

‘God makes eternity, eternity makes the world, the world makes time and in time there is genesis. Goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom form the essence of God; the essence of eternity is invariability; the essence of the world is order; the essence of time is changeability and the essence of genesis is life and death.’

Hermes Trismegistos

There are five manifestations in the All-revelation: God, eternity, the world, time and genesis. God, as the source, is the universal spirit, in which there is nothing else, from which nothing else emanates but goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom.

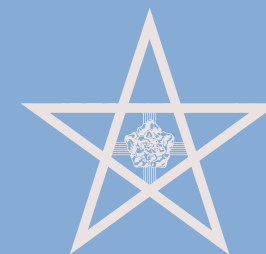
What originates from this primordial source of things is eternal and invariable, in power as well as in ability. God and eternity, we may say, are themselves.

Eternity, as the primary manifestation of God, reveals goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom, that is, universal love, paramount happiness, all-encompassing knowledge. These are values that have no end. From himself, God creates eternity, which possesses values that together may be called love.

Goodness, beauty, bliss and wisdom are omnipresent in eternity, just as a space can be filled with perfume of roses or with light. Then we cannot imagine a place where this perfume or that light would not be present. In this way, the all-manifestation is pervaded by God, is filled with God. This is eternity in the sense of durability, everlasting, in an invariable state.



J. van Rijckenborgh



pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum



The sevenfold world brotherhood

A letter by Catharose de Petri

The call for autonomy The light of nature

Life and ideas of Paracelsus

There is no empty space

Exercises in thinking differently

The imprisonment of the senses

What happens in the brain during the renewal of the consciousness?

The processes of change on the way of transfiguration considered anatomically

Faces Walt Whitman

pentagram

volume 31 number 6 2009



The study of man

In this issue, the **pentagram** would like to acquaint its readers with a new, rational esotericism, which is born from the cry for help of the human heart, rooted in an intelligible concept of the world and humanity, and bringing a philo-

sophical wisdom that does not offend the intelligence of its students in any way. This concerns a threefold approach, which has been the task of the Rosycross for centuries, and to which all who serve in it are faithful. We begin with a testimony from the past: a portrait of Paracelsus and his radical methods. The second approach is contemporary, in which physicians and thinkers try to show anatomically that the human body is destined and suitable for transfiguration. In this way, they bring the age-old promise of purpose and goal of the human being, namely to be the bearer of the spirit-soul, nearer; down to the structure of his organs.

And finally, there is a wave of human compassion, a view from the heart to every fellow human being who, hidden or visibly, bears the image of the immortal one with him and around him. An encounter in a railway station, a magical song of Walt Whitman, in which the overtones are singing of the glorious atmosphere of Mani's teachings: 'Know this Light, and befriend it, for from the Light soul emanate: patience, faith, perfection, love, wisdom.'

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Cover:

Bacchus and Ariadne – universal beauty in the harmony of the diune human being.
Marble double bust by Tullio Lombardo. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Kunstskammer, around 1505–1506

the sevenfold world brotherhood

In the book *The alchemical wedding of Christian Rosycross*, J van Rijckenborgh described a picture of the future that has many aspects and can, therefore, be discussed from many angles. We might say that humanity is currently living in a stage of transition, so that we are as yet unable to form a clear picture of the enormous electromagnetic radiation power that will be released at the appropriate time.

It is still impossible to say at what moment the times will be ripe for such a radical, mighty event. However, we may be convinced that one day the powerful effects of Light power will cause a tremendous purification in the being of all people who at that moment inhabit the earth, and of those who at that moment sojourn in the other spheres of life.

By its radiation power, the sevenfold world brotherhood will certainly play a major part. However, do not view the brotherhood in any concrete form, but rather as Light radiation.

We should see these things as a divine call, and we have to react to this call. This divine call is also a radiation activity, an intervention of the Light, approaching us through the word that originates in Christ.

Read parts II and III of the Epilogue of *The alchemical wedding* again. Then much will become clear concerning the things described there, also with regard to the perpetrators of the great play. Any manifestation, in whatever form, is hard to understand by the dialectical consciousness when we compare certain statements, in other words, when we go through them systematically. Gnostic consciousness teaches the ability to distinguish. To the extent that the process of the soul makes progress, more clarity will be achieved with regard to what is still more or less dark. It is always better to achieve insight into things ourselves ✨

Summarised from a letter
by Catharose de Petri in
Letters, Rozekruis Pers,
Letter 22, The future



The scarab of Chepri, symbol of the human being, who bears the spiritual sun. The name Chepri is related to the concept 'becoming' or 'developing'.

From the tomb of Tutankhamun, son of Akhenaten, 1323 BC

- ✧ imperishable stone at an ancient holy place,
in the middle of an energy field
- ✧ monument of renewal at moments that the
earth is charged with the forces of
the sun, the moon and the stars
- ✧ temple of Light for people
who drink in its combined
energies

Stonehenge
built: 3100, 2150 and 2075 BC



Travelling is seeking the right way. Seeking the purpose of life, silence or the beauty of true life and its depth, the traveller passes his time on listless stations, looking for the right track – his track.

Impressive moments may occur without travelling anywhere, without performing any action. A track, a whole worldview, may change in a flash of a second. 'People of the way': in antiquity, this was what the first people following Christ were called. The way begins, when the heart finds *the other* one.

And while the traveller eats dust and dry bread, his path changes into a 'way of the stars'...



the call for autonomy

A beast always feeds like a beast, and also the human being feeds to the extent that he is a beast, equally of the earth as the latter is, but he should not be like a beast, but as one who is from eternity, he should be nourished with what is eternal, for he was not created a beast, but a human being, in God's image and likeness. The animal body is another one than that, which feeds on the tree growing from God's root. The human body is the eternal body, in God's image, equal to him and therefore immortal. The human being was created as an immortal one.

Paracelsus' wisdom refers to what underlies the outside, to what is visible. Here the human being, the conscious inhabitant of two worlds, is visible to the natural eye in the light of nature; there he is visible in the light of the spirit, but hidden to the outward eye. Paracelsus belonged to a group of teachers who left their mark on the spiritual development of Europe. They worked from a sphere that is, in the tradition of the Rosicrucians, called 'the unknown half of the world'. It is hidden to the outward senses, but is nevertheless always concretely present. We experience this hidden aspect, this essence, as longing, as agitation, often also as a cause of change, and it opens as light to those people, who no longer experience the world of outer forms as the only truth. What is visible, then turns into a bridge, a lock, across which the unknown half of the world is recognised as being true and real. It is the fatherland of the immortal ones, the community of 'those who are able to experience the Light', as Karl von Eckartshausen expressed it.

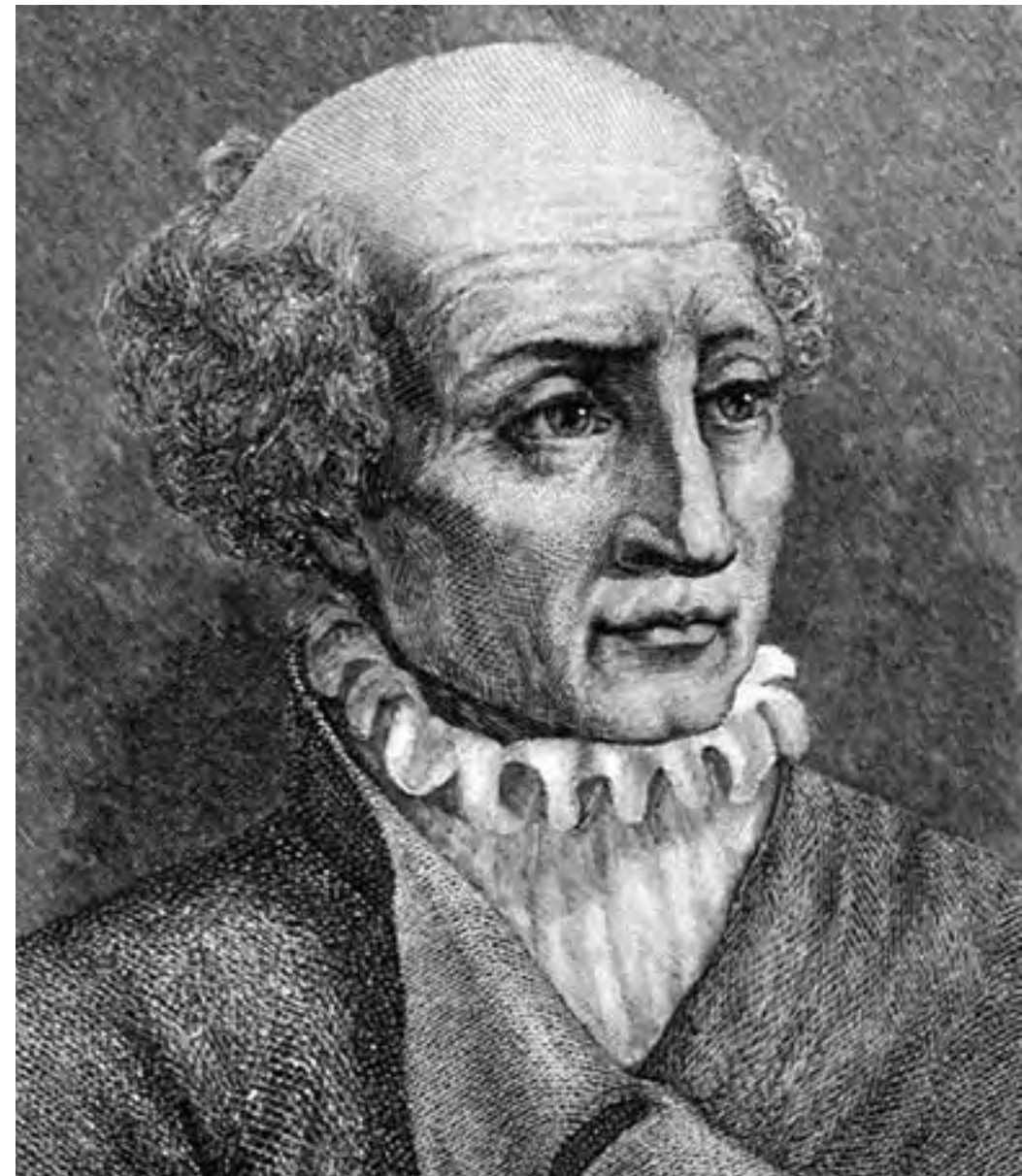
A PATIENT SHOULD BE HIS OWN PHYSICIAN AND THE PHYSICIAN HIS HELPER What was and is the task of the initiates and sages of all times? It is only being a helper of humanity. This does not mean that he solves the difficulties, conflicts and problems of others, but that he helps with gaining insight into the causes of evil. He also shows ways how we can overcome and solve the chaos. Via medicine, Paracelsus allowed people to come into contact with the power of what is hidden,

of the essence. Without this power, no healing will be possible. In his time, he simultaneously kept, as author and teacher, the eternal wisdom up-to-date, the result of which appears to have surpassed the centuries and to have taken root even in our days. 'Eternity wants to call the human being to eternity, because it is not bound to time or history. However, since useless people have become involved in medicine, only focused on self-interest and seeking it, how will I succeed when I call up to love? On my part, I am ashamed of medicine, because so much deception has come into it.

