



pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum

‘And, for the same reason, he will gladly accept and enjoy such honours as he deems likely to make him a better man; but those, whether private or public, which are likely to disorder his life, he will avoid?’

‘Then, if that is his motive, he will not be a statesman.’

‘By the dog of Egypt, he will! in the city which is his own he certainly will, though in the land of his birth perhaps not, unless he have a divine call.’

‘I understand; you mean that he will be a ruler in the city of which we are the founders, and which exists in idea only; for I do not believe that there is such a one anywhere on earth?’

‘In heaven, I replied, there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may set his own house in order. But whether such a one exists, or ever will exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other.’

‘I think so, he said.’

Plato, *Politeia*, book IX



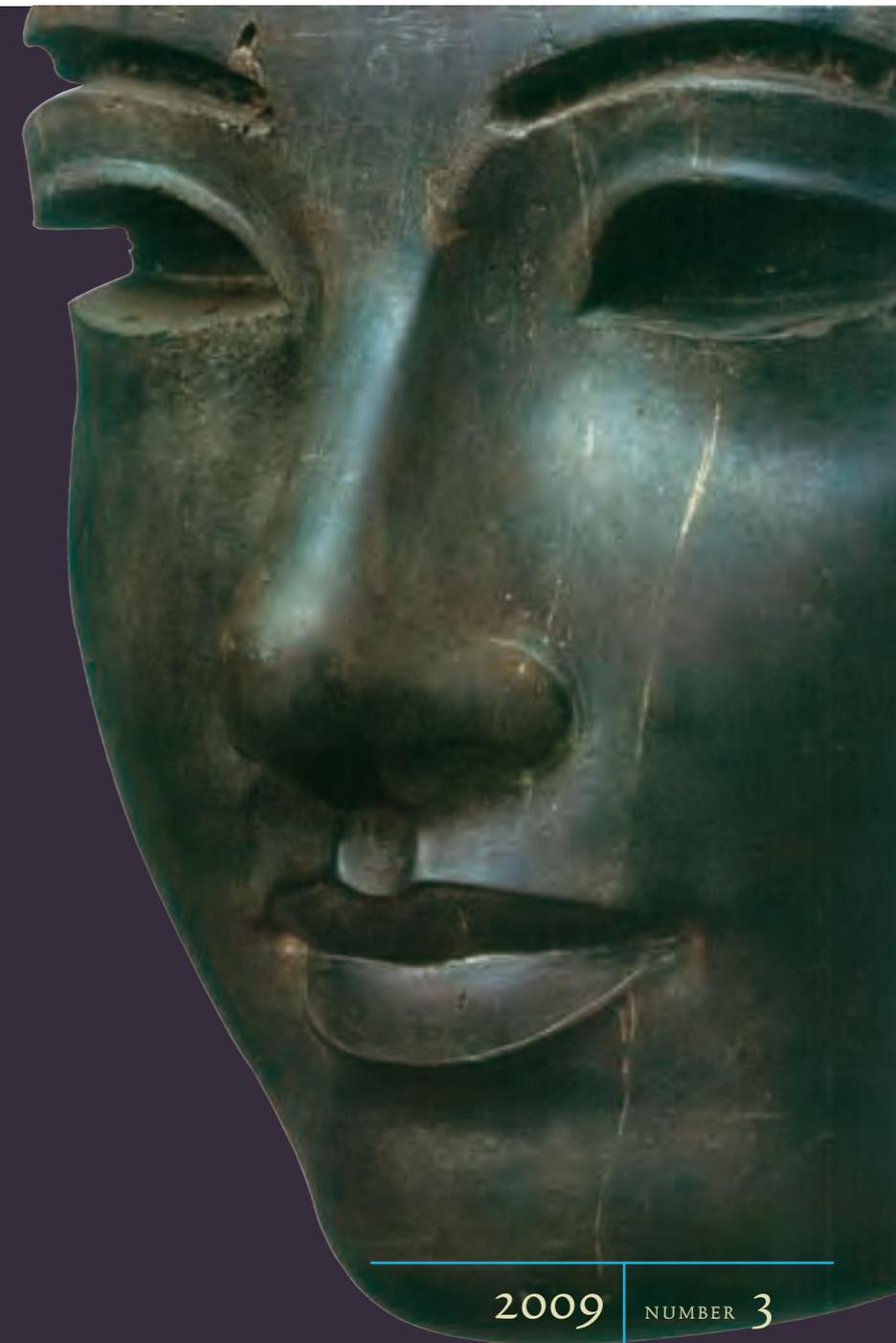
Hermes and Pymander

Plato’s story about Er
about the afterlife

Stardust

What is doing what is good?

Aquarius, the ‘better ego’
and the mystery planets



pentagram

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The hermetic manuscripts, with which we are familiar, usually date back to the first two centuries of our era. However, currently the idea takes root that the preserved corpus of the 'thrice-great Thot' or Hermes is based on knowledge that is thousands of years older. Gradually, the image appears to the amazed scholars that the whole of Egypt constituted one great system of initiation, in which thousands of people restored the link with true life.

However, throughout the ages, the Egyptian religious system became increasingly externalised, though in smaller, 'hermetic' circles and groups, the pure tradition was preserved and passed on, until it became settled in the magnificent Corpus Hermeticum, which is unequalled as an initiation manuscript.

J van Rijckenborgh understood the profound meaning of the Egyptian Gnosis. He stripped the texts of their veils and placed them in the centre of twentieth-century life. During a large number of conferences, he explained this primordial knowledge to his pupils, which enabled human life to take a wholly different direction. In this issue, we would like to embark on a study of it, based on the commentaries by J van Rijckenborgh in *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis and its Call in the eternal Now*.

The pictures from ancient Egypt, illustrating the articles, have been obtained from the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities in Cairo. To those who are able to see, they all express the divine context, in which creation shines and radiates, when man has the spirit-soul at his disposal again.

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Cover:

Even without the rock-crystal eyes, which 4,000 years ago adorned this obsidian female head, this sculpture expresses peace, pure sweetness and profound knowledge

the caduceus in the temples of the spiritual school

In mythology, Hermes, or Mercury, is the messenger of the gods. His symbol, the caduceus, or Mercury staff, is a profound hermetic symbol, which, among many other things, expresses the conscious link with the Supernature.

The celebration of the ten-year existence of the temple focal point of Sole Novo in Djèrègbé and the successful development of the working field of Benin offered a good opportunity to place the caduceus as a second symbol at the place of service.

In the temples of the Rosycross, the caduceus symbolises the hermetic Gnosis, the universal wellspring, with which the pure, original teachings of the Rosycross are also linked. This is amply confirmed by the text from the Alchemical Wedding: 'Hermes is the primordial source; he who can, let him drink from me; he who dares, let him plunge into my depths.'

J van Rijckenborgh has extensively discussed the books of the Corpus Hermeticum during conferences that have been published in the four volumes of The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis and its Call in the eternal Now.

To J van Rijckenborgh, Hermes, as the image of the primordial wisdom of the Gnosis, was the symbol of the true, heavenly man. And Hermes' caduceus, the Mercury staff, expresses this symbolically; it is the representation of the new man, in whom the new consciousness fire of the heavenly human being has developed.

Hermes is also identified with the messenger of the gods, who brings the universal wisdom to people again.

We see that the symbol represents the new serpent fire, the consciousness column of the newborn soul human being, with the two wings of the new consciousness of the living soul at the top, or also the new thinking resulting from it.

After all, Hermes' religion is sometimes called the religion of thinking, the religion of hermetic thinking, stemming from the link of the new soul with the spirit.

The symbolism in the temples of the consecrated focal points of the conference centres is profound. Next to the cross with roses, also the caduceus is placed as a sign that, after the rose has unfolded on the cross, after the rose heart has opened to and in the Light of the Gnosis, the birth of the new man will be accomplished. The heavenly human being will be able to enter the new spirit-soul life on the wings of the spirit. Combined, both symbols refer to the wondrous process in the pupil that, once the new possibilities of the consciousness are indeed developing, the ordinary intellectual faculties withdraw into the background and wisdom is born. J van Rijckenborgh says about this: 'First of all, wisdom must be born from the heart, from the rose of the heart. Wisdom matures in the head sanctuary. And like love, it is emitted as a radiation by the whole being.' During the development of the Spiritual School and the group of pupils, Hermes' caduceus was, at a certain moment, placed next to the cross with the rose in the temples of renewal. It was a sign that in and with the primordial wisdom and knowledge of all times, the pupil unceasingly places himself before the path of the heavenly man, the true man in his microcosm. This refers to the path of transfiguration.

With a new mode of life, he or she places him or herself on the path of the Rosycross, and walks it until the morning of the resurrection of the



Plan and impressions of conference centre Sole Novo, Porte Novo, Benin

living, new soul human being, who sees the morning of the spirit dawn over him. The Spiritual School unceasingly calls the human being to be aware of the new period of interiorising, on the way to this higher consciousness, on the way to greater and deeper insight into the wisdom and Light radiation of the Gnosis. 'Turn your heart to the Light and know it,' says Hermes ☼





the corpus hermeticum

In the following articles, we would like to compare the *Corpus Hermeticum*, this key to the ancients, with that of the current young Gnosis. When we study the extent to which the teachings, the life and the guidelines of the ancients correspond to those of the younger ones, the reader will clearly know whether the young Gnosis derives its right to take the initiative and guide the expanding world work on the basis of values or on the basis of delusion.

J. van Rijckenborgh

The *Corpus Hermeticum*, in the version we try to fathom, consists of eighteen chapters, called books. The first book is titled Pymander. It concerns a dialogue between Hermes and a mysterious being that calls himself Pymander. Here, Hermes is the nature-born human being, who has entered the path of liberation, has passed through the birth cave of Bethlehem, and has received the newborn soul state. Now he is occupied with weaving the golden wedding garment on the basis of this newborn soul state. In the meantime, the new state of consciousness, the Mercury consciousness or hermetic consciousness, begins to manifest itself. Once this consciousness begins to assert itself, Pymander comes to the fore. Pymander is the wisdom, with which the hermetic human being makes contact by virtue of the new manifestation of his being. Pymander is God's omnipresent wisdom. Yes, Pymander is God. Pymander is 'the word that is of the beginning', but he is not so in general, as is the case in the prologue of the Gospel of John: 'In the beginning was the word.' Or as we can read elsewhere in the Bible, where the name of God is mentioned in general in numerous places.

No, Pymander is the wisdom, the word, the God, who specifically addresses Hermes. When it

is stated in a number of places in the Bible that God speaks, that God addresses a hierophant or any other worker, in many cases this does not refer to the divine language in general, but it means that the Logos addresses the hermetic human being in a Pymandric way.

The omnipresent wisdom is a radiation, a vibration, a universal light power, a particular electromagnetic power. It is the highest radiation of the all-manifestation, the radiation of the spirit itself. When there is a person, whose hermetic consciousness is breaking through, the radiation of the spirit will immediately be recognised, experienced and sensed by this consciousness. Then a focal point, a fiercely, powerfully luminous point of contact emerges between this universal field of the spirit and the hermetic human being: the focal point, in which spirit and consciousness see each other face to face. The spirit of this focal point is Pymander; the consciousness is Hermes. The mentioned activities of this focal point generate the walking with God, the dialogue, the living communication between God and human being. Once you develop and experience anything of the new state of consciousness on the path, you simultaneously enter the personal contact with the Deity, and the daily walking with God develops.

