactly the intention of the Aquarius impulse that began to unfold in the whole world in the last decades of the 19th century.

In spite of this, there is in Steiner’s work an obscurity that can lead to misunderstandings. He did not always differentiate clearly between the immortal, eternal world of

the spirit in which there is no self-maintenance and the supersensible or “higher” worlds of subtle matter saturated with self-maintenance, which stand behind the appearances of the visible world as forces and causes from the beyond.

Therefore, a reader of his writings can easily confuse the supersensible, “higher” worlds of the beyond, which are not permeated with the Christ forces, indeed, are often their adversary, with the eternal world of the spirit and believe that there is a continuous transition from the beyond to the world of the spirit.

Correspondingly, Steiner did not differentiate clearly or not clearly enough between the true self of the human being which belongs to the eternal world of the spirit, and the personal ego as a part of this world or, as the case may be, the “higher” self as a part of the beyond. The self-maintaining higher self of the human being is not an expression of the eternal and not identical with the true self, the Christ self of the human being. Therefore, there is the danger that the exercises and developments that Steiner described, for example, in *How to Know Higher Worlds* are taken up by the personal ego of this side or by the higher self of the beyond. A path of knowledge would emerge from this that would make the self-maintaining ego—Steiner himself would speak of an ego permeated by “Lucifer” or “Ahriman”—conscious in the supersensible worlds of the beyond and produce “clairvoyance” in these regions. The goal of the Christ impulse, however, is to dissolve the self-maintenance of the lower as well as of the higher self so that the true self, the inner Christ in the human being, can come to the fore.

Who knows what clarifications in this regard would still have come if Steiner could have built up the planned “three classes” of his esoteric school. Even though in his writings and lectures, the decisive characteristics of the modern path of initiation—self-responsibility and self-knowledge—are again and again addressed, not clearly presented is that the surrender of the self-maintenance of the lower as well as the higher “supersensible” ego is the prerequisite of the unfolding of the Christ ego. The ego cannot develop itself into the Christ ego. Rather, its self-maintenance has to disappear. Then the eternal world of the spirit will appear in the human being.

Max Heindel

Max Heindel (1865–1919) (actually Carl Louis Frederik Grashoff) emigrated in 1896 from Denmark to the USA where he stayed in Los Angeles from 1903 to 1906.¹⁷ In his own words, these years were characterized by an insatiable hunger for spiritual realization. He joined the Theosophical Society in 1904 and soon became Vice-President of the society for California. In 1905, driven by his great desire to communicate to others what he knew, he started giving public lectures in the northwestern USA—especially on astrology—with such an engagement that he developed heart trouble.

His longing for spiritual knowledge led him in 1907 to Rudolf Steiner in Germany via the mediation of Alma von Brandis. In Berlin he attended Steiner’s lectures and introductory courses but was still not satisfied yet in the

core of his being, although he accepted portions of Steiner's discourses. He was only really satisfied when later in the year of 1907 he met the "Elder Brothers" of the Rosycross, as he recounts it. He received instruction from them near Berlin. He received the mission to record the teachings received and to publish them before the end of the year 1909. He made a first draft still in Germany but completely rewrote it after returning to America. In 1909 the book *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* was published in Chicago.

Until then Heindel had given further lectures and courses in Columbus, Seattle, and other cities, which led to the founding of the first Rosicrucian Fellowship Center in Columbus, Ohio. He placed special value on distributing articles containing his teaching via the press.

During 1909–1910 Max Heindel was again active in Los Angeles. He received a further assignment from the "Elder Brothers" of the Rosycross, that is, to build up the Rosicrucian Fellowship and to build a temple in which the students of the Rosycross were to gather regularly and send out spiritual healing power. This Ecclesia Temple on Mt. Ecclesia in Oceanside, California, was completed on December 25, 1920, well over a year after Heindel's death.

Max Heindel also was a person who drew from the field of the spirit and at the same time was confronted with impulses from the beyond. To be sure, in his cosmology influenced by Rudolf Steiner and developed in the book *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, he differentiates between the "Absolute," an eternal spiritual world, and the world of invisible forces that directly rule the world on this side of the veil. But it is not yet sufficiently clear that the invisible

and visible worlds are no longer in accordance with their original purpose.

Max Heindel emphasized that presently the intellect of the human being has become the slave of desire and no longer listens to the influences of the eternal spirit. He also valued the statement that the power of Christ has to be active in the heart and to change the entire human organism. The exercises he describes, however, are tied to the attributes of the human being on this side. They would therefore not be oriented to the world of the Absolute, but to the realms of subtle matter of the beyond.

Jan van Rijckenborgh

In the course of time, Jan van Rijckenborgh (1896–1968), founder of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, brought the process of clarification that was still in full swing with Steiner and Heindel to its end. He took over the cosmologies of both, but he evaluated them totally differently. According to his insight, there exists an absolute, eternal world, origin of all, including the world on this side and the beyond. But this world and the beyond in their present constitution, as well as in their development through the different periods of creation, are no longer a pure expression of the eternal spiritual world, the “Word,” but a “fallen world” cut off from the original spiritual world. Indeed, they are in opposition to that world although always surrounded and carried by it.

“The original world of mankind is of everlasting glory.

There, mankind fulfils the divine plan underlying world and mankind in perfect obedience.” This obedience is “voluntary, conscious cooperation in a free binding of love with God.” But “one should become used to the idea that involution might well be a fall as a consequence of a catastrophe....All world religions mention this.”¹⁸

Therefore Jan van Rijckenborgh explained the concept of the “two nature-orders”: the eternal, divine nature-order unfolding its inherent spiritual laws in eternal becoming and a “dialectical” nature-order with its movement of opposites, in disharmony with the divine laws and determined by self-maintaining rebellion against these laws. This “dialectical” nature-order also develops in periods of creation but separate from the divine order. It is, as Jan van Rijckenborgh says basing himself on Jakob Böhme, the “house of death” with the characteristics of transience and futility.

This dialectical order is at the same time an “emergency-order”: It is not only the result of a “fall” but also has its purpose. It is the realm of existence of the fallen spirit beings who precisely by the characteristics of this order can recognize their condition and find a way back to the divine nature-order. “God does not let go the works of his hands.”¹⁹

Within the human being who lives in this fallen nature-order, there exist correspondences to both nature-orders. On the one hand, the ego permeated by self-maintenance belongs to the fallen nature-order and like it has two aspects: To this visible world belongs the conscious personality ego; to the invisible beyond belongs a “higher

self” also permeated by self-maintenance, the concentration of all self-maintenance beyond the personality. On the other hand, the eternal, true self, the “spirit spark” as Jan van Rijckenborgh terms it, that belongs to the divine nature-order is also active in the human being; although it is mostly a latent principle in present-day humanity.

The great Aquarius impulse of the Brotherhood of Life has the aim to make the human being conscious of his home in the imperishable spiritual world and to lead him back to it. Thus it speaks to the true self, the spirit-soul of the human being, which is connected to the original world and wants to return to it.

This is something different than a path by which the personal ego penetrates the supersensible realms of the beyond and acquires the faculty of clairvoyance. It is also something different than a path by which the human being becomes conscious of the concentration of all self-maintenance beyond the personality, the “higher self,” and unites it with his personal ego.

On the contrary: The awakening of the true self requires that the personality ego and the higher self “go under” and dissolve in the true self and become its servants. “The idea is not that the ‘I’, now bound to the lower human being, must, at a given moment, find its true self and be united with it. No, the true ‘I’, the true divine spark, lies in the true self, and this true divine spark of the Heavenly Self must be liberated from the ‘I’ of earthly man. So, we reverse the matter: the earthly man who wants to be liberated must perish! The Other One, the divine son of God, must increase and the earthly man must *decrease*.”²⁰

The point of departure on the path intended for us by the great Aquarius impulse of the Brotherhood of Life is the spirit spark, the true self, which has been connected to the spiritual world since the beginning. The personal ego is addressed on this path only to have it cooperate with the removal of the obstacles that stand in the way of this development. It should recognize its own self-maintenance, surrender, and serve the eternal. Then the rays of the spirit of Christ penetrate with mighty power the spirit spark, the individual representation of the Christ forces in the human being, bring it to growth, and demand the endura—the surrender of all self-maintenance on this side and in the beyond.

The clarity that results from this explicit distinction, can well be seen if one reads, for example, in Rudolf Steiner's *Rosicrucian Wisdom—An Introduction* (also entitled *Theosophy of the Rosicrucian*) or in Max Heindel's *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* about the stages of the Rosicrucian path and then studies the description of these stages in Jan van Rijckenborgh's *The Coming New Man*. In Steiner and Heindel, the main concern is the unfolding of the supersensible perception of the "higher self" in the supersensible spheres of the beyond, thus in the etheric or astral realms. A connection to the world of the eternal is thereby silently implied or regarded as the last stage in a continuous development. On the path shown by van Rijckenborgh, on the other hand, primarily the spirit spark develops, and at the same time, the egocentricity of the lower and higher personality diminishes. A new personality free of egocentricity is built up from the spirit spark. The higher self cannot pass from the supersensible realms into

the eternal spiritual world.

Subjectively these two possibilities correspond to two different motives in the human being. Driven by the desire for a higher development of his personality, the human being can certainly also want to gain insight into the supersensible worlds of the beyond with the goal of better serving humanity in this way. If he enters an esoteric path on this basis, he will develop the capacities of his higher ego and let his lower ego awaken therein, or he will altogether only develop the lower personality.

But the human being can also realize, when he has reached a boundary in his strivings in this world and the beyond, that only an awakening in the eternal corresponds to his innermost desire and actual inherent aim and that he has to become free of all striving for development in this world or the beyond.

The reason that Jan van Rijckenborgh gave for the liberating path he described also corresponded to this clear distinction and was different from the reasons that Rudolf Steiner and Max Heindel gave for the paths shown by them. Steiner and Heindel say that the human being can and should develop the higher capacities latent within and thereby serve humanity better.

According to Jan van Rijckenborgh on the other hand, the path that unfolds the eternal in the human being and subordinates the transitory is a necessity. A mistake, a fall, has to be reversed. The human being has deviated from his destiny to live in harmony with the divine laws, by which he brought forth the chaotic world on this side and in the beyond with their many evils and death as the greatest evil.

If he wants to satisfy his inherent aim again, then he has to correct this deviation and the evils that have resulted from this. But if he furthers this development on this side and in the beyond, then he strengthens this deviation even more and maintains this world and the beyond, the nature-order that is not divine. So he has to come to “neutrality” in face of the self-maintaining influences from this world and the beyond in order to give to the spirit spark and the divine order the space to unfold.

Only then and only in this way can the human being serve humanity so that it eventually becomes aware of its catastrophic situation, recognizes its deviation from the divine, and recognizes and finally also fulfills its inherent aim.

H. P. Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, and Max Heindel founded not only societies in which their teachings and corresponding paths of development were delineated and could be studied but also special groups within these societies for all who wanted to consciously go the path. Such “esoteric schools,” as it was known for example with Madame Blavatsky, represent force fields in which the spiritual forces of the founders and all members of the school become active in a structured way and help the members on their path. Esoteric schools that have the goal of the development of the lower or higher personality have to feed on forces that originate in this world or the beyond. Such forces are not inexhaustible and the effort that is necessary to invoke and transform them will certainly eventually lead to a backlash.

Only if spiritual schools connect with the eternal in the

human being, unfold it, and therewith liberate the Christ forces from the divine world, do they have an inexhaustible reserve of forces at their disposal. And these Christ forces must not be forcibly invoked and strengthened through concentration and meditation to build up a strong personality that has to die eventually anyway. The Christ forces are the basis of the world, the divine as well as the undivine— although continuously falsified by the latter— and are always available to the human being. He does not need to force them. He only has to agree to let them work in him and permit that they dissolve the self-maintenance that stands in their way.

Another result of the process of clarification brought about by Jan van Rijckenborgh was that he built up a spiritual school corresponding purely to the Christ forces and the path that is their consequence according to the purpose of the great Aquarius impulse. A “living body” arose, an organism that represents the structure of the spiritual world and the way leading to it. The Christ forces are transformed for all stages of the spiritual path and become available to the benefit of all members of the living body. These members find themselves within the living body in an environment that promotes the growth of the spirit spark and lends them all the forces to consciously dissolve their respective obstacles. Vice versa, the pupils strengthen the living body in the measure that the Christ forces are liberated in their own spirit spark, their true self.

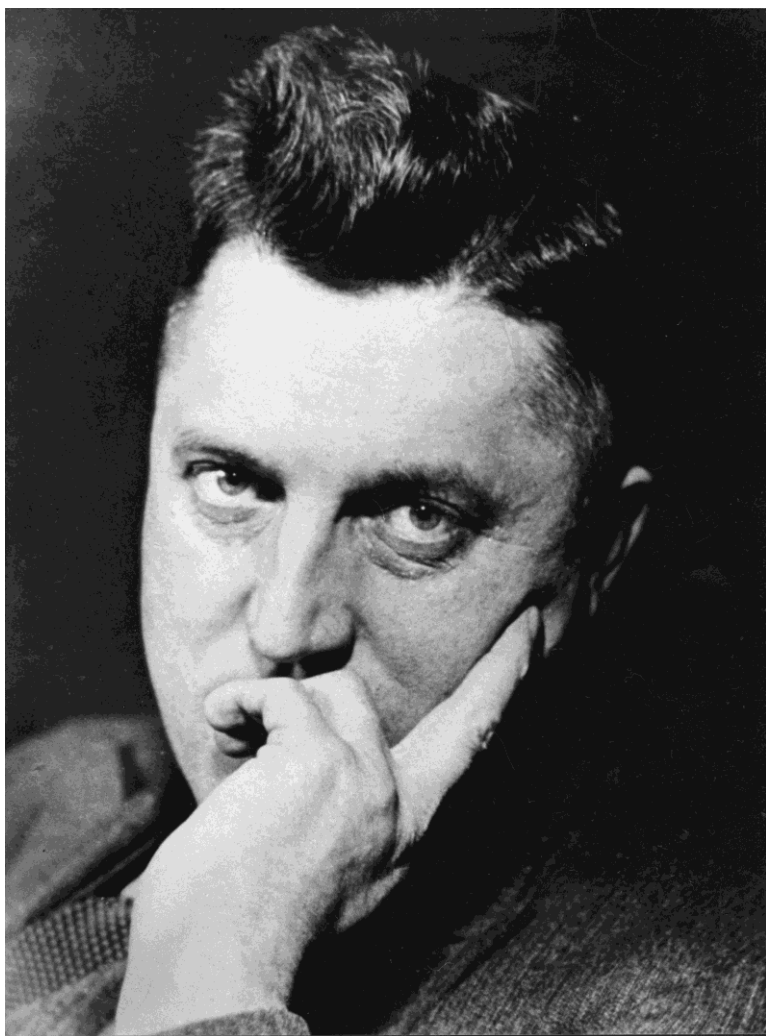
Seen outwardly, the living body consists of the organization of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, the rituals, symbols, conferences, meetings, and the universal teaching. The “power field” of the Rosycross, the inner aspect of the living

body, is active in these forms. It represents for all pupils the Christ, the true self, surrounds them like a great true self, and every individual self can gradually grow into this Christ self. Jan van Rijckenborgh thereby anchored the spiritual impulse of Aquarius from the divine world firmly in the undivine world. This impulse can and will continue to work in the world as long as there are pupils who react positively to it with their spirit spark and liberate the Christ forces in their own being.

The Beginnings

It is surely not a coincidence that the Spiritual School of the Rosycross began in Holland. The Netherlands were ever and again an asylum for free-thinking human beings who were persecuted elsewhere. The impulses from the spiritual world could flow in and be anchored in the best way in such an atmosphere, so it is no wonder that the founders of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross were born there.

Also, with regards to an international activity, this country offered especially favorable conditions. Imagine that the Lectorium Rosicrucianum had begun in Germany in the 1920s: From 1933 on it would no longer have been able to work openly, and after the war its international activities would have been strongly hindered by the reservations about Germany.



Zwier Willem (Wim) Leene (1892–1938), brother of Jan Leene, one of the founders of the Spiritual School

Jan Leene and Zwier Willem Leene

Jan Leene, later to be known as Jan van Rijckenborgh, was born on the 16th of October 1896 to a family belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk). He died on the 17th of July 1968. His elder brother, Zwier Willem (Wim) Leene, came into the world on the 7th of May 1892 and died on the 9th of March 1938. Their father, Hendrik Leene, was a wholesale merchant of textiles in Haarlem. Together with Zwier Willem Leene, Jan Leene later took over this wholesale business. The first outer spiritual, religious influences on Jan Leene were those of a Christianity with a Calvinistic stamp. As he tells it, there were already very early inner spiritual influences. At six years old, a vague consciousness awakened in him that there had to be something like “the Rosycross.”²¹

True Christianity?

From their youth on, the Leene brothers recognized that there was truth and a mighty power in Christianity but that the forms that Christianity had taken in the churches were rather a hindrance to this truth and power. Where were the fundamental change and inner rebirth of the human being for which the gospels called? Christian faith as the conviction of the human being as already saved, or as only a moral varnish over a practice of life essentially no different than that of all “decent” human beings, frankly cut off the living, revolutionary experience of the powers of the spirit that wanted to become active in true Christianity.

An intellectual theology was just as unsuitable to favor a living experience of the Christ forces. And was “conversion,” in the sense of a contrite submission to “God’s commandments” or a hasty flight into the loving arms of a savior, the “rebirth from water and spirit” that Jesus had spoken of and lived?

In these questions and this longing for true life-renewal, the spiritual kernel of the human being came to expression in the Leene brothers. This kernel, unknown to most human beings, strives to unfold yet usually finds no adequate means of expression in the forms offered for its unfolding. This spiritual kernel must have been already very awake and active in the two brothers, and certainly it must also have been inwardly connected to the cosmic structures of spiritual force lines. Otherwise, the young men would not have longed for truth with such a radical impetuosity and could not have recognized so clearly that the given religious forms of life offered no home to the spirit. The urge for truth and an independent experience and realization of that truth were the first expressions of the spiritual kernel that longed for the “rebirth from water and spirit.”

The Leene brothers sought for a form of true Christian life on this basis. Although very different in character and talents, they complemented each other splendidly in their need for a way of life corresponding to true Christianity resting on a conscious recognition of spiritual laws. So began a close cooperation between them that formed the basis for the later Spiritual School of the Rosycross.

A. H. de Hartog

The theologian and preacher Professor A. H. de Hartog (1869–1938),²² who was well-known at the time in Holland, provided a good example for the Leene brothers. He professed a “realistic theology” and demanded a life of realized Christianity in the sense of Romans 12:1: “The new life is the true sacrifice.” With this intention, de Hartog carried on a dialog with the worker’s party of his day and was a founding member of an institute for comparative religious science in Amersfoort. But his Christian realism and his practical Christianity were by no means exhausted in social engagement and ecumenical strivings. De Hartog was much more concerned with a renewal of Christianity from a spiritual dimension and experience lying deep in the human being. In the writings of Jakob Böhme he found hints to this dimension—the “un-ground” as Jakob Böhme called it. According to de Hartog, the Word manifested from this un-ground in three forms: as creative Word, by which is meant the creative structures of the spiritual force lines that are at the basis of all development of world and humanity; as Word that has become human: these structures of force lines manifest in human beings such as Jesus, for example; and as Word that has become scripture: from such human beings, the spirit emanates as power in the form of actions and words. In them, the spirit is revealed in the “flesh”—eternity in time.

All this seemed to the brothers as spoken from their soul and gave nourishment to their inner need for renewal from Boehme’s “un-ground.” The belief in a dogma or the saving power of ritual was not decisive. An expression of de

Hartog held great meaning for them: “The essential truth is not presented to us through the letter but has to be conquered and realized through the human consciousness.” Along with Angelus Silesius, whom de Hartog liked to quote, Wim and Jan Leene also said: “Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem were born, and not in you, you would still be eternally forlorn.”

Nevertheless, the spiritual hunger of the Leene brothers was not yet satisfied by de Hartog’s theology and practice. To be sure, de Hartog pointed to the spiritual world in the cosmos and in the human being and demanded that the human being make room for this spiritual world in spite of convention, self-interest, and habit. But he did not yet show a way to the direct experience and unfolding of this spiritual world in the human being. However, they felt the need to consciously experience the Christ in their own being and liberate it from all coverings in a process; yes, they knew: Only when Christ roots out the ego being of the passions and the mind, which the human being takes for his true self, can his true essence, the Christ, come to the fore. They wanted to be able to testify like Paul: “I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.”²³

The “Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception”

After they left the church, the search for this way led Wim and Jan Leene to Max Heindel’s Rosicrucian Fellowship.²⁴ In 1917 Mrs. van Warendorp had become the first Dutch member of the American Rosicrucian Fellowship of Max Heindel. At the beginning of the 1920s, a small study group

of members of the Rosicrucian Fellowship had already formed in Amsterdam for which Mrs. van Warendorp functioned as the leader. In the month of April or May of 1924, the Leene brothers encountered this group. In *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* by Max Heindel, they found a cosmology that nourished the spiritual consciousness seeking to unfold. Leaning on the works of Rudolf Steiner, the creation and evolution of the world and of humanity out of lawful impulses of the spiritual structures of force lines is presented in this book. In this development, the spirit in the human being could find its own past. *The Cosmo-Conception* also describes the efforts of the spiritual world to again reverse the wrong relationship between spirit, the beyond, and this world, which culminated in Christ's becoming human in Jesus. Finally, Max Heindel also seemed to give a path of exercises by which the human being could grow again into the spiritual world. All these elements gave to the spiritual seed in Wim and Jan Leene the nourishment and opportunity to finally consciously unfold and become active.

What especially attracted the Leene brothers to the path shown by Max Heindel was that it was formulated in the form of a "philosophy" that, although stemming from spiritual experiences, could also be understood by those who were not yet able to have independent spiritual experiences. This path also simultaneously spoke to the three main human qualities—thinking, feeling, and doing—and demanded their equal, harmonious development. Thus, it included the whole human being.

The “Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap”

On the 9th of September 1924, the Amsterdam study group was constituted under the name “Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap” as a branch of the “Amerikaanse Rozekruisers Genootschap”—the Rosicrucian Fellowship.

In the 1980s Mrs. Catharose de Petri gave the 24th of August 1924 as the founding date of the later Lectorium Rosicrucianum. What is expressed thereby is on the one hand that the root of the organization of the later Lectorium Rosicrucianum actually was the Rosicrucian Fellowship of Max Heindel. On the other hand, however, from the beginning an impulse worked in Z. W. Leene and Jan Leene that, although it developed originally within the Rosicrucian Fellowship, had an independent connection to the spiritual world as would be seen later. In the following years, it slowly separated itself from the Max Heindel movement as an independent organization and spiritual path.

By then the Leene brothers already must have been conscious that they had a special spiritual task. Madame Blavatsky, Steiner, and Heindel had made preparations for this task, for they had broken through the hard crust of materialism and re-enlivened traditional spiritual paths. Even though they may have placed in the foreground the occult faculties of the human being, his becoming conscious in the “higher worlds” of the beyond, and his coming into contact with the masters from the beyond, they had also opened perspectives to the Absolute, the original world of the spirit.

On the basis of these preparations, the special spiritual task of the Leene brothers was to directly connect with the super-nature through the unfolding of the spirit spark, to found a spiritual path that had transfiguration as the goal, and to go this path themselves. Personal contact with masters from the beyond was not sought, but a conscious binding of the spiritual principle in the human being with the Brotherhood of Life. This bond exists in a completely different manner in the super-nature and is totally inaccessible to the personal consciousness of the human being of this side and the beyond.

If the spiritual kernel of the human being is to unfold, the personality on this side and its possibilities of contact with the beyond may not be developed further; so the personality on this side has to be “broken up” in so far as it is an obstacle to the spiritual personality.

Something new can only arise if the old, in so far as it hinders the new, is broken up and, in so far as it can serve the new, is transmuted so that it corresponds to the new. The whole human being must be partly “broken up” from within, from the spiritual kernel, through the forces of the spirit with the conscious cooperation of the human being, and it must be partly transformed until it has become an organ that can perceive and enliven the structures of spiritual force lines that surround and penetrate it. Of what use would it be to the human being if his old personality were conscious in this world and the beyond but gave no opportunity to the super-nature to build up a new personality that would be a conscious instrument of the spirit? Although John the Baptist, the highest developed earthly human being, was the greatest among mortals, the

smallest in the Kingdom of Heaven was greater than he.²⁵ The human being had to really enter the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, to become a conscious carrier of the Christ.

This was the vision of the Leene brothers, and therein also lay the basic principle of a future spiritual school. The basic principle was a pure realization of the Christ in the human being through the liberation from all influences from the beyond as well this side.

The 24th of August 1924, 14 days before the constitution of the Dutch branch of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, must have been the date when this vision of the Leene brothers was expressed at a meeting of the members of the Dutch Max Heindel movement to become the basis for further developments.

Independence

From 1925 on the Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap operated a small publishing house with a mail order book business in Amsterdam. This operation was dissolved on the 15th of February 1928 and replaced by a “Publicatie-Bureau van het Rozekruisers Genootschap” in Haarlem, at the center (smaller organizational entity) to which Z. W. and Jan Leene belonged. This office had three departments: a book business, the editorial office of the monthly periodical “Het Rozekruis” (first issued December 1927), and the subscription and advertising department. By then the Rozekruisers Genootschap had built up four centers in Holland. The Leene brothers were the leaders of the Haarlem center.

In December 1929 Mrs. van Warendorp became ill and was hospitalized for some time. From then on the Leene brothers also took on the leadership of the Amsterdam center.

In 1933 the Max Heindel Foundation was established as a legal entity of the Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap. All property of the Genootschap became the possession of this foundation. Its task was to manage this property and to work for the inner development of the society. For this purpose, the property De Haere was purchased in 1935, where from then on instruction and continuing education courses in the Rosicrucian philosophy were given in the so-called Rozekruiskamp (Rosicrucian camp).

After Max Heindel's death in 1919, quarrels ensued in the American Rosicrucian Fellowship. Two parties had formed. The leaders of the Dutch group kept out of this quarrel and steered an independent course. Moreover, Z. W. and Jan Leene had led the group ever more on a spiritual path free of occult tendencies in accordance with their vision and also had drawn the corresponding consequences in a personal regard.

“When we began our work in 1925, we were confronted with a Rosicrucian movement whose name was the only thing it had in common with the Rosycross.... This movement was teeming with negative occultists, who would never be able to make any progress and who were very ill. Besides, there [were] a large number of ‘black’ intentioned people who had penetrated everywhere. Finally there were a certain number of serious people who, having been led astray, had sold their true birth-right for imagined

happiness.... It was in this situation that the foundations for the new work had to be laid.”²⁶

In 1934 the parties of the conflict in America decided to make peace with each other. This led to a compromise that also gave room to the occult tendencies. This compromise was supposed to be simultaneously valid for the Dutch section. But the leaders of the Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap, who in years past had made such efforts to bring about a process of clarification, could not agree to this. Should one allow the occult tendencies and the personalities that represent them to muddy the laboriously achieved spiritual purity? “For we were now to be forced to fraternally shake hands with the black magic elements, which we had been able to remove from our organization with much effort, and to let them destroy through their ‘cooperation’ the work purified over the years.”²⁷

This was the situation that led to the Dutch section making itself independent with the decisive participation of the Leene brothers. After a failed attempt to found an

“International Federation of Rosicrucian Societies” (in which the American Rosicrucian Fellowship was to be a member with equal rights), the Leene brothers and the third leading personality of the Haarlem center, Lor Damme, declared the independence of the Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap on Christmas 1934. The name Rozekruisers Genootschap was kept, and most of the members at that time joined the new organization.

As a reason for this step, the Leene brothers and Lor Damme referred to a “mandate of the Order of the Rosycross,” that is a spiritual instance, according to which

the leadership of the esoteric work of the Rosicrucian Fellowship was to be temporarily centralized in the Netherlands (letter from the 27th of March 1935).²⁸ On the 25th of September 1935, the new organization became a legal entity.