Suspect and corrupt rabble, which sells their medications, whether good or not, enters medicine. He who is able to bring in money, is praised as a good physician. Also pharmacists and some barbers occupy themselves with medicine. They deal with medicine in a way contrary to their conscience and neglect their own souls to become rich, to equip house and garden and everything belonging to it, and to put it into tip-top order. They do not care that they acquired it undeservedly; to them, the main thing is that it is there (from: *Defensiones*).'

He who takes responsibility for himself is only able to do so in freedom and on the basis of a clear consciousness: I should be my own physician, there are no others. An external adviser can only help me on this basis, for who else should understand the causes [of the disease]? Who else than the person concerned is confronted with the problem or the disease? Strictly speaking, it is the voice of intuition, the soft, inner voice

life and activities of paracelsus



Wars, farmers' revolts, exploited people against the rulers, burning monasteries; the plague, outrageous injustice, unbelievable arrogance of the ruling class, corresponding poverty and oppression of nations, and yet, the awakening of the human being continued

that can be considered the healer, the inner physician.

PARACELSUS' YOUTH Tremendous agitation, breaking up and change, struggle of what is old against what is new. Wars, farmers' revolts, exploited people against the rulers, burning monasteries; the plague, outrageous injustice, unbelievable arrogance of the ruling class, corresponding poverty and oppression of nations, and yet, the awakening of the human being continued; it cannot be prevented. The churches and their theology, the social order, and medicine were hollow down to the marrow. Paracelsus was a child of his time. He was born in Einsiedeln in 1493, the only child of physician Wilhelm von Hohenheim, and he received the name Philippus Theophrastus von Hohenheim. His mother served in the nearby monastery. Father Von Hohenheim purportedly was a serious, taciturn man, who studied nature. Paracelsus' youth was not characterised by affluence, as was the case with all other people of that region. He grew up as a child of farmers, ate the same raw food as they did, and spent much time outdoors. Father Von Hohenheim got a certain reputation by his (al)chemical studies, and after his mother's death, when the boy was nine years old, they moved to Villach in Kärnten, Austria. There his father got a job as a teacher at the mine school in Hüttenberg. Under his guidance, his son was taught in a practical way about ores and metals. He transferred the impressions and experiences he received since early childhood by

observing nature and later by studying physics to all other realms of life by analogy. He studied medicine in Tübingen, Vienna and Ferrara. His irritation about the outdated knowledge that was taught at the universities, originated there. Throughout his entire life, he would unmask them in no uncertain terms.

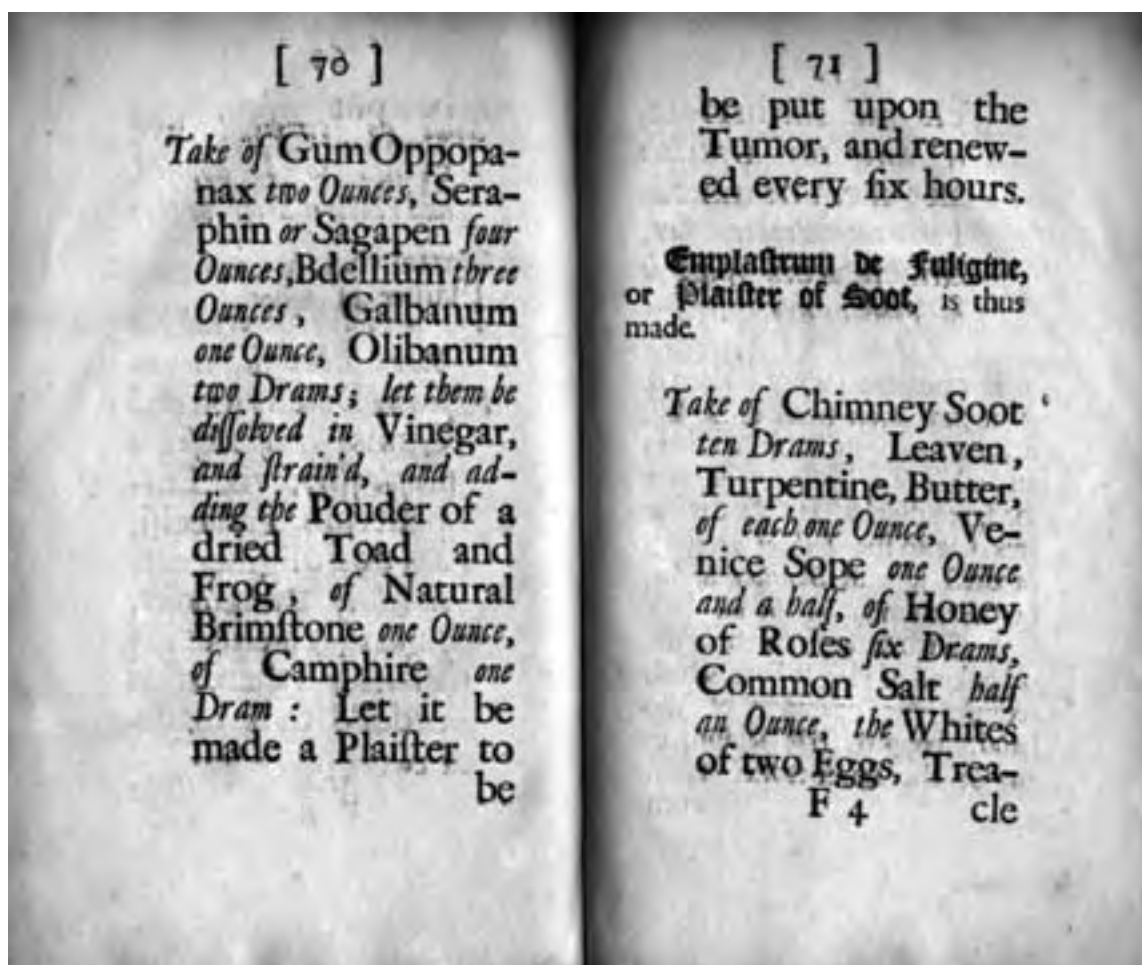
THE PLAGUE IN FERRARA In 1514, the plague broke out in the North-Italian town of Ferrara, and everyone with money fled to the countryside. Medical students who wanted to return to fight the disease, were freely offered the degree of doctor by the town council. Paracelsus became incensed by the bungling with expensive, unsuccessful remedies. He went deeply into the disease and thought that it concerned a 'fire' and that the plague was actually an 'entity', created by fear and lack of freedom and that it was vivified in the human being. This is why the disease had to be treated 'in a fiery way' (just as the pain) and not with ointments and plasters. He developed a recipe that was much more effective, so that many people survived. When the epidemic had past, so did the euphoria of the town council. Paracelsus had only been lucky, it was said. However, the renowned humanist Nicola da Lonigo (1428-1524), vice-chancellor of the university as well as chairman of the town council, backed him up. This Da Lonigo was one of the first opponents of theorising on the basis of the ancient manuscripts of Galen and Hippocrates. Already by 1490, he had pointed out the weak points in their thinking. In this

way, Paracelsus received his title (though considerably later), without having to pay the fee that was usual at the time. With unbridled energy and concentrated on the laws of creation, he ignored the established medical rules and only kept his eye on the interests of his patients.

THE WANDERER Paracelsus appears to us as if he lived between worlds, as someone who drew from the creative power of what is hidden. After his studies, he set out on a journey that would last his whole life. He was very much aware of his calling. He unveiled the light of the spirit, not only in medicine, but also in theology and philosophy, by the power of the essence. He travelled through Italy, France, Spain, England, The Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, Russia, Poland, Romania, Hungary, and the Balkans down to Constantinople. He also visited various countries and cities in Asia Minor. During his travels, he learned from anyone from whom he might possibly learn about diseases and their treatment, not at the universities and from their professors, but from 'barbers', natural healers, farmers, shepherds, skippers, travelling tradesmen, old women, and even from the executioner and his helper. He was notorious for not mincing his words, which often rubbed the authorities the wrong way. His language appeared to be a sword, with which he separated what was sick from what was healthy. He condemned a system based on indolence, ignorance and seeking one's own profit. Theophrastus ('he who explains God') was

not an agitator, but encouraged people to seek freedom. In 1524, when he was 31 years old, he had to leave Salzburg, because he read from the Gospel in German to the rebellious farmers...

LAB COAT In 1526, he was in Strasbourg, when bookseller Frobenius asked him to come to Basle to visit him. This scholar and prominent printer was troubled by the results of an accident with his horse. The pain in his foot became only worse by the treatments of the physicians living in the city; they even advised amputation. Frobenius was cured by Paracelsus within a short time. This was the reason that Paracelsus was offered a position as city physician of Basle, combined with a chair at the university. Almost immediately, Paracelsus encountered serious problems, not only in his acceptance of the chair but also concerning the way he practised medicine. The city council of Basle had appointed him without consulting the academic college. His controversial appointments were resisted by the faculty. At the time, it was unimaginable that anyone would propagate his own experiences and insights instead of commenting on the writings of the ancients. And another, unheard-of novelty was that Von Hohenheim presented his lectures (as the first professor at a German university) in his mother tongue, German. His opponents considered 'his not speaking [his teachings] in the revered garment of the ancient languages, but in the language spoken by the drivers in the alleys, market vendors and the handmaidens at the well, treason to science.' He



Page from a recipe book by Paracelsus

did so, because people in Germany were striving to speak their own language. Luther's Bible translation into German is another example of this. Paracelsus' lectures were, therefore, very well attended. Even his envious opponents had to admit this, and they expressed their displeasure that he taught everyone by his lectures and that the whole illiterate crowd of bath healers and alchemists attended his lectures.

The resistance against his teachings, based on philosophy, and against him as a person came from all sides. There were rumours that it was not certain whether he was a physician, and also

that he didn't wear the usual garb of physicians (like cap and gown), but walked around in a lab coat. The faculty also used its prerogative to prevent his practising medicine. Subsequently, he submitted a petition to the town council that justice should be done to him in his conflict with the university. In this petition, he discussed the sorry state of the pharmacies. Paracelsus replaced the long recipes of ancient medicine by his new, simple and effective remedies, which he usually manufactured in his laboratory. The Basle pharmacists did not know these remedies, let alone that they were able to produce them. In

Just as Luther burned the bull of the papal ban, Paracelsus symbolically put Avicenna's famous manual, the *Canon Medicinae*, behind him

addition, he often discovered decayed plants, and the prices were too high. He made proposals for checking all pharmacies and for the introduction of a fixed medication surcharge in order to protect the patients against swindling and deception. The town council granted his request, so that he was enabled to continue his lectures. He broke away from the crystallised science of antiquity and introduced a medical science that was also, as experience showed, very effective. Just as Luther had burned the bull of the papal ban, Paracelsus symbolically put Avicenna's famous manual, the *Canon Medicinae*, behind him, and threw it into the fire in the presence of his students. He said:

'The physicians have lost their greatest treasure, their love for truth, and they have surrendered to drinking, eating, whoring and the like. They don't know anything, they don't see anything, their belly is their god. This generates their insight; this swallows their fruits. Your art must be practised by violence, by enforcing the faith that they believe what you say, and by confirming this faith with all your drivel, walking, running and fussing. You are running for the sake of sweet money and not for the health of your patients. For if you had the proper remedy, what would be the use of your walking, running and looking at urine; what would be the use of all this twaddle?' (from the *Opus Paragranum*)

As a true physician, he considered it more important to visit people and examine them than to go deeply into anatomical studies. During trips in the countryside, he taught his students

botany. This was more valuable than all manuals combined. He taught them how to extract active substances from plants and to neutralise harmful parts. He taught them to prepare the arcana, the essences of the hidden and active forces. His students lived in his house as his assistants, as was usual at the time, and helped him with his writing. To the sick, Paracelsus always showed great compassion, which is demonstrated by the following statement of which many versions are known: The strongest pillar of medicine is love. 'Be aware that, above all, compassion and love are demanded of a physician.'