We will understand that this has nothing to do with the spiritualistic practices of the disembodied entities of the reflection sphere, which try to imitate the contact between spirit and human being in a loathsome way. Understand clearly that everything that addresses the nature-born

Wholly enveloped by the deity, 'under the shadow of the wings of the divine', certainty, power and knowledge emanate from pharaoh, who is the earthly incarnation of Horus. Diorite sculpture of pharaoh Chephren, approx. 4,600 years ago

The Mercury consciousness, the threefold, new powers of thinking, willing and acting, can only be born from the renewed heart

consciousness, the I-consciousness, is without any exception delusion and deception. A luminous structure of force lines arises, when the hermetic consciousness directs itself toward the spirit, in this way igniting the fire of the spirit in the focal point of contact. The hermetic human being will encounter Pymander. A power, a vibration flows from this structure of force lines into the hermetic human being. This vibration has a sound, a colour, wholly corresponding to the motivation, on the basis of which the hermetic human being raises himself into the field of the spirit. In this way, this manifestation, this encounter, is of a very individual nature. Only in this way, does God 'speak' to the human being. It is finding and hearing the ineffable name. You may have read or heard of this. You will then have heard that, throughout the ages, countless people have been seeking this 'ineffable name'. The wisdom of all times correctly relates that finding and hearing the ineffable name is the summit of a gnostic-magical development. We have said that countless people have sought and are still seeking in a negative way for this Horeb, for this mountain of attainment, on the basis of their natural I-being. However, it is evident that these attempts are doomed to fail and will invariably remain so as long as the I is the basis of these efforts. Yet, the key to this magical summit dwells in the heart of every human being. When a person opens his heart to the Gnosis, he begins to walk the path that will lead to the encounter with God and which will lead

to the daily association with the Deity. How terribly poor, how absolutely ignorant appear the theologians who would like to understand the Divine word as a book, who diligently dig in the earth to find God's word and who think that they, when they start reading this book a chapter a day, and speaking of it, will hear God's voice.

WINGS OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS No priestly human being, no priestly expedient will enable you to walk with God. To celebrate the encounter with God, you have to walk the path to your Pymander yourself. Seen in this light, you will probably also realise the danger of wrong meditation. The hermetic human being can consciously raise himself into the field of the spirit. The hermetic human being, who has the new consciousness at his disposal, can raise himself on its wings into the field of the spirit and encounter the flame of the spirit. However, once the non-hermetic human being begins to seek God in a meditative way, for whatever reason and however well-intended in order to be united with him, negative effects and negative results will always arise, which largely cause ties with dialectical forces, with the reflection sphere. If you want to be safe, do not seek God through meditation, but rather by your mode of life. Do not engage in idle talk, but act through deeds. Allow your new mode of life to speak for you through action, by a demonstrable reality of life, and walk the path! When we gather in our temples, our invocations,



Basis of a pillar with the caduceus, Ephesus, Asia Minor

rituals and prayers are not a means of creating a mystical-meditative atmosphere, but are always an attempt to attune ourselves to the attainable and admissible vibration key of the Living Body of the Young Gnosis. By this, we mean that any invocation should always correspond to your state of being, to the quality of the person who is doing the invocation, to his currently experienced presence on the path. If you are, at this moment, unable to determine the quality of your current presence on the path, a safe basis can always be found in the Lord's Prayer. There we can read: 'Give us this day our daily bread.' At any time, every true seeker will be safe in it. He will certainly receive the daily spiritual bread, to

which he is entitled, if the prayer is spoken by a yearning soul. The personal encounter of the hermetic human being with the field of the spirit, also called 'hearing the voice, the soft voice', is frequently discussed in the Bible. It is said of Elijah, when he found himself before the cave of mount Horeb: 'See, the voice came to him.' And when Apollonius of Tyana wanted to hear the soft voice, he wrapped himself, like Elijah, 'in his mantle'. This refers to raising himself up to God, with the acquired values of the golden wedding garment.

PYMANDER AND HERMES The hermetic human being who, on the basis of his inner state and by a transfiguring change of life, possesses the possibility for it, forges a link with the universal spirit field. In the focus of such a link, a structure of force lines develops: Pymander manifests himself. Differentiated from the spirit, Pymander appears. However, Pymander is not a separate entity living in the spirit field, but an ignition of and in a living reality, which is wholly part of the spirit field. This igniting fire is the Pymander of Hermes. This manifestation is related to the state of being and the quality of Hermes' power. When Hermes reflected on the essential things and his spirit-soul elevated itself, Pymander appeared: he that is, yet also is not. When the hermetic human being for a while ceases to concentrate on the field of the spirit, the Pymandric figure disappears, and dissolves in the omnipresent light. The fire, the fiery flames



The alabaster Heb-Sed vase is 4,850 years old. The kneeling figure, with its hands stretched to heaven, symbol of eternity, links pharaoh with the eternal joys of the divine field of life

fade. Pyman-
der is present,
yet he is not,
because he is
wholly one
with the light.

From the
beginning of
the text, we
are struck by
the fact that
Hermes re-
flected on
the essential
things, and that
his spirit-soul
elevated itself. For
the hermetic human
being, this process is a
requirement. It demon-
strates the ideal, necessary
cooperation between head and
heart. By their cooperation, heart
and head determine life. You should remember
this as an axiom: 'They cannot be separated,' says
Pyman-
der.

This is why you should acquaint yourself with
the mystery of the heart. You know that man
has four vehicles: the physical body, its etheric
double, the desire body and the thinking fac-
ulty. The etheric body builds and maintains the
physical body, while the desire body determines
the inclinations, the type, the character, and the

disposition of
the human be-
ing, briefly, his
entire nature.
Focus, above
all, your at-
tention on the
desire body, or
sidereal figure,
as Paracelsus
called it. The
sidereal fig-
ure surrounds
and penetrates
you from every
angle, and the
sidereal fluids
enter our physi-
cal body through
the liver. There is a
continuous circulation
of these forces that enter
and leave the liver. The liver in
particular is the focus of the desire

body. The quality and the nature of the activity
of the head and those of the activity of the heart
sanctuary correspond to the state and the nature
of the desire body, which you received at birth,
and which has further developed since birth.
In the nature-born human being, the heart and
the head are the slaves of the desire nature. The
system of the functions of your heart and those
of your mentality, your thinking faculty, are con-
trolled by your desire nature, by your belly. Your

feeling, your heart, your thinking as people of
this nature are regulated and controlled by your
pelvic sanctuary.

Consequently, you live from and through the
pelvic sanctuary, in and through your spleen-
liver system. You are bound to matter as to your
natural being, focused on matter, longing for and
thinking of everything of ordinary nature. All
sidereal radiations enter the liver in accordance
with the activities of your desire nature.
When a human being, after endless wander-
ing on the dreary path of experience, becomes
boggled down in nature-bound life, it may hap-
pen that he begins to long for renewal, for a
liberating solution. Something of a longing for
salvation develops in this human being, an urge
to seize any salvation and to realise it within
himself, so that he may climb up from the pit of
mortification.

SEEKING THIS STATE OF RENEWAL, this increas-
ingly conscious yearning for salvation, is the
highest form of desiring of which a nature-born
human being is capable. What stirs and boils in
your heart as a nature being, is fully desiring. Its
qualitative summit is longing for salvation. This
is the highest state, the state of the border, of
dialectical, astral radiations. In this state of the
border, the Gnosis touches you, not in the liver,
but in your heart.

The first touch, the basic touch of the Gnosis,
always occurs via the heart sanctuary, though
only as a reaction to the longing for salvation

of the human being. If anyone would approach
the temples of a gnostic Spiritual School purely
experimentally or out of curiosity, this would
not benefit him in any way. It is only beneficial
for a human being to be in a gnostic focal point,
when his heart has opened somewhat to the
Gnosis as a result of this highest state of desir-
ing, of longing for salvation. The Gnosis calls
the heart 'the sanctuary of love', but due to all
kinds of karmic influences and influences of the
ancestors, which have been active in the human
being since birth and which inevitably deter-
mine our mode of life throughout the years, the
heart of nature-born man is no longer a sanctu-
ary of love. No trace of true love can be found
in his heart. The heart of the human being of
this world has degenerated into a murderer's
den.

When, in ancient times, the heart was called 'the
sanctuary of love', this referred to a heart that
was prepared for a life force, a possibility of life
that may rightly bear the name of 'love'. Every-
thing that is below this high standard of love is
a state of desire, of I-centrality. Even longing for
salvation is initially asking for the self. The I is in
a tight corner, and now 'I' am seeking a solution.
'I' seek 'my' salvation. Because the human being
in this state is a desperately poor wretch, the
Gnosis touches him with its imperishable love,
in an attempt to help him.

Everything that manifests itself below this high
standard of love is a state of desire. The love that
is meant here, the love that is worthy of this
name is not to be found in the essence of dialec-

The king, son of Horus, is 'knower of the original world'. The winnow and the sceptre are symbols of strength and power

tical nature. It is of a higher order; it belongs to true life, to the new life. It is spirit; it is God. This is why Pymander says in verse 17: 'The spirit-soul is God the Father.' And in verse 19: 'Direct your heart upon the light and know it.' 'With these words,' Hermes continues, 'he stared me full in the face for a while, so penetratingly that I shuddered at his stare.' This is the test: what will be present in your heart sanctuary in the future: desire or love? Direct your heart upon the light and know it. When the light makes its abode in the heart sanctuary, your desire nature must disappear. Then egocentricity, this drive of the I, must be wholly extinguished. The heart sanctuary is the great basis for and of the spirit. The spirit will have to live in the heart sanctuary, which will have to be wholly prepared as to all its aspects for this high state. 'Life is where the heart is,' says Pymander. When the heart has been prepared for its task, you will see in the spirit-soul, in the heart, the beautiful, original human figure, the primordial principle from before the beginning without end. The dialectical human being has turned his heart sanctuary into a den of desires. Within him roars the fire of the passion of the I, while the

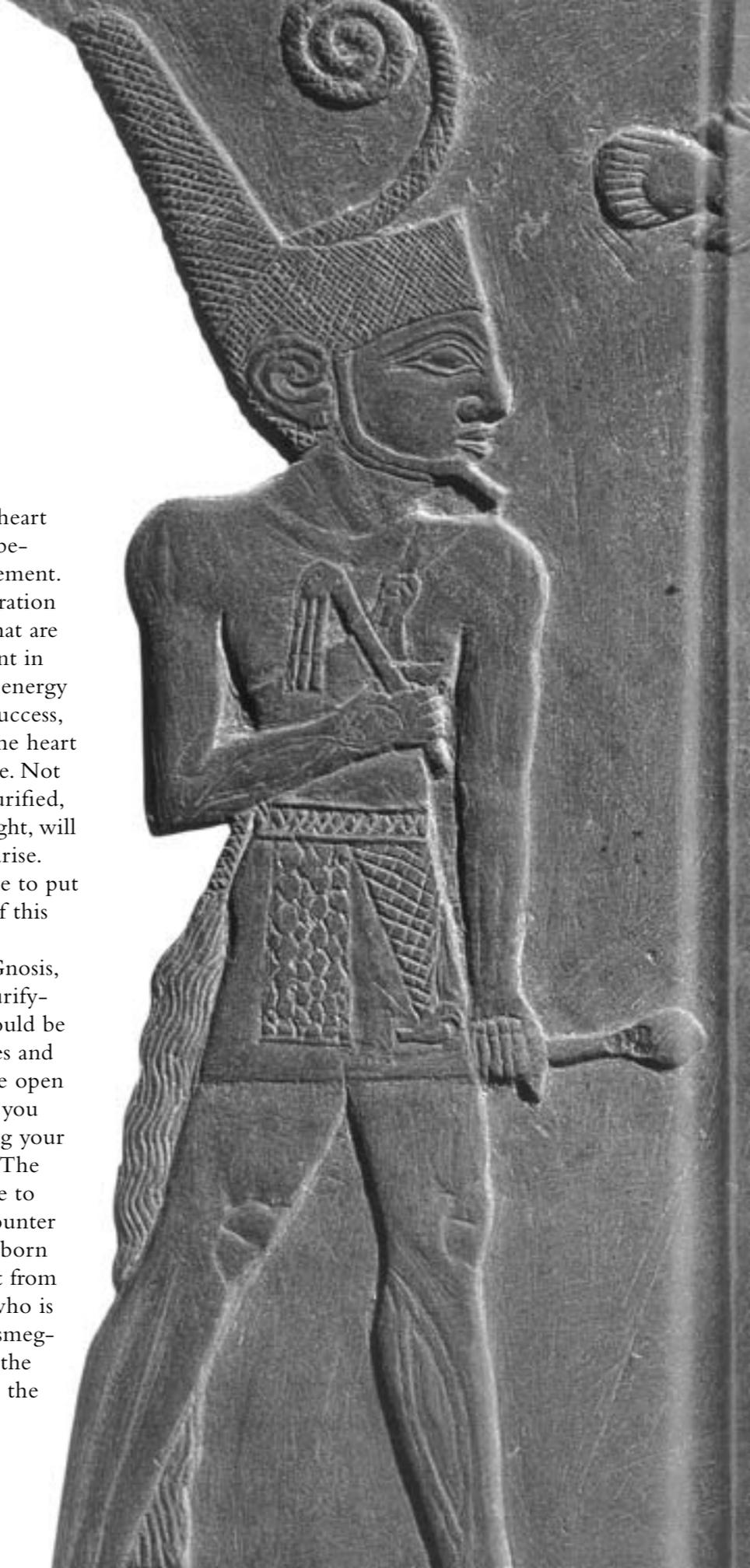
heart is called to offer a dwelling to the spirit, to the inner God, who is potentially present in the primordial atom. Do you understand how intensely ill the human being is? The heart sanctuary, the temple for the inner God, has become a murderer's den.