In 1936 the name was changed to “Orde der Manicheen” (Order of Manichaeans), in 1941 to “Jacob-Boehme-Genootschap” (Jacob Boehme Society). One sees thereby towards what goals the developing group was striving at that time and in what spirit it sought to come closer to these goals. Only in 1946 did it take the name Lectorium Rosicrucianum, which it has carried up to the present.

Spiritual Work

The years between 1925 and 1940 were characterized by an intensive lecturing activity by the Leene brothers, self-study, internal schooling, and Jan Leene’s activity as an author. He later told of the difficulties he had to struggle with in the beginning: how he often stood in front of rows of empty chairs after intensive preparations for a lecture; how first individuals, then groups of interested people came together whom he confronted with the Rosicrucian path; how some of these only followed their own interests and did not strive for serious spiritual development; and how therefore at first a highly unstable group with high fluctuations developed. Then slowly a core group took shape, which truly had spiritual development in their heart, and then did all in their power to understand what was at stake and to convert this into life practice.

“With about fifteen sympathizers we rented...part of the house at Bakenessergracht 13 in Haarlem... Here it was possible to furnish a little Temple and in the back of the house a meeting room. All this on a very modest scale... Here...the work could develop its own necessary rhythm, despite all the disappointments that were so often met, especially in the beginning. Disappointment when, for instance, nobody came when the hall was ready and the meeting had been announced.”²⁹

There also ensued an intense examination of the theosophical literature of H. P. Blavatsky, her coworkers and successors, as well as literature in a similar direction. In later books, van Rijckenborgh mentions, for example, R. Bucke’s *Cosmic Consciousness*, Baird Spalding’s *Life and Teachings of the Masters of the Far East*, and Krishnamurti’s works; indeed, he tells how he “devoured” the philosophical-religious literature of all times to find points of contact and aids to formulate his inner experiences. Under the pseudonym John Twine, he wrote articles for pertinent periodicals, his first books (*Het mysterie van de bijbel—The Mystery of the Bible*, *De blijmare van de Gave Gods—The Glad Tidings of God’s Gift*, 1931 and *In het land aan gene zijde—In the Land on Yonder Side*, 1933) and was active as publisher. For example, he published a Dutch translation of Jakob Böhme’s first work *Aurora oder Die Morgenröte im Aufgang* (*Aurora: The Dayspring or Dawning of the Day in the Orient*) with a foreword. And in the periodical “Nieuw Religieuze Oriëntering” (New Religious Orientation), he published in installments the Dutch translation of *Die geheimen Figuren der Rosenkreuzer*

(The Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians).

Of special significance for his own inner development and that of the group, which he led with others, was a trip to the British Museum in London. There he discovered the Rosicrucian writings from the beginning of the 17th century and could take home a copy of an English edition of Johann Valentin Andreae's *Christianopolis*. He published this book in a Dutch translation and with detailed commentaries. The most extensive book that he published under the pseudonym John Twine, in 1938, was a grandly laid-out interpretation of the *Fama Fraternitatis* by Johann Valentin Andreae.

Henny Stok-Huizer

Mrs. Henny Stok-Huizer encountered Jan and Z. W. Leene's Rosicrucian group on the 24th of December 1930, whereby her husband who belonged to this group himself acted as the connecting link. The brothers Jan and Z. W. Leene and Mrs. Stok-Huizer recognized each other directly as of like mind and coming from the same inner understanding. From this meeting developed a life-long cooperation, exemplary for the insight of Jan van Rijckenborgh (also emphasized repeatedly later) that in a group on a spiritual path to the conscious experience of the spiritual world, both human expressions, the feminine and the masculine, have to work together and are entitled to equal rights. Without such cooperation and the resulting bundling of all human spiritual forces, such a path is condemned to fail.



Henny Stok-Huizer (1902–1990), founder of the Spiritual School with the Leene brothers

Mrs. Henny Stok-Huizer, who later took on the spiritual name Catharose de Petri, was born on the 5th of February 1902 and told that already as an eight-year-old girl, she was concerned with the decisive question of the meaning of human life.³⁰ Already very early in life, she became conscious of her inner connection to the medieval Brotherhood of the Cathars: “Even in our early childhood we wandered very consciously in our ether-vehicles packed with karmic experience through the caves, the mountains and the valleys of the land of Sabarthez.”³¹

Because Mrs. Stok-Huizer, coming from a family belonging to the Reformed Church, was not satisfied with the answers that the church gave to the great questions of life, she unceasingly searched for the truth in other groups and streams. Her meeting with Jan van Rijckenborgh made it clear to her that she had sought the truth in the same direction as he. When Z. W. Leene died in 1938, Henny Stok-Huizer together with Jan Leene took on the leadership of the group.

Their spiritual names tell something of their spiritual identity in contrast to their common status and of their function as spiritual leaders. Jan van Rijckenborgh: John, the rich guarantor. He sees himself like John the Baptist as a forerunner of Christ and clears the way in himself for the Christ. Thereby, he creates the possibility to help others with the same task. Rich in spiritual forces, he testifies in this world of the world of the spirit and represents it or steps forward in the spiritual world as guarantor for the pupils entrusted to him. Catharose de Petri: Continuing the tradition of the Cathars, she unfolds the “rose of the heart,” the seed of the spirit, in herself and gives others support

and power as a strong spiritual rock (petra).³²

Further Clarifications

Through the work with interested people and with his group that gradually became larger, it became more and more clear to Jan Leene what the actual goal of being human is and what the path thereto would have to look like. In the measure that this clarification occurred within him, he could also contribute to the clarification of the consciousness of his group and develop the power of discrimination. One is thereby reminded again how different reactions arose in the whole world and especially in Europe to the Aquarius impulse that became active around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century.

Jan Leene saw himself facing an immense ocean of competing or quarreling esoteric streams. Besides groups occupied with magic, clairvoyance, astrology, spiritual healing, tarot, palmistry, spiritualism, etc. for entertainment purposes or for egocentric goals, there were other groups that were seriously striving for the spiritual development of the human being: theosophy, anthroposophy, Rosicrucians, freemasons, mazdaism, Sufis, and many others, partly based on past teachings and traditions and re-enlivening them, partly attempting to experience the spiritual world in the present. Some were connected to western, Christian traditions; some took up eastern teachings and techniques.

Besides these there were also the psychological methods

and the faith traditions of the great churches that also claimed to connect human beings with the spiritual world. In whoever wanted to find the goal of human existence and the path to its realization in this chaos of conflicting streams, spiritual truth would have to act very strongly, like a compass that shows the helmsman the direction in a rough sea. He would also have to have clear instruments of feeling and understanding in order to formulate the intuitively-grasped truth for himself and others and thereby also make it accessible to the ordinary consciousness.

Transfiguration

Jan Leene's departure point for the clarification of this chaos was transfigurism: The spirit exists as a seed in the human being. But his soul, the composite of his finer forces, is presently more or less a victim of the reflection sphere and of matter. His personality, the active ego that he is conscious of at this moment, is more or less its willing instrument. The goal now consists first of the reawakening of the spirit in the human being, and then of this spirit also becoming active and expressing itself through the soul and the personality. But as long as the soul and the personality are exclusively servants of the beyond and of this world, the spirit cannot express itself through them. On the contrary, it is hindered in its unfolding. Thus it is necessary to cut the ties of the soul and personality to the beyond and this world. Then new impulses can go out from the spiritual nucleus in the human being to the liberated soul and personality. These impulses "break up" the old soul and

personality, as far as they are egocentric, that is, steered from this world or the beyond, and make everything in them that can serve the spirit into a suitable means of its expression. Practically, a new soul and personality, which no longer live out of the substances and forces of the transitory world, are built up in this manner. A type of “personality exchange” has to occur if the human being wants to fulfill his destiny.

This is by no means a new esoteric goal and process. It is rather becoming serious with a goal and process that are at the basis of the original Christianity. They were only less and less understood over the centuries and were finally forgotten.

“Whoever wants to lose his life for my sake and for the sake of the gospel, will save it,” Jesus says. This formula contains the goal and path of “personality exchange,” “transfiguration.” “For my sake” means for the sake of the prototype of the true human being, the spiritual human being, which Jesus represents and which is waiting in every human being to be unfolded as the true spiritual self. Whoever wants to lose the life of the self-maintaining soul and personality, which are imprisoned in the transitory world, for the sake of the spiritual human being will find the life in the spirit. The latent spirit nucleus awakens in him. This spirit then builds a new soul and a new personality for itself that live out of and express the spirit. “The method of initiation of the new era aims at [the exchange] of the personality, the secret of the evangelical rebirth...which means to build up, in and through the Power of Christ and His Hierarchy, a completely new personality.”³³

But most esoteric streams of the east and the west, at least in their present forms, fail to recognize this goal and this path. Certain directions, especially those traditionally active in the west, want to reach the goal of spiritual consciousness through refinement and development of the soul and personality, through “culture of the personality” as Jan van Rijckenborgh calls it: “the uplift of the anthropos, of man, from the bottom up. Thus, systems of racial and blood purification were instituted, according to magic norms.... Thus too, consciousness in higher regions and a splendid extension of the sense faculty came about, but this was rooted in matter.”³⁴ For a personality system built up entirely of the elements of the non-spiritual world will not be able to go beyond the non-spiritual worlds, no matter how much it is refined, indeed, this would even bind it still tighter to them. Thus what is necessary is a loosening of the ties to this world and the beyond, to benefit a surrender to the spiritual world, instead of a refinement of these ties. The hope to bring the present personality into a condition in which it becomes conscious of the spirit by means of exercises and techniques is deceptive. If it becomes conscious of new realms through such methods, then it is those of the beyond, the reflection sphere. On the contrary, this hope is just the expression of the personality’s and soul’s egocentricity, which with all its effects hinders the unfolding of the spirit.

Other esoteric directions, more likely eastern-influenced, attempt not so much to develop and to refine the personality through exercises and techniques, as to split it into its material and finer components. The efforts are in the direction of, for example, stepping out of the material

body or “body-free” experiences of the soul. But as long as the soul and the personality are imprisoned in the reflection sphere, such experiences will in general be caused by the reflection sphere and do not originate from the spiritual nucleus of the human being. Jan van Rijckenborgh called these esoteric methods “splitting of the personality.” “By dietetic methods, breath control and asceticism, concentration and contemplation, and by control of the powers of speech the candidate had to learn how to bring about splitting of his fourfold personality. By means of such splitting...the pupil was able at will to effect a separation between his physical body, with its etheric counterpart, and his two more subtle vehicles, so that he could travel in full consciousness in the so-called Higher Regions.”³⁵

With the concepts personality exchange, personality culture, and splitting of the personality, Jan van Rijckenborgh had worked out classifications by which he could analyze the different esoteric directions. But of course this was not possible from the outside, but only from within; only thereby could a human being experience the spiritual world, the beyond, and this world within himself and thus experience which powers were active in a given group.

According to Jan van Rijckenborgh, both systems, personality culture and splitting of the personality, had their justification in earlier times and even still had a function at the beginning of the Aquarius era. For “the two old systems have seized hold of Occidentals rushing to their doom and linked them for a time with the past, so that they would not become crystallized beyond remedy.”³⁶ But this

function consisted only of a preservation of the western human being from a complete sinking into materialism and a preparation for a new, truly liberating spiritual impulse. "If, in the dim past, it was possible for the esoteric candidate to be liberated in the described ways and to celebrate this glorious return; if, in the first part of this century, it was necessary to fix the mind of the seeking Occidental idealistically upon the past, mankind has now entered an era in which the future alone must be considered."³⁷

Jan van Rijckenborgh and Mrs. Catharose de Petri could continue working uninterruptedly with their group until 1940. But when the Germans occupied Holland, the Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap [Orde de Manicheen] was prohibited and had to act illegally. During the war, Jan van Rijckenborgh continued to be absorbed in the spiritual literature of the past, for example, the texts of the Corpus Hermeticum, of the Manicheans, and of the Gnostics and occupied himself with the history of the Cathars in southern France. This served to bring more depth and clarity to his own spiritual experiences, which precipitated a series of pioneering works after the war.

Jan Leene as Writer

Expressionism

The first works of Jan van Rijckenborgh that appeared in the 1920s and 1930s are stylistically very much defined by expressionism. In those times there was a desperate quest

for renewal. When this longing came to expression, it also did not shy away from a certain, at times excessive, pathos. But where such pathos appears in Jan van Rijckenborgh's early works, it is always an outlet for the power of his spiritual experiences. It shows his struggle for clarity amidst countless ideological streams and his insight of how urgently necessary it was and is to show humanity a clear, comprehensible, and practicable path to the spiritual world in order to tear it from its inertia and illusions, and thereby spur it on to actually go this path. When the spiritual world opens a path in a human being through all inner and outer conventions, then this is like a volcanic eruption. The power of this eruption also colored Jan van Rijckenborgh's language in his books of that time. Ever again he made it clear that a spiritual path is a decision of life and death, in two regards: Firstly, the times and the individual had reached a point where faith in matter and influences from the beyond in the form of megalomania and exaltation were driving humanity to the most dangerous experiments and ways of behavior in the scientific, social, political, and economic realms, all of which threatened existence. Only a spiritual path through which the human being again connected to his origin in the spiritual world could give a direction to the unbound psychic and physical forces so they could work constructively, not destructively.

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Beneben derselben Lateinischen

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*Original German edition of the "Fama Fraternitatis,"
which Jan Leene (Jan van Rijckenborgh) interpreted
under the pseudonym John Twine*

Secondly, the spiritual path requires being radically uncompromising. Whoever directs himself to the spiritual world and wants to make it a priority in his life may in no wise still look to success, power, and fortune in the transitory world. All such looking is a chain that binds one to the transitory world and that collides with the forces of the spiritual world in a most sensitive way in as far as a human being has already made space in himself for the spiritual world. Therefore, van Rijckenborgh made the motto from Henrik Ibsen's *Brand* his own: "Everything or nothing!" If the human being directs himself without compromise to the spiritual world, then the concerns of the transitory world also receive their place and are integrated in the order of the spirit: Perhaps not like he had imagined it—but he can shape his life in such a way that the concerns of the transitory world are also taken into consideration. Here the words of the Sermon on the Mount apply: Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, then all this—the necessary requirements of existence in the transitory world—will be added unto you.³⁸ True, this does not happen without the cooperation of the person concerned. But such an arrangement of life will always succeed.

Technology

As a visionary, van Rijckenborgh foresaw that science and technology would play an ever greater role in the coming decades. He vehemently characterized not only the insanity of the atomic bomb but also recognized that the peaceful use of nuclear energy touched the basic building blocks of

nature and thereby endangered the balance of the human life field to the utmost. He knew that the influence of the mass media on human beings would increase tremendously and that even occult powers would misuse the mass media in order to greatly strengthen the illusions in humanity.

On the other hand, he also liked to use scientific and technological concepts in formulating the universal philosophy. After all, the symbols of the teaching were to be appropriate to the consciousness of the modern human being and to open doors for him. Therefore, for the spiritual nucleus in the human being, which Meister Eckhart still called the “little soul spark,” which the Buddhists referred to as the “jewel in the lotus,” which Jesus compared with a “seed of grain” that grows in the field of the personality, which the Rosicrucians of the 17th century symbolized with the rose bud, he chose the symbol of the “spirit spark atom,” to express that this nucleus contains a whole world within itself like an atom and has potentially tremendous forces at its disposal. For this reason, he also spoke of a “power field” when speaking of the field of the spirit as well as of the unfolding spiritual potential of a group like the gradually developing Spiritual School. He used the terminology of nuclear fission for certain developments in such a group. These are all symbols that by analogy can bring particular spiritual facts and processes closer to the scientifically-oriented modern human being.

The “Living Body”

The inner development of the Roze kruisers Genootschap

occurred parallel to the inner development of Jan van Rijckenborgh and his coworkers: For in the measure that the recipients of the spiritual impulses reacted to them and admitted them as experiences in themselves, they could and had to pass them on to those receptive to them. After all, this was the inner task of the founders of the Spiritual School: as human beings especially intimately connected with the world of the spirit, to free the path of the spirit in themselves in order to gradually create the possibility for an independent reaction in other human beings who could not directly react to the world of the spirit. Their own experiences and realizations became the catalyst for similar experiences and realizations in other human beings. Conversely, the experiences induced in others had an influence on the originators and caused increasing awareness and clarity. Thus, the basic principle of the teaching and the path unfolded gradually in the founders of the group, as they became conscious of it in their direct connection to the world of the spirit. This basic principle then also unfolded always a little later in the group that was inwardly connected to them.

The members of the group tried to reach a clear understanding of the world's and their own condition, always stimulated and supported by the philosophy conveyed to them by Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri. They also tried to draw the consequences in their life. Through these efforts born of the longing for life renewal in the spirit, the forces of the spirit came into circulation in every individual and in the group. Gradually a "living body" arose: an organism in which every individual pupil formed a cell into which the forces from the spiritual

world streamed and whose structure and life principle were the result of the structure of the spiritual world. "A Spiritual School...has a sevenfold Living Body. It is built up of living stones. That is to say: it is built up of some thousands of souls who expect their entire salvation from the living Christ."³⁹ This principle and the manner and way it had to unfold became ever clearer to all participants.

In 1936 a building in Haarlem was acquired in which a temple as a special place for spiritual work was set up for the approximately 200 pupils of that time.

The inner condition of the group after the phase of "contact" could now be called the phase of "working with the powers of the spirit." A preliminary result of this work was a condition that one could call the "phase of neutrality." The group of pupils gained a certain inner freedom from the egocentric tendencies of the personality on the basis of the powers of the spirit. They became neutral and tranquil, without agitation, and calm in the face of inner and outer influences from the world on this side and from the beyond.

When this phase was maintained for long enough, at a given time, the pupils had to become conscious of the forces from the true self to which they had only reacted intuitively until then. Jan van Rijckenborgh describes this situation in his book *The Gnosis in Present-Day Manifestation*. He compares the "living body" of the group in the condition of neutrality with a sphere, a three-dimensional power field in which forces circulate. But these forces are not yet ignited, have not yet become light. Further inner work of the pupils, further addition of energy is necessary until one day the

sphere of forces becomes a sphere of light, in other words, until the forces of the spirit that circulate in the group break through into the consciousness of the pupils and can be experienced as light. “Suddenly we see how light breaks through like the dawning of daybreak, like the rising aurora at the top of the magnetic body, at the north pole of the magnetic sphere of the Spiritual School.”⁴⁰ And quoting the Gospel of John, Jan van Rijckenborgh continues: “‘In the Word lies life, and life is the light of men.’ In other words: the manifestation of the light-field follows the manifestation of the force-field. The most characteristic feature of that light-field is that it is also a life-field.” And further: “‘Christ is the light of the world; this light is the first-born of the Father.’ What else does that signify but his prophesied return....Christ’s return is a fact, becomes a fact in every magnetic body in which it is becoming light, in which the force-field develops and becomes a light-field. Then Christ has returned....Christ has not only risen, according to his promise, but he has returned, the light has been born.”⁴¹

It would still take years, until long past the war, before at least the beginnings of this new condition could be realized. Until then it was important to maintain the level that had been reached, to continue the necessary processes of purification, and to gain the power of discernment to recognize which influences from the transitory world of this side and from the beyond and which influences from the world of the spirit were active within the pupil.



Cathar cross

Spiritual Roots of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum

Christian Rosycross

Why does the Spiritual School founded by Jan Leene, Z. W. Leene, and Henny Stok-Huizer carry the name “Rosycross”? Is the School referring to a historical movement of the Rosicrucians, taking up their traditions, and continuing them? Or does it live out of a spiritual principle to which the name Christian Rosycross applies? Both are the case.

“Christian Rosycross” as Spiritual Principle

The aim, path, and working method of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross are contained in the principle “Christian Rosycross.” It documents the direct connection of the Spiritual School and its founders with the world of the spirit.

Awareness

The actual task that the original spiritual world has set humanity since the impulse of Christ is the realization of

this Christ impulse. The human being is to go under as to his egocentricity so that the Christ latent in him, the true self, can resurrect in order to totally transfigure his nature. Out of the Christ impulse becoming conscious and active in the human being, gradually a new personality is to arise in place of the old one. This new, transfigured personality is again in harmony with the laws of the spiritual world, recognizes and realizes them.

But today the Christ impulse has to be realized under other conditions than those at the time of Jesus on earth. Humanity has continued to develop. At least Western humanity has trained a sharp intellect over the course of centuries. This development of the mind went hand in hand with a greater consciousness in the world of the senses, greater independence, and greater individuality. Today the human being wants to understand what he is doing; he wants to act from insight and can thereby also act responsibly. He no longer wants to simply accept the doctrines of others and live by them but wants to understand them in order to live out of his own insights. This is one result of the Aquarius aspect of the spiritual world stepping into the foreground.

Christian Rosycross stands as a symbol for the necessity and need of the modern human being to understand the Christ impulse and the consequent spiritual path in order to finally consciously experience the Christ forces in his own being. This does not exclude that the spiritual student of modern times allows others to teach him. He even has to do this on the spiritual path, because as a rule he cannot yet directly experience the impulses from the spiritual world. He is dependent on human beings who experience the

spiritual world first-hand and report to him about it. But he will then examine these reports and teachings very closely and will make them his own only when he has understood them and if they seem plausible to him.

Therefore the master has a different function for a spiritual student of modern times than before. Formerly the student bound himself with absolute faith to the master and allowed himself to be led like a child. True, today he receives teachings and forces from the master, and also a faith in the trustworthiness of the master is necessary. But the guidance has now transferred to the student's own inner being. The real master is the true self of the student. For this reason, in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross there is a spiritual path and a comprehensible, conceptual philosophy about the goal of this path, which the student does not develop out of himself but that he can examine, that he can understand, and that can serve as a foundation to his behavior until he experiences the spiritual world firsthand in his own being. The philosophy serves him as a guide until the faculty to directly receive the impulses from the spiritual world has arisen in him.

Today's human being and spiritual student then wants to and must independently and individually apply and verify his insights in his life. He will want to be active as a responsible member of society who at the same time has his own sphere of activity in the world. Today's spiritual student no longer withdraws from the life of the world in a cloistered community but lives responsibly in his occupation, family, and society and realizes his path individually and responsibly in this regard.

Universality

Christian Rosycross is a symbolic figure for still another principle. The Christ impulse is a deepening and extension of all former revelations of the divine world to humanity. Although all human religions before the Christ impulse also stemmed from the divine world and therewith go back to Christ, each only brought aspects of this world to humanity in order to gradually prepare it for the reception of the entire Christ impulse.

In the centuries after the comprehensive Christ impulse that became manifest in Jesus, people, especially also in the Eastern Mediterranean realm, tried to permeate, change, and extend the traditional philosophies, religions, and mysteries with the Christ forces. Greek, Indian, Egyptian, Persian, Jewish, etc. traditions were touched, transformed, and made to serve the decisive, central task of humanity: the conscious transfiguration of the human being. Christian Rosycross is the symbol for these processes. The comprehensive Christ impulse is alive in him. He received within himself the contents and forces of all former great religions that streamed to him, permeated them with the Christ forces, thereby lifted them to a higher stage, and joined them in a new unity as different aspects of a great endeavor by the Brotherhood of Life that climaxed in the Christ impulse.⁴²



“So, Brother Rosycross, you are also here?” Christian Rosycross enters the reception room of the castle of the alchemical wedding and is mocked by the charlatans. Illustration by “Johfra” from “The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross.”

“Christian Rosycross” as Formula

The spiritual kernel of all religions, philosophies, and mystery traditions stemming from the spiritual world is contained like a formula in the name Christian Rosycross. The first name, Christian, indicates that Christ is this kernel and that a human being who wants to fulfill the present task of humanity has to be a Christianus, a human being filled with Christ. The last name, Rosycross, indicates the present condition of the human being, also the way to fulfill the task of humanity, and the goal of this way, the new condition of the human being. For now the spiritual principle, the Christ self or true self in man, is still latent, like a closed rose bud, and fastened to the cross of matter and the personality on this side. At present the personality consists of a self-maintaining ego—the vertical of the cross—and egocentric interests—the horizontal of the cross. These two main streams of his life on this side directed to matter cross in the heart of the human being.

But if the cosmic Christ forces enter the heart where the individual Christ principle, the spirit spark, is found, then this human being begins a path of inner change leading to transfiguration: The rosebud unfolds into bloom. The spiritual principle is awake, active and finally conscious. The vertical beam of the cross of the personality is opened to the vertical influx of the cosmic Christ spirit. This gradually replaces the old, self-maintaining ego and thwarts the ego-serving “horizontal” interests directed to this world and the beyond.

This process continues until the “cross” is completely

changed and the personality is transfigured. The rose is then in full bloom and the “dead” Christ, the true self, “buried” in the human being is resurrected. Man then possesses an immortal, transfigured, resurrected personality as an instrument that consciously receives the spiritual—“vertical”—forces and “horizontally” distributes them lovingly, without self-interest, in the service of humanity. The pupil goes this path from beginning to end in and with the help of the Christ forces but with independent insight that he puts into action in practical life.

Thus the formula “Christian Rosycross” contains the core of all religions. But this core is carried to the full ripeness of esoteric Christianity: The task of humanity can now be carried out in all aspects and completely. Not only the subtle-material worlds and the subtle-material bodies of the human being, that is, thinking, feeling, and willing, can be grasped and changed by the Christ impulse, but this change extends into matter and the gross-material body. A new heaven—a new subtle-material world—as well as a new earth—a new material world—arise.⁴³ And this all becomes possible in the special life circumstances of today’s human being who possesses a self-responsible individuality conscious in the material world.

The Historical Rosicrucians

The principle “Christian Rosycross” describes the present condition of the “atmospheric spiritual field,” which has

directly connected itself to humanity since about the middle of the 19th century. It contains within itself the sum and concentration of all former developments of this spiritual field. If one opens himself from below, from the humanity developing in the sense world, to this principle and unfolds in his own being the spiritual aptitude corresponding to it, then he becomes ever more conscious of it and can finally also act out of it. Jan Leene, Z. W. Leene, and Henny Stok-Huizer were three persons in whom this process occurred.

But a person in whom such a spiritual impulse manifests will always also seek to trace earlier manifestations of this impulse in human history and try to establish a connection to them. On the one hand, he draws directly from the impulse of the spiritual field, but on the other, he also seeks an outer confirmation of this impulse in connecting to its traces in the material world.

The Writings of the Classical Rosicrucians

For Jan van Rijckenborgh, these traditions became outwardly concretely palpable in the Rosicrucian writings from the beginning of the 17th century⁴⁴ among others. In the *Fama Fraternitatis*, he discovered the program for the realization of the spiritual principle—the formula “Christian Rosycross”—in life and society and the goal derivable from it. In the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, he recognized the theoretical formulation of this principle. And in the *Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, he found the description of the way to this goal: the reception, transformation, and realization of the spiritual impulse

leading to the unification of spirit with the renewed consciousness—the “alchemical wedding”—and finally to transfiguration, the resulting construction of a new personality.

The Historical Reality of Christian Rosycross?

Since this spiritual impulse took concrete historical forms in the Rosicrucian writings, it has often been asked if the principle itself, “Christian Rosycross,” was embodied in a concrete historical personality. For example, Rudolf Steiner answered this question in the affirmative and presented to his audience a concrete human being with a concrete lifespan (the Rosicrucian writings give the time of 1378–1484) but whose civil name may not have been Christian Rosenkreuz (Rosycross). As a result of his spiritual-scientific investigations, Rudolf Steiner also presented a series of historical personalities who were to have been earlier and later incarnations of Christian Rosycross. He was to have been a human being who experienced the life of Jesus as one of the closest participants. On the other hand, Carlos Gilly, doubtless the best expert on the historical Rosicrucian writings and the problems connected with them, comes to the conclusion:

“There was not a Christian Rosenkreuz of the 14th/15th century,”⁴⁵ which however only means that according to present knowledge, there was not a human being with the civil name Christian Rosenkreuz.

But such attempts, whether they employ spiritual-

scientific/esoteric methods or scientific/historical research, are always subjective, dependent on some imponderables and therefore lack ultimate certainty. The deductive way, on the other hand, is much more certain. If whatever kind of spiritual impulse is to be active in historical humanity, there have to be human beings who can concretely transform and anchor it in humanity, not only in that they represent it philosophically but also in that they embody it. So there must have been beings who embodied the principle “Christian Rosycross.”