Paracelsus was vilified. Contemptuously, it was said that he was a heretic in a medical respect, a *lutherus medicorum*, who should be burned like all the others, a tramp who wrongfully claimed to be a physician, a fool, a practitioner of black magic, he purportedly had the devil in his body, etc. He also had a conflict with a prominent Basle canon, who was cured by Paracelsus, but who only paid him a tenth of the agreed fee. The judges' verdict was in favour of the canon. In addition to an angry petition to the town council, he also wrote a pamphlet in which he challenged the judges. Subsequently, the fierce campaign against him reached its peak. A warrant for his arrest was issued for insulting the judges. Warned in time, he left the city during the night and escaped.

THE WAY HOME Paracelsus resumed his life of wandering, developed an extensive medical practice and celebrated his triumphs as a suc-

Alterius non sit, qui suus esse potest

successful doctor. However, he did not find any rest or settle down. In 1529, he arrived in Nuremberg, where the town council allowed him to publish his writings. The first part had hardly appeared, when he heard that the medical faculty had urged the town council to prevent the publication of other manuscripts. Word went through Europe, and this word was Paracelsus. Scholars and non-scholars, nobility and citizens knew his name; they either vilified him or longed for his help. It was only given to a few to see who he really was. Destitute, he travelled to Innsbruck in 1534. The mayor forbade him to settle there, because he did not want to believe that this man walking around in poverty, could be the renowned physician. Paracelsus withdrew further across the Brenner Pass to Sterzing in South Tirol, where the plague was raging at that moment, and he started working there. It was there that he also drafted a paper about this disease.

THE ROGUE AND THE SWORD *Rich is he, who can give everything; poor is he, who has and wants to keep what he has for himself.* His wanderings led him to Vienna. There he enjoyed the great confidence of the sick as well as the great resentment of the local physicians. They did not have the courage to debate with him and they avoided him. At the same time, through diplomatic pressure, they tried to prevent his writings from being printed. Emperor Ferdinand I, to whom *Die grosse Wundarzney* (The great Handbook of Healing) was dedi-

cated, summoned him twice. He explained to the monarch that he would engage in discussions with the physicians; he allowed them their science and kept his own. The following lines have become famous: ‘Your most gracious Lord, the crowd turning against me is large, but small is their intellect and their art, so that they cannot take away anything from me, because they have not enough proof. I should be enjoyed that they are my enemies, for the truth does not need any other enemies than the liars. I put the basis, which I possess and on which I write, on four pillars: philosophy, astronomy, chemistry and virtue. I want to depend on these four, and I am waiting for any counterargument, and will be alert whether outside these four, any physician will rise up against me. The physicians would like to topple me; however, I will grow and they will turn into barren fig trees. My manuscripts will remain until the last day of the world, because they originate from the truth.’

He explicitly stated that a physician who was unable to cure gout, epilepsy, dropsy, the plague and leprosy, was not a good physician. His accurate prognoses, the knowledge of his quickly working remedies and countless cures, bordering on miracles, contributed considerably to his fame, already legendary during his life. Although he had the reputation of being a peace-loving man, he is always represented with a sword, the symbol of his determination, decisiveness and energy.

By the end of his life, he lived in Salzburg, where he died at the (to us) young age of 49

Let no one, who can be his own master, belong to someone else

years on 21 September 1541. There has been much speculation about his death. Did he die from a natural disease, was he poisoned or pushed from narrow, steep stairs? The latter cause is deemed the most probable one. Paracelsus, knowing that his death was imminent, calmly faced it and determined that he wanted to be buried at the cemetery of St. Sebastian. This cemetery was close to his house, in the vicinity of alms cottages. The archbishop of Salzburg later decided that the funeral of the famous physician and scholar should take place with solemnity. On his tombstone in the forecourt of the church of St. Sebastian, we can read the familiar sentence:

Vitam cum morte mutavit. By death, he has changed life, changed, but not exchanged, as most biographers have translated this sentence. However nowadays, the concept takes root that life can be changed by death and receive another quality.

PARACELSUS AND HIS HERITAGE: THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS Paracelsus was like a fiery wheel that left his traces via Europe up to Asia Minor: as a great individualist in the visible realm, as a renewer in all fields, subjected to the light of the spirit, bound to and in harmony with the laws of creation. He spoke in images and parables, so that his pupils, including us, would be able to understand the subtle relationships: What the teeth chew is not medicine. No one sees medicine. Medicine is not a substance, but power.

Remedies are only effective to the extent that they contain the *quinta essentia*, the essence, as information of the substance concerned. Homeopathy is based on the same point of view. His philosophical and theological considerations are timeless and topical, and above all practical. In our own dealing with the causes of our suffering and our worries, which are nothing else than aspects of our quest and hints on the path, we can learn much of Paracelsus’ philosophy. His healing methods were based on leading people to autonomy and freedom, to wholly being taken up into the peace, the happiness and the fulfilment of their inner destiny. Paracelsus referred to the realisation; he wanted to liberate the actual renaissance in creation and in the autonomously active human being. The light shines in the darkness to illuminate it through the human being, through the conscious deed of all who behold it. Paracelsus’ motto of life was:

Alterius non sit qui suus esse potest - Let no one, who can be his own master, belong to someone else ☼

Most quotes in this article have been translated from *De artsenij – Het woord Gods, Bloemlezing uit het werk van Paracelsus (Medicine – The Divine word, Anthology from the work of Paracelsus)* by dr. Klaus Bielau, Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem 2006

the light of nature

The spiritually great ones often left a philosophical structure, through which the esoteric power is still able to impress us. This does not apply to Paracelsus. He was rather a breaker and a renewer; he was alarmed and moved, and his message contained an explosive charge that has yet hardly been discovered until now.

THE THREE LEVELS Paracelsus is timeless. His message spans time, and reaches from the past, via the present, to the future. To many people, Paracelsus is only historically significant. To others, he is very topical. To a few, his message contains a future dimension that is already being prepared now. These three aspects of time reflect the three levels of his work. He brought new impulses on the physical level, on the level of the soul, and finally he leads us to the divine nucleus in the human being. On the physical level, Paracelsus demanded the unprejudiced evaluation of phenomena. He demanded the physician and the student of nature to behave critically with regard to the ancient hypotheses, to make observations and to do research themselves. This call was satisfied by the exact sciences, physics and chemistry. For these sciences, Paracelsus had only a purely historical significance in the sense that he was a pioneer of this objective research. However, biology, and particularly the medical sciences, encounter limits due to their mechanistic paradigm. Is regular medicine not powerless and desperate in the face of a large number of Western diseases? The reason is clear: life cannot be explained from the material plane only. To understand life, a higher level, a tenuous-energetic level, should be involved. In the great cultures of all times, people had a notion of a vital power that vivified the physical body. Paracelsus placed vital power and soul in a cosmic context. He explained how the physical body received life and ensoulment from a tenuous

reflection of the cosmos, the microcosm. By a complex pattern of relationships, the microcosm was embedded in the macrocosm. According to Paracelsus, the physician should not only consider the physical body, but he should see the human being as a microcosm, and in his diagnosis and therapy, the context of the great world should also be involved. Nowadays, this message has become topical again. Paracelsus is seen as the pioneer of holistic medicine, which takes the tenuous-energetic aspect into account. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthroposophy, further elaborated what Paracelsus had already proclaimed with a bird's eye view, and made it applicable in practice. However, this is not all of Paracelsus' work. The two mentioned levels form the foundation, which Paracelsus needed to be able to proclaim his main idea, his spiritual message. This message contained a tremendous perspective, which was able to give the human being his spiritual value back, but only few people were able to understand and realise Paracelsus' core message. The spiritual core of his teachings was: the human being is not only a mortal physical and soul being, but he is potentially an eternal, spiritual being, too, surpassing the visible cosmos. It is remarkable how Paracelsus, time and again, emphasised that the natural human life system, that is, the physical as well as the tenuous-cosmic human being, are both mortal. However, in the human heart, a nucleus of the eternal human being is hidden, which was once created as bearer of God's image. We will return to this later.



Page from a text by Paracelsus
F&M Pennsylvania
German Broadside
Collection, Franklin and
Marshall College

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE It is generally known that Paracelsus was a great physician. He accomplished many cures which bordered on miracles, and in addition, he left a sizeable body of literature. We may therefore assume that many very effective recipes and secret formulas were to be found in his work, which we may discover and use again. However, the number of concrete hints is disappointing in view of the size of his work, because Paracelsus' point was always the principle, the philosophy, the understanding of human being, nature and God. He was not interested in methods and recipes that could be used in practice. Yet, when he sometimes gave hints about concrete, medicinal plants and minerals or a recipe, his aim was to clarify the underlying spiritual principle.

Medicine in the way Paracelsus had it in mind, can never limit itself to tracing and imitating the recipes of this great physician. In this way, absolutely no justice would be done to him, because he always emphasised that each time has its own diseases, and therefore also needs its own remedies. Imitating him would fundamentally contradict his method of working, which specifically threw all book learning overboard and stimulated autonomous research. What mattered to him was, therefore, not a ready-made recipe, but a clear understanding of the human being and his relationship to the cosmos. Paracelsus was a flaming torch at the beginning of a new era. He walked a new path, but did not leave an itinerary, which simply had

to be followed. No, he testified to the Light, in which everyone would be able to recognise and walk this path. It was a path that had to be followed in the light of nature. This light will guide us, if we want to examine the relationship between man and nature, between illness and cure. If we are 'standing in the virtue' and follow the light of nature, the eternal Light, far surpassing the light of nature, will one day dawn over us. What did Paracelsus mean by the concept of the light of nature?

In order to acquire knowledge and wisdom, we need light. Suppose that we are in a totally dark room. With each movement, we will bump ourselves and perhaps fall, because we are unable to orientate ourselves. Now a window opens and light streams in. Immediately, we see the path we have to walk. The same applies to the light of nature. It is a cosmic radiation field, with which our soul resonates. This generates a soul power that enables us to recognise the hidden relationships between the inner and the outer world, between soul and body, between human being and nature. Yet, scientific knowledge does not stand in the light of nature in this way. The intellect may be compared with feeling with your hands in the dark room. Scientific knowledge is limited to the outside. It only leads to knowledge of the outside, but we are unable to recognise the inner relationships by it. The human being, who is able to behold in the light of nature, recognises the essence of things, the relationship between different events, even if they do not have a linear, causal relationship.