THE PURIFIED HEART He who has been enabled to call his heart to His service again, will also be able to open his head sanctuary to his priestly task in the service of humanity. Then you, too, will be able to reflect on the essential things, for the Mercury consciousness is born from the renewed heart. The Gnosis considers people to be ill, to be patients, because of the psychological state of their heart sanctuary. The Mercury consciousness, the threefold, new powers of thinking, willing and acting, can only be born from the renewed heart. When you reflect on these essential things, you will be able to raise yourself in and with the purified heart into the omnipresent field of the spirit. The hermetic development and the hermetic life are based on the absolute unification and cooperation of head and heart, not of the I and

the head, but of the purified heart and the head. The world has become stranded on this requirement. We see the chaos and degeneration around us, and the I asks: 'What are we coming to?' We experiment in many ways, using formidable energy and dynamism, but without success, because we forget to purify the heart and to devote it to His service. Not until the heart sanctuary is purified, devoted and opened to the light, will a wholly different mentality arise. Not until then will we be able to put the finger on the sore spots of this world, of this society.

When you are called to the Gnosis, know and fulfil the task of purifying your heart. Your heart should be emptied of the drive of desires and egocentricity, and it should be open to the great love. To this end, you will have to practise, preparing your heart and your state of mind. The head will follow, yes, will have to follow, for then you will encounter your Pymander. Pymander is born from the love of God and not from the driving will of a person who is in a tight corner. Hermes Trismegistus tells you that the key to the Gnosis, to the one true life, is the

Marble plate, around 3,150 BC





Palette, representing the divine power Hathor, which, 5,700 years ago, represented heaven. Between its horns, it usually carries Ra, the sun: divine consciousness. Hathor is an aspect of Isis in the figure of a cow, because from her, creation receives life; she brings fertility and food and protects the young child, and the soul

purification of the heart. When you walk this path and accomplish the work, the soft voice will also speak to you: 'What do you wish to hear and see and what do you long to learn and to know in your heart?' What else would you wish to learn and know than the essential things? And what would initially be the most essential thing that you absolutely have to know? Would it not be the truth concerning yourself? If you do not know yourself, how would you be able to fathom the Other One? The hermetic human being, during this first attempt to fathom these things, sees a mighty, serene and heart-warming light. In this light he sees, in a downward-spiralling movement, a pool of darkness, terror and misery, intensely pitiful, continuously in motion, in inexplicable confu-

sion. Dark red flames shoot outwards on all sides. Out of this pitch-black darkness, a voice resounds, a wordless call, corresponding to the light, spreading all around. From this light, a holy word is spoken. What is true and pure in this darkness raises itself from dark nature and begins to form an atmosphere. Thus the human being sees the light, which has risen above sunken nature, and next the atmosphere attuning itself to the original light. Below is the moist darkness of earth and water: the dialectical state of being of the candidate. However, it is a candidate who has purified his heart sanctuary. At the least, he is occupied with purifying his heart: the moist darkness of the earth and water, moved by the voice of the word that is from and of the Light, the word that is turned towards the Light. 'Did

you now understand this word?' the Pymander of the living body of the young Gnosis asks. And he himself answers: 'I am that light and it now abides in the heart of the true candidate.' It is God, manifested in the flesh, the returning Osiris, the returning Christ. The luminous field of the spirit is first and foremost Pymander, the structure of force lines of the all-manifestation. But, o glorious miracle, this light, this mighty light, this fire flame of God, chooses to abide in the heart. In this way, the Deity becomes a son, for what has slept in the heart for aeons, is awakened by it: the son of the deity is manifested within you. The son of the deity possesses a mighty power. Pymander calls it 'the word' or 'the voice'. When Pymander speaks in the candidate, he testifies in the heart, for the heart is the dwelling place of God in which, when the time has come, the son of the deity speaks. God and the son, the light field and the descended Light, can no longer be separated. From their union, life, the new life arises. Therefore, when you have been ennobled to it by the emptying of your I: 'Direct your heart to the light, and know it.' When you recognise it, you see the great and glorious powers of the living word within you. You see and experience in the heart a light of countless powers, a truly immeasurable world, the Golden Head. And you see how the roaring fire of the lower order is

enclosed and restrained with great power. It is in this way brought into balance under the direct guidance of the Light and because of the Light in the Word spoken to you. Thus you see and experience how lower nature is devoured by the luminous power of the Gnosis, which is born in you, by what we call transfiguration or rebirth. This now is the arch-Gnosis, the hermetic Gnosis, the truth which has been spoken to humanity since the very beginning. This is the word of Pymander. Now consider whether this word is in accordance with the word that the young Gnosis has been allowed to speak to you throughout the years, the testimony concerning the original human figure from before the beginning without end, the human figure that was and is until this hour ☸

From: *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis and its call in the eternal Now*, volume 1, chapters 3 and 5

stardust

We have become externalised people; we do not have to fool each other about it. Our Western civilisation, if we may still call it such, is one of flat lines. Socially speaking, there are neither tremendous peaks of radiant reality nor depths of inner life.

Our life is one long service of fulfilling an inexhaustible stream of necessities and desires. Society leaves little room for deepening, for those seeking with all their heart, for people who would give anything for a sparkle of true life, for a spark of ensoulment, for a spark of what is divine. Even spiritual seeking may be a tributary off this stream of desires, which determines our life for a short while. In this context, what do the great stellar periods mean, which are discussed in another article of this issue of the Pentagram? The human being has been told: 'You are of God's generation.' It is an adage that the Rosicrucians also wholeheartedly profess, though they did not invent it, and ancient manuscripts of humanity already testified: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'

Why do we not seize what is divine? Does something prevent us? Do we perhaps lack the courage to give up the pleasant certainty of reason which tells us that 'you are dust and to dust you shall return'? A French philosopher once said that he could not accept this statement from Genesis 3:19 until, one day, he understood it in such a way that he could wholly embrace it. 'Because,' he said, 'I wasn't told that we are stardust, created from the spiritual root substance of the cosmos, and that we are also meant to return to that stardust!'

We have, if we may say so, been created from the DNA of the primordial matter of the universe. Do we not all carry the properties of our ancestors with us? Certainly we are determined and we act as we do, by the earth, by our ancestors, by our disposition, by the properties acquired in

the past. And we pass them on to ourselves from one day to the next, and to our children from one generation to the next. Their bodies read the DNA and they process it in their way, as long as the earth and humanity exist. And what is earthly will return to what is earthly. However, before this period, there is still another matrix.

In the deepest layer of our being, 'the ineffable one' has laid down his own code. It is a universal code, consisting of the four magical characters of the ineffable name, with which the sages have always been familiar, the 'tetragrammaton'. And regardless of how long the earth and humanity will continue to exist, one day every human being will read this code, and manifest the four holy characters of what is divine as his birthright. This is why the concept of 'stardust', primordial matter, is appealing to a true seeker and the concept of 'earthly' matter is not. Thus, spirit, consciousness appeal to him, whereas matter, heaviness and limitation do not. 'We are of God's generation.' The Rosicrucian holds on to this truth and pulls himself up by it; with it, he finds the way out of the swamp of inertia of this world, and forces himself to investigate, to understand, as elaborated in J van Rijckenborgh's explanations in the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, *The Confession of the Brotherhood of the Rosycross*:

'We, seekers of the hidden secret, know that system and order govern throughout the universe, which unfolds from eternity to eternity, with the aid of imperishable laws.

We who, step by step, push aside the veils that





One day, the human being will propel both codes to a glorious synthesis, and inwardly find the man of the Light again

separate us from the ineffable, discover the plan behind all realisation.

We, who investigate the relationships between the macrocosm and the microcosm, see the grandiose equilibrium between all things.

We, who grasp the narrow rungs of the Mercury ladder in order to raise our conscious being into the realms of the unseen, see the life streams of the realms of nature flow through the ether.

We, who approach the great silence, hear the voice of silence.

We, pupils of the great training school of eternity, who are entering the temple of the spirit, embrace the glory of abstract thought.

We, servants of the spiritual fire, see deep into the wellsprings of human ability. We know to what man has been called from the beginning.

We, who gather roses in the garden of Fohat see, in our moments of vision, the path of development streaking from horizon to horizon like a flash of lightning.

And we, who thus increase our knowledge, widen our horizons, filling our faculties with dynamic energy, proceed from astonishment to admiration, from deep wonder to stammering adoration, to humility.'

The period that is now dawning may signify a big step forward for humanity, at least if it is willing to understand the last task of the preceding Age of Pisces properly. This is, ultimately: being

Stele with 'the codes' or laws of Hammurabi, Babylon, around 1,800 BC. His name means 'fatherly healer'

capable of a sacrifice. This sacrifice is not a very difficult task, because it amounts to one thing only: 'Helping the human being in his distress and questions of life.' We 'sacrifice' what is heavy in us, what is limited and merely of matter, all those small egos. In this way, we open a window to this deepest layer in our consciousness, the organ with which we are able to find the true *raison d'être* of creation.

