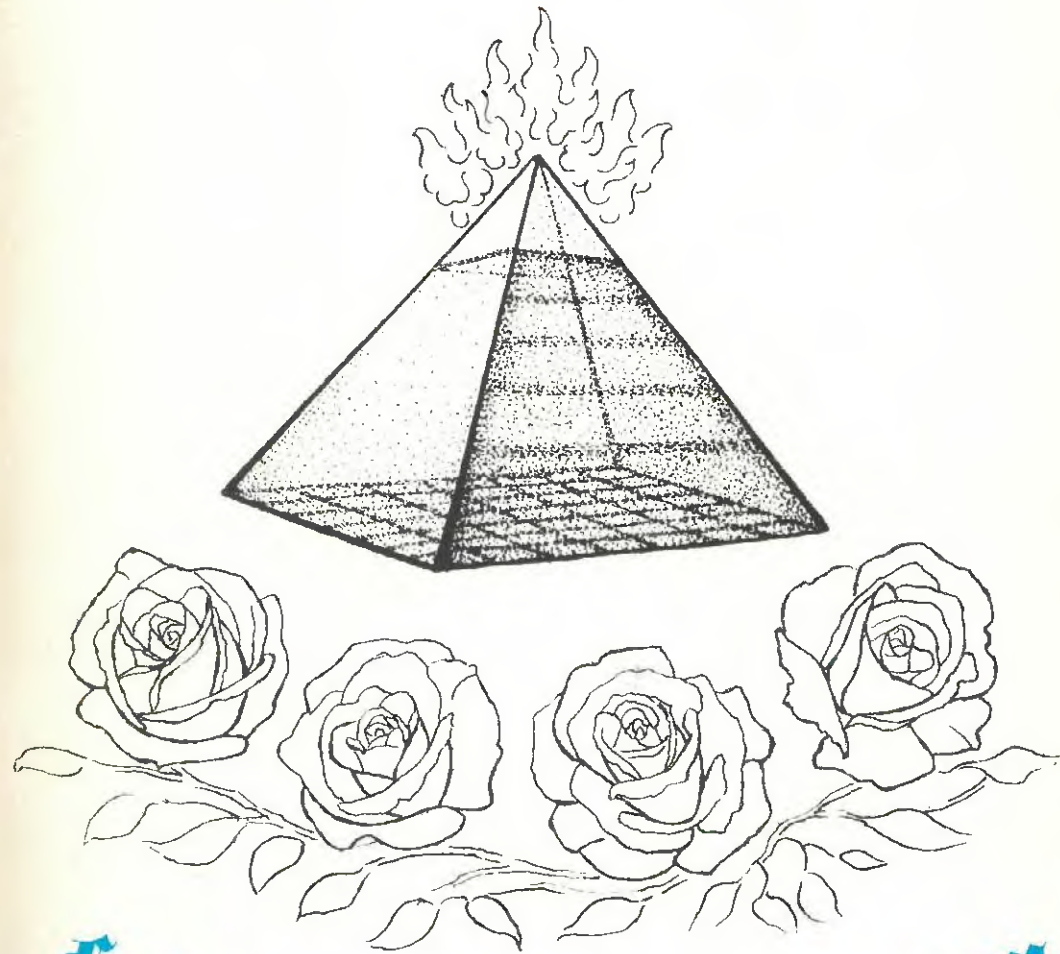
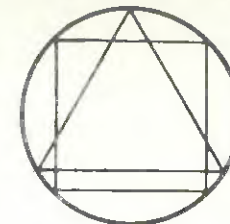


The Topstone



Lectorium Rosicrucianum



THE TOPSTONE

April 1978
4th. volume

number 1

headquarters

Baknessergracht 11-15,
Haarlem,
The Netherlands

u.s.a.

P.O. Box 9246
Bakersfield,
California 93309

australia

P.O. Box 152,
Parkholme,
South Australia 5043

new zealand

P.O. Box 35.149
Browns Bay
Auckland 10

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THE SUBLIME WISDOM
OF
LAO TZE

XIII

In the 10th chapter of the Tao Teh King, the 7th paragraph we may read:

“He gives birth to things and nourishes them.

He gives birth but does not possess.

He increases and multiplies but does not expect reward.

He rules but does not consider himself the master.

That is what is called the Mysterious Virtue.”

Our task now is to fathom the “Mysterious Virtue” The Mysterious Virtue; a fantastically apt and precise definition of the state-of-being of the Taoist, of the Transfigurist. We must ascertain what virtue is alluded to here, and why it is called Mysterious. The Virtue meant here is the ultimate condition of complete Liberation, of complete Tranquillity, of complete non-being. And the manner in which the complete Liberation has been brought about is considered to be Mysterious, seen dialectically. In this nature-order, the various stages of any person’s development can be traced in detail, whereas that of the transfigurist is an enigma, a mystery. The life of the mystic is transparent, the mystic who retires from the world engaging in his interminable hours of meditation, in his devotions, and his penances. The life of such a person can be described from year to year and likewise its ultimate outcome. The occultist has an equally transparent life. Anyone aware of occult mentality and practice can know fully the course of the occultist’s life; there is nothing mysterious in that. The development of the person possessed of a trained intelligence, and successively a university education, a degree and specialisation in some subject may likewise be fully known and traced, irrespective of what

special scientific subject he may ultimately practise. Those lives may be said to follow a programme. And the successful execution of his programme brings to such a person renown, fame, respect, adulation; he turns into a historical figure, an example for all people living. No Mysterious Virtue this, but an open and perceptible virtue quite according to programme. — This is what he was — This is what he did — and this is what he then became. All this is clear!