Everything is linked with everything; nothing exists by itself. Yet, is everything really one?

Heart and head are involved in recognition in the light of nature. It is the wisdom, stemming from the intuition of the heart. Not until the human being has become aware of the unity of all creatures in the cosmos, will the light of nature be able to dawn in him. Everything is linked with everything; nothing exists by itself. However, is everything really one? The consciousness that is limited to the body evokes a feeling of separation. Time and again, we painfully experience the limitation and loneliness of our physical existence. We cannot speak of unity until there is a mediating soul principle. The cosmos with its lights, radiations and energies combines the parts into a higher whole and subjugates them to one law. With their orbits and rhythms, they control everything, set everything in motion and combine everything.

THE BODY OF THE ELEMENTS AND THE BODY OF THE STARS The human being, too, possesses an immaterial, energetic body, of which the structure is an image of the firmament, of the cosmos. Paracelsus called it the body of the stars. This body is a reduced copy of the cosmos, that is, a microcosm. Just as the cosmos has different strata, in other words, possesses energy fields with different densities, we can also distinguish several levels in the body of the stars. Paracelsus

described the composition of the human being as follows.

First, there is the body, and after the body, the ruler; next the emotional body, then its king, who controls it; and then there is a king who controls the human being. He who is familiar with esoteric terminology will recognise a well-known division:

- First, there is the body, the gross-material body. Paracelsus spoke of the body of the elements, composed of the four elements: solid, fluid and gaseous substances as well as the element of warmth.
- Then there is the 'ruler', that is, the power that causes the physical body to move and live: the etheric body.
- This is followed by the emotional or astral body that enables sensory perception, experiences, feelings and desires.
- Next, there is 'the king', who controls the astral body, namely the ego or mental body.
- Finally, Paracelsus distinguished a fifth essential part of the human being, the king who controls the human being, that is, the higher self. Paracelsus also referred to the highest part as the fifth being. In this context, the fifth being is a combination of the elements and the firmament. It is the essence, the quintessence of the human being. It is called quintessence, because, as the

Paracelsus described in detail everything a magician, esotericist, occultist, kabbalist, astrologer, clairvoyant, prophet, physician, alternative healer, philosopher or mathematician might imagine in his wildest dreams

fifth element, it surpasses the other four parts and guides them, just like a king. And he added that there are two types of quintessence, an active, mortal one and a latent, immortal one. The microcosm, as represented by Paracelsus, this whole, complicated human life system, is mortal according to him. Not only the physical body, composed of the elements, but also the vivifying and ensouling microcosmic principle is transient. He said: each body dies in its own realm. The body of the elements is laid down in the grave and dissolves into the elements; after death, the body of the stars arrives in the sphere of the stars and is dissolved there. Therefore, Paracelsus did not see a fundamental difference between the composition of the human being as explained so far and that of the animal, because an animal possesses a body of elements as well as a body of the stars, and both are mortal. Uncompromisingly, Paracelsus knocked the human being, as the pinnacle of creation, off his pedestal and put him on the same level as an animal. He always emphasised that all his knowledge and intellect were animal. However, this degradation of the human being aimed at giving him his true value back through the grace of God. This true value was not to be found in the perishable microcosm, which was

an image of the equally perishable cosmos. We know that the stars, too, will ultimately dissolve, and therefore, the visible universe is transient. However, the essence of the human being is eternal. The eternal element in the human being is not subject to the cosmic law. It surpasses the stars. Paracelsus referred to the eternal element in the human being as the spirit of the image. By image, he meant the original, eternal human being whom God created in his likeness. This divine image surpasses the mortal stars. However, this image no longer exists as a developed, active being, but only as the spirit of the image. Paracelsus used the concept of spirit to refer to a hidden principle. The spirit of the image is the latent principle of the original, divine human being. In his own words: 'Even though I call the human being an animal, I know quite well the differences between human beings and animals. They are only to be found in the spirit of the image. This is what I must strongly emphasise.' Although mortal, the human being is able to develop great wisdom and the arts. By being conscious of the fact that the microcosm constitutes a unity with the cosmos, the sources of the light of nature are opened to the human being. In this light, a wealth of wisdom and power pours into the human being.



THE LIGHT OF NATURE In his most important work, *Philosophia sagax*, Paracelsus described these powers in the light of nature. He distinguished *nine categories: magia, nigromantia, nectromantia, astrologia, signatum, artes incertae, medicina adepta, philosophia adepta and mathematica adepta*. Each category is subdivided and is extensively described. What we read here is breathtaking. It is a survey of all specialisms imaginable concerning the so-called higher faculties. Everything a magician, esotericist, occultist, kabbalist, astrologer, clairvoyant, prophet, physician, alternative healer, philosopher or mathematician might

imagine in his wildest dreams, is described here in detail. From a book about Paracelsus' medicine, published a few years ago, we quote: 'He who has been involved with mediums or has this type of experiences himself, will immediately recognise the phenomenon of channelling with Paracelsus. This is a divine gift, which many creative people possess (inspiration by spiritual contact with other people or spiritual beings).' But he who speaks about divine gifts in this context, does not understand Paracelsus' spiritual message. It was far from Paracelsus to call these

Five hundred years ago, Paracelsus was not accepted with his holistic medicine. Nowadays, he is an authority in this field

‘faculties in the light of nature’ divine gifts. He said: ‘Just as eating nourishes and refreshes the body, the external world grants the human being his intellect, his art and his wisdom and skill, and this does not originate from God’s special grace, but from the light of nature.’

Paracelsus wanted to make it clear that the whole pantheon of spiritual and supersensory powers were natural tricks, acquired in the light of nature. The light of nature may be very powerful and may lead us to great wisdom, but it is transient and, as Paracelsus called it, even fatal. The light of nature is not divine, because God is eternal. The eternal, divine Light surpasses the light of nature.

Paracelsus: ‘There are two types of wisdom in this world, an eternal one and a fatal one. The eternal one directly originates from the Light of the Holy Spirit, while the other one stems directly from the light of nature. The wisdom from the Light of the Holy Spirit contains only one being, which is the right, indivisible wisdom, but that from the light of nature contains two types, the good and the evil wisdom.’

To many people, God was an explanation for what was not comprehended, a solution for inexplicable phenomena. In the past, when countless natural phenomena, like for instance lightning,

were terrifying and inexplicable, they were ascribed to God. Later, science was able to explain these phenomena, so that the scope of the divine realm became ever smaller. Yet, with regard to the supersensory aspect, we are not very far removed from the Middle Ages. There are many supersensory, wondrous gifts that are ascribed to a divine influence. At the time, the sciences demystified all natural phenomena by rational explanations. In the same way, Paracelsus appeared and destroyed the images of God still left with his *Philosophia sagax*. The *Sagax* is like a sharp axe, with which he smashed our delusion of God and our limited images of God.

Five hundred years ago, Paracelsus was not accepted with his holistic medicine. Nowadays, he is an authority in this field. Many honour him as a great pioneer. But this holistic medicine was only a part of his mission. His main message was and is transmitting a true concept of God. To this end, first the delusion of God had to be broken up. He had to explain in detail the specific supersensory realms, so that no one would any longer be able to say that the faculties in the light of nature, however sublime, were divine gifts.

Paracelsus: ‘Learn to separate the eternal wisdom from the useless one, and to recognise both, because otherwise, this will remain a great error.

For it is an important point that many of you write about eternal wisdom, but are not born from eternal wisdom.’ We have to be born to eternal wisdom. And he continued: ‘And also remember that there are two souls in a human being, the eternal and the natural one, which are two lives, one of which is subject to death and the other withstands death...

The same is true for the multiple spirit, the eternal and the natural one. What is natural, is in the body of the stars, and the body of the stars is in what is physical, and in this way, they together form one human being, but a dual body, because there are two carnal bodies on earth, one from Adam and one from the new birth by Christ, which sees God.’

Tirelessly, Paracelsus urged us to develop our skills in the light of nature and to lead an active life, thus augmenting knowledge and the arts. With the same urge, he explained that all these skills are imperfect and do not lead to true life. Paracelsus’ main aim was to point people to the essence, the soul basis, of which the germ is to be found in the heart, in the spirit of the image. There we can find the beginning of a new birth, of the immortal human being. This new human being has not only an immortal soul, but also a new, immortal body. Paracelsus’ true message, which has hardly been understood to this day, was to point to this eternal human being.

THE ETERNAL In general, we often speak of being reborn. After a serious illness, after a mental purification, after a seemingly disastrous event

has ended well, we may often feel reborn. These examples should be understood in the sense of the renewal of the soul, comparable to the renovation of an old house. However, Paracelsus meant something quite different. He referred to the rebirth of the eternal human being, not in the sense of the renewal of the soul, but fundamentally. He spoke of an imperishable substance, from which the new birth originates. In the same way, Paracelsus considered the human being. Now the question may crop up, whether any great mind may be called such a human being. There are two aspects, by which we can recognise this. Paracelsus said something about it, which turns our ordinary ideas of a being devoted to God wholly upside down. The divine spirit breaks up nature and the natural human being, and only works on the new birth. Therefore, a master, building in our world, works on the basis of the light of nature, and not on the basis of the eternal light. A messenger of the eternal light affects this nature and the mortal human being and destroys any delusion. His constructive power only works on what is eternal in us. Christ, too, is quoted in this sense: ‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.’

Paracelsus was a messenger of the divine light, a Theophrastus. He did not bring peace or beautiful words. He unceasingly urged us to distinguish, to examine, to achieve insight, to separate the true light from the false light. He brought us the sword in order to cure us from any delusion and errors ✪

there is no empty space

Space, which human beings experience as wholly empty, is actually not empty according to modern physics. It also appears that the image we have formed of the universe is fantasy, a representation that is not supported by reality.