It is a task that will continue to preoccupy a human being; it is a call to investigate the substance from which he has been created. 'We are of God's generation.' This is at the least a mystery, but it is not a mystery that will be cleared up in the future, when the Age of Aquarius is fully blossoming. It is a mystery that can only be approached in the here and now. He who accomplishes this task, or even if he only begins it, will experience that other, new properties will be at his disposal. These properties are nothing else than Light, and are incredibly wide and open the original life to him. These properties bless the sensitive heart, remove the coldness from reason, and ensure that the human being does not damage or destroy everything around him like stepping on an unexploded shell. The Rosicrucians have a wholly different idea of the earth than the usual one. This idea is not simply one of heaviness and limitation, but rather one of tremendous possibility: able to shape the womb of universal man, where the stars, the luminous universe in which the earth occupies its place, are the foster mothers of the great human being of the Light. Remember that distance, space, and therefore the opposites, are the

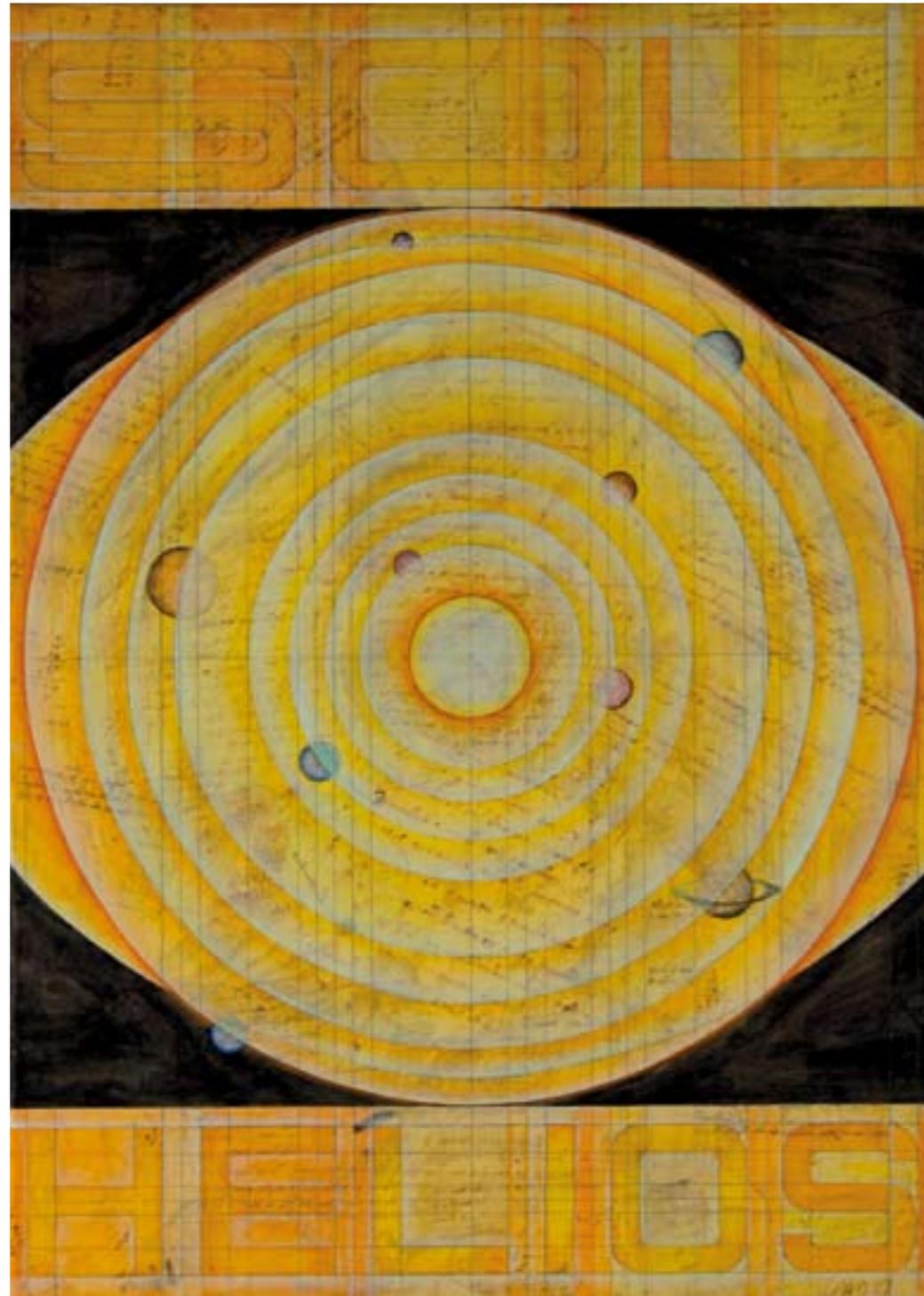
grindstones, leading us to insight, understanding, knowledge, consciousness of and in the coherence of things. However, they are like eggshells that have to be broken at the appointed time. The small human being should prepare a path for the great human being who is no longer imprisoned in the narrowness of separation.

Aquarius, the waterbearer who pours out his living water into our system of life, is the electrical energy that breaks the shell, which links humanity with another, absolutely new plan of life, namely the birth and genesis of the Aquarian human being.

J van Rijckenborgh expresses it as follows: 'We proceed from astonishment to admiration, from deep wonder to stammering adoration, to humility, to service of God. We bow before God's majesty, because deep examination always reveals God's intervention in all realms; because we experience the power that moves all things, the sublime force that propels our planet through space, the Light of the World, the Christ.'

This is the religion of which the Rosicrucians speak. It is a possibility for people inherent in an absolutely new time. It is the religion of thinking, inspired by the 'manas', with which the first 'code' can be read again. The human being will shake the dust of the earth from his feet. He will propel both codes to a glorious synthesis and, wrapped in a radiant mantle of violet-golden stardust, he will inwardly find the man of the Light again ✨

aquarius, the better ego and the mystery planets



November 2008 was the month of spirituality. In The Netherlands, the theme was: Is there a better ego? It is a fascinating question, which people generally hoped would be answered in the affirmative.

However, in thinking more deeply about it, trying to fathom it more deeply, and trying to live more according to it, we soon discover that it is a multifaceted question, involving many aspects: social, personal, biological and religious. There is a rather large risk of not reaching a satisfactory answer in one human lifetime. At a certain moment, the question crops up: 'A better ego? What do you mean by better? Is my current ego not good enough?'

Let us go a bit more deeply into this question that is so closely related to the theme of this month of spirituality: 'I am trying to live a decent life.' Laudable, you might say, even useful and socially desirable.

The Dutch national celebrity, Annie M G Schmidt, once answered the question, whether she was afraid of dying: 'Afraid of dying? Not at all. Then I will finally be rid of all this jealousy, this sentimental, envious and petty ego that has always bothered me.' A good observation, because this big personality that we are in our auric system, has been formed by quite a few small egos.

There is a humanistic ego, a social ego, a violent ego, an angry ego, an affable ego, a self-overestimating ego, a sexual or a hungry ego, a good ego and a bad ego. All of them need attention; all of them cry for preference, and when they have had their nourishment (attention is nourishment), they leave us alone for a while. This circle with all these egos constitutes the human personality. There is not one ego; that is an invention of our philosophers.

In the past, the human being did not have an ego, at least according to the philosophers. In the past, he was linked, riveted, we might say, to the social context, in which he was born, just as he was (and still is) also linked with his changing pattern of needs. However, at a certain moment, during approximately the beginning of the nineteenth century, we suddenly had an ego. We received it from Arthur Schopenhauer, the philosopher whose mother lived under the same roof as Goethe. He gave us this ego in order for us to lose it again in the great ocean of infinite life, into which it might be absorbed.

With all of his philosophical passion, he investigated why and to what extent the human being is inwardly torn apart between two worlds, for this is what it comes down to, or does it: 'Two souls are living in our breast,' etc. There is on the one hand, the empirical consciousness, the experiential consciousness, based on sensory perception, and on the other hand, an as yet vague, but assumed superior consciousness, for which Schopenhauer initially did not have a name and which he ultimately called 'the better consciousness'.

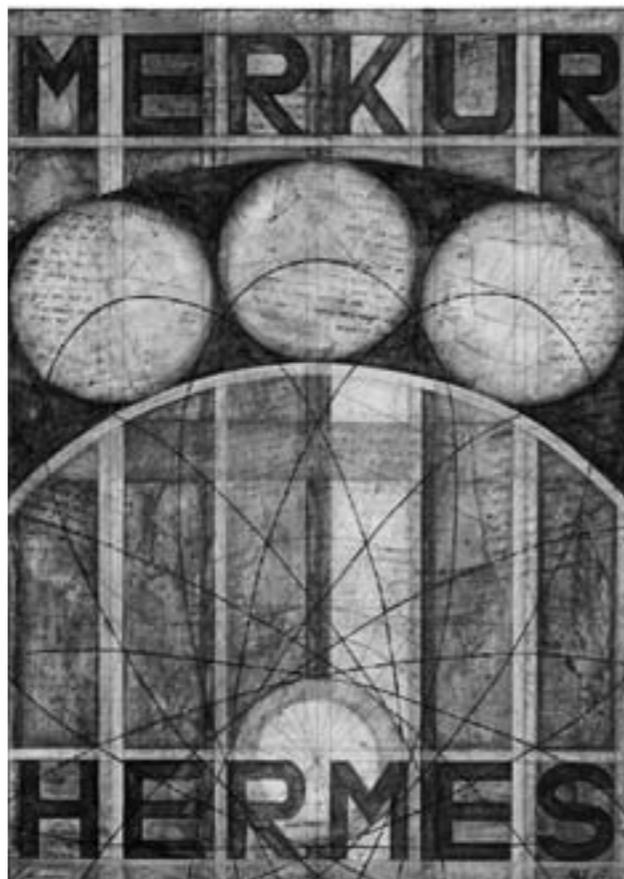
In 1813, he wrote in his philosophical diary: 'I assert that personality and causality exist in this temporary, sensory, mental world, indeed that they are necessary. However, the better consciousness within me leads me to a world, in which neither personality nor causality, subject nor object exist.' This is a world that may be considered a higher dimension, a greater reality, similar to what resounds in the writings of

Hermes Trismegistus.

Personality and causality are concepts that resemble the insights of the Stoa, the philosophy from the third century BC, the time of the Greek philosopher Zeno of Citium. He, too, wondered: Is there a good personality? And what is good? Is there something worth living for? In a practical sense, this is an easy question. You may be a good shoemaker, or a good real estate developer, a good father, or to make it a bit more provocative, a good arms manufacturer. How good are you then? Being good is then: properly fulfilling your function. The Greeks spoke of 'physis', meaning 'process of growth'. Nowadays, we often interpret it as nature, or also as physique, but its true meaning is: fulfilling your function. Fulfilling your own function is what is good. It is living or acting according to the physis, cooperating with 'what is necessary', nature in its eternal striving for perfection, and gradually passing on to our most perfect form.

How do we have to live? The Stoa has a vision on this, too. 'It is helping the human being in his distress and his essential questions,' they said. This is not something a human being can accomplish himself, while at the same time, it is the way to stimulate the growth of our soul. This is a typical insight, stemming from the Stoa (around 300 BC). 'God is where people help people, and this is the path to eternal salvation.'

Thanks to Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD), this quote from the Greek philosopher Zeno of Citium (333-262 BC) has been preserved. In the School of the modern Rosycross, it is sometimes stated:



Mercury represents the human spirit; the renewed Mercury brings firsthand insight into universal knowledge. The whole Divine wisdom works directly and unceasingly in the human being, who liberates himself from bipolar thinking. Through the Mercury initiation, the human being becomes a conscious participant and worker in the Divine plan

'Self-forgetting service to others is the shortest, safest and most joyful path to God.' However, ultimately decline will occur; we become older, we die. Is this in accordance with what is good, too? We do not know, but it is inevitable, which is why a stoic, and for that matter a Rosicrucian, surrenders to it without worrying about it, because he does not seek nature, but rather its active power. This once placed him on the path of life, and will also take him off it. Being in that power is being safe. This power is spirit, which is pure, serene, and manifests itself in him as soul, as spirit-soul...