But the development of the transfigurist is untraceable. The results achieved may be observed with remarkable clarity, but how they came about, how they were possible, there is no dialectical person who can tell you. The course of the transfigurist's life is not apparent to the world. Jacob Boehme, the cobbler, is an instance of this: he cobbled shoes and fathomed the Divine All-Revelation; he knew the letters of reality and eternity so well that for the first few thousand years all the lettered doctors in the world put together will be unable to reach him.

The Mysterious Virtue — the Mysterious Liberation — mysterious too for Jacob Boehme himself! That is the signature.

Listen to Paul's words: "Whether it is outside the body or inside the body, I know not, but it is there." The Mysterious Virtue.

Did such entities cultivate virtue, or study it, or pledge it? No one knows. Nor do they themselves! They are unknowing, ignorant! Yet their Light penetrates everywhere, and they could therefore be ignorant. Virtue exists, its attributes exist, but the way is a great and glorious miracle! Not a centimetre, not a millimetre of that way can be "willed", "mysticized", "cultivated" or "learned"! Complete ignorance in that respect is even essential.

Is it an error then to speak of the way, the Path? Only one positive thing can be shown to you of the Path and that is its beginning! The Path, Tao, must begin with the dialectical I's self-surrender to the Kingdom-of-God in us; and having done so, what can the I do more? It is no longer there! And we say to

each other: Look, whenever any beginning is like that, mark well what follows. And in its miraculous glory we see Virtue descending on the Path repeatedly, quite as Mysterious to us as to all other human beings. And it continues to be Mysterious to us even when we ourselves walk that Path, because the Mysterious Virtue consists of becoming one with an Other Nature-Order, with an other Soul-state — and is there anything we know of that?

While standing on a mountain-top you may find a hiding spring; you strike the rock and the spring gushes water. Can you then know what way the water will go, where it will reach the sea? You are living your everyday life, you have a place there, in an office perhaps, or a workshop, or a store, or a house. People know you — where you live — what you are worth — what you are and do in everyday life. People know your capacities and shortcomings, your possibly great limitations; some may know you from your schooldays when you may have been merely of mediocre ability; you did not know much and you still don't; you have a poor opinion of yourself. And now, at the School's insistent invitation, and because of your own state of despair, you are bringing the glorious Johannine sacrifice-of-self. That little mediocre I of yours, known so well by countless people, brings you to the Valley-Spirit, and in complete surrender you empty yourself for the Other One who must grow in you. Let us assume you are doing so, that Mr. or Mrs. Mediocrity is really doing so; what is it that happens then? You strike the rock and a stream of Living Water gushes forth and pursues its course. What is it that happens then? In the eyes of the world, of people who know you so well, you are initially still the same Mr. or Mrs. Mediocrity you were before; going to work, wherever or whatever it may be; living in such-and-such a place at number so-and-so. Yet you are no longer there — you have gone — like the central character in Gustav Meyrinck's book "The White Dominican".

A miracle occurs: the stream of the new Soul-state whose free flow you rendered possible with your total self-sacrifice pursues a certain course with the "house you left behind". And

that path-of-life manifests remarkable new facets — demonstrates actual facts to all the astonished people who know you so well, and who now wonder how all this has become possible. “The Mysterious Virtue”.

And the being you formerly were smiles and is silent; continues his everyday work as long as may be required, types an invoice or sells merchandise, or talks with a client, or anything else. The Other One is giving birth to things in you, and nourishes them. How can that be?

In the great self-sacrifice, your animal-I, your biological-I has proved to be a piece, a fragment, a spark, a tiny ray of the Great-Being-of-the-Heart, or linked with it at least! Accordingly, there is a sensation, an experience as if the “old I” in a corner, at a distance, as an interested participant but exercising no influence, is observing the entirely new genesis. It is as if the Other-One-in-you says to you from time to time as an exalted relative: “See, brother, see, sister, things are as they should be, things are being done as they should be done”, and in devotion you bow your head.

The signature of the new consciousness is a wholly different experience of consciousness; no I-consciousness but collective consciousness. The Other One is giving birth to the things in you, nourishing them. He is giving birth, but having entered that condition, could you pretend and maintain you are the possessor? The Other One in you is the Builder of the New House of the Soul, and you observe and experience without possessing. The Other One in you increases Virtue, multiplies Virtue. The Stream widens and deepens, but you who did not do the work but nevertheless share its result, would you count on any reward? What reward would you want, what reward would be possible? The being gathers momentum, Virtue increases, and the being in which you formerly stood as master and ruler rises miles above former Mr. or Mrs. Mediocrity. The Other One is ruling; not “I” but Christ-in-me. It would be absurd, wouldn’t it, if you were to consider yourself the master. It is absolutely impossible for you to say:

“I” the initiate,
“I” the master,
“I” the envoy of the Brotherhood,
“I” the mandatary;
look at me, “I” am the man.