EXERCISES IN THINKING DIFFERENTLY

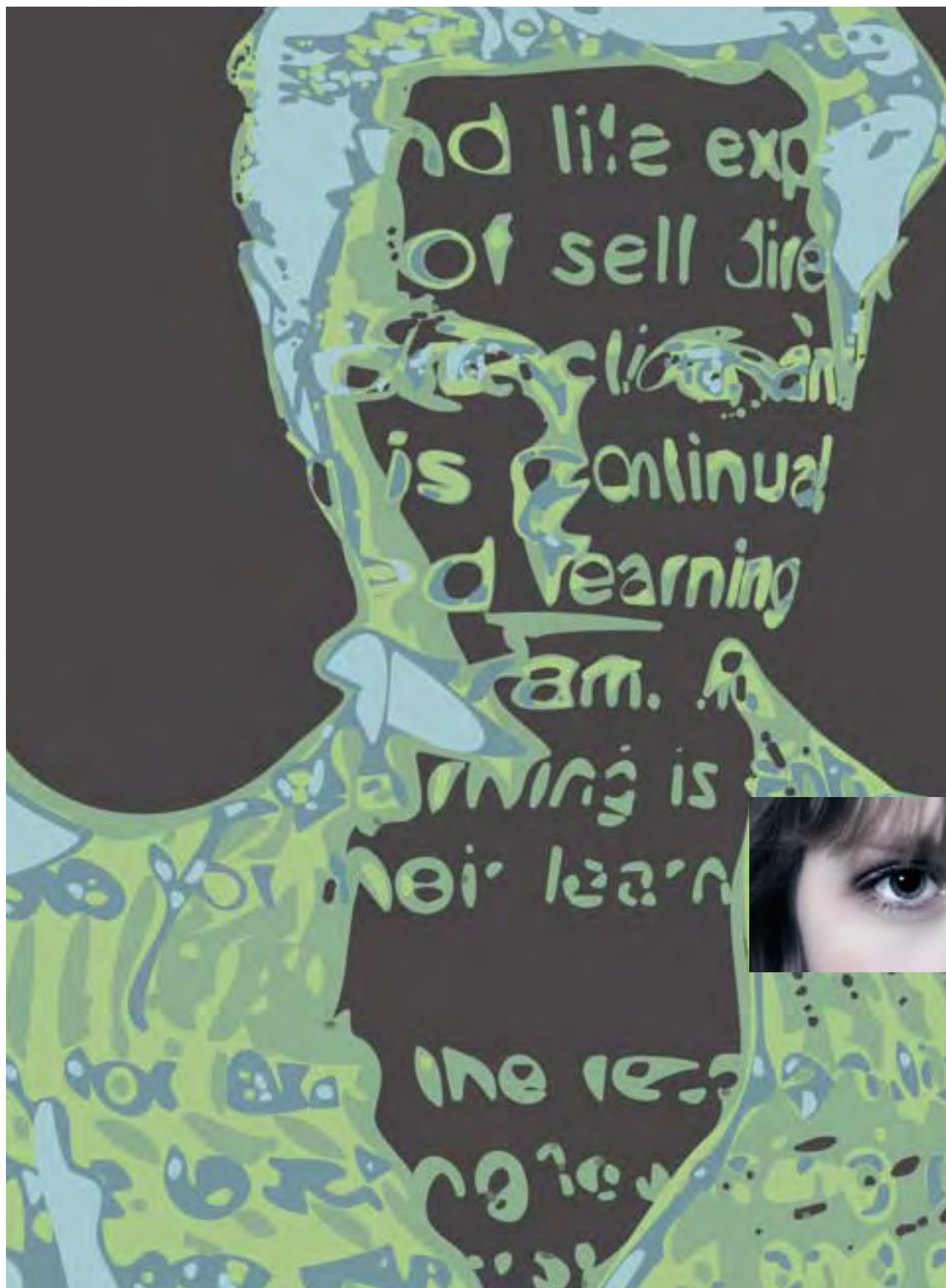
Modern physics claims that in an empty space, particles are generated and disappear continuously. How is this possible? Particles exist in pairs, particles and antiparticles. Therefore, linked with the electron, there is an anti-electron called positron. But also other particles are linked with antiparticles. When a particle is combined with an antiparticle, they neutralise each other's existence. Combined, they are therefore nothing in our eyes. In this context, it is a peculiar phenomenon that in our universe, the antiparticles form a minority. This is fortunate, because otherwise no visible creation would be possible.

with an imperceptible substance, which is able to split into existence and anti-existence.

ZERO POINT ENERGY This brings us to the zero point energy in the universe. According to the theory of relativity, the universe is filled with energy. This energy even exists when there is no longer any motion in the universe. We experience movement of micro-matter as temperature. When there is no longer any movement, this means that the absolute temperature is zero. Then there is absolute rest. Even then, the zero point energy is present. Because of its presence at the absolute temperature of zero, this energy is called

In 'empty' space, particles as well as antiparticles are continuously generated. It is as if creation takes place continually. The particles and antiparticles, generated in this way, often unite after a short while and together disappear into nothingness, that is, into what we experience as nothingness. We must nevertheless draw the conclusion that so-called empty space, from which particles are generated continuously, cannot be really empty, even if we experience this space as empty. The image presents itself of an 'empty' space, filled

zero point energy or the zero point field. Other synonyms are vacuum energy and free energy. The word vacuum energy refers to the fact that 'empty' space is filled with it. This zero point energy, which is everywhere around us and in us, has an enormous intensity. On theoretical grounds, Einstein showed that mass and energy are the same. It is possible to convert them into each other with the formula $E=mc^2$. If the energy of 1 cm³ zero point energy could be converted into mass with this formula,



Imagination

Imagination massages our thinking. Our ideas are wholly determined by our sensory experiences. From an early age, we are familiar with the world around us, including our bodies, as they present themselves in a certain way to us via our senses.

We consider it quite natural that the world looks as we have it in mind. We even extend the ideas, formed by our everyday perception, to the world of what is extremely small and to the world of what is extremely large.

This 'extrapolation' is pure imagination, because we are unable to perceive this small and large worlds.

Modern physics convincingly shows that this extension is incorrect.

Matter is energy

On theoretical grounds, Einstein concluded that matter is the same as energy. There is a famous formula that links matter and energy: $E=mc^2$. Here E is the energy that is, therefore, equal to mass m of the particle multiplied by the square of the velocity of the light c . Mass is what gives matter its inertia, the problem of beginning to move and the problem of slowing down. Mass very closely approaches weight, although it is not exactly the same. $E=mc^2$ tells us that matter is bound energy.

This energy of the mass is only released, when the particle is wholly or partly destroyed. As long as the particle remains intact, this energy remains bound in the mass. In a nuclear power plant, this energy in the form of mass enables the conversion of mass into electricity, but also the production of an atomic bomb or a hydrogen bomb.

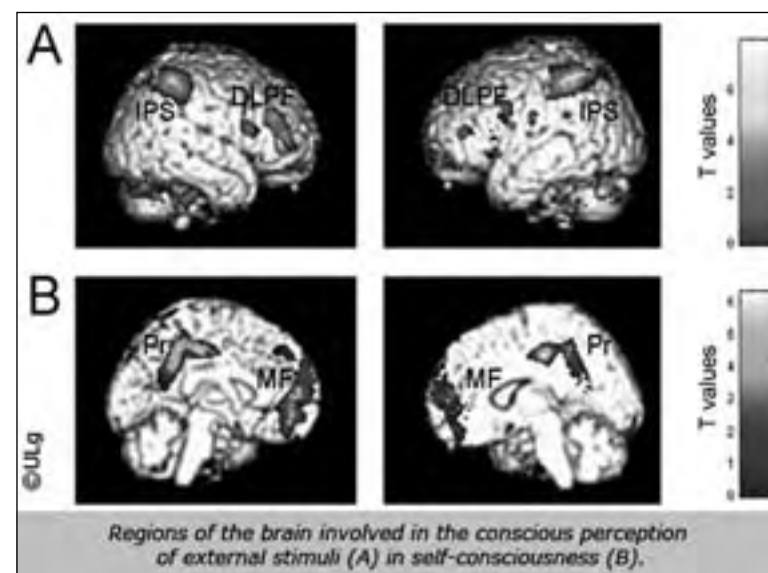
this would result in more mass than is available in our universe. Therefore, the energies, with which the human being is confronted in the manifested universe, form only a tiny ripple on this zero point energy. We may therefore consider our world a hardly visible ripple on an enormous ocean.

When we dwell upon this, we look quite differently at our world. And if this penetrates into our consciousness, an opening for change may occur in us. The latest insights concerning this phenomenon no longer refer to space and matter as two separate aspects of life. It rather is the case that space is where zero point energy is and vice versa. Space and zero point energy cannot be distinguished. Where there is one, there also is the other. They do not appear separately. In this way, modern science confirms the Rosicrucian adage 'there is no empty space'.

NEW POINTS OF VIEW As matter is only a minute grimace of the zero ocean, we can quite well imagine that this ocean can also show other faces. Why would our universe have the only possible form that a universe might take? When we use our imagination, we will perhaps understand that

quite different forms of existence, and also of life, may occur. And would it not be possible that the grimace of the zero ocean, in which we are conscious, is actually determined by the collective thinking, feeling and acting of thinking entities? Let us keep an open mind to such possibilities, even if we experience them as uncertainties.

THE STEP TO CONSCIOUSNESS – ANALOGY BETWEEN QUANTUM PHYSICS AND THE ESOTERIC MODEL Time and again, archaeological or anthropological studies show that in the past, humanity had a well-defined image of a supersensory world. Certainly in antiquity, during which people did not have materialistic explanations of their experienced reality, usually highly developed ideas existed about the supersensory world. And even nowadays, there are cultures in which people still have such a strong link with the ancient wisdom that such models of thinking are able to persist. Traditionally, this 'knowledge' was protected from being generally used by unauthorised people, and was thus called esoteric. There is an analogy between esoteric insight into so-called 'tenuous matter' and the energy levels from quantum physics.



Parts of the brain involved in the conscious perception of external impulses (A) and of self-consciousness (B)

The ancient traditions usually distinguished four levels of densification of matter:

- gross-material matter. This is the form of matter that is visible and tangible for ordinary people.
- etheric matter. Etheric matter constitutes the energy field, from which gross-material matter receives its structure.
- astral matter or desire matter. This is more tenuous than etheric matter, and determines its quality.
- mental matter or thinking matter. This is a still more tenuous form.

These last three forms are only visible or tangible for people with a corresponding power of perception.

The increasingly tenuous forms of matter occur with different levels of vibration. In this context, it is said that the more tenuous matter is, the higher the level of vibration that is possible in that matter. When we confront these traditional images of supersensory matter with the theory of quantum physics, we see that we can discover a parallel between these two. Such a parallel may be limited to pure analogy, but it is also possible that the same reality is described in two different ways. Anyway, the esoteric model often proves to

be more practical for understanding the behaviour and fate of living beings than the model of quantum physics.

But there is another parallel.

Universal thinking assumes that tenuous matter is the cause of somewhat less tenuous matter. Mental matter permeates astral matter and determines its behaviour. In its turn, astral matter causes etheric matter and etheric matter permeates and determines gross matter. At the same time, a transformation of properties, anchored in the more tenuous forms of matter, takes place to grosser forms of matter.

In quantum physics, particles of gross matter collide with each other. From the type, the energy and the direction of the products of the collision, a more tenuous structure emerges. The latter is interpreted as building material for gross matter. Here, too, there seems to be a hierarchical model of matter: through energetic processes, more tenuous matter is concentrated to grosser matter. Continuing this train of thought, we can also understand that the more tenuous matter or the higher vibration not only determines the form of gross matter, but that also the properties of grosser matter are determined by more tenuous matter.



the captivity of the senses

The human brain may be divided into three parts, according to their appearance in time:
the archaic or reptile brain
the mammal or limbic brain
the neo-cortex or cerebral cortex

400 million years ago, the reptile brain appeared for the first time in fishes and developed in amphibians and reptiles about 250 million years ago.

It is situated above the neck. It consists of the brainstem and the cerebellum. It is the brain of action and reaction. Controlled by the instincts, it contains the hereditary knowledge of the involuntary nervous system. It possesses an arsenal of behavioural patterns in case of danger, simple actions: attack or flight. It ensures the survival of the organism by controlling the vital functions: sleeping, eating, drinking, sexual activity and also marking its territory. It has a short-term memory and, therefore, a reflex reaction. The reptile brain does not have emotions, does not make decisions; everything is instinctive.