TRANSFIGURATION: ON THE WAY TO A LIFE OF PURITY AND FREEDOM Nowadays, people are seeking purity in another way, in many ways, we might say. What should we think of the Genesis Timeline Project? This is a project to collect particles of virgin matter, originating from solar winds, with the help of advanced instruments. Exactly at the limits of the geomagnetic field, as close to the sun as possible, a Gemini capsule orbited to catch those particles on its five, highly sensitive plates. The Genesis orbited around the sun for three years, and roughly landed somewhere in the Utah desert sometime ago. This close to the sun, where earthly vibrations can no longer penetrate, an absolutely serene field exists. NASA scientists, all of them associated with the California Institute of Technology, hoped to collect solar matter at the border between both fields in order to get a better understanding of the origin and the evolution of

our solar system. Despite the crash of the capsule upon its return to earth, the astronomers still hoped to be able to salvage the five broken plates or disks of gold, sapphire, diamond and silicone to study those millions of charged particles of the solar wind. 'For years, we have wanted to know the composition of the sun,' says Burnett, 'and we want to analyse every saved atom one by one.' The programme will continue for another five years. This fascination for the solar system is remarkable. What does man have to seek in space? Why should he have to know the composition of the sun, as Burnett expresses it? We understand the scientific reasons, but is there also a psychological reason behind it? Opponents of space programmes always argue that man has his hands full on earth: first solve the problems there. Did you ever have contact with a 'serene field'? Did you ever experience its beneficial effect? Do you know the awe that fills our whole being, when we come into contact with such a field? It is the awe that seizes a small child, when it enters an overwhelmingly large, high and silent space for the first time. Imagine the purifying effect it emanates, and how immense its healing power is, if only because everything petty is erased from our being for a moment by such an impression! Man does not have to go into space to stand in this solar wind. The earth is surrounded by these streams of cosmic energy, without which any life on this planet would cease within seconds. Four hundred years ago, a number of men and women had a similar experience. They experienced a

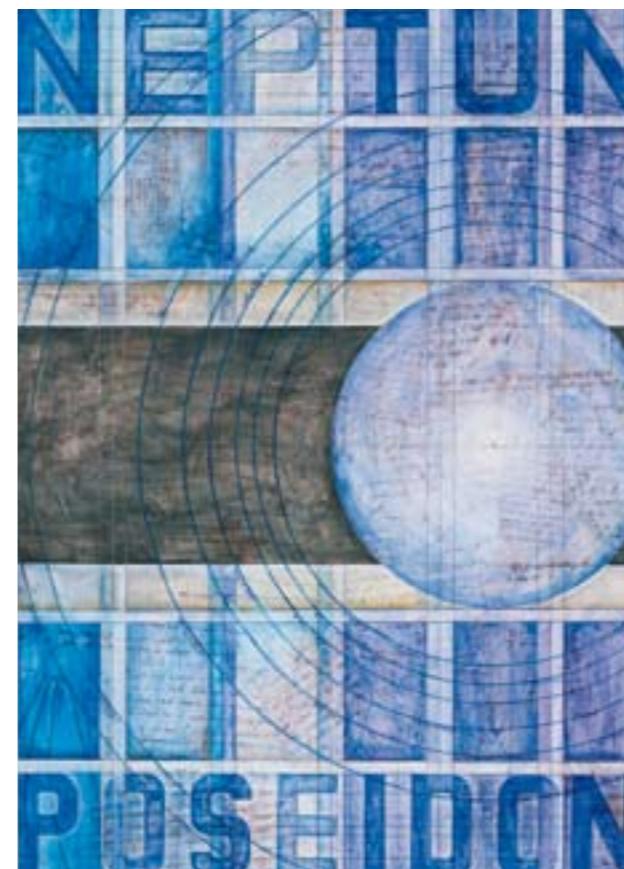
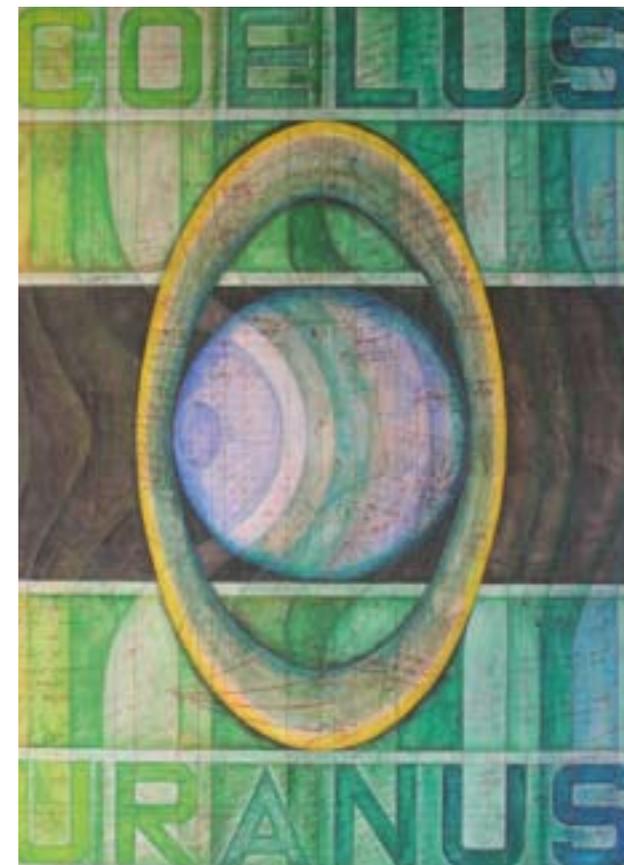
touch from the solar macrocosm, and felt the same shiver of happiness and awe. In the year 1604, seven planets were known to revolve in our solar system: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the Sun and the Moon. These seven planets brought the seven cosmic forces of the universe to the earth. This earth may perhaps have been considered the centre of the universe, though it was rather considered a drain, a nadir. It was considered the sad nadir in the universe that, just like us, strayed far from our heavenly centre, in which it initially existed, and that, just like us, strayed far from the heavenly glory, in which it initially lived. The notion that the sun was the actual centre of the universe won a great deal of weight in those days.

SUPER DISCOVERIES On 10 October 1604, a supernova was observed in the constellation of Serpentarius, the Serpent Wagon, similar to the one that appeared shortly before in the Swan. A new star! This caused tremendous excitement. In what times, it was wondered, were they living? Something like this hadn't happened since the Star accompanying the birth of the Messiah. It was indeed as if people felt the solar wind on earth, and were linked with the life of the solar sphere again. This event marks the birth of the classical Brotherhood of the Rosycross of the seventeenth century, with which we, modern Rosicrucians of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, feel much affinity. The seventeenth-century students of heaven were not so individualised and detached from the celestial world as we are. They did not launch

The three influences, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, prepare the human being for the new consciousness. They do not build, because nothing is left to build on the human being: they influence the human being. They push him into the great conflict of life, into a greater conflict of life than ever before has been the case. They lead him on an ever-narrower path, and ultimately induce him to realise the self

advanced materials into space to learn about the origin, because they felt linked with this origin. They knew the origin within themselves. The human being, said the Rosicrucians and many with them, is, after all, a small world, and all the seven planets are represented in it. Is the heart not the sun? Is the head not the earth? In this context, J van Rijckenborgh says: 'The Rosicrucians investigate the relationships between the macrocosm and the microcosm, the grandiose equilibrium between all things.' To them, everything consists of correspondences, everything is related, and they did not need the golden plates, which we sent into space to catch solar matter. They were wholly standing in the solar wind, which traversed the universe at that moment, and in a quite different way, they received the suggestions about the origin of the universe. When we extrapolate these ideas, a tremendous perspective opens, for since then, more distant planets were discovered: first Uranus, then

Neptune, and in 1930, Pluto, while in 2002 and 2003, two other planets were discovered outside the sphere of Pluto: Quaoar and Sedna. The exact nature of those planets is still being investigated. For the first time, also new planets are observed in other solar systems. 'Until now,' says Dr Bruce Macintosh of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, 'we were only able to deduct the existence of other planets of



The Rosicrucians investigate the relationships between the macrocosm and the microcosm, the grandiose equilibrium between all things

other stars by, for instance, the irregular graphs of certain stars, but now we have suddenly seen three of them around a star (Formalaut b) in the constellation of the Fishes (Pisces Australis).’ One scientist expressed his joy about the discovery as follows: ‘It is a deep and overwhelming experience to come face to face with a planet that has never been observed before.’

In our own solar system, Neptune is actually the first new planet discovered after antiquity. In 1613, in the time of which we spoke before, Galileo observed Neptune with his first telescopes, when this planet was close to Jupiter. However, he thought that it was just a star. During two successive nights, he noticed the shift of the orbit of this ‘star’ relative to that of another, neighbouring star. If he had been able to follow the orbit during the nights before and after, he would certainly have determined its orbit, and have drawn the conclusion that he was following a planet, but clouds made further observations impossible at that moment.

This is why Uranus, the first one of the new planets, was discovered in 1781. This planet revolves around the sun in 84 years. Neptune was officially discovered in 1846, on the basis of calculations, remarkably by two astronomers simultaneously, one in England and one in France. With a revolution of 165 years since the moment of its discovery, it will have completed its first revolution around the sun in 2011.

MYSTERY PLANETS Pluto, with a revolution of not less than 248 years, was for the first time

spotted in 1930, and not until 2178, will this planet have revolved one time around the sun since its discovery. These three planets are called mystery planets, because their influence extends to not yet developed possibilities in the human being, which, for the time being, are unknown to the majority of current humanity.

In the vision of the Rosicrucians, the solar system is not an empty space, in which a few spheres revolve. They consider the solar macrocosm to be a living whole, one great body that is continuously developing. Times are also changing in the great clock of the cosmos, and we, insignificant people on modest planet earth, are changing with them. From the heart of the system, in the space between the planets, the solar wind supplies ‘prana’, life potential, food and energy for this development in an unceasing and infinite variety.

In this vision, even the human being is not an individual, isolated cell, but part of a living whole, of humanity, which as a whole, as one mighty organ, might be able to receive solar power inwardly, emanating it unto the salvation of the entire planet. Seen by the masses and in view of the situation on this planet, we may still have to wait for quite some time, but Aquarius in particular, the zodiacal sign that the sun is now entering, shakes up earthly conditions. Yet, there are groups that are already spreading this energy. We are standing on the threshold of an era in which individual inner development, in the past called initiation, and group unity on a higher spiral are quite well possible and are even strong-

ly stimulated. This is one of the effects of the Aquarian vibrations, energy with a high vibration frequency.

Many effects and radiations emanate from the sun, which are necessary for the variegated life on the different planets. These radiations may be harmful for existing life and are, therefore, filtered and stopped by a complex radiation belt around the different planetary bodies. We know, for example, that the Van Allen belt is a complicated web around the earth, sifting, filtering or letting through all radiations coming from outside the earth.

In this vision, this signifies the end of the human being as we have known him until now, and as seventeenth-century people knew him. His development is no longer controlled by seven cosmic powers, which approach him via the seven familiar planets. The universal teachings have always pointed out that the human being is twelvefold, and that the solar system accordingly also knows twelve planets or power centres. Each of them mobilises a certain activity, which works in the human being, depending on his own development.

J van Rijckenborgh explains in a unique description the celestial movements and their influence on and consequences for human beings. In this context, he explains: ‘Uranus directly influences the heart and the emotional life, and stimulates both. This is why Uranus is sometimes related to neighbourly love, but this property is only born in a human being in and through practising.’

Do not use words like universal, altruistic love,

he seems to say. People float; people dream; for being well-disposed, solidarity and altruism must be developed consciously. The beginning is a flame, a spark of the cosmic fire, of God, glowing in the human heart, and growing when the human being understands: God is where people help people...

THE NEW INFLUENCES Uranus affects the heart and at the same time the pituitary gland, the ensouling and controlling centre in the human being. Indeed, Uranus affects this centre very strongly. If this influence is understood, a positive reaction is possible. Then a complete change of consciousness, of which so much has been spoken since the second half of the last century, is guaranteed. It becomes clear to many people that the modern intellectual culture leads to a society in which violence, fear, insolence and threats, superficiality and isolation are increasing. The intellectual culture, the cultivated intellectuality has, as a fulfilment of life, reached a limit. Further development of the intellect offers no real perspective of life.