By that signature you can always recognize the people who want to force their way into your ranks, and who do not want to walk the Path of the Mysterious Virtue. They always place the dialectic “I” in the forefront; they always brings their “I” into things. They are for ever fighting a battle in the way a battle is ceaselessly being fought in this nature-order. Whereas if you silence the “I” and walk the path of Wisdom, you will grow, you will evolve, you will go onward from power to power and from glory to glory, which no child of man can stop! You will then rise above the catastrophes and orgies of conflict of this nature-order. The Kingdom-of-God-in-you is opening, and shall govern you. A government you will not notice, a government without compulsion, because this government responds to a wholly different fundamental principle, being of a wholly different nature. In our nature-order the one “I” governs the other “I”; in our nature-order there is compulsion ... there must be! In the new Field of Life such a thing is impossible. And one day it will be thus: “Who are you, brother — WHO are you, sister? We are no-one.

We have departed for ever; we are dead and we Live! And we behold the great and glorious miracle — the miracle people call the Mysterious Virtue.”

J. van Rijckenborgh

THE Gnostic GOSPEL
OF
THE PISTIS SOPHIA

XI

We have discussed in detail the marvellous change occurring in aural being when the pupil begins to develop the holy process of the fiery triangle.

This change signifies the genesis, the manifestation of the 12 magnetic points, as a result of which the microcosm concerned receives a new zodiac, and hence can develop a new magnetic system. All those who are true, all those who are dedicated to the one, Universal Christ-Light - "the twelve saviours of the Treasury of Light" - will receive these twelve forces. Whoever enters this state of being will experience as a living reality the words,

"For all men who are in the world received their souls out of the power of the archons of the aeons. But the power which is in you is from me; your souls however belong to the Absolute".

Who are they - the archons of the aeons? They are the ruling and leading powers in the universe of death. This is not just all that dwells in the reflection-sphere, but think especially of the great powers who control the solar system, the zodiacal systems and even greater formations in the universe of death.

After the Fall, when Adamic humanity was driven from the original universe, a completely new - a dialectical - universe was created for its benefit; a universe which would have had to adapt itself completely, - as far as nature-laws and nature-forces are concerned - to the totally changed nature of Adamic humanity. This humanity was separated into innumerable groups and formations and tied to one of the equally innumerable groups of stars. And each group received a leader, a race-god, a Lord.

These gods, these rulers, are referred to in the Pistis Sophia as the Archons of the aeons.

It will be clear to you that these race-gods in no sense have the task nor the capability of leading back to the original life the entities subject to them. They have the drive to cultivate their systems, to lead them to their own goal in the all-revelation and thus to make their work acceptable to the Gnosis. The fact that such a goal can never be reached is the doom of the archons. The fact that all the entities dependent on them will one day withdraw from their control through Transfiguration is their sorrow.

Hence when we speak about the archons of the aeons you should certainly not think that these powers are the very picture of evil and blackness, that all the vices of the gutters of civilization are theirs. No, in many respects they represent the greatest virtues of the dialectically attainable; they expound the most beautiful imaginable aspects of an essentially undivine world-order. In some respects we could call them top-Ephesians, the summit of the border dwellers. However they react to that state in quite a different way than Adamic humanity does. When an Adamic man has climbed to the state of Ephesionhood, he will begin to long for his original home, and farewell his state of imprisonment. The archons cannot possess that longing, because they are cosmo-crators, the creators of the complicated system of the nature of death. They will have to continue their activities until the last fallen entity has been released from their clutches by free choice, and their universe can be ended.

You should note well, therefore, that very high cultural developments can be instigated by the archons and all entities who have received their souls from them; that brotherhood and philanthropy, goodness, truth and justice can be ascribed to them, and that they keep a Devachan, an uppermost heaven of almost unthinkable beauty and happiness, while all this nevertheless has nothing to do with real liberation. They who wish to place their feet on the Path of Transfiguration and who try to renew their souls by and out of the twelve original

Saviours of the Treasury of Light, need to realize these things fully, so that mistakes are excluded. They need to turn exclusively to the essential liberating aspects of the pure Universal Doctrine and of the Christian revelations of salvation.

For this reason the specifically Semitic and Mosaic must be eradicated from their thinking. We are not saying anything against the Semitic people as such, because many Jews were and are transfigurists. Take for example the 10 vanished tribes of Israel. And even in our days the holy sect of the Baal-shem is still renowned.

We mean however that the Semitic root-race, when it began its course and developments in history, was very recognizably an organization of the archons of the aeons, as were of course all other racial groups. The leading god of this Semitic race was certainly not the "Absolute" but one of the innumerable archons especially charged for a certain length of time, with the leadership of our planet. You will find proof of our opinion in Deuteronomy 32, verses 8 and 9: "When the Absolute separated the sons of Adam and gave the nations their inheritance, he fixed the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel (the Semitic race), for the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance".

The Lord here is not the Absolute, but the god of the covenant of Israel: Jehovah. It is clear that all these Semites, under such superhuman leadership, occupied themselves with attestations of gratitude. "The Lord leads *us* alone and there is no other god with him". "I shall exclaim the name of the Lord - give greatness to our god". That is the typically dialectical expression. In the Original, the Absolute is absolute, but in dialectics even an archon can become greater through the obedience of his children. And he becomes extremely wrathful if they resist his will. Moses was therefore an hierophant of the Jehovistic mysteries, the Semitic mysteries, just as every leading archon has his mysteries. No doubt a great man according to dialectical measures, but very apparently and emphatically an entity with an archon-soul, who accepts entirely, and regards it as divine language, when his god says to him:

"See that I am I,
and no god with me.
I kill and I bring to life.
I defeat and I heal,
and no one can save
what has fallen into my hands".