And why should there not have been such an embodiment in the group in which the Rosicrucian writings arose in the 17th century? This group is called the “Tübinger Circle.” The doctor and lawyer Tobias Hess (1558–1614) was the spiritual head and inspiring force of this circle. So he was at least a representative of the principle “Christian Rosycross” in that time. In this sense, Joost R. Ritman asks: “Are not Tobias Hess and Father Brother Christian Rosycross here in line as the prototype of the true imitation of Christ?”⁴⁶ Hess’s closest coworkers were Christoph Besold (1577–1638) and Johann Valentin Andreae (1586–1654). The latter is regarded as the real author of the Rosicrucian writings named. This does not mean, however, that he had the experiences described therein firsthand. The inspiring source was Tobias Hess. The group around him was either to a certain degree independently capable of such experiences or had access to his experiences and understanding. Andreae, who perhaps had the greatest gift with language in this group, was then chosen to articulate the common understanding and experiences. In this connection, his young age at the time he composed the

manuscripts speaks in no way against his authorship.

According to Rudolf Steiner, Christian Rosycross incarnated in every century from the 14th century up to the present. And Jan van Rijckenborgh writes: “We will not follow this method (of historical investigation), even though we have to tell you that C. R. C. did exist; that we know people who were his contemporaries, who saw him and lived quite close to him. There are people who are closely connected with him.”⁴⁷

A Classical Order of the Rosycross?

Did a secret Order of the Rosycross exist at the beginning of the 17th century?

Many traces have been followed and no such Order could be discovered. In spite of this, it is justified to speak of a Rosicrucian Order even then, and when the authors of the writings appeared in the name of this Order, then this was not arrogance or an attempt to lead others astray. For all who at that time “synchronously” drew from the spiritual source Christian Rosycross were connected with each other on a spiritual plane. John Dee and Robert Fludd in England, Jakob Böhme, Adam Haslmayr, Michael Maier in Germany, later Amos Comenius in Bohemia and Holland—they were all representatives of this great impulse in the sign of Christian Rosycross. All also knew of the great doctor and philosopher Paracelsus (1493–1541) and referred to him as their predecessor. The *Fama Fraternitatis* dedicates a whole chapter to Paracelsus and

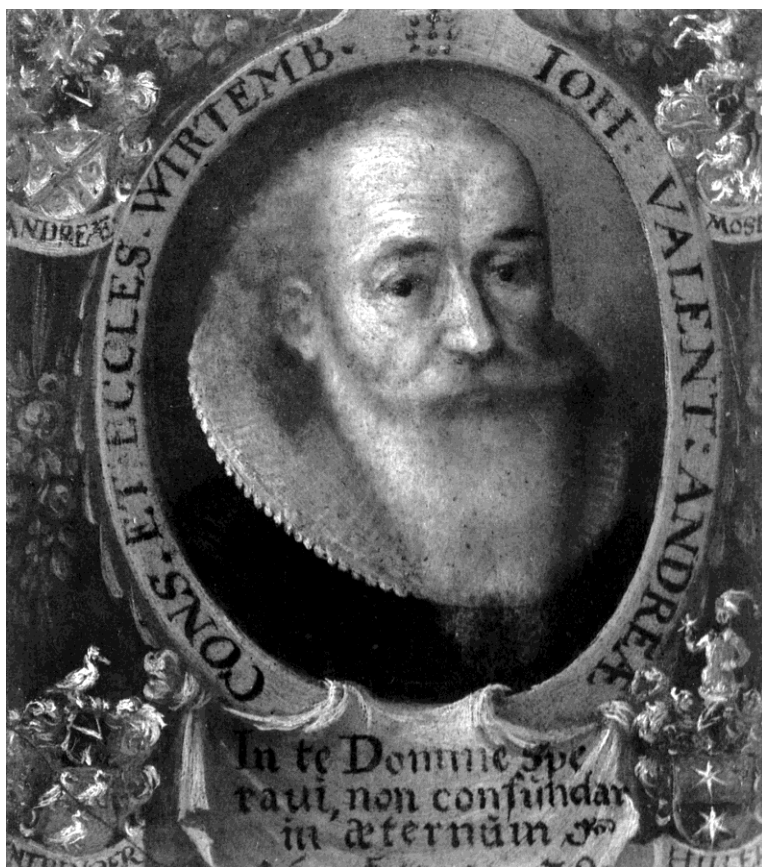
shows how he can be regarded as a Rosicrucian according to his experiences and his thoughts. He also may be grouped with those who drew from the spiritual source “Christian Rosycross” even though he lived a hundred years before the “Order of the Rosycross” was made public.

The circle around Tobias Hess surely planned to have this spiritual connection in the sign of Christian Rosycross become even more effective through a concrete organization. But the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos aroused a mighty “chaos of opinions regarding the existence, meaning, and purpose” of the supposed Brotherhood of the Rosycross. Between 1614 and 1623 alone, 330 texts about the Rosycross appeared. Charlatans and braggarts also designated themselves as Brothers of the Rosycross and so brought the Order and its goals into disrepute. Beside the serious truth seekers who longingly sought connection to the league announced in the *Fama*, there were too many people who looked for personal advantages and the development of occult faculties from such a path. If these people, “shameless comedians” who had betrayed and corrupted the *Fama* (Andreae), had become determinative in an organization to be built, then the goal and way of the Rosycross would have quickly turned into its opposite.

This may have induced Johann Valentin Andreae (who was widely identified as the author of the manifestos after the death of Tobias Hess in 1614) to more or less unequivocally distance himself from these writings. But he never gave up the program contained in them. In 1620 he tried to call to life a real brotherhood under the name “Societas Christiana.” Thus, he clothed “his old program in a new

form ... for reasons of safety”⁴⁸ as Carlos Gilly says. “So I let this Brotherhood go, but never the true Christian Brotherhood fragrant of roses under the cross”, Andreae wrote in *Turris Babel* (1619). It was alone the disorder of the Thirty Years’ War that made such an attempt practically without prospect. And after the outbreak of the war, circumstances demanded a concentration of energies on mitigating the misery of the war. It would have been wrong to close one’s eyes to the distress of those times. Thus we see Andreae’s admirable spirit of sacrifice when, for example, as superintendent of Calw, he actively helped to remove the devastations of the war and to rebuild.

The “Societas Christiana” as an outer organization was to comprehensively influence science, culture and religion and by means of these also society and politics; such was the plan. This was wholly in the intentions of the *Fama Fraternitatis*, which had spoken of a great world reformation in the sign of the principle “Christian Rosycross.” Representatives of science, culture, and religion, but also of politics and society would have found their places in such an organization. Nevertheless, that the group around Tobias Hess in this regard had set their hopes on the “winter king” Frederic V of the Palatinate and that even John Dee and England had played a major role in the development of the Rosicrucian movement are fictions according to the present state of research.⁴⁹



Johann Valentin Andreae (1586–1654), coauthor of the three Rosicrucian manifestos: “Fama Fraternitatis” (1614), “Confessio Fraternitatis” (1615), and “Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross” (1616)

The Cathars

A further root of the new Rosicrucian movement called to life by Jan Leene, Z. W. Leene, and Henny Stok-Huizer was Catharism. The spiritual legacies of all the brotherhoods that ever were active in humanity are contained in the field of the spirit like the links of a chain. It is essential in the construction of a new community of this type that it always consciously connects to the last link of this chain, inwardly-spiritually as well as also in outer tradition, in order to be nourished out of the forces of the whole chain on the one hand and to continue its impulses on the other.

Teaching and Way of the Cathars

The Cathars or Albigensians were the latest spiritual community in Europe that had a large international organization. They spread to many regions in Europe from the end of the 11th to the end of the 13th century, especially northern Italy, southern France, and further up north to Holland and northern Germany. Two extant texts of the Cathars of southern France are the *Interrogatio Johannis* (*John's Interrogation* or *The Secret Supper*)⁵⁰ and a "ritual."⁵⁰ The *Interrogatio Johannis* is very likely of Bogomil origin. The Bogomils were another community that strove on a Christian basis for a spiritual existence free of inner ties to this world and the beyond. They had already been active in the Balkans for centuries and continued Manichean traditions. They greatly influenced Catharism

by way of northern Italy, in fact may have given the decisive impetus to its rise and further development.

The Interrogatio Johannis is an example and proof of their influence. One can gather from it the worldview and philosophical basis of the Cathars. Like the modern Rosicrucians around Jan van Rijckenborgh, their point of departure was that the origin of all being is a spiritual order and power that manifests in material forms via soul forces. When this process of manifestation occurs harmoniously, then the material forms are pure expressions of the spirit. The outer then corresponds to the inner. But the world harmony was disturbed when self-maintaining forces—called “Lucifer” by the Cathars—made themselves known in the soul realm and separated from the spiritual world. Since then, these forces dominate in the world and humanity and prevent the activity of the spirit in the human being.

But there is a way to reverse this disturbance. This way is expressed in the “ritual” of the Cathars. It is first of all a matter of the latent spirit in the human being, the light spark, making itself noticeable again. It makes itself perceptible in the form of a hunch or cognition that the present state of the world and humanity is one of a disturbance of the original harmony. From this cognition follows a way of life of conscious self-liberation from the entanglements in this world and the beyond. This was the first segment of the path of the Cathars: cleansing and purification on the basis of the spiritual principle in the human being. The second segment began when the connection between the world of the spirit and the spiritual principle in the human being was re-established. The

Cathars symbolized this connection by the consolamentum: The student received the Holy Spirit. Now the final farewell to every inner binding to this world and the beyond could and had to follow. And the love, unity, and freedom of the true self, the light principle latent until now, could become active again.

The Cathars used the name “endura” for the conscious dissolution of self-maintenance, the principle of transitory life, in the forces of the true self that came to the fore again and became active through this process. At that time, it was supported by outer patterns of behavior such as sexual abstinence and fasting.

But the church did not understand that the resurrection of the true essence of the human being is only possible if the false essence, the life in self-maintenance, “goes under” in a process. The “endura” was misunderstood as physical suicide through which the Cathars hoped to enter Paradise by the shortest route. Also later it was still believed that this conception could be documented through the records of the inquisition, which reported that Cathars starved themselves after receiving the consolamentum. But the Cathar “ritual” clearly shows that the endura meant the “death” of the human being’s false essence of self-maintenance and egocentricity. If individual Cathars really believed that they had to commit suicide through excessive fasting, then this was a misunderstanding on their part.

The path of the Cathars was carried out by first withdrawing totally from the world. This was still sensible at that time. Later on their spiritual path, however, when they had become rooted in the ground of the spirit, they

turned back to the world and went through the land teaching and healing. Their farewell to the entanglements in the world was indeed without compromise and radical.

But this does not mean that they thought “dualistically” as has been imputed to them. True, they bluntly set the world of appearances permeated and ruled by self-maintenance opposite the world of the spirit. But the world of matter also once originated in the spirit and would again be permeated by it and express it when the principle of self-maintenance was dissolved.

End of the Cathars

As the church at that time was strongly defined by a striving for power, possessions, and influence, the worldview and path of the Cathars had to appear to it as a challenge from an enemy. The church saw itself threatened in its claim to power, its influence on human beings, and its self-importance, which explains its behavior in regard to the Cathars. It led to persecution, the establishment of courts to try heretics, the first establishment of an inquisition, and finally a crusade against the “heretics,” which ended with the cruel destruction of these “pure ones.”⁵¹ A decisive point was set by the burning of 205 “parfaits” (perfect ones) after one of their last places of refuge, the castle of Montségur, became untenable. Allied to the church was the French state, which followed its own political interests with this crusade. The French king saw the conflict as a welcome opportunity to extend the rule of the crown over the still relatively independent south of France.⁵²

Antonin Gadal

In their search for traces left by Catharism, Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh traveled several times to southern France from 1946 on. In 1954 they met Antonin Gadal there, who made himself known as the last patriarch of the Cathars in a chain of transmission going back centuries. Antonin Gadal confirmed what had already become clear to Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh through their own experiences.⁵³

Like the Cathars, they had recognized that the original harmony between the world of the spirit and the dialectical world of this side and the beyond had been torn asunder when the soul of the human being rebelled against the spirit. Thus the world of matter had become a hell of opposing interests and conflicts. And all striving for harmony in this world are only insufficient band-aids on the bleeding wounds as long as the basic evil, the self-maintenance in the human being, is not removed.

Efforts to create harmony that are undertaken while retaining self-maintenance or that stem from it cannot possibly lead to the goal. It is impossible to penetrate into the world of the spirit from below upwards through the smoothing of the rough edges and through the further development of the material world. One has to radically carry out the endura, the dissolution of self-maintenance. Only then can the spirit work from above downwards, dissolve conflicts and disharmony, and later enable the human being to construct his personality and world anew.

This realization and experience—that there is no bridge

from below upwards, meaning through further development of the earthly human being, that instead the bridge can and must only be built from above downwards—was and remained one of the central declarations of Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh, which decisively determined and determines the life and the path of the School of the Rosycross.

Also, the history of the Cathars burned itself deeply into the consciousness of the leaders of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum. The church showed an uncompromising enmity and will to destroy as regards this movement. Seen externally, Catharism ended in an ocean of blood. Therein a lawfulness came to expression for Jan van Rijckenborgh, which he also explicated again and again. When a human being or a group of human beings remember their original inherent spiritual aim and want to free themselves from their political and religious world determined by self-maintenance, then this world will not voluntarily give up its “possession.” It will become violent possibly leading to the destruction of the seeker for truth and freedom. Thus it has been throughout all of world history. One only needs to consider, for example, how Jesus was treated by the political and religious institutions of his time, and how then the young church that was organizing and becoming an instrument of power persecuted the Manicheans and Gnostics.

Occasional sharp comments by Jan van Rijckenborgh about the church in books and lectures relate to these historical facts and this lawfulness. He pillories the institutions in so far as they, as organs of the drive for possessions, influence, and power, persecute human beings who want to dissolve

this drive for possessions, influence, and power in the unity, freedom, and love of the spirit. At the same time, however, he always indicates that the same lawfulness is active not only in the outer world, but also in every individual human being and also in every student on the spiritual path. In every individual who wants to go this path, self-maintenance asserts itself even stronger and tries to destroy the impulse of the true self. It would be too comfortable to seek for “evil” only outside of oneself and to self-righteously want to separate from it. First it has to be discovered and overcome in one’s own inner being.

Freemasonry and Alchemy

In the Rosicrucian writings, Jan van Rijckenborgh encountered freemasonic symbols and alchemy, further roots of the philosophy of the Rosycross.

Freemasonry

He enlisted freemasonic symbolism repeatedly in describing the spiritual path. The goal of every pupil is to become a “living building stone” in the spiritual temple of the Spiritual School as well as of humanity as a whole. He will smooth all surfaces and edges of the stone, that is, remove all his egocentricity so that the true spiritual self will fit well into the structure of the spiritual world. Also as an individual human being, he wants to become again a

complete temple in which the spirit can live. Thus he carries out self-responsible, conscious “freemasonic work” to “freely” build himself: to withdraw the true spiritual self from the entanglements in this world and the beyond and to build up a new personality, a new temple, out of the forces of the spirit.

The temple of the individual human being as well as the temple of humanity can only be erected on the “corner stone” Jesus Christ, on the force and in the force of the spirit and in the light, in the new spiritual consciousness. In this work, the pupil stands “on the fourfold carpet”: Mentally, emotionally, volitionally, and actively, he leads a life directed to his task.

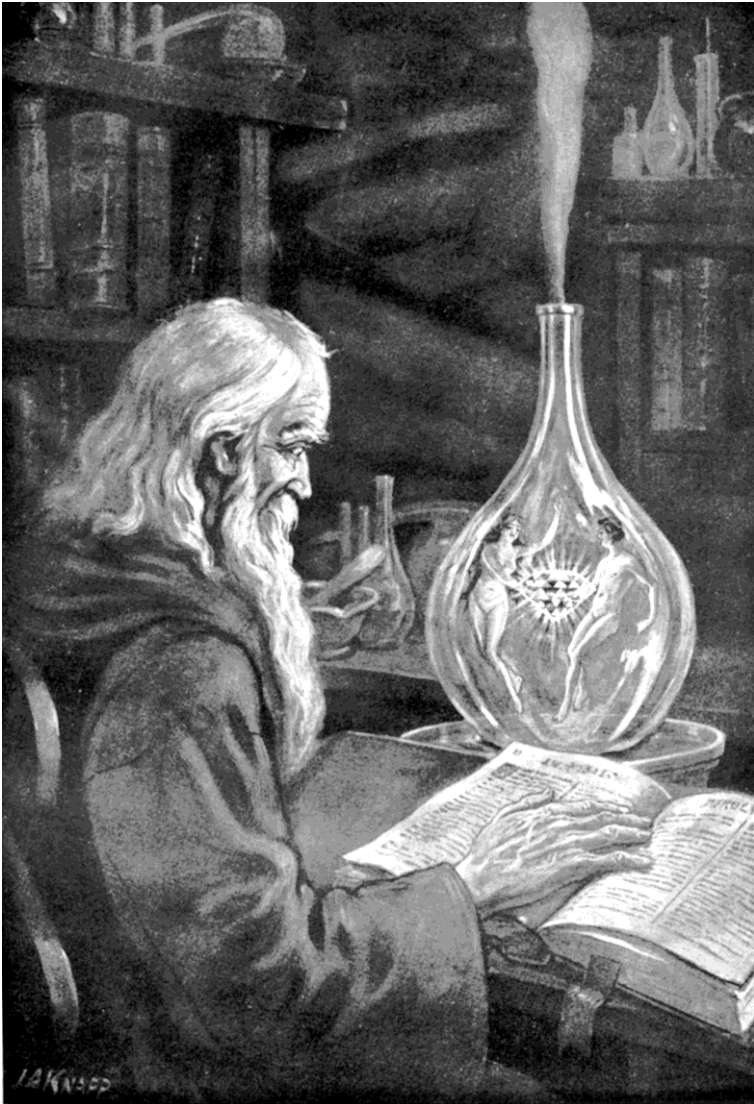
Alchemy

In the Middle Ages and still into the 18th century, alchemy was the generally widespread symbolic language through which esoteric researchers communicated esoteric truths. Seekers for the truth of the spirit carried out alchemical experiments mainly in order to symbolically represent soul-spiritual processes within the human being through outwardly visible occurrences in the realm of metals and minerals. The striving to make physical gold was a materialistic degeneration, a misunderstanding.

Through the inclusion of the symbols of alchemy, which had especially come to development in the Arabic cultural realm, the developing modern Rosicrucian community connected with another link in the chain of brotherhoods

from before the time of the Cathars: the Arabic mystery tradition. In the *Fama Fraternitatis*, Christian Rosycross did not travel in vain in the Arabic world, for example, to Damascus and Fez, meeting the local sages and absorbing their wisdom. This expresses symbolically that the Rosicrucian impulse also lives out of the Arabic mystery tradition of Sufism.

Central themes of alchemy were firstly, to turn lead into gold, and secondly, to celebrate the “alchemical wedding” between bride and groom, between queen and king. Turning lead into gold: The present human being is a personality stamped by self-maintenance and therefore degenerated and sluggish like lead when compared to the original condition. This personality is constructed according to the laws and forces of matter and is no longer a pliable instrument of the spirit; on the contrary, it hinders the spirit. The human personality as it should be, however, is free of self-maintenance and is a pure, clear instrument of the spirit. It is “gold.” When the alchemists wanted to turn lead into gold, then this meant that the personality dependent on matter was to be transfigured into a personality permeated by the spirit. This occurred in three phases: “dissolution” of the lead; leading it back into the primal state of the metal as such, the “prima materia”; and construction of the gold from the prima materia. The self-maintenance of the personality is dissolved; the primal state of the soul living out of the spirit is reestablished, and out of this primal state arises the new personality permeated by the spirit.⁵⁴



The Alchemist. Illustration from Manly Peter Hall's (publisher) "Codex Rosae Crucis," Los Angeles 1938

The second great theme of alchemy that plays a major role in the philosophy of the modern Rosycross is the “alchemical wedding” between the king and queen, between the spirit and the renewed soul in the human being. This wedding is the prerequisite for transfiguration. What is meant is that in a personality cleansed of all self-maintenance, a new soul arises that is not determined by the gross-material and subtle-material world but by the spiritual world. The more the forces and structures of the spirit become active in this soul, the queen, the more it will develop a consciousness that is capable of grasping the forces and structures of the spirit, the king, active in it. Then it is consciously permeated and filled by these forces—this is designated as the “alchemical wedding.” According to the words of Paul in the Bible, the soul then recognizes as it is recognized, and sees “face to face.”⁵⁵ The alchemical wedding is the descent of the Christ, the spirit, into Jesus, the soul prepared for this. From then on, the human being who consciously receives and lives out of the spirit has become a source from which the spirit flows for others. The new, spirit-permeated, transfigured, resurrected personality is built up from his new thoughts, feelings, will impulses, and actions that are directed to the spirit. Jan van Rijckenborgh writes about this in *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*: “And now, in the story of C. R. C., the spirit-soul has become manifest, transfiguration has been completed, and the new, omnipresent consciousness causes Christian Rosycross to enter the fields of the living soul-state, or in other words, to enter those fields of consciousness that far transcend our three-dimensional consciousness and into which, with this consciousness, we are unable to follow C. R. C.”⁵⁶

Relationship of the Sexes

The cooperation between spirit and soul brings up a subject that is of great importance for the life in matter as well as for the spiritual path and the activity of the spiritual human being: the relationship of the sexes. In the material world, the human being appears in two forms: as man and as woman. Both possess a personality determined by self-maintenance, which is differently “polarized” in each, however. Man is biologically-bodily active, woman biologically-bodily passive. In their subtle bodies, these functions are reversed. In summary one could say that woman is more inclined to develop feelings and to stimulate thoughts while man is more inclined to stimulate feelings and to develop thoughts. Heart and head, feeling and thinking, stand in a polar relationship in the human being and in man act like plus to minus, in woman like minus to plus. Because of this different polarization, the sexes attract each other.

Man as well as woman will reach the alchemical wedding on the spiritual path: In both of them, a spirit-permeated soul that will one day consciously experience the spirit is constructed on this path. Spirit and soul⁵⁷, “king” and “queen,” are also factors of different polarity in the individual human being, whether man or woman. As long as both these factors are latent and only the self-maintaining personality is active, the human being lives solely out of this personality, feels incomplete, and feels attracted to the other pole, the other sex. But if both these factors, spirit and spirit-permeated soul, become active

again in a human being, be it a man or a woman, then he is in the state of the image of God awakened from its latency and is autonomous, a whole. He does not need to seek for anything lacking in himself in the other sexual partner. What he was lacking, the spirit and soul that have become alive, is again present in him, and the transfigured personality is an expression of this autonomous dual unity, an expression of “king” and “queen” who have celebrated their “wedding.”

But there are also two types of this autonomous human being: the spiritual, autonomous “man” and the spiritual, autonomous “woman.” For, so writes Jan van Rijckenborgh in the *Elementary Philosophy of the Modern Rosycross*, “it is a scientific fact that the fundamental organic differences which exist, even in the individual cells of men and women, are also present in their soul figures, in their spirit figures and in their archetypes, and that these differences have therefore been taken into account in the central-spirit principles and in the divine plan. This could not be otherwise, because everything that exists is manifested out of the spirit. So there is a divine creation: man, and a divine creation: woman. These two aspects together form the human life-wave.”⁵⁸ In the spiritual man, the spirit, the active force, works outwardly and the soul, love and devotion, is within. In the spiritual woman, the spirit as active force is within and the soul, love and devotion, works outwardly. Thus both types are autonomous, as both poles work in them together. Both have a transfigured personality that is an expression of this unified dual polarity.

Nevertheless, they are two different expressions of the human being. As such, they can and will work together with

equal rights. “We call this liberating collaboration: to be cosmically ‘two-in-one’.”⁵⁹

This has consequences for the spiritual path: For already on the path itself, both sexes will work together on the level of spirit and soul with equal rights. Even more, there are consequences for the human beings that have become autonomous again who, since they are present in a twofold expression, work together in the world of the spirit. The working together of Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri is an example of this new cooperation. Jan van Rijckenborgh always emphasized that a spiritual path can only lead to the goal if man as well as woman reach inner autonomy in order to then, having become autonomous, work together at a new level.

The Gnosis

Among the medieval alchemists, the father of alchemy was considered to have been “Hermes Trismegistus” or “Hermes, the thrice great”: great according to the spirit, the spirit-soul, and the spirit-permeated personality. Through Hermes Trismegistus, a legendary figure of the Egyptian mysteries, Jan van Rijckenborgh came to the Gnostic Hermetic writings and to the Gnosis in general. From 1961 to 1966, four volumes of his interpretation of the Hermetic writings were published under the title *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis*. The Gnosis is another decisive root of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross.

One will only be able to adequately understand the

historical Gnosis if one understands it as a renewal and deepening of the pre-Christian mystery traditions of the Mediterranean realm under the sign of original Christianity. The historical Gnosis is really the impulse of original Christianity and its continuation with the inclusion of the traditions of the mystery schools of the Mediterranean that were newly enlivened by and taken up in the Christ impulse.⁶⁰

But Gnosis is not only a historical movement. Rather, this movement shows especially clearly a timeless existential knowledge, a path of initiation that can be experienced at all times and in all places. “Gnosis” means knowledge. As such, it is not a system of beliefs and not knowledge that can be learned but insight arising from within the human being: the becoming conscious of his true essence.

The way shown by Jesus is nothing else: becoming conscious of the “image of God” that has become latent in the human being of this world and the activation of this image of God as the “Christ in man.” On this path, the self-maintenance of the human being of this world has to “die”; in the words of Paul, the “old self” has to be “crucified”.⁶¹ From the image of god that has awakened and become active, a new personality can then be constructed that, like Jesus, is resurrected from the “grave” of nature.

Gnosis is therewith also the process that the School of the Rosycross designates as transfiguration. Jesus himself went this path and lived it as an example. When the Holy Spirit—symbolized by a dove—descended on him after the baptism in the Jordan and he was “anointed” with this spiritual fire, that is, became the “Christ,” this was nothing other than his

becoming conscious and active of the image of God in him, which then opened itself to the forces of the spiritual world and received them. Thereby, the “Son,” the “image of God” created by God, again became one with God. Jesus recognized God as he was recognized by God and could say: “The Father and I are one.”⁶²

After this becoming conscious—realization, Gnosis—the self-maintenance present in his own subtle-material being, symbolized by Satan, approached him, was recognized, and was overcome in the new spiritual forces. Then the activity of Jesus who had become the Christ began out of the spiritual forces: He lived the thoughts, feelings, energies, and activities springing from the spiritual world in love for others. This was the construction of a new personality that replaced the old one permeated by self-maintenance.

“Son of God”

On the one hand, the “Son of God,” the Christ, is really the only Son of God, the light of consciousness that goes out from the force of the “Father” in order to illuminate all human beings. In this sense, Christ spoke through the mouth of Jesus: “I am the light of the world.”⁶³ On the other hand, every human being is in principle a son of God, for the immortal image of God is in him, and he becomes a son of God in reality when this image of God in him again becomes conscious and active. He then belongs again to the “children of light”⁶⁴; as a “righteous one,” he is a “son of God.” The book “The Wisdom of Solomon” in the Bible

describes very accurately the characteristics and inherent aim of such a “son of God.”⁶⁵

Salvation

According to the experience of the Gnostics, salvation does not refer to the mortal, gross-material and subtle-material personality. Jesus does not save the personality through an act of grace and awaken it to “eternal life.” The image of God in the human being has to be saved, not the egocentric personality. And this salvation consists of the image of God, the true self in the human being, awakening from its latency and inactivity and becoming conscious and active. What was formerly trapped in this world and the beyond becomes liberated and saved. This is an inner path that cannot be taken away from the human being by a savior from without. Nevertheless, the human being cannot go this path out of his own power. He cannot save himself but needs the power from the spiritual world for this, just as Jesus was “anointed” with this power. He needs the aid of helpers who stand in a special connection with the spiritual world and who transmit its forces to him, just as Jesus transmitted them after his connection with the Christ force.