In particular, to the extent human beings consciously want to allow this, Uranus will lay a positive foundation. Uranus offers this possibility because it influences both the heart, as the most important organ, as well as the head to remove the limitations of the analysing and calculating mind, and in this way, to bring cooperation between heart and head nearer. Uranus affects the emotional being and makes it not only infinitely more sensitive to the needs of others but also to

POLARISATION OF THE METALS

When we consider the earth to be a magnetic system, an effect emanates from this system, and what does not correspond to the organism of the earth and the different earth strata more or less bounces off. This is why often a magnetic storm rages in the upper layers of our atmosphere, a turbulence that prevents undesirable radiations from penetrating it. Conversely, it happens that life, including human life, develops by using the available radiations penetrating this life. In addition to the radiations of the earth itself, there are many radiations coming from outside the earth. These radiations are useful and necessary for life on earth as well as for humanity and its development.

How do radiations become relevant

on earth for certain developments concerning the human being? In the upper strata of the earth, there is a great diversity of substances, elements, metals, known and unknown. In earthly matter, we find a reflection of all stardust, of which the universe is composed. The earth layers are in continuous, although in our view slow, motion. At certain moments, specific substances are polarised and activated by radiations that penetrate through the Van Allen belt, significantly helped by the holes in the ozone layer; which time and again develop at different places and which we partly cause ourselves. The person, who is not susceptible to certain radiations, is nevertheless affected by them,

for example via his food and water; the composition of the air, and in many other ways. In this way, many kinds of minerals and metals are active in our system, through our food or via the air we inhale. New cosmic radiations, which become active, cause new developments. Thus Uranus becomes active in the element uranium, which is converted into radium and subsequently into other radioactive substances. The food, the atmosphere, and therefore the human being become gradually, though increasingly, radioactive. This cannot be stopped by even the purest organic or biodynamic agriculture. It is one of the processes that leads to radical changes in human life.

the inner Other One. The fundamental egocentricity, the nature of the current human being, will have to be neutralised, because otherwise it is obvious that Uranus will have a negative effect. Then we will see the other side of the coin: the impulse to freedom will then lead to licentiousness, amorality, and an absolute negation of the conditions and laws controlling life. The brotherly disposition, to which Uranus drives us, then turns into collective stupidity and equality: the superficiality of all expressions of life and a soulless equalisation of the human being. A conscious and positive reaction opens the human being. His attention and longing then spontaneously go out to the things, about which we are speaking, because a longing to be of help and understanding, make him susceptible to the Light that encompasses the whole universe. The mystery planet, Neptune, ties in absolutely logically with the human development that begins with Uranus. The human being will surpass what is personal, when he also possesses wis-

dom in addition to neighbourly love. When this wisdom is demonstrated in a human being and is able to manifest itself combined with neighbourly love, many impediments for the developing soul human being will disappear. Uranus smoothes the way, so that this wondrous principle is able to manifest itself as a newborn, ensouling consciousness principle. Neptune breaks the rigid structures of our thinking and pulls the striving human being up into an absolutely pure, undefiled world. Neptune links us with the transparent ethers of a new state of life, and makes us enter the serene field of the solar sphere, provided we realise its conditions in our own life. Neptune has a point of contact in the head in particular, and affects the epiphysis or the glandula pinealis. The Rosicrucians also say that the nervous system is highly susceptible to the influence of this planet. These influences make this subtle substance suitable for the assimilation of the high energies that are comparable to

electricity. He who is able to assimilate the pure inspiration of Neptune, causes wisdom to enter the earthly field, wisdom that is urgently needed. Needless to say, such a person has liberated himself from earthly impediments, and preserves his astral body in great purity.

TRANSFIGURATION During its development, humanity passed through many moments where it had to learn to react to impulses of renewal. This is a never-ending process. In our time, new influences invite the human being to react in a positive way and to turn possibility into reality. Wisdom is always needed to take the correct steps, unselfishly, for the benefit of all. The influence of the third mystery planet, Pluto, mainly concerns concretisation and realisation. Pluto is therefore seen as the planet that perseveres, accomplishes and realises. Pluto's entrance into our sphere of experience is only possible if the human being embraces and understands the idea of transfiguration. Pluto realises the fundamental restructuring. He who consciously experiences the power of this third mystery planet, experiences it in the new structure and has, in principle, realised the liberated spirit-soul human being. His love, his wisdom and his behaviour are free.

As Neptune points out the direction of our spiritual life, and supplies the spiritual inspiration for it, Pluto will manifest it. Pluto rules, where we as personalities can no longer go. It is not without reason that he is the God of the unseen! He offers humanity an opportunity to realise the

unimaginable: to arise from the limitations and captivity of matter, to break through to resurrection, and to become an inhabitant of the solar system.

The seven older planets have made human life on earth possible, and continue to do so. The gate, the border, is formed by the last of those seven planets: Saturn, the guardian on the threshold, which is crossed, can be crossed, through new, inner quality. A renewed heart filled with soul life, a consciousness longingly looking forward to the link with the spirit, and a mode of life that clearly demonstrates this, constitute the passport.

In the cosmic order, this border has been crossed. With regard to the earth as a planetary being, we may say that three new planets are fully active, and we see their breaking and changing influence demonstrated around us. In this context, great possibilities are released. Every human being is free to investigate these possibilities, and to undertake them to the extent they appeal to him, in order to steer his own fate in a new direction. This is the benevolent, though urgent, invitation emanated to us by the three mystery planets ☉

The illustrations of the planets have been made available by Madeleine Deckert from Switzerland, www.madartdesign.com

becoming conscious or: what is doing what is good?

In the train, I met Daan Visser. He was still a student at the university, and we became engaged in a conversation about the use of drugs by young people, triggered by an article in one of those free newspapers.

Daan used to be very involved with this: at one time, he had smoked dope himself to experience how that was, and also to be sure that he could stop! And he had succeeded! Afterwards, he periodically wrote articles about this topic in university newspapers and on his own website. The topic strongly occupied him, because he had seen several of his friends fall victim to drugs. This was his way of trying to do something about it. He was quite laconic about the impact of the help he offered in this way. This didn't alter the fact that he absolutely wanted to continue writing about this topic.

I met Remco while we were having a cup of coffee. This young man had travelled a lot in his life, had worked at all kinds of jobs, and was now finally graduating. He burned with a fierce indignation about use and abuse of animals, as a vulnerable and voiceless group of living creatures on this terrestrial globe.

It was hard to determine where to turn with this indignation. Once in awhile in his life, he encountered a situation in which he was really able to do something for an animal in distress (saving a bird from the snares of a fishing net, for example), but generally speaking, he felt very powerless with regard to all this grief. This did not diminish his burning desire to help. Like these two, there are many people, young and old, who would like to help, even if they have realised that such attempts to do good have a flip side that is disappointing.

What is doing what is good? Obviously, it is good to help an animal in distress, or a friend who threatens to collapse. However, things are not always that clear. What is good for one, is bad or less clearly good for someone else. After all, don't we all look at 'good' and 'evil' from our own personal background? Perhaps not everyone is aware that this is literally the case.

Any image begins as a 'mental image', in other words, as an idea, a mental conception. On the basis of this idea, of this mental image, the longing arises to express it in a form. Next, the power of the will is needed to realise it, until finally the idea takes shape, if it reaches this point at all. When we have ideas about, for instance, good and evil, this process develops as we just described.

THE VEHICLES OF THE HUMAN BEING According to the universal teachings, a human being has not only a physical body. The physical body is surrounded and irradiated by an ether or vital body, and around it, the astral or desire body extends. Mainly around the head, the beginning of a mental body is to be found. These bodies or vehicles, all of them belonging to the personality, are unaware of the microcosm in which they exist. Only because the spirit-spark is set in motion, can any notion of it penetrate to the human being. In principle, the field in which the personality is active in the microcosm, is a rather separate field, called the respiration field.



It is not such a difficult task, this self-sacrifice, because it boils down to actually one thing only: 'Helping human beings in their distress and vital questions'

When we think something with our mental powers, cloudlike streams of thoughts are generated in this respiration field. If we only pay attention to an idea for a short while, this small cloud will soon evaporate, but if we are occupied with something for a long time, look at an idea from all sides, and sometimes continue to cherish certain ideas for years, a self-maintaining projection of this idea is formed in our respiration field. This projection demands our continuous attention, and demands to be enabled to continue its existence, for the image, this formed idea, demands its nourishment from us as its creator.

Anyway, these projections always drain away energy from their creator, and manipulate the personality in accordance with their nature. On the basis of all these images and ideas, populating our respiration field, and this occurs in every human being, we determine our image of 'good' and 'evil' from our own perspective. All our observations are, therefore, personally coloured. No one is able to observe really objectively. This is one of the reasons why doing what is good in this world is always only partial.

Also the earth has its respiration field: a sphere, in which all ideas, all mental creations of the whole of humanity during unspeakably long periods, have been formed. In this way, it is clear that this sphere is the sphere of the past. This field was, and therefore still is, a reflection of everything that humanity has thought, done, felt and wanted.

One of the particular aspects of the coming time is that radiations will reach humanity which more than ever before, will be able to thwart the compelling influence of the past. These are new impulses, stemming from an original life that has not been defiled by the past. These impulses will set the spirit-spark into motion enabling new, pure ideas to penetrate the human being, the personality, aiming at making him suitable to enter the new life consciously.

To this end, someone will have to understand that he or she has such projections, lives and acts from them, and therefore looks at the world on the basis of the past! How can we lose this compelling influence of these images? Partly this is possible through the magical words of this time: 'letting go', such that some images, to which the consciousness holds on, diminish or disappear. Solving everything personally is impossible for a human being. There is still too much of the past in our respiration field, matters of which we are not or cannot be aware. It would require many lives to discover this, lives in which new images and bonds might be created again.

THE FIRST STEP In the School of the Golden Rosycross, the aim is becoming conscious of the other, of what emanates from the spirit-spark within us, present as a remnant of what is divine in every human being. This is the first step on the path to total susceptibility of our respiration field to this impulse. Once the spiritual aspect in our heart awakens from its dormant state and is

set in motion, the energy emanating from it will also affect the head sanctuary via the blood. This power is of a wholly different, much higher vibration than the one we usually experience. This high vibration causes agitation: the human being progresses from confusion to self-knowledge, and ultimately begins to think more clearly.

Because of this clarity of thinking, the human being will receive insight into his links, the personal 'creations' to which he is bound, and into the extent to which he is determined by the past. Facing this, and then making it subservient to this new light of the consciousness within him, will cause all these personal images and forms gradually to fade away. In the light and the radiation of the newly opened inner sun, these compelling influences diminish, while the self-generated creations in the respiration field gradually cease. What remains is the gained experience, stored as a nucleus in the microcosm.

The respiration field becomes calm, like a still lake, in which the radiation of the divine sun can penetrate to the bottom. This personal purification directly affects the whole field of this world, like a falling star forms a spot of light in the dark night. By combining his striving with that of all who are seeking the Light of the other life, a person in whom the spiritual spark of what is divine has been set in motion again, is also engaged in the purification of the earthly sphere of life. Wherever possible, he neutralises the agitation he encounters in his environment.

This is the best and most effective help we are able to render, because whenever there is some rest, every human being receives room to choose in which direction he or she would like to go. There is room to choose freely.

'He who overcomes himself, is stronger than he who conquers a city.' In other words, he who purifies his own respiration field in the Light of the other, contributes to the restoration of the world field.

This is a great task, requiring courage and honesty, but every human being inwardly possesses the possibility to do so. And what good can a human being then do in a social context? This is actually quite simple: Do what your hand finds to do. Do not pay extra attention to it, that is, help and act, but without the idea: now I am going to put this right, like Daan, like Remco, like many people do. Do it in a natural way, and do not judge. Then you do not lean heavily on one end of the scales, the good, so that the other end, evil, does not automatically rise. The balance remains in equilibrium, neutral, while nothing is in the way of the other to develop freely 🌟

Plato – the story of er – about the afterlife

The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross contains a number of elements that are universal. In this context, we might think of the (light) cord in the pit, the choice of the path of life, the draft of oblivion, and the power to act correctly under any circumstances. These concern comparisons and metaphors that want to make it clear to us what our relationship is to the true world and which are as old as humanity. A number of these elements can also be found in the following story that was told thousands of years ago, and which Plato wrote down in the last chapter of his *Politeia* around 400 BC.