You know that the Semitic root-race was divided into twelve tribes. That is the "lot of his inheritance", the lot of Jacob. What has been done on account of that "lot of his inheritance" we all know. When the nomadic tribes of the old semites invaded Canaan they massacred all the peoples living there and took their possessions. By the commandment of their god no one was to survive. If there were a few humanists among the Semites who let some people live, this was scored against them very heavily by their god. And later, when the Semitic people arrived in their stolen land, where they had destroyed a beautiful and sublime culture (the Egyptian), they went on with their orgies of murder. The worst of these was the tribe of Dan, which was not satisfied with its bounds and occupied an adjoining state, massacred its people, and took possession of it in the name of Jehovah. "Dan" means judge or justice, well, the dialectical nature of this justice will not escape our attention. There is no need to object to this, for all people in this world have their souls from the power of the aeons. And right up to this hour you will find proof that the leading figures of this planet are the most humble and faithful servants of the aeons.

"An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth", the ancient Mosaic law, received from the hand of his god, is also today still the leading motive of the masses and the individual, even though Jehovah is no longer mentioned, and Christ is on their lips. Even a child can understand that this Christ is a false Christ. All of us who are the descendants of the old root-races, and in whom all the suggestions of the grey past stir and boil out of subconscious and out of the direct radiation of our lipika of the archeons, all of us must understand that there

is only *one* solution for us: throwing ourselves into the process of liberation, so that one day it can be said of us also:

“but the power which is in you is from me, Jesus the Lord, and your souls belong to the Absolute Kingdom”.

J. van Rijckenborgh

GLEANINGS FROM THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

II

You are the Light of the World

It is an unmistakable fact that when people look for spiritual or physical liberation, and when they put the world and humanity in a position, of accusation because of the boundless degeneration of life, they always point, in their fierce criticism, at the sore points and sinful conduct outside of themselves. You saddle your enemies with everything that is bad, inferior and undesirable, and no one can say that the criticism and the judgement are unjust. For most criticism by far is based on a certain amount of truth. The burden of unworthy blood is so great, human shortcomings are so formidable, the misdeeds committed individually or as a group are so eye catching, that nearly every piece of criticism must be said to be on the mark. But when we say in advance, in order to obviate any misunderstanding, that somehow a perfect justice must triumph and be carried into this world, it can surely be said that the big question is whether the common method of criticism is the correct way of bringing the basic errors of human existence into the open. The applied method of criticism always seeks *the* fault and observes *a* fault in objects outside of itself. It is hardly ever thought about whether man, by virtue of his degenerate being, is actually capable of objective criticism, whether he can observe and judge impartially.

The Universal Philosophy for example teaches us that every person can see his fellow men and the things and values around him only through his own aural sphere. And that sphere is not pure and perfectly transparent, but is coloured and distorted by our own blood-being, by our own state of being. Upon

further observation we would find that the ego always acts on the assumption that it is right. It has the idea that it is being attacked. It also thinks that it observes and acts correctly. That is why it must be revered and recognized. The ego acts out of the delusion of kingship. And because delusions are unreal, that kingship is under attack. This causes self-preservation.

“Who is attacking me; who is threatening my kingship? Who is not giving me recognition in my delusion? Who is pushing me off my throne in my carefully established standard of living? So that I am hungry and lack clothing and fuel and light, so that I lack everything?” And hatred, blood-thirst, and uncontrollable fury go out to the offender who in his turn has done all this to me out of *his* I-delusion, *his* kingship-dream. Is anything worse than this experience for king “I”, with his modernized home, his radio and television, his slippers, his easy chair and warm fire, his four week annual leave, and his superannuation? During the last was humanity experienced the crisis of the I-delusion, and the living standards were dashed to pieces and every king “I” was attacked, even unto his easy chair. It is time that the human being is driven right back through the criticism and bitterness that he nurses against the outside world, driven right back into his own self. If you want to air your fiery criticism, if you cannot contain it, you should turn it onto your own self. For once expose your own nakedness to the light, and see the bones of your pitiable state stick in all directions.

Dear reader, wake up from your I-delusion. Discover that you are lying fettered in the chains of dialectical degeneration. It is the task of the School of the Rosycross to give you a helping hand in this waking up. The sword of truth must be planted in the soul, you must writhe in soul-anguish and death-agony, before the true spirit can awaken in you. There is no sense in shutting off your ears to the blows in continuing your ordinary life as if nothing is happening, because in any case one day you will *have* to endure those blows right into every fibre of your being. The sword of truth must cut through your I-delusion. Nothing must be left of this delusion for the danger is surely

not imaginary that you will start seeking the causes outside of yourself again?