Two Worlds

The Gnostics distinguished between a creator god, the demiurge, the “god of this world” as Paul also called him,⁶⁶

and the original “Father,” the spirit.

The “god of this world” is the god of the world on this side and the beyond. To him corresponds the mortal, self-maintaining personality built of gross and subtle matter, which imagines this god as a person and anthropomorphic in accordance with its own nature. Therefore, this god possesses the characteristics of mercy and wrath, compassion and justice. But above the god of this world is the original spiritual world, which corresponds to the image of God slumbering in the human being. This image of God, which can become conscious in the human being, is not a limited, mortal personality but an individuality of unlimited consciousness. It does not stand opposite the God of the spiritual world like an I to a you, like a person to a person, but experiences itself consciously embedded in God, permeated and animated by God. In this sense, Jesus is a Gnostic and can say: “The Father and I are one,” and: “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”⁶⁷

Jan van Rijckenborgh encountered the historical Gnosis first in the Hermetic writings and the Pistis Sophia,⁶⁸ later also in the writings found near Nag Hammadi such as the “Gospel of Truth” and the “Letter to Rheginus.”⁶⁹ In the Hermetic writings,⁷⁰ Hermes Trismegistus takes the place of Jesus Christ, the helper from the spiritual world who himself has gone the way of transfiguration and makes it possible for others.

The Universal Teaching

Syncretism or Universal Teaching?

A philosophy like that of the School of the Rosycross that receives forces from many roots in the past and uses symbols from the most varied times and cultures is often charged with being “syncretistic”: that it is artificially assembled from all possible elements of different origin, that it is lacking in originality, and that it actually only lives from the experiences and accomplishments of others.

But the philosophy of the Rosycross has grown out of the authentic spiritual experiences of the founders of this School. It is not a philosophical system pieced together from concepts and arbitrary symbols, also not a system of beliefs erected from dogmas. The philosophy of the Rosycross is rather the expression and precipitate of direct experiences with the world of the spirit, experiences that, since the world of the spirit is characterized by unity, also represent a unity, a living, original unity.

Whoever can inwardly re-experience the basic experiences with the world of the spirit will recognize this philosophy’s unity originating out of the singular root of the spirit disregarding its many different symbols. Someone who only looks at this philosophy from the outside, however, will take the variety of symbols as an indication of syncretism.

When a human being becomes conscious, for example, of the spiritual formula at the basis of the development of humanity and the human being, then he directly receives

therewith a share of the world of the spirit in which this formula is anchored. He symbolizes it perhaps with the sentence: "Whoever is willing to lose his life for the sake of Jesus, the prototype of the spiritual human being, will keep it, that is, the true life in the spirit." But he can also represent it with Buddhist symbols, perhaps such that the "thirst for existence" has to be totally "extinguished" before illumination will strike like lightning into the resulting emptiness. Or he describes it with symbols from Platonic philosophy: Someone who strives for and loves wisdom will only experience this wisdom, the world of the spirit, when he has liberated himself from the deception of sense perceptions and the entanglement in the sense world. He will also be able to represent this experience with the formula "Christian Rosycross," which is again a special expression of this experience. Should he hesitate to use and cite the symbols of all these streams that he perceives as confirmations of his own living experience?

Since all original religions and mystery impulses are revelations from the spiritual world and find their unity therein, Jan van Rijckenborgh can speak of a "universal teaching" in regard to the philosophy of the Rosycross. All religions—and therewith also their symbols—are branches of a great tree, parts of a great organism, with each having different tasks at specific times and in specific cultures. All originate from the one root of the spirit and represent it.

Someone who looks at religions only from the outside, as dogmatic systems, will only notice the differences between them and will demarcate one from the other. But someone who sees them as expressions of a spiritual world that was

experienced differently at various times and by various people will recognize the one spiritual world in these symbols.

It is this way also in ordinary life. The experience of joy, for example, can be expressed differently. One person may symbolize it by a bubbling brook, another by an exulting lark. Someone who only sees the pictures and has no access to the experiences that stand behind them will assume it is a matter of two different statements. Someone is acting similarly when he sees the “Kingdom of God” of the Christians, the “Nirvana” of the Buddhists, the “Tao” of the Taoists, and the “World of Ideas” of Plato as different things. Indeed, in order to demarcate his position from others, he wants to do so. But they are symbols that all point to a singular experience.

In modern times, where the cultures of earth come into relationships with one another, the world religions also come into contact with each other and examine each other. If they do not go back to the experiences standing behind the symbols that originate from the unity of the spirit, then they will never understand each other. Today attempts are being made worldwide to find a common denominator in religions, for example, in the form of a “world ethic,” and to make it obligatory for humanity. These are artificial attempts that only originate from the outer systems of beliefs. Instead, it would be essential that human beings become ever more conscious of the spiritual world. Then they are one in this experience, no matter how they symbolize it.

But not only the growing together of peoples and cultures

forces a new way of looking at things; the Rosicrucian impulse itself is a stream into which all previous streams from the world of the spirit enter, enhanced and permeated by the Christ impulse. This fact once again justifies the inclusion of the different symbolisms in the philosophy of the Rosycross, even makes it necessary. For all previous symbolisms gain new depth and power through the Christ impulse and so can contribute to the development of the consciousness of humanity in a new way.

The “Universal Spiritual School”

In its teachings and structure, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is an expression of the universal world of the spirit. Someone who experiences its structure and power from within and becomes part of it experiences the structure and power of the world of the spirit in general, just like the becoming conscious of the true self of a human being lets him experience his identity and unity with the spiritual world.

These circumstances often induced Jan van Rijckenborgh to speak of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross as the spiritual school in general and to say that no one who does not belong to this spiritual school could go a spiritual path. He thereby referred to the congruence of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross with the universal spiritual school, the totality of all impulses from the world of the spirit. In fact, no one who is not touched by the impulses from the world of the spirit, that is, the activity of the universal

spiritual school, can go a spiritual path.

Seen outwardly as organizations, however, there are also today various spiritually striving groups in the world. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross is not the only one. Jan van Rijckenborgh also indicates this in various places of his work. For example: “There are religious and occult brotherhoods in the world which claim to possess the only true faith. We do not share this point of view, but only want to make clear that the light has been manifested in the magnetic body of the modern Spiritual School, so that Christ has entered and from this light, life came forth.... We are putting such emphasis on this so that it cannot be said later on: ‘The Lectorium Rosicrucianum claims to be the only true church.’ We repeat that the magnetic body of the modern Spiritual School has become Christ-centered in a very exact sense; that without this light there cannot be life; that the eternal prince of the Light for that reason said: ‘Without me you can do nothing.’”⁷¹

Developments during and after World War II

The bases for the Spiritual School of the Rosycross had been laid by the beginning of World War II. The Leene brothers and Mrs. Stok-Huizer had worked out the philosophy of the Rosicrucian path in connection with the principle “Christian Rosycross.” They characterized this path and demarcated it on the basis of the original Christianity from spiritual paths of the past of the West and the East that can no longer lead to the true inherent aim of the human being.

Parallel to the spiritual development of these three human beings, a group had arisen that, touched by the Rosicrucian spiritual impulse, had at first occupied itself with the philosophy of the Rosycross and then, solidifying this impulse in their own being, had gained an ever better power of discrimination for how the modern Christian path of initiation looked in comparison to the old paths. Jan van Rijckenborgh described this path in his book *Dei Gloria Intacta* (1946) that he wanted understood as the “Declaration of the Christian Mystery of Initiation for the Present.”

After the war, building on these experiences and realizations, Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh could go on to the construction of an “inner school,” the real spiritual or mystery school in which the pupils continued their path on the basis of the now well-understood philosophy of the Rosycross and their newly-won power of discrimination.

Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh developed the first stage of this inner school in southern France in close inner contact with the preceding Brotherhood of the Cathars. It was concerned with the endurance, the conscious dissolution of the self-maintenance of the personality in the forces of the spirit.

This was at the same time the legacy of the Cathars to the new spiritual school of the present that was to realize the Rosicrucian impulse. The visible transfer of the heritage of the Cathars to the modern Rosicrucians took shape with the unveiling of a monument in Ussat-les-Bains on May 5th, 1957.



The monument “Galaad” in Ussat-les-Bains, southern France. It commemorates the cooperation of the Cathars, Grail knights, and Rosicrucians: the “Tri-unity of the Light.”

It is built up of large stones of the most varied forms, a symbol for the living “stones” of the pupils of which the school of the Cathars consisted and the modern school of the Rosicrucians consists, also a symbol for the chain of communities and mystery schools that over the centuries anchor and further develop the world of the spirit in humanity.

As a special sign for the contribution of the Cathars to this great work, Antonin Gadai added to the monument an altar stone that had survived the centuries in the cave of initiation of the Cathars. In this cave is still found today a life-size pentagon chiseled into the rock, a symbol for the

fivefold new soul that develops when the human being carries out the endura.

On the occasion of the unveiling of the monument “Galaad,” a three-day conference of the Rosicrucian pupils from Holland, France, and other countries took place on a piece of property for which a down payment had been made for this purpose. Since then, such conferences have taken place at irregular intervals of up to several years. They served to enliven the spiritual heritage of the Cathars: to reexperience their path, which comprises the first steps of the Christian path of initiation, but then to go further on this basis and realize the Rosicrucian impulse as it comes to expression in the principle of “Christian Rosycross” under the conditions of the modern world.

This work manifested outwardly in various occurrences. At the end of 1946, a piece of property with buildings called “Elckerlyc” near Laage Vuursche (Holland) was bought, which later received the name “Renova” (renewal). In these buildings, the pupils met for “renewal conferences” in order to realize and go the path together. In 1951 a large temple serving this work was erected on this property, the “Renova Temple.”



Dove in the garden of the Dutch Conference Center “Renova.” The dove is the symbol for the feminine aspect of the spirit: the power of harmony that orders and preserves everything that has become new.

The Path of the Spiritual School

The truth, the eternal power of wisdom of the world of the living Soul-state will grow within you, according as you will be ascending the seven steps of Soul-birth.

(Catharose de Petri, *The Seal of Renewal*)

The path, work, and structure of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross are determined by its goal. The goal is determined by the fact that presently the relationship between the divine nature order and the non-divine nature order is disturbed. If the spirit, the root of all things, would be received by the human consciousness and expressed in matter, the harmonic development of the spiritual “lines of force” that belong to the spiritual world would be guaranteed. Instead, the human being has dissociated himself from the spirit in self-willed self-maintenance. Thereby the spiritual world has become latent in him.

The Goal

The goal of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is the reversal of this wrong relationship, first in the human being but, in the long run, also in the cosmos. The School enables its pupils to go a path and goes with them, which leads, on the one hand, to the dissolution of the dominance and self-lawfulness of soul and body, and on the other, to the

resurrection of the spirit latent in the human being. The human being should attain inner freedom from the influences of the sense world and freedom from fate, which is the result of the self-maintaining activities of countless egos that preceded the present ego.

This freedom is only thereby possible, if his true essence, his spiritual nature, unfolds again. For a being is free when it lives in harmony with its inherent law of development. In the measure that the spiritual nature of the human being unfolds, the pupil becomes capable of shaking off the influences of matter and destiny that hinder the development of his true essence.

The structure of the spiritual world along with that of the true self of the human being is the truth. Therefore, Jesus says: "The truth will set you free."⁷² If a human being lives out of this truth, which means being in harmony with the world of the spirit, then he is one with it and one with all other human beings in so far as they also live out of the spirit. His life will be a conscious realization of the spiritual world and a conscious activity out of the spiritual world. His soul is permeated by the truth and its power, and his personality expresses this truth and power.

The power of the spiritual world is the love that is active without limits and without self-interest: Like water, which nourishes all creatures without having to want and intend it, so the love of the human being living in the freedom and unity of the spirit contributes to the development of all beings, spontaneously and without intention.

If the goal is rightly recognized and the corresponding way trodden, then at the end of the path will stand a personality

liberated from all self-maintenance and inertia—a transfigured personality that consciously and self-responsibly reacts to and realizes the impulses of the spirit.

There is then also a new soul that is liberated from self-maintenance, liberated also from fate and the influences from the reflection sphere. It takes up the impulses of the spirit and passes them on to the transfigured personality. Then the spirit in the human being has become one with the infinite, eternal spiritual world and is united with soul and personality. Through them, the spirit distributes understanding and love, and receives the reactions of the environment to this distribution.

The Spiritual Path

Longing for the Spirit

A certain maturity is the prerequisite for the path and attaining the goal. The human being has to have reached a critical point through many of his own experiences and the experiences of the many egos that have summed up to his fate in his microcosm. At this point, life itself becomes “questionable” to him. For his latent spiritual principle makes itself noticeable, at first still unconsciously, and fills him with the presentiment of a life in limitless freedom, unity, and love.

In contrast to this presentiment, he experiences normal life as limited and meaningless. This has nothing to do with the

experience of someone who has come up short, who experiences pain due to his unrealizable wishes. The Buddha said: Even if all my wishes were fulfilled and I led a life like the blessed gods in the beyond, my longing would still not be stilled. The longing is only stilled when the human being has united with the inexhaustible world of the spirit. Jesus characterized this principal insufficiency in the course of the things of this world and the beyond in the first beatitude: "Blessed are the beggars of the spirit."⁷³ What is meant hereby is not a lack of intelligence but a condition in which the human being experiences that he lacks the unity with the spiritual world, the conscious abundance of the spirit, and that he longs like a beggar for the wealth of the spirit. One could also translate the beatitude as: "Blessed are those that long for the spirit, for the Kingdom of God."

This is the basic prerequisite of the path to the goal of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross: longing for the spirit. The latent, ineffective spirit in the human being longs for the conscious ascent into the spiritual world, for the abundance of the spirit in which it can unfold. The stronger this longing for salvation is, the stronger is the chance that the path will be kept to, that wrong tracks will be recognized as such, and that the goal will be reached. Such a longing for the spirit cannot be generated. It has to be born of the experience of the human being that he lives in this world and the beyond as if in exile and painfully longs for his spiritual home. But once it is born, it can flare up to a mighty longing.

Obstacles

A great if not the greatest difficulty on the path of the student of a spiritual school is that the world in general, society, and therewith his entire outer environment, as a rule, follow other goals and take other paths than he does. The goals of the environment of the student are mostly even contrary to his spiritual goal. Societal forces consciously or unconsciously influence every member of society and therewith also the pupil of a spiritual school. Education, training, conventions, and especially the mass media all enjoin him to behave in conformity with society's values and norms and to support them. He is to also strive for success, prosperity, security, and enjoyment and unconditionally affirm them.

If the pupil would not have had the basic experience that his actual goal in life cannot lie in these interests dominant in society and if the longing for true life fulfillment would not have become overwhelming, he would have no chance to develop the weak, little plant of the true human being in himself against the overwhelming unfavorable outer conditions. Just as little would he have a chance if the three remedies of the Spiritual School were not available to him: the forces from the field of the spirit, the community of the "living body," and the Universal Teaching.

Inherent Aim of the Human Being

Not only subjectively but also objectively, the path of the

Spiritual School of the Rosycross would be impossible, yes, a figment of the imagination, if it did not deal with the inherent aim of the human being. The path is anchored in the formula that is active in the individual human being and in humanity as a law of development, as a divine line of force, and is determined by this formula. For this reason, the path of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is in principle not new but also the path of all other original religions and mystery schools of the past and present. Every original religion and mystery school did not want anything other than to show human beings who were ripe and receptive the path to their actual inherent aim and to help them to walk this path— always under the special conditions of their time.

This path is not a fixed idea, not a meaning given to human life arbitrarily. If it would be so, then the human being on the way to this goal would eventually be exhausted or would give up when the obstacles became too great. The actual justification for this path lies herein: It is the path of the true human being who wants to liberate himself from the sheaths of falsehood—the human being striving for success, possessions, power, and enjoyment—in order to live out of the world of the spirit. The inner tension that allows the pupil to search for the path and to continue walking on the path— and should this path last many incarnations and run up against seemingly insurmountable obstacles—originates from the objective situation that the present world and the present human being have lost their balance. A disturbance in the household of the world and in the psychological household of the individual wants like a pain to abolish itself. The disturbance itself creates the tension that calls up

the forces to its overcoming. They are active in the pupil and flow to him from the Spiritual School from its three “remedies.”

The Path as Subjective Experience of the Pupil

Words like “path” and “goal” are images. The idea that the pupil is moving forwards and making progress can lead to misunderstandings. The spiritual path does not consist in that the pupil conquers ever-new realms of consciousness, develops ever greater capabilities, and has ever more beautiful and intense experiences. It is better if one imagines the path as a succession of stages in the pupil approximately like a child ripens into a teenager and a teenager into an adult. It concerns an inner growth on the one hand, a “withering” on the other.

Not the development of the personality to greater power, importance, and enjoyment, not an expansion of consciousness and clairvoyance in subtle realms of the beyond are goal and path, but just the “withering” of the egocentricity of the personality. In the measure that the self-maintenance of the pupil dissolves step-by-step, the characteristics of the true self, up to now unknown to him, can awaken within, grow, and change his personality.

These processes yield a succession of states of an ever-greater tranquility, calm—yes, the “not-being” in relation to transient nature—in the pupil, who is gradually permeated by a new freedom, love, and unity with the spirit. In the measure that the old, apparent identity

determined by self-maintenance dwindles, the inner law of the spirit unfolds and becomes the new identity of the pupil, which is also his original identity stemming from the spirit.

In the first approach, one could describe the experiences of the pupil on the path with the help of pairs of opposites: In the place of intention steps the allowing of the unfolding lawfulness of the spirit; in the place of desire, the surrender to the spiritual world; in the place of one's own will impulses, the streaming of new forces.

“Insight”

The first stage on this path—or the first state that the Rosicrucian pupil experiences—is the phase of insight. It is not a matter of intellectual analysis. It is a matter of insight that arises into the consciousness from the heart of the pupil. The Rosicrucians speak here of “pre-remembrance,” a remembrance of the spiritual world deeply hidden and buried in the human being. When this pre-remembrance becomes alive in the pupil, then he foresees that his inherent aim is a life in the world of the spirit. In the light of this presentiment, his opinions and views up to this time appear as limited. And the dissolution of this limitation is experienced as liberation and expansion. The intellect certainly participates in this process in critically testing and formulating the new experiences, but it is not the originator of these experiences.

A beginning pupil gains, for example, the insight that human life—his life—has meaning in the grand picture of the development of world and humanity. At the basis of all development of world and humanity lies the spiritual world as lawfulness and power. He also belongs to this spiritual world; it is active in him as the law according to which he set out on his journey as a spiritual being. He is “born of God”—*Ex deo nascimur*—as the Rosicrucians of the 17th century said, a thought germ gone forth from the thought of God that wants to develop and express itself independently. As a thought of God, the human being has a task and responsibility not only for himself but also for the whole stream of development of world and humanity in which he has been taken up.

Coincident with this “remembrance” of his true being, the pupil also becomes conscious of the condition in which he finds himself presently: He is not working responsibly in the spiritual stream of the development of world and humanity. Like all other human beings, he has taken a path with world and humanity that leads ever more into matter. He recognizes that the world is presently in no way the unfolding of its inherent spirit but the unfolding of its anti-spirit also inherent in it.

The experience of “being born of God” brings further insights with it depending from which worldview, which direction, the pupil comes. If he thought materialistically up to now, for example, then the thought of not only being a speck of dust in the universe and not only a fleeting coincidence will bring real meaning to life. Eternity surrounds and protects the world. The world originated out of divine intelligence, power, and formative force, out of

eternity, even though it is distancing itself on its own paths ever further from its origin. The big bang and biological evolution may be correct looked at from the outside, from the side of form; but what is decisive is that seen from within, from the side of the spirit, world and humanity have come forth and develop further out of the eternal spirit.

If the pupil believed up to now in a creation of the world through God, who works on an object like a craftsman from the outside, then this idea will now appear limited. He recognizes that the divine “Word” is the structure of lines of creative forces that are at the basis of all existence and develop it from within, just as the creative information present invisibly in the seed of a plant brings forth the visible plant out of itself.

If the pupil believed in an eternal life for the personality in the beyond after death, then also this idea will no longer seem tenable to him in the light of the new experiences. For a personality that originated from and lives out of the anti-spirit of self-maintenance and is not an adequate expression of the spiritual kernel hidden in it cannot possibly endure eternally. It will be dissolved after death and a period of processing experiences in the beyond. The spiritual kernel that has not yet become conscious and active, however, will continue to live eternally. At a given time, it will connect with a new personality born on this side and thereby tie itself to the experiences of the previous personality that are stored in the totality of the microcosmic system of this human being.

So, the beginning pupil will acquaint himself with the idea of reincarnation—not in the sense that a mortal personality

returns repeatedly in an ever improved condition, but that the immortal spiritual kernel ever again connects with a new personality whereby the harvest of experience of the previous personalities determine the structure and life of the newly “adopted” personality. The pupil will realize that this process of reincarnation could in principle continue endlessly as long as the personalities persist in self-maintenance. For then the spiritual kernel would never become conscious and active. Only when a personality gives up its self-maintenance can the spiritual kernel become conscious and active, transfigure the personality, and transform the latter to its means of expression. Then the process of reincarnation is at an end. For then its presupposition and necessity have fallen away. It is only necessary as long as the spiritual kernel is unconscious and latent. The human being then steps out of the “wheel of birth and death.”

“Longing for Salvation”

The second state that the Rosicrucian pupil experiences on the path is that he orders his life anew. He draws consequences. The insight ascending from his heart about his place and task in the world leads to new actions. When the pupil recognizes that he is “born of God” and that his life should correspond to this fact, he will begin first to bring order into his life. He gradually becomes conscious of his goal in life, and therefore the obstacles to the goal also show themselves.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross calls this inner state of the pupil “longing for salvation.” If the pupil longs for “salvation,” the life in the spirit, and acts in the sense of this longing, then, like the diseased and possessed in the account of the New Testament, he will be gradually healed of the illnesses and “demons” of his entanglements, conflicts, fears, and illusions and their consequences. A new order and freedom arise in him out of his new insights and longing for healing.

This phase of pupilship, this state of inner and outer cleansing, is characterized by “neutrality.” The pupil withdraws from being ruled by sympathies and antipathies towards people and things. He recognizes how he is led and entangled by fears and hopes of all sorts—and no longer lets himself be led by them but only by the experience: The true self does not fear or expect anything. It quietly and with understanding withdraws from the entanglements in the world of self-maintenance. Through such a way of life, new forces from the world of the spirit come into circulation in the pupil and a new exchange of forces between him and his environment develops.

“Self-Surrender”

In the second phase of the path, the pupil was occupied with untying himself from the effects of self-maintenance, the entanglements in the world caused by hope and fear. Now, in the third phase, he logically focuses his attention on the cause of these entanglements, the self-maintenance within his own being. His I-centrality is the root of all his

conflicts and entanglements. He proceeds to dissolve this root step-by-step. How is he able to do this?

This root comes into his consciousness through the recognition and the feeling that it is not his true being, and it gradually dies off like a root that has been dug out of the ground and is exposed to the light. Nowhere else than in this phase does it become clearer what the spiritual path is not. It is not concerned with the human being analyzing with his mind his “strengths” and “weaknesses” and then trying with his will to remove disagreeable character traits. It is an experience common to all human beings: One can recognize some “negative” character trait with one’s mind and gain a certain distance to it. One can then also try to remove this trait and to replace it with a new behavior. But in the long run, this method will always fail. The “negative” trait is not removed thereby; yes, through the fight of the consciousness and will with it, it becomes only still stronger.

The realization of the pupil of a spiritual school is of another kind and another origin. It is in principle such that one state of soul is replaced by another state of soul. If the pupil is, for example, filled with criticism of others—a state born of self-maintenance and weakness—then gradually a state of inner strength of soul and of understanding of others can grow out of the unfolding spirit in him. This state takes the place of and dissolves the previous one, just like a cramp disappears when the energies in the muscle flow freely again.

Two aids stand by the pupil in this. The one is the Spiritual School’s force field in which he stays. In this force field, the

structures and characteristics of the true self of humanity are present and active like lines of force in a magnetic field that surrounds the pupil. They support the structures and characteristics of the pupil's own true self, and with this backdrop, he becomes conscious of his old self-maintenance.

The second indispensable aid to the pupil in this phase is pain. Once the pupil has experienced the new possibility of tranquility and power and the thereto-related freedom from unrest and weakness, and then when he, for example, once again exercises criticism that wounds, he will experience this state as highly unsatisfactory, yes, as painful. And this pain will weaken the old state, if the pupil quietly endures it. The ancients called this type of pain "repentance." This is not a feeling of guilt due to the violation of a rule. It is instead a deep regret over a situation that does not correspond to the true self of the human being.

All these occurrences can be summarized in the formula: "Those who lose their life for my sake [...] will save it."⁷⁴ This formula describes especially the process in the third phase of the path of the pupil. For this third phase is the actual phase of the reversal and the change in which the essence of the path of the pupil comes especially to expression: *their* life, that is, the life of self-maintenance and egocentricity, the common state of the human being. When someone loses this life consciously and voluntarily for the sake of the new state, the state of the soul born of the spirit, then the new state, the life out of the freedom, unity, and love of the spirit, becomes active. "For my sake" also means: in the forces of the spirit and with help of the forces of the spirit. Therefore, the Rosicrucians of the 17th

century described this phase of the path with the words: “In Jesus we die”—*In Jesu morimur*. Whoever is born of God and in whom God is again active will “die” as to his old being in the forces of the spirit, which are represented by Jesus. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross calls this state of the third phase of the path “self-surrender.”

“New Attitude of Life”

The next, fourth step on the path is the anchoring of the new possibilities of life in one’s own being. And how could they be anchored differently and better than by the pupil learning to live ever more and more consciously out of the new forces and structures of the soul? This presupposes that he learns more and more to provide room for the new potentiality in the struggle between two forces and potentialities in his own being and to give less room for the old potentiality, recognizing it ever more, and suffering the pain of remorse. It is a question of endurance and of perseverance, of daily attentiveness and ever new decisions.

To live out of the new soul forces and structures means to act out of them. By so doing, they are recognized and strengthened and given the chance to be active as new thoughts, new feelings, and new will impulses thereby completely replacing the old state of the pupil. But what does it mean to live and act out of the soul forces? It means to work together with the structures and forces of the spirit without any self-maintenance—to live for other human beings! It is the state of “not-doing” as the ancient Chinese sages expressed it.

Five essential soul qualities gradually grow in a pupil of the 4th phase: tranquility arising from the harmony with the true self; compassion that knows at the same time what others have to carry and endure; knowledge of what is striving towards truth and freedom in other human beings and things, and what is working against this striving; constructive love that promotes truth and freedom on the basis of this understanding; and finally, joy that gives the activity of the pupil verve and dynamism.

When the old inhabitant of the “house” of the personality, self-maintenance, has moved out or “died” in the fourth phase of pupilship, a new inhabitant, the true self, moves in. The true self now changes the furnishings of the house and the house itself so that it becomes its expression and instrument. All character traits and abilities of the human being freed from self-maintenance are permeated by new forces. They become expressions of the spiritual formula that lies at the basis of the human being as law of development.

“Becoming Conscious”

In such a human being, the structure of the spiritual lines of force unfolding within him gradually becomes conscious. This is the state and the task of the fifth phase of the path.

The contents of this new consciousness differ radically from those of the old. After all, this consciousness is itself brought forth through the individual structure of spiritual lines of force of the human being, whereby it is capable of

recognizing these. The thought of God, the human being that has come forth from God's thinking, becomes conscious of itself and experiences thereby that it is God's thinking that is active in him and that mediated this consciousness. In this sense Paul speaks of this: "... I will know fully, even as I have been fully known."⁷⁵

Thus the pupil becomes conscious that he himself as individual intelligence, force, and love is embedded in and permeated by the divine spirit, God. Whoever wants to find a description of becoming united with the world of the spirit can read, for example, *Aurora* by Jacob Boehme.⁷⁶ The pupil will also learn in this phase to consciously transform what is experienced and to work with the new forces according to their inherent lawfulness. He now works with the creative spiritual lines of force that go through him (one of which he is himself) in such a way that he promotes everything in his environment and other human beings that belongs to the spirit. He acts in constructive love, which is nothing other than the activity of the spirit. "Reborn through the holy spirit"—*Per spiritum sanctum reviviscimus*—is what the classical Rosicrucians called this phase of the path.