Socrates speaks, Glaucon listens and reacts. 'These, then, are the prizes and rewards and gifts which are bestowed upon the just by gods and men in this present life, in addition to the other good things which justice of herself provides,' I said.

'Yes,' he said, 'and they are fair and lasting.' 'And yet,' I said, 'all these are as nothing, either in number or greatness in comparison with those other recompenses which await both just and unjust after death. And you ought to hear them, and then both just and unjust will have received from us a full payment of the debt which the argument owes to them.'

'Speak,' he said, 'there are few things which I would more gladly hear.'

'Well,' I said, 'I will tell you a tale; not one of the tales which Odysseus tells to the hero Alcinous, yet this, too, is a tale of a hero, Er the son of Armenius, a Pamphylian by birth. He was slain in battle, and ten days afterwards, when the bodies of the dead were taken up already in a state of corruption, his body was found unaffected by decay, and carried away home to be buried. And on the twelfth day, as he was lying on the funeral pile, he returned to life and told them what he had seen in the other world.'

He said that, when his soul left the body, he went on a journey with a great company, and that they came to a mysterious place, at which there were two openings in the earth; they were near together, and over against them were two other openings in the heaven above. In the intermediate space, there were judges seated, who com-

manded the just, after they had given judgment on them and had bound their sentences in front of them, to ascend by the heavenly way on the right hand. And in like manner, the unjust were bidden by them to descend by the lower way on the left hand; these also bore the symbols of their deeds, but fastened on their backs.

He drew near, and they told him that he was to be the messenger, who would carry the report of the other world to men, and they bade him hear and see all that was to be heard and seen in that place. Then he beheld and saw on one side the souls departing at either opening of heaven and earth, when sentence had been given on them. And at the two other openings, other souls, some ascending out of the earth, dusty and worn with travel, some descending out of heaven clean and bright.

And arriving ever and anon, they seemed to have come from a long journey. And they went forth with gladness into the meadow, where they encamped as at a festival. And those who knew one another embraced and conversed, the souls, which came from earth, curiously enquiring about the things above, and the souls, which came from heaven, about the things beneath. And they told one another of what had happened by the way, those from below weeping and sorrowing at the remembrance of the things, which they had endured and seen in their journey beneath the earth (now the journey lasted a thousand

**Nefertiti's head from Aken-Aten (El-Amarana),
around 1340 BC**



‘Virtue is free, and as a man honours or dishonours her, he will have more or less of her’

years), while those from above were describing heavenly delights and visions of inconceivable beauty.

The story, Glaucon, would take too long to tell, but the sum was this: He said that for every wrong, which they had done to anyone, they suffered tenfold. Or once in a hundred years, such being reckoned to be the length of man’s life, and the penalty being thus paid ten times in a thousand years. If, for example, there were any, who had been the cause of many deaths, or had betrayed or enslaved cities or armies, or been guilty of any other evil behaviour, for each and all of their offences they received punishment ten times over, and the rewards of beneficence and justice and holiness were in the same proportion.

I need hardly repeat what he said concerning young children, dying almost as soon as they were born. Of piety and impiety to gods and parents, and of murderers, there were retributions other and greater far which he described.

HE MENTIONED THAT he was present when one of the spirits asked another: “Where is Ardiaeus the Great?” This Ardiaeus lived a thousand years before the time of Er: he had been the tyrant of some city of Pamphylia, and had murdered his aged father and his elder brother, and was said to have committed many other abominable crimes. The answer of the other spirit was: “He comes not hither and will never come.” And this, said he, was one of the dreadful sights, which we ourselves witnessed.

We were at the mouth of the cavern, and, hav-

ing completed all our experiences, were about to re-ascend, when of a sudden Ardiaeus appeared and several others, most of whom were tyrants. And there were also besides the tyrants private individuals, who had been great criminals. They were just, as they fancied, about to return into the upper world, but the mouth, instead of admitting them, gave a roar, whenever any of these incurable sinners or someone, who had not been sufficiently punished, tried to ascend. And then wild men of fiery aspect, who were standing by and heard the sound, seized and carried them off. And Ardiaeus and others they bound head and foot and hand. And they threw them down and flayed them with scourges, and dragged them along the road at the side, carding them on thorns like wool, and declaring to the passers-by what their crimes were, and that they were being taken away to be cast into hell. And of all the many terrors, which they had endured, he said that there was none like the terror which each of them felt at that moment, lest they should hear the voice. And when there was silence, one by one they ascended with exceeding joy.

These, said Er, were the penalties and retributions, and there were blessings as great. Now, when the spirits, which were in the meadow, had tarried seven days, on the eighth they were obliged to proceed on their journey. And, on the fourth day after, he said that they came to a place, where they could see from above a line of light, straight as a column, extending right through the whole heaven and through the earth, in colour resembling the rainbow, only brighter and purer.

ANOTHER DAY’S JOURNEY brought them to the place, and there, in the midst of the light, they saw the ends of the chains of heaven let down from above. This light is the belt of heaven, and holds together the circle of the universe, like the under-girders of a trireme. From these ends is extended the spindle of Necessity, on which all the revolutions turn. [...]

The spindle turns on the knees of Necessity; and on the upper surface of each circle is a siren, who goes round with them, hymning a single tone or note. The eight together form one harmony. And round about, at equal intervals, there is another band, three in number, each sitting upon her throne. These are the Fates, daughters of Necessity, who are clothed in white robes and have chaplets upon their heads. Lachesis and Clotho and Atropos accompany with their voices the harmony of the sirens. Lachesis sings of the past, Clotho of the present, Atropos of the future. Clotho from time to time assists with a touch of her right hand the revolution of the outer circle of the whorl or spindle, and Atropos with her left hand touches and guides the inner ones, and Lachesis lays hold of either in turn, first with one hand and then with the other.

When Er and the spirits arrived, their duty was to go at once to Lachesis. But first of all there came a prophet, who arranged them in order; then he took from the knees of Lachesis lots and samples of lives, and having mounted a high pulpit, spoke as follows: “Hear the word of Lachesis, the daughter of Necessity. Mortal souls, behold a new cycle of life and mortality. Your genius

will not be allotted to you, but you choose your genius. And let him who draws the first lot have the first choice, and the life, which he chooses, shall be his destiny. Virtue is free, and as a man honours or dishonours her, he will have more or less of her. The responsibility is with the chooser. God is justified.”

When the Interpreter had thus spoken, he scattered lots indifferently among them all, and each of them took up the lot which fell near him, all but Er himself (he was not allowed). And each as he took his lot perceived the number which he had obtained. Then the Interpreter placed on the ground before them the samples of lives, and there were many more lives than the souls present, and they were of all sorts. There were lives of every animal and of man in every condition. And there were tyrannies among them, some lasting out the tyrant’s life; others, which broke off in the middle and came to an end in poverty and exile and beggary. And there were lives of famous men, some who were famous for their form and beauty as well as for their strength and success in games, or, again, for their birth and the qualities of their ancestors. And some who were the reverse of famous for the opposite qualities.

And of women likewise. There was not, however, any definite character in them, because the soul, when choosing a new life, must of necessity become different. But there was every other quality, and they all mingled with one another, and also with elements of wealth and poverty, and disease and health; and there were mean states also.

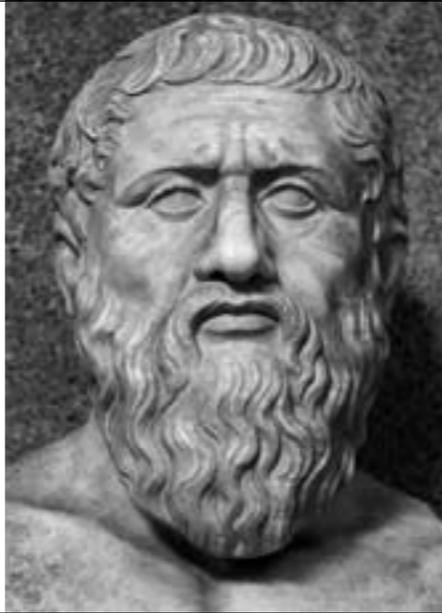
OF THE POLITEIA it is said that it is Plato's most important work. It deals with the ideal society; it is actually an enlargement of the ideal human being, who bears the 'heavenly city' in his heart as an inner, unchanging guideline. He who is able to notice it, hears in the overtones of this book countless glorious references to the mysteries and the inner, esoteric teachings behind Plato's Academy.

At the end of book IX (591e – 592b), Plato lets Socrates speak:

'He will look at the city, which is within him, and take heed that no disorder occur in it, such as might arise either from superfluity or from want; and upon this principle, he will regulate his property and gain or spend according to his means.'

'Very true,' he said.

'And, for the same reason, he will gladly accept and enjoy such honours as he deems likely to make him a better man; but those, whether private or public, which are likely to disorder his life, he will avoid?'



'Then, if that is his motive, he will not be a statesman.'

'By the dog of Egypt, he will! In the city, which is his own, he certainly will, though in the land of his birth perhaps not, unless he have a divine call.'

'You mean that he will be a ruler in the city of which we are the founders, and which exists in idea only, for I do not believe that there is such a one anywhere on earth?'

'In heaven, I replied, there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may set his own house in order. But whether such a one exists, or ever will exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other.'

'I think so, he said.'

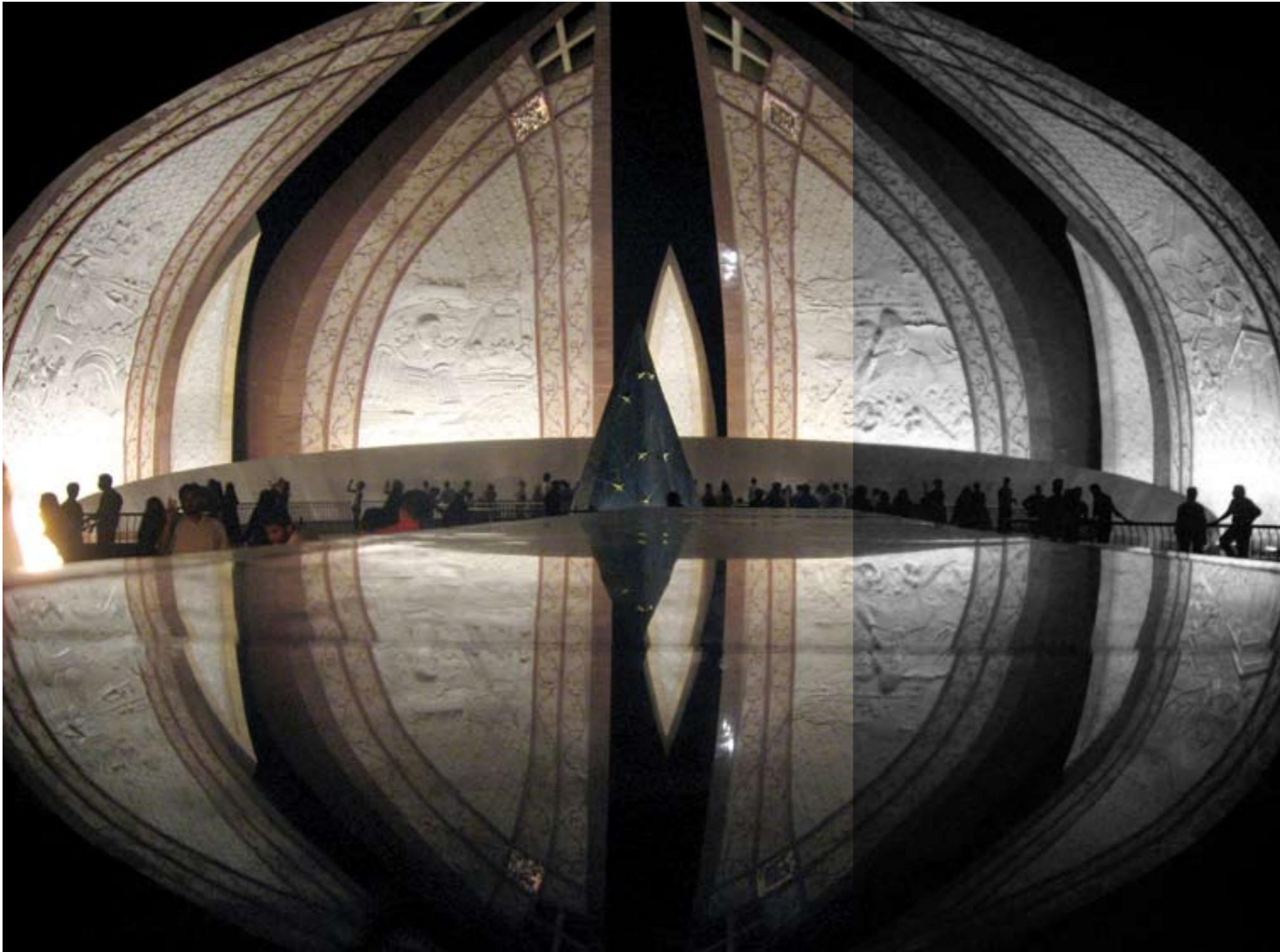
And here, my dear Glaucon, is the supreme peril of our human state. And therefore the utmost care should be taken. Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge and seek and follow one thing only, if peradventure he may be able to learn and may find someone, who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity. He should consider the bearing of all these things, which have been mentioned severally and collectively upon virtue. He should know what the effect of beauty is when combined with poverty or wealth in a particular soul, and what are the good and evil consequences of noble and humble birth, of private and public station, of strength and weakness, of cleverness and dullness, and of all the soul, and the operation of them when conjoined. He will then look at the nature of the soul, and from the consideration of all these qualities, he will be able to determine which is the better and which is the worse. And so he will choose, giving the name of evil to the life, which will make his soul more unjust, and good to the life which will make his soul