It is possible and very understandable that the majority of humanity will need a new turning of the wheel. For many people one bitter experience is not sufficient to enable them to come to a complete reversal. But you, who have shown interest in the Rosycross, we assume you are of different stature than the masses. You must be of a different quality and employ a different method of life. You are the seeker who has started a journey to find the Path of the Light. You are not looking for *nature*-revelation, but *spirit*-revelation. If you think you are Christian, then the Words are spoken to you also:

*“You are the salt of the earth;
but if salt has lost its taste,
how shall its saltiness be restored?
It is no longer good for anything
except to be thrown out
and trodden under foot by men.”*

Indeed, if they who are driven by the spiritual urge of remembrance hesitate to go the Path of Salvation, and do not want to take up their task of head, heart and hands, who will? A new birth is always achieved in the night, in grief and chaos. He who is conscious of his task must live in the new birth. He is of the morning land. Hence when one cannot be of the morning land and is not yet able to live in the new birth, one needs to perish in the night and in grief and chaos. The salt that loses its taste is no good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

You probably think you will join in when the new morning comes presently. “When the first cry of the new birth vibrates through the air I will sing along in that choir and make my shouts of joy resound”, you think perhaps. But you should understand the secret of the new birth, the deep meaning of things. Can there be a birth without creation, without conception? If you are seeking your help from outside, as the religious masses have always done, you will trip over the evil

the task of his own head, heart and hands. But you, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. That is clear language, that is dynamic, that is direct, that finishes off all hair-splitting. Let your light shine! When and where? In a world that is dark and to a person who needs light. Show God by your works and actions.

Can you let your Light shine? You, who want to be a Christian, should not wait for the morning, for we *make* the new morning, we cause its conception. Let your light shine out of that new morning into the night, even though dialectics attacks fiercely. We go onward with uplifted heads, for we know that the light impregnates our being and we radiate that light into the night. We pour out that light which burns so irresistible in us, over the world and humanity, and we make the morning. And if you so stand in the joy of this light-relay, you will say these radiant, fiery words with us:

New Sun, arise!

And the New Sun rises. It ascends to the pinnacle. Seeker for the ways of the Lord, gird yourself, go the way of the Rosy-cross, so that by your works, by your striving, your Father who is in heaven will be glorified.

J. van Rijckenborgh

of all times. "God must do it through His Son. Is he not called "the Light of the World"? But the Sermon on the Mount testifies emphatically;

"You are the light of the world.

A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

*Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel,
but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house."*

"You are the light of the world", that is, if you are a pioneer, if you are aware of being a Christian. *You* are the light of the world! And now must the light wait for the light? Must the light wait for the morning? The light must shine until the morning comes! The city on the hill must show its presence to the world. By the Light of the world, and that is you, you must radiate all your spiritual goodwill through the night and through grief and death, into the furthest distances. That is the conception of the new birth! Shining light in the night. You yourself must prove whether you are a "child of man reborn in God", a light of the world. That is what you are called to; not later, but now! That is why the Sermon on the Mount continues:

"Let your light so shine before men,

that they may see your good works

and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Do you understand these words? If man were to fulfil these words he would no longer discuss the arguments of whether there is a God, or which church, which dogma, which direction is the right one. Then all that petty-minded talking will be silenced, then people will laugh away that highly learned theological waffle of our modern ingenious age! Then God will be proven by a light-radiation from out of our own being! Then man will experience God revealed in the flesh.

Thousands of hours of prayer have been conducted through the years, massive prayers pleading for light, for oil in the lamps. The God of this world has listened to these prayers benevolently and has urged them for more hours of prayer. Thus man was kept occupied and forgot to turn his attention to himself, to

THE MYSTERIES OF ORPHEUS

A number of times we have taken the opportunity of showing you how much the message brought by the modern Rosycross is a call that has been sounded throughout all the ages and that is raised with a regular periodicity to awaken mankind to the true life, and to liberate it from the earthly wheel of life.

We want to do this once again, this time by means of the Orphic mysteries, of which so little is known and about which so much untruth is spread. But you who have been educated in the universal doctrine will certainly understand the characters of the universal language which greet us out of the Orphic mysteries. For this reason our first feelings should be ones of gratitude, because we can gather the call of salvation from so many sources, and because they appear everywhere and consequently provide us with a certainty, so unshakable, so immovable, that we as pupils of the modern Spiritual School gain an ever firmer footing, and hence become more and more capable of attempting the big jump to the Other Life.

When we consider Orpheus, we must firstly rid ourselves of all we have possibly learnt in regard to this in our younger years, not so much because it might be untrue, but because we have been used to drawing totally erroneous conclusions from what we learned. As a result of these conclusions we have gained scant respect for the Orphic and Dionysic miracles, which we want to name in one breath.

The idea of "orgies" is connected with these miracles. And orgies are in bad odour. Indeed, in later centuries, in the very decadent Roman Empire, orgies (originally: the celebration of rites in the mysteries) were turned into alcoholic debauchery, accompanied by the most shameful public sensuality, and all

this under the guise of the Orphic and Dionysic mystery. The wine cask was held in high honour with Dionysus and Orpheus, it was said, and it was asserted that these two mystery figures generated madness, especially in women.

The influence of Dionysus was like an atmospheric vibration. As soon as it swept over the country, women who were susceptible to it left their homes, husbands and children, to gather in certain places and yield themselves with their god to all kinds of orgies, full of wine and hysteria. "While the women are occupied in domestic chores", so say the legends, "the vines suddenly coil around the weaving loom, and milk and honey drip from the roof. They grab one of their children, tear it to pieces, and go to the hills, where together with the Maenads, they yield to the divine intoxication. The epidemic frenzy bursts upon the people and sweeps along even the most unwilling. It breaks all ties and leads to the life of unbridled nature." "In one place", says another story, "three daughters leave their house in a frenzy, and devour their infants."