What is learned and experienced on the fifth step at first in a groping way—independent, conscious experience of one's own spiritual being, profound understanding of the environment on the basis of this experience, and experience of the cosmic spiritual being, as well as acting out of these experiences—becomes deepened and enlarged upon on the sixth and seventh steps of the path. The pupil totally submerges in the streams of the spirit and streams out to the world and human beings, whereby a new personality

develops according to thoughts, feelings, will, and even subtle materiality.

This path with its seven phases must not be understood to mean that the transition into the next phase always means the closing of the previous one. Every state is a task that remains until the end of the path. Every state has to be continuously enlivened so that the succeeding ones have a good foundation—as with a house whose stories are placed well on top of each other. The process of the first step, for example, the establishing of insight, continues in all the following steps and deepens ever more. Conversely, all experiences of the following steps can and do appear in the previous ones in a germinal form.

Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh once characterized the seven steps of the spiritual path as follows:

- “1. the new knowledge, the birth of the new mind;
2. the conscious communion with the Lord, the development of the new mind by means of a new heart-radiation: thinking with the heart;
3. the budding of the new will-being, genesis of the new desire-body;
4. the new activities of head, heart and will give rise to a new life of action, the birth of the new etheric body;
5. birth of the new physical body;
6. union of the new personality with the Spirit-Soul;
7. union of the new personality with the divine spirit—the victory.”⁷⁷

Special Characteristics of the Path

The pupil on the spiritual path becomes aware of certain characteristics of this path.

Faith, Knowledge, and Deed

The pupil begins the path in faith and obtains his energy until the end always also from faith. But his faith is not the believing of a teaching or a dogma that he takes up from an authority. This would be a great leveling of this concept. He experiences faith as a motive power from the spiritual kernel becoming active in him noticeable as a longing for a new reality of life—a longing for salvation. He experiences this simultaneously as an openness to this new reality of life, as an inner certainty that this reality of life is his destiny and that of every human being, and that it will sometime also take shape in him. Faith is the experience of being “born of God.”

From this state of openness to the goal of the path and the longing for it gradually arises knowledge. The pupil becomes conscious from within of the goal of the new life and the stages of the path thereto. He becomes conscious that as a spiritual being he is embedded in the world of the spirit. He becomes conscious of what obstacles stand in the way of the realization of the new life. He experiences in every moment of the day which action is necessary so that the life in him urging to come forth can grow. Thus he knows what it means “to die in Jesus.”

Religious human beings are often distrustful of “knowledge.” They stress faith in the truths of religion. The mind is not in a position to understand the “facts of salvation.” But knowledge on the spiritual path is something different than mental deliberation. It is a becoming conscious of the true being and the spiritual world. If faith does not lead to knowledge, then the pupil is stagnating on the path.

From the knowledge of the world of the spirit and its forces follows further the application of these forces according to their inherent laws. From the knowledge of the obstacles that stand in the way of the unfolding of the new life in the pupil follows the dissolution of these obstacles. This means a complete change of the old I-central personality and the build-up of a new one, which acts in new ways: “reborn through the holy spirit.” From knowledge follows the deed. And since the latter is nothing else than the turnover of the spiritual forces received, the pupil realizes through his deed the love of God in the world.

Faith lives in the nascent new heart of the pupil, knowledge in the nascent new head, and the deed is fed through the energies newly circulating in him.

Realization

The pupil on the spiritual path experiences that this path means independence. He does not get any further if he does not react independently to the impulses coming out of his own inner being. He will discover and overcome the human

tendency to honor and to imitate others who go the path thereby withdrawing from his own task. If he identifies the goal that he has recognized with that of others—with saints, with a savior, with an institution—then he honors this goal in others and puts his forces in their service. He no longer needs to change himself. He identifies with the other who has already reached the goal.

Many who brought the spirit into the world and wanted to enflame others with it had to experience how the need of human beings to worship them as bringers of the spirit again extinguished that flame. People glorified them as human beings in whom the spirit had become alive and awaited deliverance from them. In their honor one celebrated feasts and erected beautiful buildings but did not let the spirit in one's own being come to life.

What is decisive on the spiritual path is that realization takes the place of worship. This does not exclude gratitude and respect towards the bringers of truth. But the pupil testifies of his gratitude in the best way by fulfilling the earnest wish of these truth bringers: that the truth is realized.

Objective Changes on the Spiritual Path

The subjective experiences on the spiritual path—premonitions, insights, longing for salvation, self-surrender, new way of life, new consciousness—are expressed in thoughts, feelings, and decisions, that is, psychic experiences. But every psychic experience also has

its physical and physiological side. Perhaps they are altogether the same facts, only once seen from within, once from the outside.

On the spiritual path, the whole human being also changes bodily and physiologically. "The person who contemplates the path seriously and decides really to go it, changes physically, biologically and anatomically from that very moment on."⁷⁸ It is known from psychosomatics, for example, that to every emotion corresponds a hormonal state. When a new love of humanity with its corresponding hormonal functions becomes active in the human being, hormones corresponding to self-maintenance or fear cannot simultaneously circulate in the blood and trigger actions. In this respect the blood and its composition, the activity of the glands of internal secretion and of the hormones, as well as the composition of the nerve streams and their directions change on the spiritual path. The nerve streams correspond with the consciousness or with thinking.

Thus one can also describe the spiritual path from the outside, physiologically and anatomically, and the Spiritual School of the Rosycross does this to show that the path is not only a subjective factor without consequences for the material body but also an objective factor that changes all the substance of the body. There are three centers of decision in the human being: the head, above all as the seat of thinking and willing; the heart, above all as the seat of feelings and desires; and the liver-spleen system—in general, the organs in the abdomen—as the seat of energies and drives and as the gate for karmic influences.

On the spiritual path, the spirit spark stirs in the human being and makes itself noticeable at first in the heart. "Usually some great shock in ordinary life causes the spirit-spark atom in the heart to start vibrating. Until this moment due to conduct and blood quality of the ordinary man, this atom had been so latent and enshrouded that it could not be awakened by the Light of the Divine Sun. When, however, as the result of bitter experience, a temporary collapse in life occurs, affecting even blood, then one of the seven heart ventricles is opened, the fire contained therein is ignited and a blinding light is radiated towards the thymus, a small organ located under the breastbone. If the thymus proves receptive... then the thymus hormone carries this light radiation into the lesser blood circulation. When this work has been completed, the light power will certainly in time touch all brain centres to which it is carried by the blood. Upon its arrival in the head-sanctuary, the person concerned will then, in the first instance, be born a seeker... Irresistibly, a whole series of thoughts are now developed."⁷⁹ Thus insight arises as the first phase of the path. Through the influence of the light force of the spirit, which is new consciousness, the pupil becomes conscious of the state of the world, his own state, and the new possibility of life out of the spirit.

Everything now depends on the heart being cleansed of the wishes and desires of self-maintenance. This happens thereby that the forces of the spirit become active as longing in the heart, as a new "desire," as the desire to become "whole." This desire, which gradually permeates the whole blood and changes the internal secretion, step-by-step replaces all other wishes and the hitherto existing

activity of the internal secretion. This is the second phase of the path, and when the thinking in the head and the nerve streams of consciousness in the spinal marrow submit to the new forces in the heart, an ever greater freedom of thinking develops. Heart and head are referred to each other; one complements the other in the new efficacy of the spirit.

Once this unity between head and heart, the new hormonal activity in the blood, and the new nerve streams are somewhat stabilized and tranquility has entered in the being, then the process of cleansing and if necessary dissolution of the energies and impulses from the center of energy, the liver-spleen system, can begin where the root of self-maintenance is found. For there lives “the ‘I’, the blood-I, the earthly soul...This location is to be understood not merely in a figurative, but also in a literal sense. The liver, the spleen, the kidneys and the adrenal glands plus the solar plexus (the pelvic cerebral centre) form the realm of the blood-I, the desire-being.”⁸⁰ Now “through this new circulation of entirely different ether-powers, of pure Christ ethers, the fortress of the ‘I’ is attacked; the ‘I’, the desire-being is driven from the pelvic centre and a new desire being, the embodiment of the great Craving for Salvation, is born.”⁸¹ Thus thinking becomes increasingly conscious of the impulses from the energy center. And supported by the longing for salvation of the heart, it learns to withdraw from the grip of these energies. In the measure that these energies are no longer used, they become weaker. The pupil has entered the third phase of the spiritual path. The old will is replaced step-by-step by a new one.

The direction of the physiological processes now reverses:

As formerly the I-system had directed and subdued the heart and head in a self-maintaining way, so now the heart and head, embedded in the streams of the spiritual world, dominate and give tasks and direction to the energies of the body.

“Once the Divine light has been ignited in the head-sanctuary, we see a surge of power in the right strand of the sympathicus into the plexus sacralis at the base of the spine.... The stream of grace of the gnosis now fills the entire being and descends the tower of mysteries to the earthly chamber of the plexus sacralis.... There the stimulative field is connected to the revealing, reacting field. Now the steam must ascend to the meeting place in the head-sanctuary via this reactive field, i.e. the left strand of the sympathicus.”⁸²

When thus the new will impulses, born of the renewed heart and steered by the renewed head, stream through the nervous system next to the spinal column from above downwards and then again from below upwards, the so-called chakras (organs of the subtle bodies of the human being), which formerly were in the service of self-maintenance, gradually become servants of the new nerve streams and newly polarized. A new life of action is the result, mark of the fourth phase of the path.

Finally, there comes the point where the forces of the spirit also stream through and newly polarize the last chakra, connected with the pineal gland. Thereby thinking becomes free to take up the streams and forces from the spiritual world directly, not only via the heart, and to steer the actions of the human being out of the conscious knowledge

of the laws of the spiritual world. The spiritual forces coming from the heart then stream through the whole spinal marrow with the seven chakras. In the fifth phase of the path, the human being consciously takes up the spiritual forces and uses them responsibly. His personality with the three centers of the head, heart, and liver-spleen system becomes a conscious, sterling instrument of the spiritual world. "A change of the body literally takes place. ... We see, as it were, the miracle of the advent of a new personality within the old personality of nature and yet outside it."⁸³

The law according to which the spiritual human being has appeared, the spiritual seed that lay near the heart, has unfolded in the whole personality through the heart and head thus transfiguring it. Its thinking, feeling, willing, and acting stand from now on in the service of the spiritual world, which corresponds to the sixth and seventh phases of the path. The biological functions that must still be simultaneously maintained continue to be monitored by the blood, the hormonal system, and the nerve streams without thereby detracting from the whole systems orientation to the spiritual world.

So, "we assert that the power of brotherly affection, which begins to prove itself in the pupil on the sixth step of the sevenfold path, is not a power that can be explained from this nature.... That which proves itself in the new magnetic cycle is 'God revealed in the flesh'.... This is brotherly affection: a new existential faculty actively radiating in the gnosis. The I does not stand behind all this; it is not the result of the decision: 'Now I must begin to show brotherly affection!'... Whoever possesses this faculty is in the service

of man, existentially; he cannot stop for this faculty is; it surrounds him on all sides.”⁸⁴

“The brother and sister of the seventh step possess a glorified new total personality including a physical bodily form.” They live out of “the love which is called God, Spirit and Light. And now you will understand as Paul understood: if you had everything and had not that love, that new state of being, you would have and be nothing. For this love which is God, this eagle’s flight of the spirit, is the ultimate goal, the great and wonderful goal for all who in this epoch are called to the light.”⁸⁵

The outcome of these descriptions is that the way of transfiguration differs in principle from some ancient, especially eastern paths of initiation. First of all, the pupil does not work towards awakening the energies of the abdomen, the so-called “kundalini,” drawing them up the spinal marrow and letting them conquer heart and head. For this would mean that he could become the victim of not only the biological energies of this world but also of the karmic energies. Heart and head would then not be oriented to the streams of the spiritual world and therefore also not filled by the forces of the spiritual world, which alone could become master over the biological and karmic forces. The human being would only have the usual forces of feeling and thinking at his disposal, perhaps strengthened by moral barriers. But these would altogether not be equal to the assault of the powers of the kundalini and would uncontrollably be flooded by them. “When the unbridled will has ignited the plexus sacralis with unholy fire, that which is unholy cannot be sanctified or spiritualized. At best it can be subdued for some time, until

at a specific moment it bursts out, in one way or another, like a devastating fire.”⁸⁶

In the way of transfiguration on the other hand, the pupil always takes the spirit spark, the representative of the true self in the heart, as his starting point and takes up the forces of the spiritual world through this entry gate. They enter over his heart into the system of the personality and renew first the heart and head in order to then also bring energies of the will and karma under their dominion. “Thus, the new will is the fire, the creative power according to the spirit, and that fire can only produce liberating and really creative work providing it conforms to the head and the heart in their new state.”⁸⁷ Thereby freedom, consciousness, and responsibility are always guaranteed. In the end of this process, the pupil lives with his true self in the streams of the spiritual world, this being the destiny of the human being. An awakening of the kundalini not out of the true self and its forces, on the other hand, even if the human being would be able to dominate the karmic forces, would mean that he would dissolve in the streams of the subtle-material worlds to which karma belongs. And this is not the inherent aim of the human being.

Inner Structure of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross

The path of a pupil of a spiritual school is carried out in a succession of seven “steps” or psychic and physical states that are logically and organically built on each other.

But the way each individual pupil goes this path is also the way the Spiritual School of the Rosycross in its totality has gone. For at first it consisted of human beings in whom only a presentiment of a more essential humanity had awakened. These pupils then lived through the phases of the path that follow each other under the instruction of the founders of the School—who in their turn went the transfiguristic path.

One can compare the Spiritual School according to its structure with a step-pyramid: The first step or “aspect” is membership; the second and later steps or aspects are called pupilship. Membership and the first step of pupilship form the “outer school.” The “inner school,” the actual mystery school, begins with the third step. For with the third step begins the actual change of the old personality and its replacement by a new personality living out of new forces of spirit and soul.

Relationship of the Stages to Each Other

Every step has not only significance for itself but also for all other steps. Every state follows logically the previous one. Thus, no state can and may therefore be skipped. So the lower step always has an important significance for the next-higher one—as its prerequisite and enabler.

But also the reverse is the case: Every higher step has significance for the next-lower one. The powers for the process of change in the pupil stem not only out of his own being—the more or less latent spiritual principle in him—

but also out of the field of the spirit itself. The powers from the cosmic spiritual field stream downwards from above, from the seventh step, through all steps, stimulate the individual spiritual forces of the pupil on his respective step, and support him in his development. Thereby they adapt according to intensity and content to the state of the pupil on every step, otherwise he could neither receive them nor get any use out of them. On the next higher step, the spiritual forces stimulate the pupil, pull him upward, and give him the power to climb higher. Thus, the striving of the pupil from below meets the help from above on every step in a characteristic way.



Christian-Rosycross Temple in Calw in the south German working field

The Work of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross

The question may be asked: but what then is the task and work of the Spiritual School in the new era?...The Brotherhood of the Rosycross will, in the years to come, demonstrate a certain truth through itself...All of mankind claiming to be spiritual and intellectual is engaged in arguing about what is 'truth' and what is 'untruth'. Now, if we are correct in our contention that the vast majority of mankind is no longer able to differentiate between truth and untruth, then what would be the use of exerting ourselves to the utmost to confront mankind anew with the Rosycross truth?

This is the reason why the Spiritual School has instituted no new truth organization; it will not go in for any debate on the truth, but through the results of its labor, it will demonstrate the Power out of which it exists and works. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross is engaged in calling into being a factual situation.... This will make it possible for everyone to gain a clear insight into the state of world and mankind in our present order of existence and, with the factual existence of the new man in view, to determine whether he will be for or against the Light.

(Jan van Rijckenborgh, Dei Gloria Intacta)

Three Helping Factors

Through what means or factors does the Spiritual School of the Rosycross contribute concretely to the development of its pupils on the sevenfold spiritual path? For this is after all its actual task and justification for existence: to show human beings the path to the unfolding of the true self and to be helpful to their going of this path. The factors that are active in the Spiritual School to enable this to occur are the forces liberated by the founders, the teaching, and the group.

The Founders of the Spiritual School

Help for a human being who wants to unfold his true self—or better: whose true self wants to unfold—can only be given by a human being whose true self is already more or less active. An unfolded state stimulates a not-yet unfolded state. One could speak of a kind of “infection” or also “induction.” State acts on state—as far as receptivity is present.

The founders of a spiritual school provide an environment for the true self in which it can unfold and out of which it can draw forces for its development—a soul-spiritual “power field.” It represents the structures of the spiritual world and its forces to which the structure and energy of the true self of the pupils corresponds.

Without such human beings, the pupil would be standing

before an insoluble task unless the true self in him had already reached a high step of development. In general, the true self is still in an embryonic state and needs a “mother field” for development until after it has been born and then grown-up, it can independently take up the forces from the cosmic spiritual field.

Regarding the self-maintenance of the personality, which is the decisive obstacle for the unfolding of the true self: It cannot dissolve itself. A block of ice cannot melt itself. It must reach an environment that is warmer than itself: Energy must be supplied to it. If one places it in warm water, then it dissolves its hard structures and takes on again the soft “structures” of the water and its higher state of energy. In this sense, the spiritual state of the founder or founders of a school that manifests in a “power field” is a decisive factor without which every development of a pupil would be impossible.



Catharose de Petri (1902–1990), founder of the Spiritual School with the Leene brothers



Jan van Rijckenborgh (1896–1968), brother of Zwier Willem Leene, one of the founders of the Spiritual School

The Teaching

But how does the state of the developed human being act on the state of the undeveloped human being? Does it happen by suggestion, by intentional “magical” influence of which the pupil is not conscious?

This would be against the principle of freedom, which is a basic principle of every spiritual school. No responsible human being with a true self that has become conscious, with spiritual powers, and with a new personality structure will influence other human beings “magically” in the usual meaning of the word. He works rather via the spoken and written word, via symbols or rituals, that is, via a “teaching” that can be consciously taken up and applied by his pupils.

When a human being who is filled with spiritual forces and living out of spiritual lawfulness speaks, then he expresses thoughts, feelings, and energies that correspond to the level of the spiritual world. With thoughts, feelings, and energies with which his words are “charged,” he turns to the conscious personality of his listeners. These have complete freedom to discuss, take up, or reject them. If the pupil takes them up, then they touch the true self latent in him via his consciousness. This self is stimulated and fed by the power and structure contained in the words. Thus, the true self of the pupil gradually steps into his consciousness. He “remembers” again the truth that was hidden and buried in him. By means of the word (or appropriate symbols and rituals) the unfolded spiritual state of the speaker comes to expression and touches via the consciousness of the listener his not unfolded spiritual state, stimulates it, feeds it, and

enlivens it.

The “teaching” in the broader sense appears in three forms: first, as spoken, written, and sung word; second, as symbol or ritual; and third, as sacrament. In each of these forms, it can refer to three aspects: the aspect of the connection to the spiritual world, the aspect of the experience of the spiritual world, and the aspect of the realization of the impulses from the spiritual world.

An example from the world of symbols, the “logo” of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, should clarify this: the circle in which a triangle and a square are inscribed and with a dot in the center.

Connection to the Spiritual World

The circle, symbol for infinity and eternity, for the supernatural, describes the aspect of the connection to the spiritual world. It reminds us that eternity is anchored in our own being as the spirit spark. The human being is connected with eternity through the spirit spark; we can only begin with our true spiritual path on the basis of the spirit spark. The principle of eternity within makes the path possible for the candidate. The circle makes the pupil conscious of the connection to the spiritual world and strengthens him for going the path.

Experience of the Spiritual World

All words, symbols, and sacraments that explain the structure and power of the spiritual world, the present condition of world and humanity, and represent the path that leads to the destiny of the human being refer to the aspect of experience of the spiritual world. When such themes are elucidated in an address or when the pupil sees corresponding symbols, he remembers the formerly buried truths whereby they become active forces in him.

The triangle in the logo of the Spiritual School is the symbol for the three universal powers of the spirit that touch the human being in his three centers of consciousness: head, heart, and energy center. They correspond in Christian terminology to “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit.” In these three centers of consciousness, the pupil experiences the forces of the spiritual world. In the heart, he experiences the certainty that he is called to eternity and opens himself to these forces. In the head, they are active as inspirations guiding his life, and they gradually permeate his whole life and fashion it anew. When he sees the logo and especially reflects on the triangle, then he becomes conscious of which forces are to be taken up and applied by him in the course of the path.

The triangle moreover corresponds to a formula that is often placed before the consciousness of the pupil in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross: “Unity, freedom, love.” In the heart grows the unity with the spirit whereby also arises the unity with all other human beings living out of the spirit. Striving for self-importance, pride, turning away

from the spirit, and the resulting separation from other human beings gradually disappear. In the head grows the freedom of an independent thinking drawing out of the spirit. A human being resting in the spirit and its laws will be free of expecting things from other human beings. He can release them out of the prison of his expectations of them and does not need to dominate them. He increasingly loses his striving for power. And in the whole being gradually arises a new activity, a spontaneous streaming of the spiritual forces out to others on the basis of unity with the spirit and knowledge of its laws: This is the new love that replaces every self-centered seeking and possessive longing. As these three principles work in the individual pupil, so they also work in the community of pupils when many pupils realize them. When this formula is pronounced and penetrates via the consciousness of the pupil to the “ear” of his true self, then the latter feels the incentive and the power to realize unity, freedom, and love.

Realization of the Spiritual World

The third aspect of the “teaching,” the realization of the impulses from the spiritual world, is likewise enlivened through addresses and symbols, texts, rites, and sacraments. Here the Spiritual School works above all with impressionable, short formulas that repeatedly place the pupil before the steps that are coming up on the path and the problems he must especially watch out for. Thereby it continues in the tradition of all mystery schools and original religions. One can think, for example, of the

“Golden Verses” of Pythagoras or also of the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew, which is nothing else than a description of the steps of the spiritual path (the “Beatitudes”) and the requirements and rules of life on this path that can be realized on the basis of spiritual forces.

This third aspect of the “teaching,” the realization of the impulses of the spirit, is symbolized by the square in the logo of the Spiritual School. When the pupil sees it, then he feels called on the basis of the touch by the spirit and the experience of its forces to work on his fourfold personality. He again becomes a temple through which the spirit can be active. The square refers to the realization of the spiritual path in the four bodies of the personality. It is the freemasonic “square of construction” or “square of the carpet” on which the pupil stands. He firstly directs his mental body, his thinking, unequivocally to the spiritual world and receives his thoughts out of it. Thereby he can secondly be “without conflict.” His feelings, his astral body, are no longer determined by likes and dislikes, which always create conflicts, but by compassion, love, and neutrality amidst the opposites. If he becomes free from conflicts in this way, then thirdly his life energies, his etheric body, will newly organize themselves. In a harmonious interchange between receiving and spreading spiritual forces, his energy economy comes into order on a new level, and he can perceive his spiritual and worldly tasks. Thereby he comes to act, fourthly, not for himself but for others, in unity with the spiritual world. With reference to his life in the community of pupils, this means “group unity”: responsibility for the others, doing for the others, as the fourth side of the “square of construction”— the

material body.

Thus, it is perhaps evident how the “teaching” acts out of the power field on the consciousness of the pupil and via the consciousness on his true self. The power field of the living body contains all the structures of the unfolding true self and the spiritual path. They surround the pupil as lines of force. The collaborators working out of this power field and the symbols consciously experienced by the pupil activate and enliven these structures. The true self of the pupil feels thereby how its own structures are stimulated and fed.

Outer Rules of Conduct

The indications for a new behavior by the pupil toward his fellow human beings in his private and professional life are also part of the realizable aspect of the “teaching.” Such behavior occurs spontaneously when the pupil begins to live more and more consciously out of the impulses of the spirit spark. These indications also encompass rules that relate to the body, specifically nutrition. The pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross follows an ovo-lacto-vegetarian diet. Firstly, he does not want to be the cause for which highly organized living beings are killed. For every killing of an animal kills something in the soul of the killer—indirectly also in the souls of those who cause this killing—and binds him to what was killed. Secondly, the pupil knows that his material being, on which his consciousness, his thoughts, and his feelings are to a certain degree

dependent, must be nourished in such a way that the spiritual impulses are not unnecessarily obstructed. And certainly the constitution of the material body does not become purer through the ingestion of animal flesh and blood in which are still contained in hormonal form the feelings of the animal while being slaughtered. There is protein-rich vegetarian food that can amply replace the nutrient value of meat.

The pupil likewise abstains from smoking, alcohol, narcotics, and tranquilizers of every form. The stimulants and depressants contained in them change the organs of the brain in which consciousness and perception are localized and partly open these organs to uncontrolled influences from the reflection sphere. These delicate organs of consciousness are to become receptive to the impulses from the world of the spirit. When the pupil directs himself to the impulses of the spiritual nucleus, they create changed organs of consciousness for themselves that can perceive and react to the spirit. But if they are opened from the outside through a forced development, they can be damaged, or intruding influences from the reflection sphere can displace and block the impulses from the spiritual world.

The pupil will also develop a special watchfulness in the face of the influences from the modern mass media and advertising that try to mobilize drives, desires, and illusions via the unconscious. The pupil experiences inwardly that all this increases the egocentricity of which he wants to be freed after all. He will inform himself, but not allow himself to be influenced against his will and the spiritual goals he has set for himself.

Such a way of life becomes binding for the pupil only in the second phase of the path after he has independently gained insight in the first phase of the path into the meaning, yes, the necessity of this behavior on the spiritual path. He then notices on the basis of new experiences or perhaps due to alert inner tranquility and clarity how meat consumption, smoking, alcohol, etc. can again rob him of this awakened state of being.

The Teaching as Power

Through his experiences with the three aspects of the teaching, the pupil will gradually learn what this teaching actually is. As a representation and vivification of the lawfulness of the spiritual world, it is in the first place not a system of concepts that the intellect is to acquire and especially not a system of dogma to which the feelings could faithfully cling. Stimulated by description and vivification, the pupil experiences independently the power and structure of the spiritual world and the corresponding soul world.

With this understanding, there can be no quarrel over the truth of dogmas or hypotheses. There are only more or less comprehensive experiences in the world of the spirit, and as experiences they are true even though those of one pupil may differ from those of another. The pupils only experience different aspects of one and the same reality.

In the same way, in so far as it relates to the realization of the spiritual impulses, the teaching is not primarily a

system of moral instruction or ethics. Of course, the pupil will attune his outer behavior as best he can to the given rules. But this practice is only a help, not an end in itself. History has always shown that such a practice that has become an end in itself only leads to self-righteousness, fanaticism, and inflexibility. The pupil gradually recognizes instead that the outer ethical-moral behavior is only a necessary condition for the unfolding of the true self but not a sufficient condition. No matter how hard he strives to meet the outer rules and to be a “good pupil,” he cannot force his true self to unfold. Only when he recognizes that the outer rules are only supporting measures and derive their authority from this, only when he is prepared to let go of the hope and the belief that alone by fulfilling these rules his true self will be freed, does he give the true self the chance to unfold spontaneously. It unfolds freely according to its inherent laws and then uses the pupil’s outer way of life in order to express itself.

Sacraments

Besides the words and the symbols, the sacraments are one aspect of the teaching in a wider sense. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross has several sacraments, among them baptism and the marriage sacrament. Sacraments are outer, visible actions through which a pupil is linked with certain aspects of the power field of the School, that is, with certain forces from the spiritual world. The soul-spiritual occurrences in the pupil are decisive thereby. The outer ritual is only the visible confirmation and thereby

strengthening of these occurrences.