The limbic brain or emotional brain appeared between 150 and 300 million years ago in mammals. It is found above the reptile brain, on the inside of both cerebral hemispheres. All structures are mutually linked through hormones, neurotransmitters and peptides. The role of the emotional brain is dealing with and controlling affections and emotions, for instance concerning the progeny, the family group, etc. It records whether experiences are pleasant or not. Logic cannot penetrate it. The limbic brain works as a filter; it records the experiences and converts them into automatic reflexes; it stores memories, which are pre-

Portrait of a Woman
Amadeo Modigliani, Cleveland Museum of Art, 1917-18

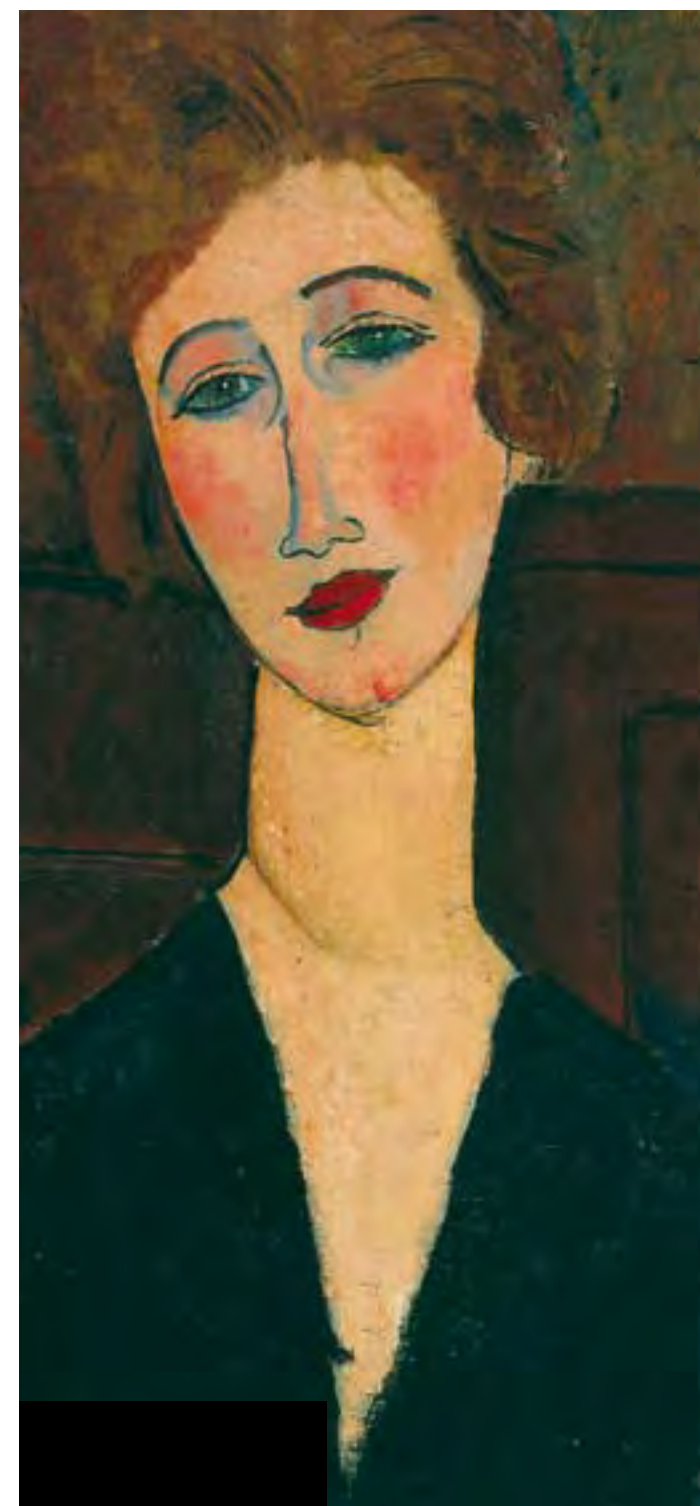
La Scapigliata
(the woman with the uncombed hair)
Leonardo da Vinci, 1508

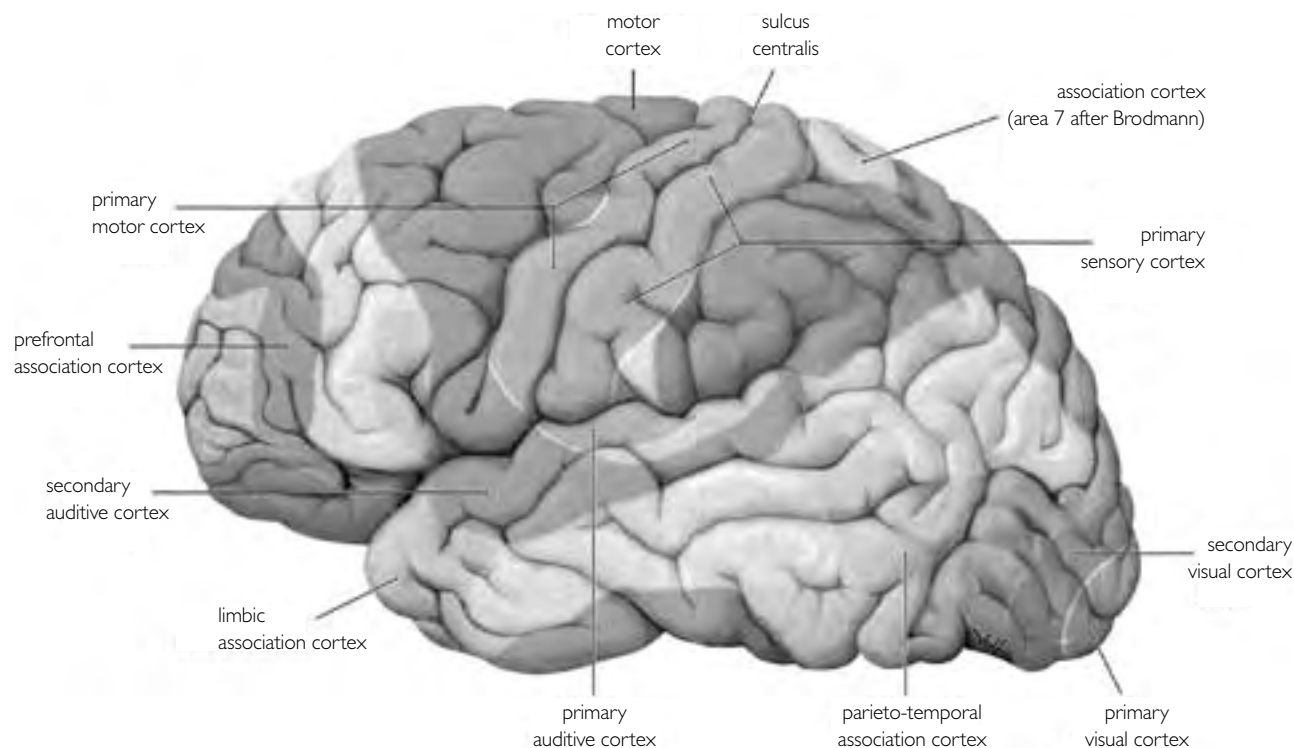


Here we touch the essence of the universal teachings. This is expressed by 'as above, so below'. The properties of grosser matter are determined by more tenuous matter. We can extend this argument to our body. It may be said of each organ that it not only has a gross-material function, but also one or more tenuous ones. Psychosomatic complaints are a result of this.

MANIFESTATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS AS AN INSTRUMENT OF LIFE Some people consider consciousness purely a product of brain activity. Others see it as an immaterial property. However, if we assume that higher states of vibration and more tenuous matter cause the behaviour of grosser matter, we will see that it is not either brain activity or immaterial properties, but rather brain activity as well as immaterial properties. The brain then acts as an interface, a transformation

layer, which converts the more tenuous reality into our gross-material corporality. The more tenuous reality is activated in our body. In this way, this more tenuous reality is able to manifest itself and can, in addition, be confronted with other realities. What is the result? It is experience and the development of the consciousness! This view is supported by recent research into near-death experiences. It appears to be possible to preserve consciousness after the brain activity has ceased. Even the memory is preserved, because a number of people, who had experienced a heart attack, during which also EEG measurements no longer showed any brain activity, were later quite aware of events that they had experienced during their brain arrest. All of this presents us with a broad range of possibilities to deepen our insight into the purpose of life ☸





Through the neo-cortex, we are aware that we have consciousness, that we exist, and that we know ourselves

served for a long time. It forms the storehouse of our knowledge. It takes care of our survival by a proper adaptation to our social environment; by empathy, adaptation to the group, convictions and motivating mechanisms: it enables us to experience joy or sadness, and to experience success or failure.

The limbic system is slower than the reptile brain; we are aware of our emotional reactions, even if we are not aware of their significance. This is why it is very difficult to change it. Our emotions are expressed beyond our control: palpitations, goose pimples, perspiration, blushing, stomach ache, et cetera. Through the limbic system, we involuntarily react to old memories, followed by behaviour with a strong emotional element, inaccessible to any logic. This is why experiences from the past have such a large influence in our life. The limbic brain has links with both other parts of the brain. If a certain experience blocks us or causes an unpleasant sensation, this emotion will activate the reptile brain and check the neo-cortex, so that our power of reasoning, of putting things into per-

spective and of learning will be seriously weakened. However, if the experience feels pleasant, the neo-cortex is stimulated and the powers of the brain are used in an optimal way. Thus the limbic system plays a fundamental part in our emotions, as well as in the field of the endocrine system and in the physical organs.

The neo-cortex appeared between two and three million years ago in the primates, in the human species. Situated above the reptile and limbic brain, it contains eighty percent of the total brain mass. This is why the neo-cortex is also called the cerebrum. What is really new in the human being is its size and the multitude of structures linked with it: the new brain has an unprecedented flexibility, which was lacking in the 'old' brain. Through the neo-cortex, we are aware that we have consciousness, that we exist, and that we know ourselves. It plays an essential role in our medium to long-term memory that stores all important events in our lives, and that remembers the meaning of words and acquired skills. However, our memory is far from infallible. It sometimes deforms facts and its reliability

decreases with time. The neo-cortex forms the functional basis of our imagination. Aware of our emotions, we interpret them via our language and our values. Generally speaking, the left hemisphere is specialised in linguistic faculties: speech, listening, writing, reading, and the right hemisphere in spatial skills: drawing, recognising familiar objects or faces, sense of direction, etc.

The neo-cortex is the seat of our logical and rational thinking and our arguments. It is the place in our brain where the 'intelligence' develops, where our neurons make new connections every time we understand something. It imagines, compares, has memories, but it also forgets and makes mistakes!

In order to control a situation, the neo-cortex is able to check the reptile and limbic brain. It enables us to express our instincts politely; it sublimates flight into 'withdrawal', and aggression into militancy or into self-confidence. It dims and filters the automatisms of the other two parts of the brain. However, do not be mistaken, for although it has imagination and is able to anticipate, it is also vulnerable and dependent on judgements, which are always relative and often absolutely wrong.