It is like a night-mare, literature has taught us to believe, and the god drives them all to ever greater frenzy; he is the great hunter, and the women who serve him he whips up like hunting dogs. Who has not heard of the Bacchantes? These are the women who have been whipped up to dionysic frenzy, and who carry on like savage beasts in atrocious rage.

What are we to think of all this, which has been taught and dished up without any understanding as sagas and legends, and which had such a satanic reflex in Roman decadence? Even in our day don't we refer to the alcoholic as the person who worships Bacchus? Is it not so that the myths and legends of the ancient mysteries are posited as facts in order to accentuate dialectical sins and abuses? Won't it therefore be very difficult to divest of their veils, these mysteries, which smell of wine and vice, and to use them as a call to the new life? Not at all! For the signature of a divine message is so clear in these mysteries, that even a child could understand it. Let us now get to a rational account.

The Orphic mysteries date back to a prehistoric time, a

so-called legendary time. We could place the beginning of these mysteries to about 12 000 years ago, and you should keep this in mind when hearing about Christocentric thoughts of 10 000 years *before* Christ. Orpheus can be compared to all other great religious teachers. He brought teachings which are a summary of the universal mysteries, without him writing anything himself. Beside him there appears Dionysus, the stormy driver of the spirit. Whoever studies this figure, can establish without any fantasy that Dionysus represents the activity of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit which sweeps over the world like a stormwind, everywhere awakening dialectical man whenever possible, and driving him to ecstasy, i.e. orgies.

When the disciples of the Christ experienced their Pentecost of the Holy Spirit, there were many who expressed the suspicion that "they are filled with new wine" The ecstasy, the heavenly, unearthly joy, which the touch of the universal spirit generates, and the actions arising from it, are so illogical, so absurd to the ordinary earthly person, that the term "madness" is an obvious one. The old accounts describe the reaction of people to this holy touch which is so tremendous that to outsiders it is very alarming.

It is necessary to understand this clearly. As time progresses in this earthly realm, the race-body of man crystallizes continuously. The human being is heading to an increasing petrification. This hardening affects not only the physical body but also the other vehicles of the personality, as well as the characteristics of the personality; all of its life-sphere and behaviour. This indicates not only a hardening, therefore, but also a retardation of all the functions of life, and so as the ages pass the human ability to react weakens constantly. When we add to this that the weakening of the ability to react keeps equal pace with the narrowing and limiting of the consciousness, we will understand fully that the touch of the Spirit was able to be much more dynamic and cause a much greater reaction 12 000 years ago, 2 000 years ago, or even 700 years ago. Seven centuries ago people came to the Cathars in their hundreds, and they immersed themselves completely in the endura, because they

observed and experienced the touch of the Spirit. Two thousand years ago people reacted to the call of the disciples of Christ in their thousands, and they were baptized, which we should visualize not as an external ritual act, but as a bodily experiencing of vibrations and as a personal reaction to this.

And so we can understand that 2 000 years ago the Orphic and Dionysic mysteries were capable of awakening more than thousands to the new life; that they caused a mighty, massive reaction so tremendous that after all those thousands of years the most shocking sagas and tales have been preserved, albeit tales woven together by people left behind who did not understand.

Thousands of years ago Asia Minor was an enormous focus of universal contact, and the people dwelling there have experienced the grace of it. Egypt, Canaan, Syria, Persia, as well as the southern Balkan were one great harvest field for the holy mysteries of the Universal Brotherhood. One can say that the harvest of those times stretched far into the tens of thousands of souls liberated for the New Life.

At that important point of time in the Aryan epoch, it almost seems as if the mysteries crowded each other out. How many there were in ancient Greece, for example! But all were given the opportunity of entering the liberating life. It was the last possible really big hold on Aryan mankind. It was the last great harvest before the race-body became so crystallized that large harvests would be out of the question. Who today can still understand and see the spirit? Who today still has sufficient consciousness to be able to react in a clear and spontaneous way? The thousands of those olden times and the hundreds of seven centuries ago, will be the scores of today at the most. These days a struggle must be fought to make *one* soul, *one* person sufficiently open to the light. And the brothers and sisters who succeed in this, fall on their knees in gratitude for that one soul saved. They are just as grateful as the Orphic hierophants were for their thousands.

The wine which is linked with the service of Dionysus is the symbol of activity of the Holy Spirit. Just think of the wine at

the Holy Supper. When the vines of the wine grapes coiled around the looms of the women, and when milk and honey dripped from the roofs, this means to say that the touch of the Spirit was so dynamic, that people simply could not continue their day to day lives. They *had* to react, spontaneously. In this way innumerable people in those ancient times reacted to the rushing force-waves of Dionysus. And the people knew, they understood, because they were taught by the teachings of Orpheus.

These teachings are represented as songs and poems, sung and recited with the accompaniment of a seven stringed lyre. This lyre is the magic and liberating instrument of all the Sons of Will and Yoga, the sevenfold faculty of the Divine Man. With the help of this lyre, Orpheus sang his songs. The present-day dialectical investigator who does not understand says that the teachings and songs of Orpheus were very pessimistic. Orpheus was a gloomy teacher, so it is asserted with great emphasis. But you, as pupils of the Spiritual School, would certainly not agree with this.