The Group

Beside the power field maintained by the founders of the School and the universal teaching, the third great means of help on the spiritual path is the group. The power of the founders, which is taken up via the power field by the coworkers and pupils, and the teaching, which in its three aspects stimulates the true self of the pupils, is enormously strengthened by the group. The pupils of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross constantly stimulate each other through: conversations about the teaching, the orientation to ideals, the help to pupils wrestling with themselves, the common growing new insights and common growing self-realization, the longing for new experiences, and through the communal organizational work in the service of the Spiritual School. Thereby they will very much value letting every fellow-pupil make his own experiences and exerting no social pressure on him, for this would not be a stimulation of the true self, which cannot live other than freely.

Temple Services

The events in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross in which all three “means of help” of the Spiritual School become active in a special way and strengthen each other are the so-

called temple services. A temple service consists of a spoken “ritual,” generally given by a woman; of an address, generally given by a man; and of music and songs. The ritual speaks to the heart and feelings of the listener. It mostly contains quotes from the universal teaching, the holy scriptures of all times, and works above all through pictures, symbols, and poetry. The address deals in a more philosophical-conceptual form with an aspect of the universal teaching and directs itself primarily to the intellect, the head of the human being. The music is attuned to the ritual and the address and supports both.

Themes

The themes of the temple services are many, as manifold as the universal teaching itself: the structure of the spiritual world, its forces and its unfolding; humanity and the human being as a spiritual being embedded in this spiritual world and developing with it; the present state of world and humanity, its separation from the spiritual world; the path on which this separation can be removed and on which the true self, which is one with the spiritual world, can become conscious and active again; the efforts on the part of the spiritual world to reach human beings in the world separated from the spiritual world via sent ones, who explain humanity’s destiny to human beings and who make the path to fulfill this destiny possible. All these aspects of the universal teaching can appear in the most varied symbols depending on the religion, culture, and people in which they were once articulated, and thus they are

presented in the temple services in ever different facets and pictures: be they symbols of Taoism, of Hinduism and Buddhism, of Greek philosophy, of the Gnostic mystery schools, of the medieval mystics, of the Christian Bible, or of the classical and modern Rosicrucians. But all this is not to cultivate the mind or to convey knowledge, rather because in these symbols from all periods of human history, experiences of the human being with the spiritual world come to expression.

These experiences can be revived through the word and thereby become the means to remind the true self of the listener of these experiences. The true self of the listener recognizes thereby his connection in the spirit with all human beings and through all time periods and is glad of this universality.

Symbols

In addition to the spoken word and the music, the influence of the state of the speaker on the state of the listener also occurs through visible symbols, be they pictures and signs, be they, to a limited extent, ritual actions. The temple that the pupils occupy during a temple service is in itself such a symbol. It reminds the pupil that his own personality is a “temple” in which the spirit, the true self, cannot really live at the moment. The old “temple” has to be torn down, therefore, and replaced by a new, worthy home for the spirit. Like Jesus, every pupil tears down his old temple “in three days” (they correspond to the three great phases of

development on the path: connection with the spiritual world = faith, experience of the spiritual world = knowledge, and realization of the spiritual world = deed) and builds a new one in three days: a transfigured personality, a “spirit body.”⁸⁸ The Spiritual School of the Rosycross connects thereby to Christian symbolism, but also to the freemasonic symbolism of the legend of Hiram Abiff at the basis of which lies the building of the Temple of Solomon. The pupil builds not only on his own new “temple,” but he is a “stone” in the great new temple of humanity, which must be erected on the principles of truth, goodness, and beauty.

In the center of every large temple of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, there is a fountain with a rose. It symbolizes the living water rising in the heart of the microcosm. Seven steps—a recollection of the seven steps of the path—lead from there to the so-called “place of service,” a podium from where the rituals and addresses are given. At some distance from this podium stands a seven-branched candelabrum. It reminds one that a sevenfold new consciousness in which the “seven spirit” expresses itself must light up in every pupil. On the other side of the podium stands an altar table with an open Bible. For the all-creating and sustaining divine “word,” the structure of force lines of the spiritual world, is waiting to be “read” and “declaimed,” that is, to become active and conscious in the human being. On the front wall behind the place of service above the candelabrum is the staff of Hermes provided with two wings at the top and entwined by two serpents that show, seen cosmologically, the path that the development of humanity has taken and will take

in the course of the involution and evolution of the spirit. Seen anthropologically, the staff is a picture for the spinal system of the human being in which the fire of consciousness circulates. It must be renewed in the course of the development of the individual and of humanity. Seen cosmologically, the Rosycross that hangs above the altar on the other side of the front wall refers to the special task and place of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross in this development of humanity. Seen anthropologically, it symbolizes the Christian path of initiation.

Thus the pupil in the temple is surrounded by symbols that mirror the structure of his microcosm, his spiritual path, and the spiritual path of humanity. If he knows the meaning of these symbols, then they make him conscious of his state, his task, and his goal in the framework of the development of humanity.

Every temple service is a truly divine service. It is not concerned with the edification of the personality and mystic emotionalism. It is much more concerned with building, through the transformation of divine forces, the new temple of a transfigured personality in which the true self serves God. It serves God by unfolding as the image of God as which it was created. It serves God by liberating the forces of God for others. For all forces being liberated in a temple service benefit not only the pupils but, because of the unity of all of humanity, all human beings receptive to them.

Conferences

The most intensive form of group experience is the so-called conferences: weekend gatherings of many pupils. In the course of two days, the forces from the new life field are liberated in a series of temple services and strengthened through the communal experience. At such conferences, the pupils as much as possible leave behind all the worries and desires that occupy them at home. The activities beside the temple services: common meals, common periods of rest, conversations, and going for walks, are all directed to the reception, the preparation, and the passing-on of the spiritual forces. No disturbing influence through newspapers, radios, and television interferes. The pupil can come to inner silence, which is the prerequisite for the reception, processing, and passing on of the spiritual forces and will also seek the corresponding outer silence that supports and is the expression of the inner one.

Secrecy?

Every interested person can freely inform himself of the goals and working methods of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross and participate in open events. The whole literature of the Spiritual School is at his disposal. And since according to a motto of the classical Rosicrucians, “one has to start with gold to reach gold,” the interested person can be sure that already in the literature and the open presentations of the School, he learns principally

everything about the goal, teaching, manner of working, and characteristics of the spiritual path. The nucleus of the spirit and the School is mirrored also in its outermost shells. What can be told and conveyed to an interested person is told and conveyed. What he can only experience himself, he has to experience himself. But everyone who decides on this path after freely informing himself of the requirements and goal is invited to go this way freely and to have the corresponding experiences.

To certain events, however, only pupils are admitted. For the spiritual path brings a change in the nature of the human being. He goes through a succession of special psychic and spiritual states that develop out of each other. Whoever does not go this path does not go through these states. Thus, the power field of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross differs in structure and vibration from the power field of the usual life in society. The pupil gatherings of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum represent a spiritual power field and serve the unfolding of the true self of the pupil. A participant in whom the spiritual forces are not yet stimulated or active would lastingly disturb this process—like a magnet that comes into a field of many otherwise directed magnets.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross would like nothing better than if its goal would be known to everyone and everyone would decide to go the path that leads to this goal. The School would also like nothing better than if everyone would gain the experiences that its pupils do. For in every human being lies the goal of the unfolding of the true self.

No Exercises

The path of the pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross does not include any exercises and techniques of a mental, psychic, and physical nature. This may surprise the outsider after all that he has perhaps heard about esoteric communities and their methods. But this conscious abstinence from exercises and techniques is explicable, yes, logical and necessary if one considers the presuppositions of the work of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross and the character of the liberating path that it goes.

What happens on the path? On the one hand, a gradual growth and through this a becoming conscious of the true self; on the other, a dismantling of egocentricity and of egocentric ties to the world and human beings. And this growth occurs in a power field nourished from the spiritual world.

It is necessary that the true self is supplied with nourishment and energy on the spiritual path. Many esoteric groups therefore have the view that one would have to obtain these energies, for example, through meditation on specific mantras or breathing techniques. But in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, these energies are available to every pupil through the continuously present power field that is regularly vivified in the temple services. No special techniques are needed to obtain them. With this, there is also still the question of whether the spirit can really be compelled hither by such methods. The spirit blows where it wills, and intentional efforts to “procure” it will shut it out. One will only attract energies and forces

from the subtle worlds of the beyond through such efforts.

It is further a question of whether inner growth can be accelerated through methods. The true self has its own rhythm of growth and grows in the forces of the spirit that are placed at its disposal in the power field of the Spiritual School. Every forcing of this process would only hinder it.

“Meditation” is for the pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross the spontaneous result of the connection of his true self with the world of the spirit. This connection is always present in principle, if he opens himself to the spirit in “longing” for the spirit and lets the true self grow through his soul work on the spiritual path. The forces of the spirit working in the pupil become more active and conscious when he moves them through thoughts and feelings. They clear and cleanse his thinking and feeling life and show him what is to be done. This “meditation”—a spontaneous but conscious movement in thoughts and feelings of the spiritual forces arising from the heart—can be stimulated by reading sacred scriptures and through the above-mentioned formulas that describe the path and its realization. It is also regularly induced through the temple services.

On the other hand, how does the pupil on the spiritual path become conscious of his egocentricity and the corresponding ties to human beings and situations and how does he overcome them? The decisive prerequisite is that the true self in the pupil makes itself noticeable in the form of the longing for the spirit. With this background he can recognize his egocentricity and then also dissolve it actively—or by conscious forbearance—in the forces of the spirit.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross also has the view that outer silence can promote this becoming conscious. Inner silence, however, is the necessary prerequisite for this. But an inner silence produced through meditative exercises will not be a spontaneously grown silence. In the pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, the inner silence arises again and again spontaneously through the activity of the spiritual forces in him that are strengthened by the power field of the School. This can occur in meditative seclusion but also in violent outer unrest. Thus the pupil can always become conscious of his egocentricity, be it in outer silence or be it in outer unrest.

After the recognition of egocentricity, the practical letting-go of egocentricity and overcoming it is best learned and practiced in daily life. The pupil is confronted with the reality of his being in daily life. The reactions of the outer world towards him and his reactions to the outer world show him clearly enough where he still lives egocentrically. The pupil must prove himself in daily life supported by the spiritual forces active in him. If he only lets go of his ego in the thought realm and meditatively, then there would be the danger that the ties would still be maintained and at most repressed.

Prayer

The pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross also examines the various kinds of prayer very carefully. A prayer going out from the ego and its interests that intends

to connect the human being with the spiritual world will necessarily miss its goal. Egocentricity is behind it after all. Should it be possible that God, the invisible spirit, would let itself be harnessed for egocentric interests of the human being, be they directed to one's own life, be they directed to the life of others? A prayer that connects the human being with the spirit has to go out from the spirit in the human being, from the true self. "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth," it says in the Gospel of John.⁸⁹

Thus, a prayer that stimulates the spiritual forces of the true self in the human being and connects them with the cosmic spiritual forces can only go out from the true self of the human being—taking for granted that the egocentric being is silent. Such a prayer can only have the goal that the world of the spirit is to become active in the human being and in humanity. The first three requests of the Lord's Prayer refer to this goal.

The prerequisite for this is again that all egocentricity that stands in the way of the working of the spirit disappears. Therefore, a prayer going out from the spirit in the human being also includes the request that all egocentric ideas, desires, and ideals may disappear. The four last requests of the Lord's Prayer give expression to the different aspects of this great request.

But if such a prayer is to be meaningful, then it may not just occur within the human being. The human being must also act in accordance with it in the outer world. If he does not let go of his egocentric ties in daily life, if he does not always place the impulses from the spirit spark, the true

self, in the foreground, then all reflection will be of little help to him. For this reason, the practice of the spiritual path is the real prayer of the pupil of a spiritual school.



Jan-van-Rijckenborgh Temple in Bad Münster and accommodation building in the north German working field

The Structure of the Spiritual School

Such a hierarchical body is not an order of administrations, but a well prepared organism formed out of the being of the Gnosis, with the help of which the great holy work can be accomplished. Such a gnostic living body contains the elements of all the gnostic mysteries, the characteristics of a Spiritual school.

(Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnosis in Present-Day Manifestation*)

The basic composition of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, its goal, its structure, and its methods were established by the founders in accordance with the structure of the spiritual field that had become manifest in the founders. From this structure followed the outer step-wise structure of the Spiritual School corresponding to the inner steps that follow each other on the spiritual path.

At the head of the Spiritual School are presently thirteen persons who form the Spiritual Directorate. In the various work fields, there are National Directorates with the task of coordinating the work within their region. The next-smaller organizational entities are the large-city Centers. In these Centers are held public lectures and introductory courses on the universal teaching, as well as communal events for the pupils living in the surrounding area.

Entry into the Lectorium Rosicrucianum

Pupilship

How does an interested person become a pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross? Every interested person can attend the public lectures of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, public temple services, and other introductory programs, including an introduction to the gnostic path of the Rosycross consisting of twelve “explorations” either online or at one of the Centers of the School. Rosicrucian literature including the magazine of the Spiritual School, *LOGON*, is also available for study. In this way, he will notice if an echo of the teachings and the force of the Spiritual School resounds in him. Especially in the introductory explorations, he will be able to test if the path shown by the Spiritual School could also be his path. In these explorations, the main points of the universal teaching, the goal, structure, and work of the Spiritual School are presented by pupils in the form of short presentations followed by discussion. The introductory explorations usually run over 12 or 13 sessions, usually one per week. In this way, the interested person can in complete freedom get a picture of the School and its teaching. The explorations can also be heard or read online.

The interested person can apply to become a member at any time. “The School of the Rosycross is prepared to make contact with all those who are interested on a free, democratic basis.”⁹⁰ It offers him a field in which he can freely unfold his true self. Over a period of several months,

the member can participate in events for members and pupils, especially conferences, in order to more intensely investigate how he reacts inwardly to the work and the power field of the School. During this time, the member further orients himself in the power field and in the teachings of the Spiritual School. He consciously works on the spiritual, inner task that is typical for the first aspect of the path, for the beginning state of the path: to gain insight into his present state and the spiritual goal to which he is on the way.

After the period of membership of at least six months, provided he has used the possibilities offered to him, he may request or be invited by the School to go further and to occupy himself intensively with the task of the second aspect pupilship, that is, to consciously continue with the inner process of change. A member who is considering becoming a pupil is offered the possibility to more closely examine this decision, and once he has definitively made a positive decision, he can apply to become a pupil. If there are no serious obstacles in the way of the realization of pupilship, he will be received in the School. This reception is a free tie between the new pupil and the Spiritual School. The Spiritual School and its coworkers make no judgment of the kind of connection between the pupil and the world of the spirit. This is a matter entirely between the pupil and the truth and power as represented to him in the form of the universal teaching.

The pupil recognizes that as a consequence of the spiritual goal, a certain way of life follows. The above-mentioned modes of behavior, among them vegetarianism and abstinence from smoking and alcohol, become obligatory

for him. If in the first phase of the path, a state of receptivity for spiritual forces has developed in the pupil, then he will recognize these outer consequences as necessary and be able to accept them as a free decision without any great problems. “When the relationship between the School of the Rosycross and the interested person develops on this basis, there is no question of authority or mindless docility. There is an inner recognition, a conscious following of a path, authenticated within one’s own self.”⁹¹ Continuing in this manner, new inner understanding and forces come to the pupil from the world of the spirit, allowing a new consciousness and new psychic states to grow in him corresponding to succeeding steps of pupilship.

Withdrawal

Every pupil also has the freedom on every step of the path to immediately leave the Spiritual School of the Rosycross without complications. No obstacle is placed in his way in this regard.

Membership

Attached to the actual community of pupils, the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, is a circle of members and the “youth work.” The circle of members consists of people who after attending the introductory course want to have a loose

connection with the Spiritual School. They may do this without taking the spiritual path of the pupil with the consequences and processes of change that go with it. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross sometimes offers to members of this circle special lectures, written material, conversational opportunities, temple services, and conferences.

The members of this circle are seekers who are touched and attracted by the power field of the School and have opened themselves to the truth of the spirit. Some may want to gain more certainty that the path of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is also their path before they definitively begin with pupilship. They may also want to further orientate themselves in the power field and learn about the power field of the School in order to achieve a firm inner foundation for the path. Others may prefer to remain in this circle for an indefinite time. Every member can become a pupil at any time after six months of membership and provided the corresponding prerequisites are met.

Countless human beings today feel that traditional religious and esoteric teachings and communities no longer give them satisfactory answers to their existential questions, and so they seek a new orientation to life. In this circle of members, they can find a philosophy of life satisfying to mind and heart.

The Youth Work

The youth work of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum has the

task of holding open the possibility for children to go the spiritual path. This applies to children of pupils and members or of sympathizers. The youth work tries to transmit to the children an objective view of the given facts of the world and the human being and to offer them an atmosphere in which the deepest needs of their soul can be met. Thereby the children themselves can develop an inner yardstick in order to recognize what inner and outer factors correspond to their true being and what could obscure or obstruct this being.

Of course, the children in the youth work do not yet go a spiritual path. Such a path would presuppose independence and a developed mind, which is why a youth may only request membership and pupilship starting at age 18 after taking the orientation course. Children first have the task to develop their earthly personality, to unfold and develop their talents, to struggle with their immediate and more distant environment, and to gradually find their identity as an earthly personality. But they also have the task of embedding this identity in a more comprehensive frame of reference—a world view and the greater identity of the true self. In the youth work, the children are given help to fulfill these tasks. They can decide for now or for always to employ all their forces for the development of their earthly personality. But the youth work also offers the soil in which the child can unfold and become conscious of his deepest talents of soul until he eventually takes the spiritual path as an adult.



"Noverosa" (new rose). Temple of the youthwork in Doornspijk, the Netherlands

Like the Lectorium Rosicrucianum itself, the youth work is also active internationally. It has its own international conference center in the Netherlands.

A child can become a member of the youth work as of age six. He has to be registered by the parents or legal guardians. If the parents do not belong to the Spiritual School, a written declaration of consent is necessary from them. The youth are divided into four age groups: 6–9, 9–12, 12–15, and 15–18 years. In general, there are special temple services, discussions, conferences, and recreational activities for the children and youth.

The themes of these events are always age-respective. Thus, the youth temple services for the younger ones (6 –12 year-olds) are built up in such a way so that the heart of the child is addressed. For example, a story or a fairy tale is told that depicts contents from the universal teaching. The youth temple services for the 12–18 year-olds, on the other hand, are more philosophically orientated, and on the basis of the experiences that the youth has with himself and the world, they stimulate his own thinking and faculty of judgment.

Furthermore, recreational events and conferences, which include games, conversations, and joint projects, give the children and youth the opportunity to experience joy, harmony, and friendship and to develop spontaneity, creativity, and openness for others. Every child is a personality with his own rights, a microcosm with his specific karma and his more or less awake spirit spark. He must have the freedom to unfold his talents and live through difficulties at his own tempo and with his own decisions. But he needs help to do this and will accept help

if it is given with regard for his individuality and with love and understanding. If it is met in this way, he will also learn to meet others with respect and love.

Aspects of the outer Organization

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross is a community whose members go an inner, spiritual path. As this path is walked communally, the School also needs an outer organization. This is based on the seven-step structure of the Spiritual School, which reflects the spiritual path.

The true self of the pupils and coworkers of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross unfolds in the forces of the spirit, gains an increasing share of these forces, and applies them for others. These forces are called freedom, unity, and love. All problems of the outer organization can only be solved through these forces. The outer organization is a means to an end, a frame in which the pupils go their path, and through which they can transmit the spiritual forces for others in the material world. As a means to an end, the outer organization is in principle determined by the great goal of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross and all its pupils: a life in freedom, unity, and love.

Directed in Freedom

Every organization has goals and a structure and needs human beings who keep the goals and structure alive.

The goal of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, like that of every spiritual school, is not dependent on personal arbitrariness. Its founders articulated this goal out of their living experience of the spiritual field and built up the sevenfold structure of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross according to the lawfulness of the spiritual path.

Installation of Co-Workers

In the installation and choice of coworkers by the Directorate of the Spiritual School, it is vital that the coworkers are so steeped in the forces of freedom, unity, and, love, so that their decisions will not be determined by personal interests. On the spiritual path, the true self develops not according to personal sympathies and interests but in freedom of action and in recognition of the freedom of others as well.

Leading coworkers in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross become conscious of their personal limitations and learn to replace them by objectivity and matter-of-factness. A leading coworker who is responsible for other coworkers leaves them the freedom to unfold according to their own inner laws, to do their work in their own way, and also to learn to act objectively and matter-of-factly out of the forces of the spirit. Here these words from the *Tao Te Ching* are applicable according to their meaning: “If princes and kings were able to sustain it [Tao—the law of the spirit—] ...the people would enter harmony spontaneously, without needing to be told.”⁹²

In principle, the members of the Spiritual Directorate and their coworkers choose the coworkers according to their suitability for the respective office—that is, from above and not from below. Suitability means: Is the person concerned in a position to exercise the functions of the office according to his personal abilities? That he is faithful to his goal and the goal of the Spiritual School and learns ever more to place his personal interests aside and to work out of the forces of the spirit is presupposed for every pupil and potential coworker.

The reason for the choice from above is because whoever is to call pupils to work on a particular step of the Spiritual School has to know this step himself along with its possibilities and problems. He has to have experienced the inner state that comes with this step. Whoever has not experienced this state himself—and these are, in principle, all pupils on the previous steps—cannot judge which pupil is suitable as a coworker. Thus, the more experienced must choose the less experienced.

Purity of the Teaching

Beside organizational decisions, the essential task of the coworkers of a spiritual school is the transmission of the universal teaching to pupils and to outsiders. The goal of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross and its pupils is becoming conscious of and unfolding the true self in the human being. This can only occur with the pupil's own experience and insight. It is not a matter of the transmission of creeds, dogmas, and moral principles. It is

primarily a matter of the free flowing of spiritual and soul forces, of the vivification of inner states through words, symbols, and rituals. In the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, words, symbols, and rituals bring to expression the lines of force from the world of the spirit that characterize the state of the true self.

When the community of pupils lives out of the Christ-centered power field, reacts to it in freedom, and transforms it inwardly and outwardly, living processes and experiences of becoming conscious develop corresponding to this power field. Every coworker and pupil is himself responsible of seeing that his connection with the power field remains viable while he himself remains inwardly and outwardly alive.

For this reason, there is no training of coworkers according to a plan of instruction in the Spiritual School. What is decisive is their state on the spiritual path, and this state cannot be taught. It depends on the possibilities of the coworker to go the spiritual path and on the communal transformation of spiritual forces through all pupils. The experiences in life and in the power field of the School from stage to stage are the “training” through which the coworker goes.

Also in regard to keeping the teaching alive, the sentence previously cited from the *Tao Te Ching* applies: “If princes and kings were able to sustain it [Tao] ...the people would enter harmony spontaneously, without needing to be told.”

Freedom of the Pupil

When love, freedom, and unity take form in the leading personalities, coworkers, and pupils of the Spiritual School, there can be no breach of confidence and no misuse of freedom. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross works out of the Christ-centered spiritual field in which personal interests have no place. Therefore, all pupils, coworkers, and leading personalities have the responsibility to behave in such a way that no personal interests are pushed into the foreground. They strive for this ideal situation. So a kind of “exercising of office” is established in principle in the Spiritual School that corresponds to the essential being of humanity. It is like in an orchestra: All, beginning with the conductor, serve the common task—the performance of the piece of music. Everyone plays his part independently and freely and in such a way that he contributes his best to the whole.

The pupil also does not bind himself personally to a master and does not accept any instructions or counsels for the spiritual path that are designed especially for him. The master of every pupil and coworker is also the master of the founders of the Spiritual School: the Christ-centered power field, which works within and outside of the human being.

Diversity in Unity

The inner state of a pupil determines what worth and rank comes to him in the spiritual world. If he acts responsibly in

the field of the Spiritual School, out of the laws and forces of the spirit, then his true self is active and serves all others. The abilities of his personality are a benefit to others without egocentricity. Such a pupil embodies pure service; he does not have to push himself into the foreground nor to strive for recognition and honor.

The true self of a human being is distinct from that of anyone else as concerns his tasks in the total development of humanity. The personal abilities of every human being are different from those of all others, but all human beings are unbreakably bound to one another according to their true self, which mirrors the structure and forces of the one spirit. And when without striving for recognition, they put their personal abilities at the disposal of the impulses of the spirit, then all differences of personalities are also joined in unity.

Despite all personal differences, every pupil of a spiritual school can experience the unity in the spirit, which connects him with all other pupils. All other pupils have the same goal that he has: The true self wants to unfold in all, and everyone goes the spiritual path with his own special personal difficulties and understanding. When by reason of the tasks on the spiritual path with which he is presently inwardly occupied, a pupil takes a particular step in the structure of the Spiritual School, then this is not a personal merit. It is only the expression of the fact that he is going through a particular phase of soul work. The work in every phase is to the benefit of all other pupils and only has the intention to free the true self. The true self is as it is and does not need to make itself bigger or smaller.

Thus, a spiritual school that has developed and is working out of the laws and forces of the spiritual field can become a community that shows real unity—a pattern for the community into which all of humanity will eventually grow according to their inherent aim. Paul compared such a community with the body of Christ.⁹³ In Christ, the spirit, all coworkers and pupils are one in accordance with the true self. Like different cells and organs in one organism, they have different tasks in this community according to their personal abilities. No cell, no organ will go its own way and fancy itself as more than another; otherwise the harmony of the whole is disturbed. Only when all act out of the law of the organism, which is Christ, and perform their functions without ego, does this law unfold.

Owned in Love

Material Property

Concerning outer, material property, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross has conference buildings and land in every working field. The centers in larger cities are in some places rented rooms, and in others the pupils have their own buildings or rooms at their disposal. They are maintained by the contributions of the members and pupils and voluntary donations. Public activities that require, for example, the renting of rooms and spreading of information are financed in the same way. Orientation courses for interested persons may have a minimum charge

and internal courses for pupils are free. Only the director attendants of larger conference centers and the staff working there have permanent positions paid from the means of the School, depending on the size of the buildings. All other coworkers do their tasks voluntarily. The contributions and donations are measured in such a way that eventual additions to the buildings, the maintenance of existing buildings, and the running costs are just covered. In this sense there is no wealth that would yield long-term profits.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross has the legal structure appropriate to the respective countries in which it operates. In Germany, for example, it is a registered society recognized as useful for the common good in promoting religion. In the United States of America, it is non-profit religious organization.

Besides the School, there is in the Netherlands an independent enterprise, the publisher “Rozenkruis Pers” (Rosycross Press) with its seat in Haarlem. It has published the literature of the Spiritual School, related literature, and the journal—*LOGON*—for various countries.

Besides this publisher and smaller publishers in some countries, there are no other businesses that have a direct or indirect influence on the Spiritual School of the Rosycross. The Spiritual School of the Rosycross does not receive any subsidies from the economic realm, state associations, or cultural foundations.

The motivation of why a pupil is in the Spiritual School of the Rosycross and why this School itself works in the world is to unfold the true self. Material wealth and property have

a good potential to support the activity of the spirit in the world provided this support is free of personal interests and in clear recognition of what is necessary in a given situation. A person can use wealth and property for his own grandeur and power or cling to it in fear. But he can also use them without being tied to them and on his own responsibility so that they serve the development of humanity.

Such a disinterested, impersonal use and flowing of material forces is true love that is to the benefit of all human beings without personal sympathies and antipathies stepping in between. The pupil learns to regard his personal property in this light, just as the coworkers of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross work for others with the means of the community responsibly and without personal interests.

Immaterial Property

This is even more valid of the immaterial resources of the community—its treasures of symbols, knowledge, and experience. Also in this regard, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross strives towards a community that realizes what will eventually be realized in all of humanity: the communal reception and release of spiritual forces in the conscious recognition of the tasks for which these forces exist.

The accounts in the gospels about the feedings through Jesus and his disciples are good descriptions of these processes.⁹⁴ The spiritual forces of knowledge and love symbolized by the bread and fish that Jesus and his

disciples distribute flow inexhaustibly when they are distributed in constant connection with the spiritual field and without self-interest, yes, they even multiply due to the reactions of the recipients. For knowledge and love arise in them when they are touched by knowledge and love.