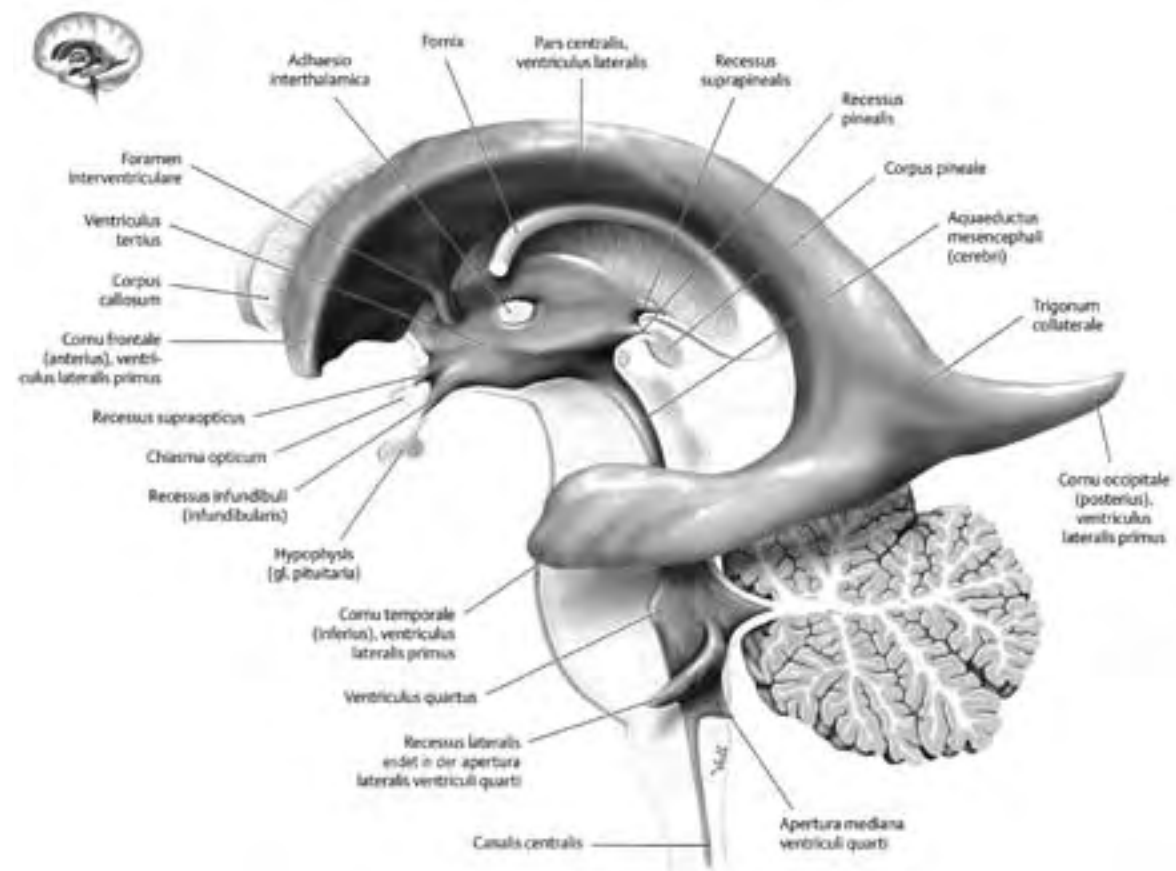
An example: it is able to create an imaginary, tragic scenario and to unleash the aggression of the reptile brain or, in the opposite case, to underestimate a danger and prevent adequate defensive reactions from being initiated. Under stress,

the neo-cortex will therefore not always function properly: it analyses badly, hesitates, or does not anticipate. When the stress becomes too much, the other two parts of the brain will take over.

Another example: a dog growls and bares its teeth. What does the reptile brain do? Fear is recognised and leads to action. Either we flee or we attack, or the limbic system takes over, while the fear becomes so great that it paralyses us. Or the neo-cortex takes the initiative: it analyses the situation, considers it and finds a strategy like, for instance, speaking softly and very calmly, withdrawing from the dog and seeking a hiding-place. The cooperation between the three parts of the brain is, therefore, not always perfect, so that sometimes hilarious situations arise. Thus we can imagine that we owe our humour to the neo-cortex.

CONDITIONED BY OUR SENSES We said that the limbic system is the part of the brain that is linked with our emotions. Science is not unanimous with regard to all structures, of which the brain consists. Generally speaking, it is assumed that its main structures are situated in the intermediate part of the rear brain. This is the zone where all information from the body ascends through the spinal column and subsequently enters the brain, after which the motor commands descend again to the corresponding organs or muscles. It is also the centre, where the information sent from the specific sensory organs to the brain is processed.

The limbic system transmits, among other things, emotions to the endocrine glands (the pituitary gland, the adrenal glands, the thyroid gland) via neurotransmitters and neuropeptides



Countless connections between the limbic system and the lower cerebral system (the spinal cord) and the higher one (the neo-cortex) enable the limbic centre to integrate information and to react to the wide range of stimuli from the outside world. In this way, our whole emotional life is determined on the level of the brain, just as this is the case with the various sensory organs. We hear with our ears, we see with our eyes, but the brain interprets the sounds and the light impressions.

This whole stream of information between the sensory cells and the nerve cells occurs through chemical substances. We call these substances neurotransmitters and neuropeptides. They are locally produced in the nerve endings. With the help of these substances, nerve cells communicate with each other, but also with other cells like those of the muscles and the glands. They form the language of the nervous system as it were. On the basis of this communication, we can also understand the relationship between the

nervous system, the hormonal system and the immune system, the three coordinating keys to our identity. The immune system fulfils the most complex function of the magnificent machine which the human body is. If it performs its role properly, it is able to identify and eliminate invaders (or foreign bodies). From the model, by which the immune system continuously makes decisions between I and not-I, we may understand that the immune system is actually our business card, our biological I that distinguishes us from any other I on earth.

Let us now study the connections between these three systems to ascertain the role that our emotions and convictions play. Recent research seems to show that any thought and any emotion causes chemical and electrical transformations, which can be measured in the brain and everywhere in the body.

As mentioned before, an emotional reaction is inclined to concentrate in the limbic system,

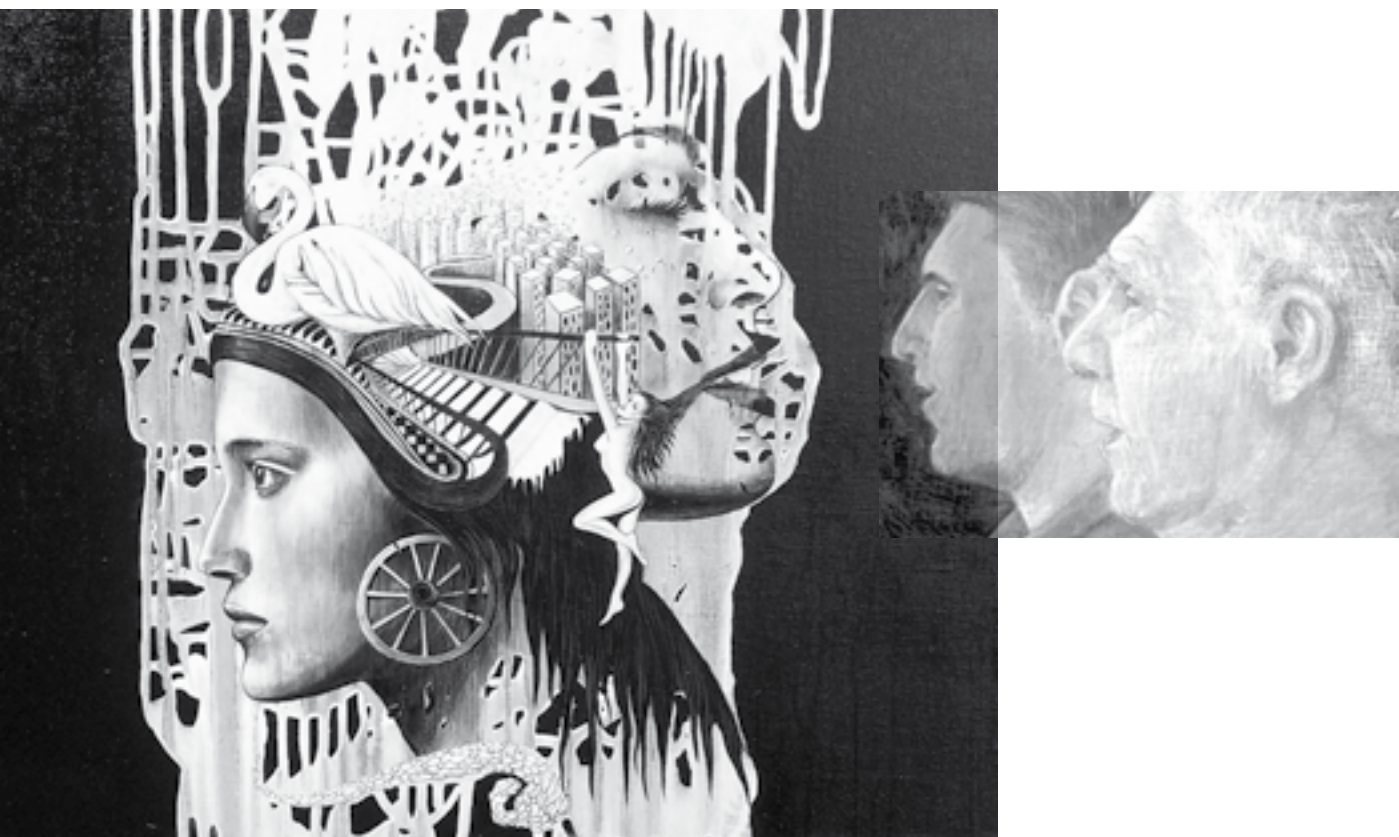
which will transmit the message to the endocrine glands (the pituitary gland, the adrenal glands, the thyroid gland etc.) via neurotransmitters and neuropeptides. And what is interesting is that the monocytes, cells that are the key elements of the immune system, surround the places where these neurotransmitters are received. In this way, the immune system and the nervous system are linked via these monocytes. Thus, the monocytes forge the link between the memory of the brain and the mysterious memory of the immune system! It shows how strongly the mental and physical aspects are linked. Later, we will also see that suppressed emotions, stored in the body, play a very important role in our mental conditioning, not to mention our emotional captivity.

How does this look 'concretely'? We are confronted with a new scientific paradigm. Currently, we know that almost all body cells have thousands of receptors that are able to receive signals from their environment. They are so numerous

that forty percent of our DNA is focused on ensuring that these receptors are exactly copied from one generation to the next. Once the information is received by the receptors, it is sent on to the cell nucleus and a process is started. This may be: repairing damage, cell reproduction, defence against the enemy, etc.

Every signal is transmitted by what science calls 'transfer substances', which consist of neurotransmitters, hormones and peptides. They are 'information' substances. They stem from the brain, the intestines, the heart, the reproductive organs, briefly, from almost all parts of the body. In this way, the communication from one cell to the next takes place, and a communication network is formed.