What is Orpheus saying? That man is sinful, and unhappy because of his twofold nature. We know that too! Orpheus says that longing for a blissful here-after has no purpose, because he wishes, and we quote him literally, "to escape the circle and to breathe again after the misery." You will know fully what that means! Orpheus teaches that life is a fatal cycle in which man lies imprisoned. In his prison he goes from bad to worse, from sin to sin. The Orphic teachings therefore deal with the sin and misery of nature, but above all there is the preaching of liberation. Liberation is central! In order to make liberation possible in the present, Orpheus literally does everything to show up this world in its dialectical limitations. The well-known jars of the Danaids and the labour of Sisyphus stem from the imaging faculty of the Orphic mysteries.

You probably know the two myths of the Danaids and of Sisyphus. The Danaids are sinners; cast out of the original kingdom, they were condemned to the endless task of filling a bottomless jar with water. Tormented by a terrible thirst of life,

the Danaids carry on with this hopeless work. Never will the jar be filled, never will they be able to cool their thirsty lips with the water. Sisyphus is the condemned one, who is sentenced to roll a block of stone up the brow of a hill, from where it always rolls back again. Does this performance need any commentary? Surely not. We talk about rising, shining and sinking, and even that is too optimistic. Isn't the Orphic point of view much more correct, when it teaches that in this nature it is a case of 'sinking' only? Isn't our whole life there to prove it?

In the localities and buildings where the Orphic teachings were studied, the Danaids and their jar and Sisyphus with his stone are constantly depicted. We can say that in these two plain symbols, dialectics is shown up as in a full-length portrait. Around 12 000 years ago! That is indeed pessimism! But then only in regard to *this* nature. For the songs of Orpheus go on further, and higher, and wider. The aim is liberation, escaping from the circle. How is liberation achieved? Listen carefully, friends!

Firstly the divine spark must be freed, the divine element, which is still present in the sunken microcosm. Secondly the pupil must go the way of the 'orphicos bios', the way of selfmortification as to nature, as a result of which the pupils of the Orphic mysteries took up a very exceptional attitude to life, and went their way in stillness. They deviated in almost every normal moral of life, as is obvious. Thirdly, the pupil went the ritual way, as it is called. The ritual way is the way of systematic contact, breaking, and uplifting by and in the Holy Spirit. The ritual way is therefore the way of Dionysus. There comes the stormwind of the spirit. And the pupil sings the song of liberation:

*"I was a child of the earth,
and of the starry heaven.
But my return is heavenly.
Truly, thou knowest it."*

The consequence of going the path through sanctified action, instruction and new life is the escape from the chain of misery. Thus the pessimism according to nature turns into the

sparkling enthusiasm of the pilgrims; 'soaked', i.e. satisfied with the wine of the spirit. They dance as Bacchantes, as all the saints and liberated ones did before them, and as is described in the Psalms. They dance their dances of liberation with the monads, i.e. the new souls with the liberated and reborn spirit, and, accompanied by the seven stringed lyre of Orpheus, they sing:

*"Hail to you who have suffered;
this you have never yet suffered!
From man you became God. Amen."*

J. van Rijckenborgh

For the young at heart:

TIRIAN

II

The message from the King

It is dark and it has been drizzling for a long time. For months on end almost invisible droplets have been falling down. The gloomy castle with its twelve heavy gates stands as a grey shadow in the big forest. The high, wet grass, the close growing ivy, the mildew, the cobwebs... it all looks like a bad dream. If you look at it for a while it is just as if the castle is watching you with a nasty expression. The dark windows with their brown curtains and the ivy above them look like angry eyes. And if you look even longer, you can see that the castle looks sad, as if it is crying. But is everything really so gloomy? Is everything in the forest really frightening? No, not really, because in the castle lives Tirian. He is lying in his bed, but he can't sleep. The whole night he is thinking about the words of the bird.

"A princess slumbers in the middle room.
Tirian, will you save her?
She is the one who ought to live here.
Listen to me and set her free.
Don't listen to the others,
but change your life.
Look for the Silver Key,
and open the door of her prison".

When Tirian had heard this, he had immediately gone excitedly to Master Luke, who had been sitting downstairs amidst piles of old books. He was just thinking about his pig-headed servant and his friends. Now he couldn't even read in peace. "Master Luke, a little bird just told me..." Tirian had begun. And he had told him what he had heard. But deep furrows had appeared in the old man's forehead, and he had looked even grumpier than usual.

"What on earth are you saying now? You're not working hard enough, lad. You no longer listen to me, you bring all your friends here, you make a terrible noise, and now you're even talking about a bird". And that is how Tirian had been fobbed off when he had wanted to know more about the secret of the locked room. And now he is thinking about it all night.

Next morning Tirian gets up early. He wants to start searching everywhere for the Silver Key, which fits the door of the inner room. He searches the attic, the towers, the cellars; he looks in chests, in boxes, in vases, between books, under carpets, behind paintings, on shelves and ledges, everywhere a key might be hidden. When Master Luke notices that Tirian is not working and has no friends upstairs, he calls, "Would you like to help me with the books? Don't you want to play with the music box? Shall I read to you? Come on!" But every time Master Luke calls, Tirian also hears the bird whistling. It is the same bird that was sitting on the window sill yesterday. He can't see it, but it sings so clearly, so wondrously beautiful, that Tirian decides to keep searching. Day after day he searches through the halls and towers of the castle. Sometimes he finds a key. Then he jumps up happily and thinking "This is it!" But then it turns out to be an iron key. Sometimes he comes across expensive jewelry or money, or old toys. And he admires it. But then he hears the song of the bird again and he remem-

bers the Silver Key. That is much more valuable, because with that, and *only* with that, he can free the Princess.