Spontaneity and Crystallization

The laws at the basis of the structure and development of the spiritual world are unchanging and static, yet the forces of the spiritual world are alive and dynamic. A community like the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, which lives out of the laws and forces of the spirit, will therefore be filled with life and movement.

The life and movement of the unfolding spirit are active in the true self of every pupil and in the community as a whole. This means in principle that the freedom of the true self, which grows in accordance with the spiritual law, ever increases; that the pupils grow ever more into unity on the basis of the true self; and that the forces of love liberated in them flow ever more strongly.

The structures and working methods of the Spiritual School must have a certain firmness and durability; otherwise all work would be impossible. These firm structures only fulfill their purpose when they are vessels for and expressions of the forces and laws of the spiritual field, which must develop in the frame of a spatial-temporal organization and the physicality of the human being when the bridge between spirit and matter is to be built.

The more the spiritual power field is alive in the pupils and coworkers and the more the outer organization becomes the streambed for the spiritual forces, the less it can develop a life of its own. It is an aspect of the spiritual path that the pupils and the leadership of the School recognize the danger of the crystallization of structures in the individual and in the community and are watchful to constantly remain inwardly alive.

Teachings

When the true self of the pupils unfolds in unity, freedom, and love and the community of pupils lives out of the spiritual forces, then the dynamism of the living experiences of the pupils with the spiritual world and their confrontation with the obstacles on the spiritual path will increase. This will become apparent in the addresses, events, and the current literature of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross. The universal teaching will be presented ever more powerfully and clearly.

When the longing arises in every pupil and in the Spiritual School as a whole for the true self to grow ever more in spirit and for the obstacles on the path to be ever better perceived, then the teaching stays alive and gains in power. The forces of the spirit itself then break up all tendencies towards crystallization and fill the spoken and written words of the coworkers and pupils with life.

The Individual and the Spiritual Community

A community like the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, which developed out of the spiritual field and leads back into the unity of this spirit, shares the anticipation of the community of all human beings in spirit. The pupil of a spiritual school seeks to realize what is a concern in every human being—the unity with all other human beings in the spirit. He will therefore affirm the community of all pupils, because he understands that this unity on the basis of the spirit is at least realized in principle, though some may perhaps often be still far removed from it.

As a rule the individual is not capable of recognizing and defining his spiritual goal on his own, not to speak of finding and going the path to that goal. But, as Jan van Rijckenborgh writes, “From the point of view of the separatist there are, of course, many objections to this way in the beginning. Before everyone is able to understand the purpose and to join with insight the new group-unity, there is, according to the style of this world, so much striking and kicking, taunting and mocking, so much merciless criticizing that very great pain and suffering result from it. But as more are willing to make a sacrifice, to let themselves be struck, taunted and criticized for the sake of the great purpose, we will have struggled more quickly through the pool of tears and thereby be able to enjoy the happiness of the new day together with the others....A magnetic body must exist to be able to set out and complete the homeward journey; a body that is completely organized, prepared and all providing.”⁹⁵ In such a “magnetic body,”

the pupil finds the most favorable conditions for his path:

First: Community in Spirit

A group of like-minded human beings striving for the same goal is an incentive and encouragement for the pupil. Only with such like-minded people will it be possible for him to strive for the future community in the spirit. Only in a spiritual community as represented, for example, by the Spiritual School of the Rosycross can he hope to realize unity, freedom, and love in the spirit.

Second: Enhanced Exchange of Forces

Furthermore, the pupil in a spiritual community has a possibility that he would not have in the same measure as an individual: to place his inner development and new forces directly at the disposal of others who are receptive to them— be they other pupils, be they other truth seekers within the framework of the public work of the community. Conversely, the forces and experiences of all other pupils with whom he is connected flow towards him. And this means a lot in a world in which the individual is constantly exposed to diverting influences, which he often does not even recognize as such.

Third: Growth of Responsibility

The group dynamics developing through the reciprocal exchange of experiences mean that the pupil is not only responsible for himself but also for the development of the whole group—within the bounds of the possible. How could it be otherwise, and how could he want it otherwise, as the gradual overcoming of isolation that is the result of the urge for self-maintenance is a sign of the spiritual path, whereby a conscious and responsible giving away of all new forces to others becomes possible.

The individuality of the pupil does not dissolve through the membership in a community living out of and towards the spirit. On the contrary: The true self of the pupil, his real identity, comes only clearly to the fore through the touch with the true self of all other pupils. The pupil sacrifices his egocentricity not to foreign interests and powers but to his true self through which all his personal abilities become active in a new way. He does not become thereby a uniform member of the community but becomes ever more an independent, responsible helper in the community who, without asserting himself, freely receives the spiritual forces and lets them flow. Only in this way is spiritual development possible, not through persisting in isolation.

Fourth: Self-Realization

The pupil has a better chance of recognizing and overcoming his hindering characteristics in a community

than as a single individual, for he sees them partly in his reactions to other pupils, partly in the reactions of other pupils towards him. But since in a spiritual school, otherwise than in ordinary life, all try to react with understanding, not with retribution, it will be easier for him to understand his own weaknesses in this atmosphere of understanding and in the long run to overcome them.

Should a truth seeker in fear of the crystallization tendencies in a group renounce the favorable conditions that just such a group offers for the spiritual path? Would it not on the contrary be sensible to make use of these favorable possibilities but thereby to clearly see the dangers and endure them? And who as an individual is safe from crystallization tendencies within his own being? A pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross can become conscious and dissolve crystallization tendencies in his own being much better on the spiritual path in the forces of the spirit.

Relationship of the Sexes

In the personality of the present-day human being, the spirit and the spirit-determined soul are latent. The goal of the spiritual path is above all to awaken again the latent spirit-soul to consciousness and activity so that it can consciously receive the spirit and transmit its forces. From the working together of the conscious and active soul and the spirit develops the new, transfigured personality. Such a human being rests in the spiritual world and is autonomous.

There are two expressions of this autonomous human being: one in which the spirit is “within” and the soul on the “outside,” and one in which this is reversed (see the earlier section on the relationship of the sexes in the chapter “The spiritual roots of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum”). Both expressions work together to strengthen their respective possibilities. Such a working together took form in the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross through Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri.

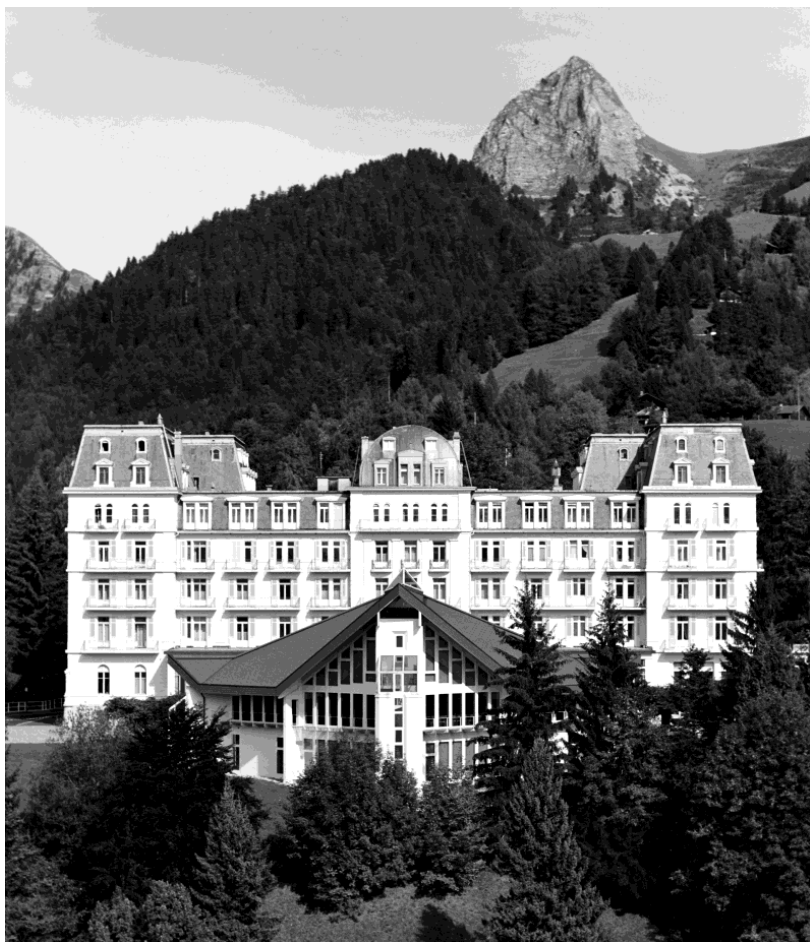
What matters on the spiritual path is that the pupil awakens the spirit-soul-unity inherent in him from its latency. He will try to practice what the goal of this path is already while on the path: the working together between man and woman as the two expressions of the spirit-soul human being who has become autonomous. These attempts are a decisive factor in the development of a group of pupils. Therefore, women and men, who represent different expressions of the spirit-soul human being, must work together in a spiritual school.

Working Together with Equal Rights

From the basic principle of autonomy of the spirit-soul human being follows that absolutely equal rights reign between the two expressions. For both expressions possess the spirit as well as the spirit-soul, only just differently polarized and functioning. Women and men in the Spiritual School have in general different functions but have equal rights and work together on this basis. This is, for example, mirrored in the temple services, which are as a rule given

by a man and a woman together, whereby the man represents more the philosophical aspect that speaks to the mind and the woman represents more the ritual and symbolic aspects that speak to the heart.

But there can be truly lived equal rights between women and men only when their egocentricity gradually disappears and new souls and personalities arise that are again truly autonomous in the connection with the spirit. Also in this sense, a community like the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is the anticipation of a human community that corresponds to the inherent potential and destiny of the human being.



Foyer Catharose de Petri in Caux: temple and accommodation building of the Spiritual School in the Swiss working field

The Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross in Society

Declaration of the Brotherhood of the Rosycross

The religious community of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum aims at the restoration and the revitalization of the original threefold temple of God, which existed in human pre-history and which manifested itself to all of humanity and aimed to serve it.

This threefold temple brought to humanity the original royal and priestly Religion, the original Science, and the original Art of Construction.

In the course of history, and for the last time about 700 years ago, time and again attempts were made to forge, enliven, and maintain this threefold connecting link between the nature of death and the original Divine Nature. But time and again these activities were prevented, destroyed, and stifled in blood baths by various adversaries of the ultimate restoration of mankind.

However at the end of a day of manifestation, there always emerges a clearly discernable swing in this continuous struggle between Light and darkness, through the permanent establishment and the unshakable restoration of the Universal Temple, which reveals itself in power and shows itself to be invincible.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum is the commencement of

this festival of victory.

It brings to humanity, firstly, a community of seeking souls who want to orient themselves on the original Universal Teaching. This community is continuously protected and surrounded by a mighty all-penetrating radiation field, in order that the light, the life, and the future of the liberating path can be visualized clearly by all who belong to this community.

Behind this community of the forecourt, there is, secondly, the Mystery School of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, in which all those are accepted who make the decision to actually walk the path of liberation from the wheel of birth and death. The same radiation field or Living Body completely assists every seriously striving pupil so that no truly determined pupil needs to fail.

Thirdly, behind the Mystery School there is the Community of the Inner Degrees, the Universal Chain of all preceding Gnostic Brotherhoods. which accepts all pilgrims to the liberating life and welcomes them into the realms of immortality and resurrection.

With this declaration the Lectorium Rosicrucianum aims to formulate its mission clearly, and arouse all those concerned in seeking life's fulfillment, to take the decision of making themselves known to the Lectorium Rosicrucianum.

Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh Haarlem,
December 21, 1960

Developments in Recent Decades

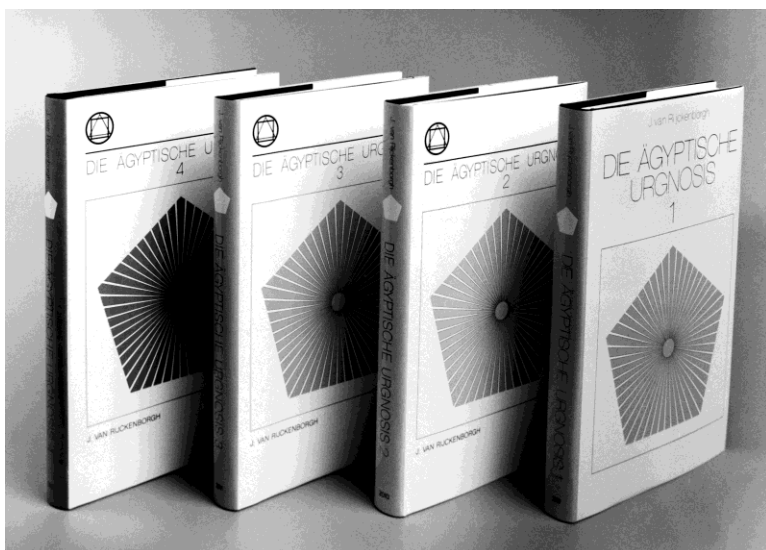
After 1945 the Spiritual School of the Rosycross began to spread from Holland to other countries. In Europe in the 1950s, branches first formed in Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, and France; later in Spain, England, and Italy.

In 1958 the “Noverosa Temple” was erected at Noverosa for the International Youth Work. The following consecrations took place: also in 1958 the “Christian-Rosenkreuz-Heim” in Calw, Germany; in 1965 the “Jan-van-Rijckenborgh-Heim” in Bad Münster, Germany; in 1978 the “Foyer Catharose de Petri” in Caux, Switzerland; in 1989 an Austrian conference center at Neustein Castle near Steinfeld on the Drau; and in 2000 a third German conference center “Christianopolis” in Birnbach near Altenkirchen.

Since the opening of the Iron Curtain, the School also officially works in the countries of the former Eastern Block. It has, moreover, established bases in Africa, North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand—that is, worldwide wherever there is Western culture and civilization. For the Rosicrucian impulse is especially suited to Western culture and civilization, although it is basically responsible for the development of spiritual laws valid for all of humanity.

In the midst of the manifold work with new pupils and new nationalities, new books were released consisting mostly of addresses by the two founders, thus enlivening the work and giving new impulses to the development of the School. In 1953 *The Coming New Man* by Jan van Rijckenborgh

was published, which depicts the characteristics of the transfigured human being and the way of transfiguration, followed in 1955 by *The Gnosis in Present-Day Manifestation* by Jan van Rijckenborgh, which describes the lawfulness in the building and inner development of a spiritual school. From 1961 to 1966 the four volumes of *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis* by Jan van Rijckenborgh appeared. These represent an interpretation of 18 texts attributed to Hermes Trismegistus in which ancient Egyptian mystery traditions were set down in the first centuries of the Christian Era, partly clothed in Neo-Platonic, Gnostic thought. Two more books by Jan van Rijckenborgh were published posthumously: in 1987 *The Chinese Gnosis*, a work on the first 33 verses of the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao Tzu, and in 1991 an interpretation of a portion of the Gnostic Gospel *Pistis Sophia* entitled *The Gnostic Mysteries of Pistis Sophia*.



Four volumes of the “Egyptian Arch-Gnosis,” an interpretation by Jan van Rijkenborgh of the gnostic texts attributed to Hermes Trismegistus

Jan van Rijkenborgh died on July 17, 1968, after a long illness. He left an extensive, future-oriented literary work created while working together with Catharose de Petri. Building on the works of Blavatsky, Steiner, and Heindel, this work develops and explains in detail the spiritual path of Christianity for the modern, scientifically-oriented human being, and it includes the spiritual and mystery traditions of all epochs of world history. He left an organization active worldwide (the outer, material garment for an inner organism, a “living body”) whose structure and function he designed and, in the form of teachings and rituals, enlivened together with Catharose de Petri and his

coworkers drawing directly from the ever-flowing sources of the Universal Brotherhood. It is the living body with seven grades corresponding to the seven steps of the spiritual path, in which human beings open thereto can go this path. Jan van Rijckenborgh left numerous coworkers and pupils who themselves went the path with earnestness and enthusiasm, and who by their devoted work enabled others to go this path and thereby spread the work in the whole world.

Immediately after Jan van Rijckenborgh's death, this community experienced a severe shake-up. More than a year before, Jan van Rijckenborgh had appointed his son Henk Leene as his successor. Shortly before his death, however, Mr. van Rijckenborgh had installed seven persons, his son and his closest coworkers, as International Spiritual Directorate. Henk was evidently still influenced by his father's earlier remarks and wanted to continue leading the Spiritual School in accordance with his own ideas. Meanwhile, he did not gain the support of Mrs. de Petri and the other six members of the Spiritual Directorate, so he left the Spiritual School of the Rosycross with a number of pupils and founded a new organization called "Sivas."

Together with the remaining close coworkers of Jan van Rijckenborgh, Catharose de Petri continued the work. She completed the rituals, clarified some aspects that had remained indistinct, and explained and showed through her example how all individual conflicts and doubts as well as all possible conflicts in a society can be overcome through inner clarity, wakefulness, and harmony arising from the connection with the spiritual world. She set down her experiences in this regard in several books, one of which

also contains correspondence with pupils. Over the course of time, she concentrated more and more on the spiritual work while leaving the organizational tasks to her coworkers. The final inner structure of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross exists thanks to her untiring activity into old age. Before her death in 1990, she arranged her succession and the directorship of the School so that 13 coworkers (in general the directors of the large working fields) were to direct the fate of the School.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross in its Environment

The members of a spiritual school and spiritual schools as a whole try to live out of a dimension that fundamentally differs from the forces of this world and the beyond—forces that are oriented to success, wealth, and power. So it is understandable that there could be problems in the relationship of such an institution and its members to society and its institutions and currents. The members of such a school and the school as a whole will above all concentrate on their path, which by itself results in a distance from society as far as the latter is determined by egocentric goals.

On the other hand, the School acknowledges the societal environment in which it and its members live as a necessary framework for its own existence and work, and behaves in such a way that this environment remains in as good a condition as possible thus avoiding points of friction. Indeed, positive influences will go out to society

from the School without it especially striving for this. Striving for success, wealth, and power always calls up conflicts and chaos, whereas a lack of this striving enables objectivity and tranquility. Thus, a general overview and a new point of view in the shaping of the world's concerns also results.

Even the first step on the spiritual path, insight and neutrality, can have enormous consequences in this regard, for the pupil in the state of neutrality does not add any new fuel to the countless conflicts that constantly develop in the world through opposing interests. He does not stir up unrest by feverish activity and counter-activity; nor does he lazily let himself be dragged along by circumstances, for he possesses the distance of alert tranquility and is rooted in the spiritual dimension of being. Thereby a clear recognition of what is taking place in the world becomes possible.

Political Neutrality of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross

In principle, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross never interferes with political, social, and economic processes of decision. It does not maintain any connections to political, social, and economic institutions and does not build up such institutions. It remains independent and is not tempted to fall into the turmoil of the struggles of relative interests and views. "However, the Rosycross warns its pupils not to take sides in the vast whirlpool of dialectical

activities... It should be understood that we are not asking you to withdraw from dialectical life, but that the point of view of the Rosycross is simply the consequence of the path which it proclaims...the path that leads to being 'in this world but not of this world'. First of all, the pupil should see to it that he is no longer of this world. Then he will be able to act in the world according to the demands of the Hierarchy. Then he will be a master, a possessor of the stone."⁹⁶

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross does not observe the events in the world with indifference. It sees the immeasurable suffering, which is the result of opposing interests and conflicts. It tries to realize a community with its pupils in which the urges for power, recognition, and possessions are dissolved, so that a community of free and independent human beings develops, which lives out of the spirit that brings unity. Thereby it believes that it is contributing to the life of a future humanity in which the spiritual destiny of the human being is the primary goal. "The possessor of the stone ... is neither conservative nor reactionary, he is not inclined either to the right or the left. With the faculties of the mind ... and the faculties of the soul ... he places himself solely in the service of the divine government, in other words, he knows and serves the work of the Christ-Hierarchy in dialectics."⁹⁷

The Spiritual School understands very well why human beings struggle for better living conditions and why they hope to eventually find happiness through dogmatic-religious and ideological institutions or by staking all their forces on gaining influence and prosperity. It comprehends very well why people violently resist developments

unworthy of them. But it also knows that such ways of behaving do not alter anything of the causes of the problems. The causes are that the human being does not live according to his spiritual destiny or does not even recognize it. All political, social, and economic structures must remain inadequate, often even unworthy of human beings, as long as they do not remove these actual causes. Forced political measures, however, would only further increase the entanglements. For this reason, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross concentrates on allowing a new spiritual basis to grow in its community through which the causes of conflicts are gradually dissolved at their roots.

The appearance of a spiritual school strengthens the laws and forces of the spiritual field that influences human beings. It tries to respond positively to this spiritual field and thereby to support developments in the direction of the destiny of humanity. When on the basis of a conscious union with the spirit and together with its pupils, it builds a community free of political power and special interests, then it contributes to the formation of a greater community that corresponds to such principles on the national and international scale.



"The Call of the Rosycross—Four Centuries of Living Tradition," title page of the catalog for an exhibition of books relating to the Rosycross in Amsterdam, which was jointly organized in 1998/99 by the Royal Library in Den Haag and the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica (Amsterdam).

Thus, when a pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross concentrates above all on his spiritual path, then he is not fleeing from the world. He withdraws from the world in as far as it places itself as absolute and follows material and ideological interests. He tries to gain a new inner basis by going the spiritual path. From this basis, not by force but through his own changes in consciousness and being, he contributes in the framework of what is possible to the gradual construction of a new social and state order or to changes within an existing order that better correspond to the spiritual life.

He behaves like the man in a famous parable of the Buddha. The man leaves a burning house and can now, from a safe distance, bring water and extinguish the fire. If he would stay in the house and try with the little usable water therein and without the necessary distance to save the house, then he would fail and perish with all other inhabitants together with the house.

In this sense, the classical Rosicrucians spoke of a general “reformation of the world”: beginning with the sciences over art and religion up to the new ordering of the political, economic, and social environment.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum and the Sciences

A New Picture of the World

Modern science with few exceptions is materialistically

orientted. It tries to explain the world by chemical-physical laws: This is true for the natural sciences, from astrophysics and physics to biology, but also to a large extent true for psychology, anthropology, and the social sciences. Even the arts and humanities want less and less to explore their fields according to the fields' own inherent laws and instead prescribe formal, statistical, and mathematical methods. Furthermore, modern science serves almost exclusively the desires of the human being of this side for prosperity, happiness, and dominion over nature and other human beings.

A totally different science and totally new perspectives on all aspects of life develop out of the laws of the spirit, however. The world view of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is stamped by the experience that at the basis of all appearances and of matter itself lie spiritual laws. From this follows that a new science would serve humanity's destiny, which consists of the freedom, unity, and love of all human beings based on spiritual laws.

Natural Sciences

Human beings with spiritual sight have from earliest times up to the present described the development of world and humanity in a far more encompassing perspective than today's natural science. The cosmology and anthropology in the works of, for example, H. P. Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, and Max Heindel describe not only the gross-material form side of the evolution of world and humanity but also the

inner, subtle-material side and illuminate thereby totally different connections.⁹⁸ Jan van Rijckenborgh also places the gross-material and subtle-material side of things emphatically opposite the original spiritual world; this results in the true valuation of the gross-material and subtle-material developments. From this horizon, the data of modern scientific research and the laws ascertained through this data receive their true meaning. If natural science would be based on such perspectives, then a totally new physics, chemistry, and biology would develop.

A New Medicine

A new medicine could also develop and would study the psychosomatic processes much more thoroughly than up to now, as is already partly happening today. It would recognize that most diseases of the body arise from thought patterns, emotional patterns, and energy flows that are not in harmony with the law according to which the human being has appeared. Indeed, they will recognize that many psychic and mental illnesses—that in turn can call forth physical illnesses—come about as a result of disturbances of the spiritual lines of force that are active in the human being and urge him to the realization of the true self.

When a human being does not react or reacts incorrectly to the impulses of the spiritual world that want to be active in him, then his whole constitution—thinking, feeling, energetic matrix, and physical body—will suffer. Such disturbances and incorrect reactions are recorded in the

spiritual world. These records are as a rule longer-lived than only one bodily form of this human being. They can affect many succeeding bodies, many reincarnations, so that a human being comes into the world with organic or psychic illnesses, for example, that are the effects of earlier incorrect reactions.⁹⁹

A new medicine could explore these connections and above all develop new yardsticks for what is healthy and what not. For real health only exists when the human being in spirit, soul, and body lives and develops in harmony with the laws inherent in him.

A New Psychology

The same is true for psychology. A new psychology would first of all take into consideration that from eternity, spiritual and psychic laws are inherent in the human being and in humanity, and furthermore, that events from many earlier incarnations are also being worked out. It is not only a matter of locating and healing psychic conflicts from childhood or the present adult life. Most often such conflicts are after all expressions of much deeper disturbances in the soul-spiritual workings of the human being. Long-term and real psychic healing can only result from the human being again connecting with the spiritual world, its laws and forces, and in such a way that he experiences and realizes this connection within himself. The only path to the real healing of the human being is a spiritual path.

A connection of the human being with the spirit within himself and the processing of conflicts on the basis of the true self can only be promoted by a psychologist who himself lives out of the connection to the spirit. A psychologist (psyche—soul) would need to be at the same time a “pneumatologist” (pneuma—spirit) and not only know soul and spirit but also experience them. For the soul receives its life and its goals from the spirit. How else could someone who does not know and live by the laws and forces of the spirit help a human being to find the goal of his soul, the meaning of his life, and thereby psychic health?

Social Sciences

The social sciences: jurisprudence, economics, political science, and sociology restrict themselves these days either to the determination of what is or judge what is at hand with the yardstick of the democratic state under the rule of law or on the basis of models of ideal societies. It is only too understandable that ever new social plans are developed, for the world is full of injustice, subjugation, and poverty, and therefore the personality on this side cherishes the hope of removing these unendurable situations through a new organization of society. But even more important is that in every human being, the true, spiritual self is active the nature of whose being is justice, freedom, and abundance and which longs for the outer world to correspond to the inner, spiritual world.

But instead of the true self being developed within, from which a corresponding outer order would follow, the

human being believes that he is able to fulfill his deepest longing alone by changing circumstances. He projects the perfection of the true self outwards in newly erected social structures without wanting to carry out a basic change of being.

A new social science would have to illuminate these connections. It could show out of which misunderstandings and false projections of the impulses of the spiritual world ideological designs for society develop. It could show that the underlying need for a social order based on truth, justice, and freedom is justified and originates from the true self, which wants to unfold. On this theoretical basis, it could altogether correctly understand the totalitarian ideological systems of the recent past and thereby make a contribution towards coping with the past and present. For these systems, fascism and communism, are not to be explained primarily out of sociological, economic, and political deficits. Poverty and subjugation, social uncertainty and national resentments have surely played a great role in their origin and their growth and delivered a part of the psychic energies for their development.

But decisive is the longing for the realization of the true identity of the human being, which runs as a motor behind such ideologies. It is this primal longing of the human being that can first explain the thrust of these movements and makes comprehensible the enthusiasm, even total devotion, with which many human beings at least in the beginning supported these streams.

The new human being, the true spiritual human being, can only develop in the structures and forces of the spirit and

only when all self-maintenance and all expectations that the material world could become a paradise have vanished. Instead, totalitarian systems try to construct the “new society” and the “new human being” on the basis of the being of this side and in the realm of this world.

They project the spiritual community of human beings living out of the spirit onto communities founded on this side. One system awaits the absolute unity of human beings of a “community of the people and blood,” that is, biological connections. Another system wants to realize absolute justice, freedom, and equality in a “classless society” through economic and social connections. And totalitarian systems project spiritual human beings living out of spiritual laws and forces onto present human beings. In a “community of the people and blood”—under biological signs—this “new human being” is a human being of pure race who follows his “unspoiled” natural instincts and is a warrior towards the outside of the community, a “people’s comrade” within the community. In a “classless society”—under socioeconomic signs—the new human being is the free “proletarian” who, connected internationally with all other proletarians in solidarity, justly administers the means of production.

A new economics could also develop. It would show that the purpose of economics cannot be to attain ever greater individual or collective prosperity without regard to human beings and the environment.