more just; all else he will disregard. For we have seen and know that this is the best choice, both in life and after death. A man must take with him into the world below an adamant faith in truth and right, that there too he may be undazzled by the desire of wealth or the other allurements of evil, lest, coming upon tyrannies and similar villainies, he do irremediable wrongs to others and suffer yet worse himself. But let him know how to choose the mean and avoid the extremes on either side, as far as possible, not only in this life, but in all that which is to come. For this is the way of happiness.

AND ACCORDING TO THE REPORT of the messenger of the other world, this was what the prophet said at the time: "Even for the last comer, if he chooses wisely and will live diligently, there is appointed a happy and not undesirable existence. Let not him who chooses first be careless, and let not the last despair." And when he had spoken, he who had the first choice came forward and in a moment chose the greatest tyranny. His mind, having been darkened by folly and sensuality, he had not thought out the whole matter before

he chose, and did not at first sight perceive that he was fated, among other evils, to devour his own children. But when he had time to reflect, and saw what was in the lot, he began to beat his breast and lament over his choice, forgetting the proclamation of the prophet. For, instead of throwing the blame of his misfortune on himself, he accused chance and the gods, and everything rather than himself. Now he was one of those who came from heaven, and in a former life had dwelt in a well-ordered state, but his virtue was a matter of habit only, and he had no philosophy. And it was true of others, who were similarly overtaken, that the greater number of them came from heaven and therefore, they had never been schooled by trial, whereas the pilgrims who came from earth, having themselves suffered and seen others suffer, were not in a hurry to choose. And owing to this inexperience of theirs, and also because the lot was a chance, many of the souls exchanged a good destiny for an evil or an evil for a good. For if a man had always on his arrival in this world dedicated himself from the first to sound philosophy, and had been moderately fortunate

in the number of the lot, he might, as the messenger reported, be happy here, and also his journey to another life and return to this, instead of being rough and underground, would be smooth and heavenly. Most curious, he said, was the spectacle, sad and laughable and strange, for the choice of the souls was in most cases based on their experience of a previous life. There he saw the soul, which had once been Orpheus, choosing the life of a swan out of enmity to the race of women, hating to be born of a woman, because they had been his murderers. He beheld also the soul of Thamyras, choosing the life of a nightingale; birds, on the other hand, like the swan and other musicians, wanting to be men. The soul, which obtained the twentieth lot, chose the life of a lion, and this was the soul of Ajax, the son of Telamon, who would not be a man, remembering the injustice which was done him the judgment about the arms. The next was Agamemnon, who took the life of an eagle, because, like Ajax, he hated human nature by reason of his sufferings. About the middle came the lot of Atalanta. She, seeing the great fame of an athlete, was unable to resist



Everywhere, people choose their path of life. 'Let each one of us seek, if peradventure he may be able to find someone, who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity,' says Plato. In this respect, a spiritual school may be a great help.

Pakistan monument in Islamabad by night

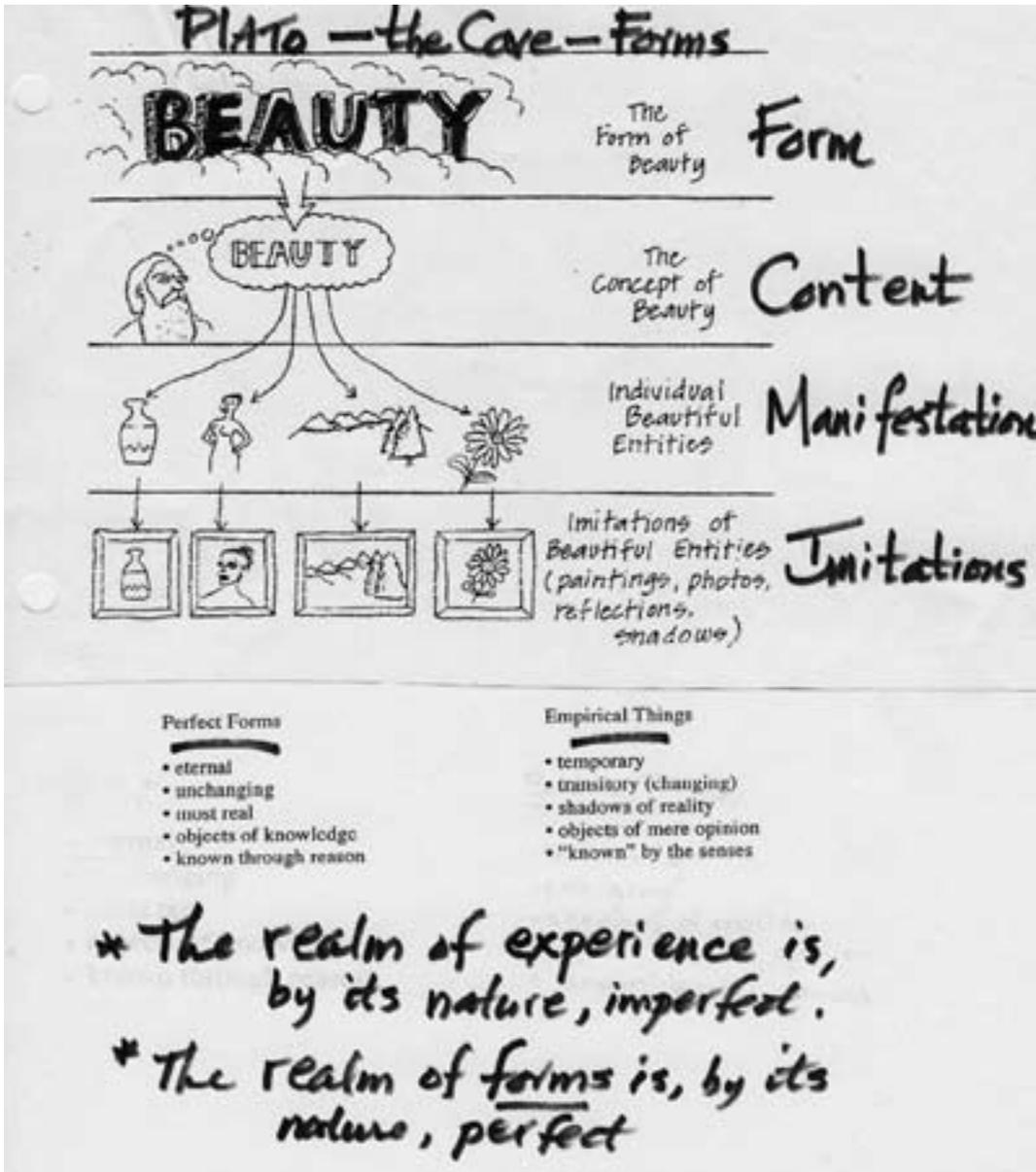
animals tame and wild, who changed into one another and into corresponding human natures, the good into the gentle and the evil into the savage, in all sorts of combinations.

ALL THE SOULS had now chosen their lives, and they went in the order of their choice to Lachesis, who sent with them the genius, whom they had severally chosen, to be the guardian of their lives and the fulfiller of the choice. This genius led the souls first to Clotho, and drew them within the revolution of the spindle impelled by her hand, thus ratifying the destiny of each. And then, when they were fastened to this, carried them to Atropos, who spun the threads and made them irreversible, whence without turning round they passed beneath the throne of Necessity. And when they had all passed, they marched on in a scorching heat to the plain of Forgetfulness, which was a barren waste destitute of trees and verdure. And then towards evening, they encamped by the river of Unmindfulness, whose water no vessel can hold. Of this, they were all obliged to drink a certain quantity, and those who were not saved by wisdom drank more than was necessary; and each one, as he drank, forgot all things. Now after they had gone to rest, about the middle of the night there was a thunderstorm and earthquake, and then, in an instant, they were driven upwards in all manner of ways to their birth, like stars shooting. He himself was hindered from drinking the water. But in what manner or by what means he returned to the body, he could not say. Only, in the morning,

the temptation. After her, there followed the soul of Epeus, the son of Panopeus, passing into the nature of a woman cunning in the arts. And far away, among the last who chose, the soul of the jester, Thersites, was putting on the form of a monkey. There came also the soul of Odysseus,

having yet to make a choice, and his lot happened to be the last of them all. Now the recollection of former toils had disenchanted him of ambition, and he went about for a considerable time in search of the life of a private man, who had no cares. He had some difficulty in finding

this, which was lying about and had been neglected by everybody else. And when he saw it, he said that he would have done that, had his lot been first instead of last, and that he was delighted to have it. And not only did men pass into animals, but I must also mention that there were



Plato's philosophy in a nutshell: The world of the original forms (ideas) or the original world is perfect. There, love is not a property; that world is love. Perfect beauty is always, everywhere and immediately visible. The thinking (new) soul or spirit is able to behold this original beauty, because it partakes of it. The world of experience and phenomena is (by its very nature) imperfect; the original beauty is mixed with shadow, and love is a property

awaking suddenly, he found himself lying on the pyre.

And thus, Glaucon, the tale has been saved and has not perished, and will save us if we are obedient to the word spoken. And we shall pass safely over the river of Forgetfulness and our soul will not be defiled. Wherefore my counsel is that we hold fast ever to the heavenly way and follow after justice and virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal and able to endure every

sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live dear to one another and to the gods, both while remaining here and when, like conquerors in the games who go round to gather gifts, we receive our reward. And it shall be well with us both in this life and in the pilgrimage of a thousand years, which we have been describing.' 🌟

Plato, *Politeia*, Book 10. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. <http://www.elopos.net/elpenor/greek-texts/ancient-greece/plato/plato-politeia.asp>