One day when Tirian has looked into every hole in the wall, has pulled every hook in the wall, and has looked through every key hole, he goes into the garden to search there. In the well, in the shed, under the plants, behind trees. His friends think it is rather silly.

"What are you acting so strangely? Why don't you play with us?" they ask. Tirian happily tells them about the key and his friends say, "Can't we help you find it? Then we'll find it much quicker and we can play in the castle again." But then suddenly the silvery sound of the little bird is heard again:

"Everyone stands alone in his task
of opening the Room
where the beautiful princess
has been waiting for so long."

And Tirian understands that he must find the key all by himself in his own house, so that he can save the princess. He searches in the gravel and the high grass, he crawls along on his knees, and finally he climbs a tree. And then he sees, outside the garden, on the other side of the wall, a large group of people standing around a herald on his horse.

A herald is a messenger. He is a messenger from the King of the Kingdom of Heaven. In one of our youth temple songs we sing "God sends out his heralds to call us all." When we understand this call, we can go back with him to his Fatherland, because it is also *our* Fatherland.

Tirian peers over the wall from his high position. The herald is on a white horse and wears a light blue cloak, on which a rising sun with golden beams is embroidered. Listen to what the herald says: "This is the message of the King to His subjects: It is time: the prince seeks the princess. It is time, the King

invites you all to the royal wedding. It is time!!”

Tirian is joyously surprised. “Yes! ” he shouts. Excitedly he climbs down from the tree. He runs to the wall, to a hatch which he knows can be opened. There is the herald! Tirian’s face is beaming with recognition and when the herald is coming close, he calls out as loud as he can, “I know where the princess...” Bang! The hatch is suddenly shut, before anyone has heard him. Startled, Tirian sees that Master Luke has stopped him saying what he knows about the princess. And now powerless, he shakes with excitement. He can hear the herald riding away and the people leaving.

Alone and discouraged, Tirian stays behind with Master Luke. He had wanted to shout, to run to the herald to tell him. But Master Luke stopped him... Now he is alone. What can he do? He has not found the key. If only he had...

But is Tirian really alone? Surely not... listen, listen carefully! The little bird is singing. Tirian can hear it, but he is tired, so tired of searching all day long, that he wants to go straight to bed and shut his eyes. But the bird stays with him and softly sings its most beautiful song.

Tirian is dreaming. He sees the dark castle with its towers, passages and halls. And in the middle of the castle... a courtyard, very small and narrow. It is green and slimy. There is a round lid on the ground. Look, it is opening, and in the deep well under it, Tirian can see a silver key. At last - the key! Tirian grabs it... and wakes up!

It was a dream. But now he can clearly hear the song of the bird again. “This was no ordinary dream; it is a sign,” Tirian thinks. “The Key is here in the castle and I must find it!” He gets out of bed and begins to look for the well. Strange, he does not know where to look, and by chance walks into a small passage. There he sees a hatch. Tirian tries to open it,



Creak... through a chink he sees the court yard that he has dreamed about. It is difficult to crawl through such a narrow opening. He is now on the roof of a lean-to. He lowers himself, steps over the ledge, and slides down a drain pipe, because he has to go down a long way to get there.

Suddenly he hears the voice of Master Luke. "What are you doing there? Come back, come back! You should be asleep at this time, like other people. Leave that and come back!" But Tirian also hears the bird whistling, and he jumps down quickly. He falls, but it doesn't hurt. When he has picked himself up, he sees a round cover made of bronze. Just as he walks towards the cover, a great roaring lion jumps in front of his feet. Tirian shrinks back in fear. A lion! But immediately the bird sings again:

"This in no dream.
Be brave!
Walk courageously towards him,
the lion is good,
show your courage,
and he will be your friend!"

Tirian feels all fear leaving him. He takes a step forward and the great threatening lion instantly changes into a lion full of radiant goodness. Then Tirian sees that on the cover a circle, triangle and square are engraved. On the edge of the cover is inscribed:

"Whoever seeks may open me.
Whoever opens me shall find!"

When Tirian has seen and understood this, he opens the cover. The strong lion helps him. But what a disappointment! There is only sand under the lid, just ordinary sand.

"Dig", says Tirian. He starts straight away with his hands,

because there is no spade around, and getting one is not so easy. The lion helps. With his big paws the digging goes along very quickly. Look... a stone stairway is starting to appear. But Tirian has become so tired that right in the middle of his work he falls asleep. But the lion goes on. Deeper and deeper he digs, until the big stairway is free of sand.

The little bird watches that nothing can happen to Tirian. When the digging is finished, it starts to sing, and Tirian wakes up. In the court yard, where it was so dark, a wondrous light now shines. Not sunlight, but a glow that comes from underneath. With his heart pounding, Tirian looks down into the well, and there... far below him he sees the bright light of the Silver Key. Quickly he runs down the stairs. At last, at last the key to free the Princess!

Intensely happy, Tirian holds the wonderful Silver Key in his hands.