The purpose of economics is above all to create the material prerequisites for the necessary cultural and spiritual developments of the human being. For the real goal of the

human being lies in the fulfillment of his spiritual destiny. The new economic science would demonstrate that with this goal in the background, economic activity cannot be determined by the principle of the self-maintenance of human beings against other human beings and against nature. Sustainable economic activity could only be based on the cooperation of human beings with each other and with nature.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum and the Arts

Through a spiritual path such as the one walked by the pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, the bases for a new music, literature, and fine arts can arise in the talented pupil, and impulses for a new art can go out into society from such a school.

Fine arts, literature, and music can serve many purposes: entertainment or recreation, benumbing the human being or tearing him out of his habits, the defense of the status quo or social criticism, but above all also the realization of the spiritual world. The arts can show how the latter purpose is expressed in things and beings purely or—distorted through misunderstandings and false projections—impurely. When they transmit realization in this way, they contribute to the human being becoming conscious of his inherent aim, finding suitable paths to the realization of the laws of the spiritual world, and avoiding wrong tracks. Conversely, art can also be used consciously or unconsciously to hinder such a becoming conscious.

The function of art of furthering insight was in earlier times its highest function; indeed, from this they first received their real justification, and yardsticks as to what was art and what not were derived from this. Today, this function has almost wholly disappeared. The arts in today's chaotic situation should have an even greater task of feeling out and describing the force lines of the spiritual world that are becoming active seismographically and atmospherically, that are waiting for their realization in the human being, and that are urging him towards a new order in thinking, feeling, and doing.

One of the highest abilities of the human being, the creative-formative faculty, would thereby be freed from the lack of orientation and obligation from which it currently suffers and would again contribute to the goal, which basically all human talents should serve: the realization of the destiny of the human being.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum and Religion

For the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, religion is the reconnection of the spiritual nucleus in the human being with the spiritual world through the spirit in the human being becoming conscious and active. In this sense, the view of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum differs from all conceptions that understand religion as the reconnection of the human being of this side with the spiritual world. Isn't such a connection impossible? Does not the Bible say: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"?¹⁰⁰ The human being of this side cannot be awakened from the

dead, not even on the Last Day and in a changed form, and live eternally. What is constructed from transient nature will again dissolve in transience. “There is a different ‘dead man’ to be awakened, however, one who has been ‘dead’ within us for eons past, namely, the true man with his heavenly vehicles, the citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven.”¹⁰¹

From this also follows that for the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, the relationship of the human being to the spiritual world is not the personality of this side facing a personal God who embodies all perfection imaginable and unimaginable by the human being of this side. It is much more the spiritual human being becoming consciously embedded in the spiritual world from which it came forth, in which it lives, and of which it again becomes conscious. The relationship of the spiritual human being to the spiritual world is analogous to the relationship of the thought to thinking, or the cell to the organism, or as the Bible expresses it, the branch to the vine.¹⁰²

The Universal Church

The resurrection of the true self is its awakening from latency. This is nothing other than salvation: liberation of the true self from its imprisonment in karma and in the crystallized ego-personality separated from the spirit. Salvation happens through the spirit becoming conscious in the true self, through realization or illumination. Thereby the personality is also transfigured and released from its imprisonment by the ego.

Although salvation of the true self happens with the cooperation of the personality of this side, the human being cannot accomplish it by his own power. The founders of the original religions and mystery schools place the forces necessary at his disposal. In this sense they are saviors. Every human being who has restored the connection to the divine world becomes in this sense a savior for others. He transmits forces to them in which they can go their path to reconnection.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross is also part of this chain of endeavors to save humanity. All those reconnected with the spirit and those human beings found on the way to this goal form the Ecclesia, the true church, the Brotherhood of Life, which works out of and with the Christ forces, the redeeming forces of the divine world. Therewith, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross finds itself in harmony with all other religions of the world as concerns their inner core—not their dogmatic shell: with the inner core of Hinduism contained for example in the Upanishads; the core of Buddhism as it is proclaimed in the *Dhammapada*; the Jewish Kabbalah; Islamic Sufism; and the original Christianity that was continued in the Gnosis. For at their core, all world religions strive for the one goal of the reconnection of the true self of the human being with the spiritual world—through becoming conscious. And in all of them the redeeming Christ forces are more or less active. “In all world religions the Christ Hierarchy speaks, testifies and works, but only in the last link of this chain do we celebrate the victory in Jesus the Lord.... In the seven great religious impulses of that period the accomplishment of a work was at stake which, although showing cohesion, was

at the same time aimed at one thing only, namely, building in succession the seven steps of a stairway that was to lead up to the ultimate manifestation of God in the flesh, Jesus Christ.”¹⁰³

Thus one can see the chain of religions and mystery schools and their founders in such a way that they all came out of the one light and the one power of the spirit, but that ever more light and power was revealed in the measure that the involution of the spirit spark progressed into matter. In the same measure, ever more layers of the personality were taken up in the processes of change initiated by the spirit: at first only the finer parts, like thoughts and feelings, but finally also the material body with its sense-consciousness and ego-awareness. There came a moment when the spiritual world revealed itself in its fullness to a human being, into the deepest sunken state of the human being, but also in such a way that the deepest sunken state could be reversed thereby. The Christ, the light of the divine world, the son of the invisible spirit, connected itself directly with the human being Jesus and filled him so that he could bring about the transfiguration even into the material aspects of the personality. Since then this possibility is anchored in principle in humanity. In principle, all of humanity has become the spiritual school.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross connects to this situation, and it teaches and carries out the reconnection with the divine world through transfiguration as far as into the material aspects of the personality. It regards itself as expression of the redeeming endeavor of Christ for humanity. And since the modern human being, due to his ego-consciousness active in the world of the senses, is

principally capable of and destined for independent thinking and self-responsibility, the Spiritual School of the Rosycross formulates this Christ endeavor in a way that can be comprehended by the mind.

The Sacred Scriptures

Correspondingly, for the Spiritual School of the Rosycross, the sacred scriptures of all religions are witnesses of the experiences of human beings on the path to the reconnection with the spiritual world and descriptions of the help that the spiritual world gives to humanity in this regard. The sacred scriptures of the religions can only be understood if one reads them above all as expressions of the experiences of the true self on its path through the transitory world.

The New Testament describes how a human being, Jesus, is connected with the Christ—he becomes the “Anointed” who goes the path of the transfiguration of the personality in the power of Christ and makes this path possible for others as savior. The death on the cross is the consequence of this mission.

The life and the death of Jesus are exemplary for all cases in which a savior comes into the world or a human being goes the path of transfiguration in the power of this savior. Ever and again the light of truth is persecuted and crucified, be it in the individual human being who resists the light with his nature or be it that society does not accept a human savior. The death of Jesus on the cross becomes in this sense a

picture of how Christ in the human being of this side and in this society is always persecuted and killed. He also becomes a picture for the decisive condition for the reconnection of the true self with the spiritual world. For only when the old ego-personality “dies,” is “crucified,” can the true self become conscious and active. Only then can the true self resurrect and construct a transfigured, immortal personality that leaves the “grave” of earthly nature.

The resurrection of Jesus is a process that the Christ, the true self, which was as if “dead” in Jesus’ personality of this side of flesh and blood, again becomes conscious and active, that is alive. Thereby it also becomes possible that the personality transfigures and a new “spirit body” arises in the old personality. As the means of expression of the true self, this spirit body is also eternal and resurrects with it. The rest of the old personality, on the other hand, goes the way of all flesh. Resurrection is consequently not a sense-perceptible fact but nevertheless a soul-spiritual fact whose transformative power extends even into the material.

Every human being who goes the spiritual path will in following Jesus reach this resurrection of his true self and of a new body. Resurrection is not a one-time historical event but a soul-spiritual-material process, a lawfulness that can become historical again and again. But since Jesus carried it out exemplarily, his resurrection can serve as a picture and symbol for every succeeding one.

For this reason, the classical Rosicrucians said of the Bible: “Rather, we desire to testify that not since the beginning of the world has man been given a greater, more admirable or

more beneficial work than the Holy Bible: Blessed is he who possesses it; more blessed is he who reads it; most blessed is he who becomes thoroughly acquainted with it; while he is most like unto God who obeys as well as understands it.” The modern Rosicrucians of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum agree with this declaration. In their works, Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh cite countless times from the Bible and show that and how the living truth comes to expression in it. It is only necessary to find the inner key, that is, to recognize the consciousness out of which the authors of the Bible wrote. Then the texts are unlocked in their richness and spiritual substance. This is not negated by the fact that Jan van Rijckenborgh also repeatedly made statements about the willful falsification of the New Testament. Here he adopted views of authors who were not at the present level of text-critical research. According to the findings of modern biblical science, the texts of the New Testament as we have them are essentially transmitted as they were composed or edited in the decades between about 40 AD and 100 AD. When falsifications occurred, then this happened above all through dogmatic interpretations that disguised the real meaning of the texts.

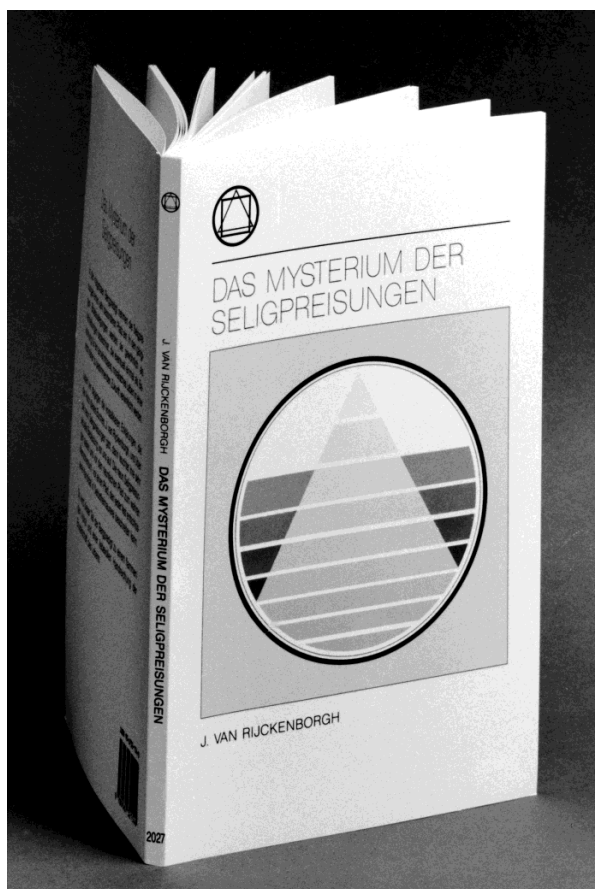
The Lectorium Rosicrucianum and the Churches

Regarding his relationship to the churches, the pupil of a spiritual school understands well what can give a human being the belief that humans on this side would be saved by a redeemer and live eternally. For the human being of this side does not wish for anything more longingly than to be

lifted out of the pain and the guilt of this transitory world. But the pupil of a spiritual school has also experienced that this belief does not satisfy his deepest yearning and foreboding. He knows that the deepest longing is only stilled when the true self has become one with the spiritual world.

The pupil of a spiritual school also understands very well what the relationship to a personal God means for the human being of this side. After all, he is himself a human living on this side and knows his need to be sheltered in a personal relationship. But at the same time, he also experiences that it is human destiny to experience the unity of the true spiritual self with the spiritual world, the unknowable “father principle” from which the true self is born, and to be embedded in it like a living, conscious cell in a living, conscious organism.

From this knowledge and striving of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum follows that a pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross cannot at the same time be a member of a church. Even such relatively minimal differences in outer belief as for example between Protestants and Catholics preclude simultaneous membership in the Catholic and a Protestant church. For one cannot believe in two dogmas incompatible with each other.



“The Mystery of the Beatitudes,” a book, which was compiled from addresses given by Jan van Rijckenborgh in the years 1945–1947

It is even more self-evident that someone who wants to reach beyond the limitations of the human being of this side to the unity with the spirit cannot simultaneously remain imprisoned by these limitations. The forces of the spirit in the true self dissolve the tendencies in the being of

this side to want to resurrect and live eternally. A pupil of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross who surrenders to the spiritual forces cannot at the same time continue to follow the tendencies of the human being of this side.

Every pupil who enters the Spiritual School of the Rosycross has a year and a half to occupy himself with these circumstances and this lawfulness in his own being and in the world. If he becomes convinced that he should seek his life goal and his salvation after all in a traditional religion and church, then he can freely and without obstructions leave the Spiritual School of the Rosycross. If he is not a pupil but a member, then he has the freedom to simultaneously be a member of a church for as long as he wants to.

The Lectorium Rosicrucianum and Esoteric Movements

The great life accomplishment and legacy of the founders of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross is to have lain bare in the chaos of the esoteric streams of the present the path that liberates from all determination by this world and the beyond, to have explained this path by means of a philosophy, and to have anchored this path in this world through a modern spiritual school. It was their realization that a path that leads directly to the destiny of the human being, the restoration of the unity of the human being with his divine origin, can only consist in a transfiguration of the human personality. This path is already laid out in the

original Christianity. It is the Christian mystery path and initiation path that Jan van Rijckenborgh described in *Dei Gloria Intacta*.

From this perspective follows a comprehensive view on the numerous esoteric movements and groupings of the present.

First:

Among the esoteric paths that really strive for regaining the unity of the human being with his divine origin, only transfigurism still leads to the goal. The path of the pupil connects directly to his spirit spark, the representation of the divine world in him. It consists of the construction of a new personality living out of the spirit with the simultaneous demolition of the old, egocentric human being. Traditional esoteric paths of the East as well as the West, which once may have been liberating, can no longer have a liberating effect for the present-day human being, at most still a preparatory function. This human being is anchored too much in the gross-material and subtle-material and in egocentricity.

A “higher development” of the earthly human being into the spiritual world is no longer possible. As much as he may refine his bodies—and may they also quantitatively reach the vibrations of the original soul world stamped by the spirit: They are still qualitatively ruled by egocentricity and therefore cannot correspond to the new life field, which is free of egocentricity. In *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, several seekers reach the “wedding room” on account of methods of refining their earthly bodies. But they are sent away again because they cannot

withstand the spiritual forces that are free of egocentricity.

Also, a qualitative change of the higher subtle bodies, whereby the lower bodies remain as they are, can no longer be liberating. The lower bodies constantly hold back and obstruct the higher bodies even should these correspond qualitatively to the new life field.

Thus, only a complete abandonment of egocentricity in all bodies on the basis of the spirit spark in the human being leads to the goal. For new bodies that correspond to the new life field can only be built up in this way.

Second:

There are presently many esoteric systems and paths that give as their goal the reconnection of the human being to the divine world but that confuse the subtle material realms of the transient earthly world with the divine world of the original spirit. For this reason, the founders of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross distinguished so sharply between the two “nature orders”: the beyond and this side on the one hand; the supernature, that is, the divine world on the other. Many esoteric groups speak of “divine” energies and masters who in reality belong not to the divine world but the subtle material regions. These groups also demand the abandonment of egocentricity—for also someone who wants to unfold the higher ego in the beyond has to let go of the lower ego on this side. If the human being goes such a path, however, then he loses his lower ego not to the benefit of his innermost essential core, his true self, his spirit spark, but to the benefit of an authority or ideology that connects to his higher ego and is foreign to the true self. He becomes imprisoned by an authority or ideology foreign to

his real identity. On the transfiguristic path, on the other hand, the pupil gives up his lower ego as well as his higher ego to the benefit of his true identity, his immortal spiritual principle.

Third:

Beyond these there are esoteric paths that directly speak to the human being's desire for power and happiness, that is, his egocentricity, and promise him mastery of life in the gross-material or subtle-material regions of the world. The founders of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross have repeatedly also referred to this fact.

Such paths use esotericism for relaxation, conflict resolution, healing, and harmonization of the human being or for expansion of consciousness into the subtle-material regions whereby the human being is to become master over destiny, chance, and other human beings. But this downright contradicts the real goal of every true esoteric path, namely, the reconnection of the true self of the human being with the divine world.

All such paths may be the first steps of a seeker who in the end realizes that they do not satisfy his inner need after all and sometimes have even created considerable damage to his possibility to go a really liberating path. In this sense, they have their legitimacy as perhaps necessary experiences on the path of the truth seeker. If he decides after possibly many such experiences for a spiritual school like the one of the Rosycross, then it is clear from what has been said that he cannot simultaneously be a pupil of this school and another esoteric community or that he can continue to use esoteric methods that only strengthen his personal interests

or that want to connect him with the beyond. He will recognize this incompatibility himself when he has gained the power of discrimination and experienced that all such methods tie him to the interests of his lower or higher ego-personality from which he wants to be freed after all.

The becoming awake and conscious of the true self presupposes the becoming free of such interests. For the true self is anchored in the laws and forces of the spirit that encompass humanity and give themselves away, while the lower and higher ego-personality are always seeking for themselves and their power be it ever so sublime.



Renova Temple (Temple of Renewal) in Laage Vuursche in the Dutch working field

The Revelation of Christ

The Christ, the true human being, existing potentially in every individual and in humanity as a whole wants to be revealed. Countless catastrophes and conflicts in individuals and peoples develop from the—negative—reactions of human beings to the image of the true human being in them urging to be revealed. The image of God, the Christ in them, wants to unfold urged by the cosmic Aquarius impulse.

The human being can react positively to this image pressing to be revealed in him and consciously go a path in which he discards tendencies hindering the unfolding of the image. He can also react negatively and call up immense suffering and disappointments. Thereby he learns.

So, the Christ gradually pushes aside the veils of the self-maintaining ego that want to hinder his appearance in the human being and in humanity.

The Spiritual School of the Rosycross tries to react positively to the true self urging to be revealed in the human being and to the cosmic spiritual impulses. In the measure that the veils hiding the Christ, the true self, are dissolved in the pupils through insight and inner work, the contours of the Christ show themselves in them and in the Spiritual School. For what is the coming of Christ other than the manifestation of the true, spiritual being inherent in the individual and in humanity?

When it says in the Bible that Christ will come “in

clouds,”¹⁰⁴ then the “clouds” are an indication of the cosmic spiritual field that influences all of humanity and develops a special strength in the power field of the Spiritual School and in the spiritual field of the individual pupil.

The true human being, the Christ, became visible in the founders of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross. He took form in the construction and work of the Spiritual School of the Rosycross. After the founders laid aside their material bodies and are still active out of the spiritual field, he only becomes gradually conscious and active in the pupils. He shows himself above all as longing and in the inner struggle of the pupils for the right power of discrimination as well as for the liberation from the veils covering the true human being. Will the Christ forces sometime totally reveal themselves in the pupils? Will they become fully conscious of the Christ and consciously experience the spirit that comes forth from him? They strive for this. And already the contours of the Christ, the true self, that shimmer through all the inner struggles can accomplish much in the individual pupils, in their community, and in the world.

“There are thousands of people who say they know Christ. They mouth his words with their lips, but their hearts remain unmoved and their minds do not understand him. They know of a holy sacrifice in an ancient past, but of that face with the crown of thorns which can now be seen on the horizon they know nothing at all.... That is why the mission of the Order of the Rosycross is to tell you what, who and how the Christ is, what this tremendous Sun-Spirit desires for you, does for you, and wants from you: ...not the negative expectation that He will make everything right. No, you must do it yourself! ... The flames of the love of the

spirit must burst forth in you.... Christ is a power, the Logos.... He is all in all, provided you react consciously and dynamically to the spirit of God.”¹⁰⁵

Notes

The books by Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh are published by Rozenkruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands.

The books of Catharose de Petri and Jan van Rijckenborgh in English as well as some books by pupils of the Spiritual School are available as free downloads on the website goldenrosycross.org. Printed copies and eBooks of some of these are available from online retailers such as Amazon and at most centers of the Spiritual School.

For public activities online and at centers of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, information about membership, and additional materials, such as the 12 introductory explorations “The Gnostic Path of the Golden Rosycross,” the online journal *LOGON*, videos, and podcasts, go to the website goldenrosycross.org.

1 And God said: “Let us make humankind in our image...”
(Genesis 1:26 NRSV)

2 *Tao Te Ching*, verse 2

3 Majjhima Nikayo I, 22nd sutra

4 See Friedrich Weinreb, *Vor Babel (Before Babel)*, Weiler 1995

5 Mark 8:35

6 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, 1962, pages 51-52

7 In this book, the designations “Lectorium Rosicrucianum”

and “Spiritual School of the Rosycross” are used more or less synonymously. At most one could say that “Lectorium Rosicrucianum” emphasizes more the outer organization, “Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross” more the inner work.

8 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy of the Modern Rosycross*, 1984, pages 10-11

9 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, 1962, page 198

10 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, 1984, page 10

11 Catharose de Petri, *Transfiguration*, 1995, page 9

12 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, 1984, pages 13-14

13 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, page X

14 Rupert Sheldrake, *A New Science of Life—The Hypothesis of Morphic Resonance*

15 Eugen Heinrich Schmitt, *Die Gnosis (The Gnosis)*, Aalen 1968

16 See Rudolf Steiner, *How to Know Higher Worlds (Knowledge of Higher Worlds and its Attainment)* and *An Outline of Esoteric Science (Occult Science—An Outline)*

17For Max Heindel see “The Birth of the Rosicrucian Fellowship” published by the Rosicrucian Fellowship, Oceanside, CA.

18 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy of the Modern Rosycross*, 1984, page 51, 50

19 See Psalm 138:8

20 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, 1962, page 174
21 J. W. Jongedijk, *Geestlijke Leiders van ons Volk*, 1962, page 172.

22 See the lecture by A. H. van den Brul given at a symposium in Wolfenbüttel November 23–25, 1994, printed in *Pentagram*, No. 4, 1995, article: “Jan van Rijckenborgh—a modern Rosicrucian and Hermetic Gnostic” and in *Rosicrucians through the Ages* (Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 2005), chapter 16

23 Galatians 2:20 (NRSV)

24 The following account is based on a brochure by the Leene brothers from the year 1936: “Enige grepen uit de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Rozekruisers Genootschap” (Excerpts from the History of the Dutch Rosicrucian Fellowship) and a manuscript by G. Westenberg from July 24, 1987: “Een korte schets van het ontstaan van het Lectorium Rosicrucianum en haar leestellingen” (Short History of the Origin of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum and Its Teachings)

25 Luke 7:28

26 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, 1984, page 201

27 Leene brothers, “Excerpts from the History of the Dutch Rosicrucian Fellowship”

28 G. Westenberg, “Short History of the Origin of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum and Its Teachings”

29 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnosis in Present-Day*

Manifestation, 1980, page 132

30 J. W. Jongedijk, op cit, page 178

31 Catharose de Petri, *The Treasure of the Cathars* (24. December 1980), page 7

32 J. W. Jongedijk, op cit, page 179

33 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, 1962, page 8

34 Ibid, pages 4-5

35 Ibid, page 2

36 Ibid, page 5

37 Ibid, page 6

38 Matthew 6:33 (NRSV)

39 Catharose de Petri, *The Living Word*, page 83

40 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnosis in Present-Day Manifestation*, 1980, page 137

41 Ibid, pages 146 - 147

42 See also Rudolf Steiner, *Esoteric Christianity and the Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz*, London 2000.

43 Revelation 21:1

44 *Fama Fraternitatis* (1614), *Confessio Fraternitatis* (1615), *Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross: Anno 1459* (1616)

45 Carlos Gilly, Catalog of an Exhibition at the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, Amsterdam 1986, page 67.

46 Joseph R. Ritman, "The Key to Hermetic Philosophy" in

Das Erbe des Christian Rosenkreuz (The Heritage of Christian Rosycross), Amsterdam 1988, page 205

47 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Call of the Brotherhood of the Rosycross*, 1988, page 35

48 Carlos Gilly, op cit, page 73

49 Ibid, page 65 and following

50 Printed in Wakefield and Evans, *Heresies in the High Middle Ages*, New York 1969, 1991

51 The “pure ones” = “Katharoi” in Greek. From this word came the German word for heretic: “Ketzer.”

52 See Lothar Baier, *Die grosse Ketzerei (The Great Heresy)*, Berlin 1984

53 See Antonin Gadal, *On the Path to the Holy Grail*, Haarlem 2006

54 On alchemy, see Titus Burckhardt, *Alchemy*, 1997

55 1 Corinthians 13:12

56 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross, Part 2*, 1992, page 206

57 “Spirit” and “soul” are not identical with the “animus” and the “anima” of C. G. Jung. Animus and anima are soul forces of the personality of this world, while the spirit and soul of the alchemists are factors of the spiritual world that have become latent in the human being. When these factors become active again, then the human being lives as spirit and spirit-soul, as “spirit-soul human being,” out of the spiritual world. His personality is renewed and transfigured by both factors so that it again becomes an expression of

the spiritual world.

58 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, 1984, page 159

59 Ibid, page 162

60 For the origin of the Gnosis, see Konrad Dietzfelbinger, *Mysterienschulen* (Mystery Schools), Munich 1997

61 Romans 6:6

62 John 10:30 (NRSV)

63 John 8:12 (NRSV)

64 John 12:36 (NRSV)

65 The Wisdom of Solomon, 2 and 3 (apocryphal—not found in all Bibles)

66 2 Corinthians 4:4 (NRSV)

67 John 10:30 and Matthew 5:48 (NRSV)

68 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnostic Mysteries of Pistis Sophia*, 2006

69 Vollständige Texte aus Nag Hammadi in 4 Bänden (Complete Texts from Nag Hammadi in 4 volumes), published and commentated by Konrad Dietzfelbinger, Andechs 1988–1994

70 The Hermetic writings were doubtlessly composed in the 1st or 2nd century CE in Alexandria and are a precipitate and re-enlivening of ancient Egyptian mystery traditions—hence Hermes, the Egyptian Thoth—that are here depicted with the help of Greek, especially Platonic, philosophy.

- 71 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnosis in Present-Day Manifestation*, page 147 - 148
- 72 John 8:32 (NRSV)
- 73 Matthew 5:3. The literal translation from the Greek.
- 74 Mark 8:35 (NRSV)
- 75 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NRSV)
- 76 Jacob Boehme, *Aurora—That is, the Day-Spring or Dawning of the Day in the Orient*. Holmes Publishing Group, 1992.
- 77 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, 1984, page 45 78 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Coming New Man*, 2005, page 196 79 Ibid, pages 32–33
- 80 Ibid, pages 40–41
- 81 Ibid, pages 46 and 322
- 82 Ibid, page 199
- 83 Ibid, pages 199–200
- 84 Ibid, pages 218 and 220
- 85 Ibid, pages 235 and 236
- 86 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, 1962, page 103
- 87 Ibid, page 100
- 88 John 2:19–20
- 89 John 4:24 (NRSV)
- 90 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, page 14

91 Ibid, page 10–11

92 *Tao Te Ching*, verse 32 in Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri, *The Chinese Gnosis*, page 432

93 Romans 12:4

94 for example Mark 6:30–44 and 8:1–9

95 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Gnosis in Present-Day Manifestation*, pages 141–142

96 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Elementary Philosophy*, page 172

97 Ibid, page 173

98 For example, Rudolf Steiner gives a description in his *Occult Science—an Outline (An Outline of Esoteric Science)* or Max Heindel in *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*.

99 Of course, they can also be the consequences of the environment or the incorrect behavior of the parents. The passage in John 9:1–3 alludes to both of these possibilities.

100 1 Corinthians 15:50 (NRSV)

101 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, page 16

102 John 15:1

103 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, page 28

104 Mark 13:26 (NRSV)

105 Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Confession of the Brotherhood of the Rosycross*, page 7–8

About the author:

Konrad Dietzfelbinger, born in 1940, with degrees in sociology and Germanic studies, worked from 1980 to 1990 as reader and manager at a publishing firm and is since independently active as translator, publisher, and author in Munich.

Besides other works, he published the Nag Hammadi texts in German with introductions and commentaries in four volumes (1988– 1995) and authored the books *The Bible in a Spiritual Perspective*, *Judas – Traitor or Hero*, *The Birth of the True Self in the Human Being – The Message of Jesus for Our Time in the Gospel of Luke*, and *Apocalypse Today – The Actuality of the Revelation of John*.