We know approximately 200 peptides, and each of them emits a complex, emotional spectrum: joy, anger, relaxation, soothing of pain, etc. In the past, we learned that 'transfer substances' work like a key that matches only one, unique



lock, the only receptor possible. Currently, we speak of the attraction between the transfer substance and the receptor, based on vibration. The receptors move on the cell surface and their configuration continuously changes. This creates a vibration that resonates with the transfer substance with the same vibration. Thus they begin to vibrate together.

This phenomenon is not an isolated phenomenon, but stems from a group of cells; it causes a cellular resonance, which has a strong power of attraction. Just as a violin string causes the neighbouring violins to vibrate with the same vibration, a synchronisation of vibrations develops that will ultimately result in a coherent whole. All reach the same frequency. Through cellular resonance, our physical body is changed by the emotions we experience. This phenomenon is very important, because it explains why our blood shows, due to the biochemical impression of our emotions, a certain quality of vibration, which subsequently determines our

state of consciousness. This conclusion wholly corresponds to the ancient motto: 'State of consciousness is state of the blood.'

We also know that the transfer substances, which are emotionally charged, unleash a stream of electricity or ions that is spread all over the body. In this way, they influence the sensitivity threshold of the brain, so that, consequently, the peptides or transfer substances of the emotion directly affect our thinking. The sensitivity threshold of the brain cells determines the extent to which the brain or our thinking is susceptible to certain information. This explains why there is so much disagreement between people. The sensitivity threshold may significantly differ from one person to the next.

The mentioned 'transfer substances' are alternately particle and wave, just like light. They are material substances, measurable in our body, but they are also waves. By our emotional interactions, they move like waves between human

Is it our brain that drives us to unceasing and repeated struggle with the same problems, with the same shortcomings, in an emotional state that, in its turn, keeps our mind captive?

beings. Thus we come back to quantum physics! We might say that our body is able to accomplish transformations of a quantum nature at any moment. This is why this also explains why the transfer of information in the body can occur with such enormous speed.

Summarising, we conclude that our consciousness is to a large extent determined by our emotional brain, which integrates all information from the whole body and links it with the subconscious memory of all earlier experiences. In this way, our most intimate convictions, our innermost faith and our behaviour are involuntarily determined by our earlier experiences.

PERPETUAL RENEWAL However, have we now, consciously or unconsciously, been conditioned by our brain to the extent that we have to struggle unceasingly and repeatedly with the same problems, with the same shortcomings, as the result of an emotional state that keeps us captive? Is no escape possible from this captivity of biological mechanisms? Are we only reactive machines, which are unceasingly occupied building defence systems that are ultimately etched onto our mind and our body?

We did not yet mention one other aspect: our desires. Our longing to survive, our self-maintenance, controls our thinking and therefore our feelings and reactions. Our primary desires can be found in our abdominal and pelvic organs. This area is also called the spleen-liver system

that is directly linked with our reptile brain. In this life, a human being always has to face dangers, physical as well as mental ones. The senses transmit the corresponding signals to the brain and interpret everything we experience, based on earlier impressions that are stored in the brain, particularly in the emotional brain. In its turn, the brain activates the systems of survival in order to enable us to maintain our identity, our ego, in particular. We therefore understand the extent, to which our consciousness, our whole state of life and our blood resonate and are kept in the same vibration as the ego.

Therefore, a breaking point will have to occur in the life of a human being to enable him to be liberated from the grasp of the drive to self-maintenance. When such a crucial moment arrives, he will perceive from within, from the depth of his soul, the illusion and the emptiness of this world. At that moment, the heart is susceptible to a new power, to the energy from another nature, of which the nucleus, which we sometimes call the spirit-spark atom, is to be found in the heart.

When this liberating energy is able to circulate in the blood, the hormonal glands will produce other hormones, namely, hormones charged with this new energy. The pituitary gland and the pineal gland play a central role in this. These two glands, situated in the head, release their products directly into the blood, and react very strongly to the breaking and renewing energy,



what happens in the brain upon the **renewal** of the **consciousness**?

An attempt to follow the processes of change on the path of transfiguration anatomically

The human brain has the size of a coconut, the colour of raw liver and the consistency of butter. It consists of two hemispheres that are covered by a thin layer of pleated, grey tissue, the cerebral cortex. Every groove on this surface is called a sulcus; every bulge is called a gyrus. Both hemispheres are linked by the corpus callosum; this is a bridge, through which information is continuously shuttled to and fro. Each hemisphere is subdivided into four lobes, and this division is clearly marked by grooves or bulges.

DUALITY Each part of the brain is present in duplicate, except one tiny area, the size of a pea, the pineal gland, situated in the centre of the base of the brain. This is very significant as we will hear later.

What is the role of the brain in the process of renewal of the consciousness? This process begins in the heart, because there we find the eternal principle that we call the spirit-spark atom or the rose of the heart. The fire, ignited in the heart, can ascend to the head, where it flares up. In other words, the head, and therefore the brain, may become wholly influenced by the powers of renewal, rising up from the heart. The brain, and therefore our thinking, will then be attuned to the Light of the heart. This is called the unification of head and heart. When the light of eternity flares up in the heart and raises itself by aspiration and purification into the head, all structures of the brain can begin to work with this new power.



Our identity is formed by a continuous struggle to preserve our integrity. This struggle is inherent in the laws of our field of life.

which ascends via the blood from the heart to the head. Then a process begins that, first of all, starts with the purification of the heart, and that leads us to a reality, in which all crystallised images will dissolve by the fire of renewal, that is, by powers and energies from another nature.

Thus we establish that our identity is formed by a continuous struggle to preserve our integrity. This struggle is inherent in the laws of our field of life. Although we cannot escape the physical and chemical laws of this unshakeable nature, there is nevertheless the possibility to liberate ourselves from them. Then the available organic structures will at the crucial moment become

free to receive, to integrate and to emanate a wholly different nature. We might also say: spiritual life expresses an energy in which the ego does not exist. The energy of another principle, of another nature, which is not continuously transformed, flows into this 'new' life, according to the hermetic principle:

Receiving everything, relinquishing everything and in this way renewing everything ♾



In this way, we state nothing more or less than that the brain exists to become the place of contact for the spirit, the reception room for a notion of omnipresence. The primary point of contact is the pineal gland. In order to allow true renewal to occur, the schemes of the past, the old mental structures, will have to disappear. They must be dissolved and replaced by new ones, by a new state of consciousness. Now is the time to replace the sum total of these old schemes, the I, by a wholly new state of consciousness, a spirit-soul consciousness! In this way, we are able to surrender the old state of consciousness of our emotions, the state of our blood, to a wholly new power that fully transforms them. In addition, we also encounter another very important aspect in this context: we learn to relinquish again the new images, re-

ceived during this process. The hermetic motto of 'receiving everything, relinquishing everything and in this way renewing everything', becomes the motto of life of the person, who entrusts himself to the process of transfiguration. He is always prepared to let go of today's truth for tomorrow's higher truth.

In alchemy, this process is called *solve et coagula*, dissolve and combine, die and be regenerated. Which structure might constitute the link between the brain and the other organs, with the heart as the centre? Let us in this context examine the medulla oblongata more closely. The medulla is situated under the bridge that links the spinal cord and the brain. Above it, we find the cerebellum. Therefore, the medulla is, with respect to the forces flowing through it, situated in the direct sphere of influence of the

The medulla oblongata constitutes the link between the brain and the heart, as the centre of the other organs

cerebellum. The cerebellum has few autonomous, independent functions. It is, by the way, not absolutely necessary for our vital functions. They take care of our balance, our sense of direction and the coordination of our movements. J van Rijckenborgh called the cerebellum the transfer place of karmic influences. This will not surprise us, when we see that they are part of the reptile brain (developed approximately 400 million years ago), meaning that the entire history of the species is expressed in it. The medulla, the (partial) bridge and the hypothalamus control the autonomic nervous system. The latter is, among other things, responsible for the rhythm of the respiration.

THE RHYTHM OF RESPIRATION Usually, the rhythm of respiration functions automatically, meaning that the pectorals and the diaphragm work (rise and fall) automatically. The respiration occupies a specific place between conscious and unconscious processes, because it appears to be wholly unconscious, that is, wholly automatic, though it can also work controlled by the will. Thus we see that there is a relationship between medulla, respiration and consciousness. When the active forces (the energetic or ether forces) in the medulla change, the respiration and the consciousness change as well. From this, we may derive that a transformation of the consciousness (initiated from the heart) will first of all result in a transformation of the respiration with regard to the inhaled forces.

There are two ways of changing the respiration:

- via the medulla by the light, kindled in the heart

- by consciously using specific respiration techniques.

It will be clear that, if we influence our respiration on the basis of the old I-schemes, little change of consciousness will be able to occur. However if, after a process of purification, the new powers of the heart are able to link themselves with the medulla, a true transformation will take place, with the additional, glorious result that the compelling influence of the subconscious, stemming from the cerebellum, will become considerably smaller.

The result is 'room' (air) and a certain dissociation from the prominent influences from the past, the karma, the law of cause and effect. Since the new energies (or the pure, gnostic vibration) are activated in the medulla and create new room, inner silence becomes possible. The medulla increasingly opens to the new power; it is like an open chalice and the respiration cannot but follow and attune itself to it.

Can we now say that heart and head are in total harmony? Not just like that. To enable the unity of heart and head, the fiery power of renewal still has to rise up and be anchored in the space of the new consciousness.

Where is the seat of our consciousness?

It is generally assumed that the consciousness is situated in the brain, and most people would point to the area of the forehead, which is lying on the radiation axis of the pituitary gland. The

Karma and self-surrender

Dissociating from influences of the past is a highly spiritual law, ensuring that the divine plan will be accomplished.

Karma is not good or bad.

It acts in an impersonal way and is a great help, because it confronts a person with situations from the past (we reap, what we have sown), and

new experiences lead to knowledge and insight. In the process of inner transformation, the new energy, the fire of renewal, will be activated in the medulla at a certain moment. When we increasingly continue to listen to the new voice in the heart, we will no longer prevent the new powers or remove them from the system. Renewal

and forcing do not go together. We are unable to 'will' it, but we are able to admit it.

Through self-surrender, the power of the Gnosis flows through us, and the new voice of the heart resounds in the human being. We try not to force anything, but we 'allow it to happen', we become silent

pituitary gland is the central control organ, the control centre, of the endocrine system. There is an intense, mutual influence between the hormones (hormeon = messenger, from hormao = set in motion), the pituitary gland and the other endocrine glands. This means that the pituitary gland is serving our 'self-maintenance'. Also in another way, the anatomical structure of the pituitary gland can give us much insight. The pituitary gland is directly linked with the hypothalamus that controls it. This organ can be found in the fourth brain cavity, that is, in the central part. The pituitary gland belongs to the midbrain. When we examine the anatomical structure of the brain, it is clear that the pituitary gland with its stem is situated under the lower part of the cerebrum. The embryonic development of the pituitary gland shows a

peculiarity: the neurohypophysis, the rear lobe, consists of the same tissue as the hypothalamus, and is wholly controlled by it. The adenohypophysis, the front lobe, has another origin. It is formed from the same tissues as the oral cavity. Therefore, the pituitary gland is a gland with a double embryonic origin.

The rear lobe originates in the nervous system and the front lobe in the digestive system. The two parts form a unity.

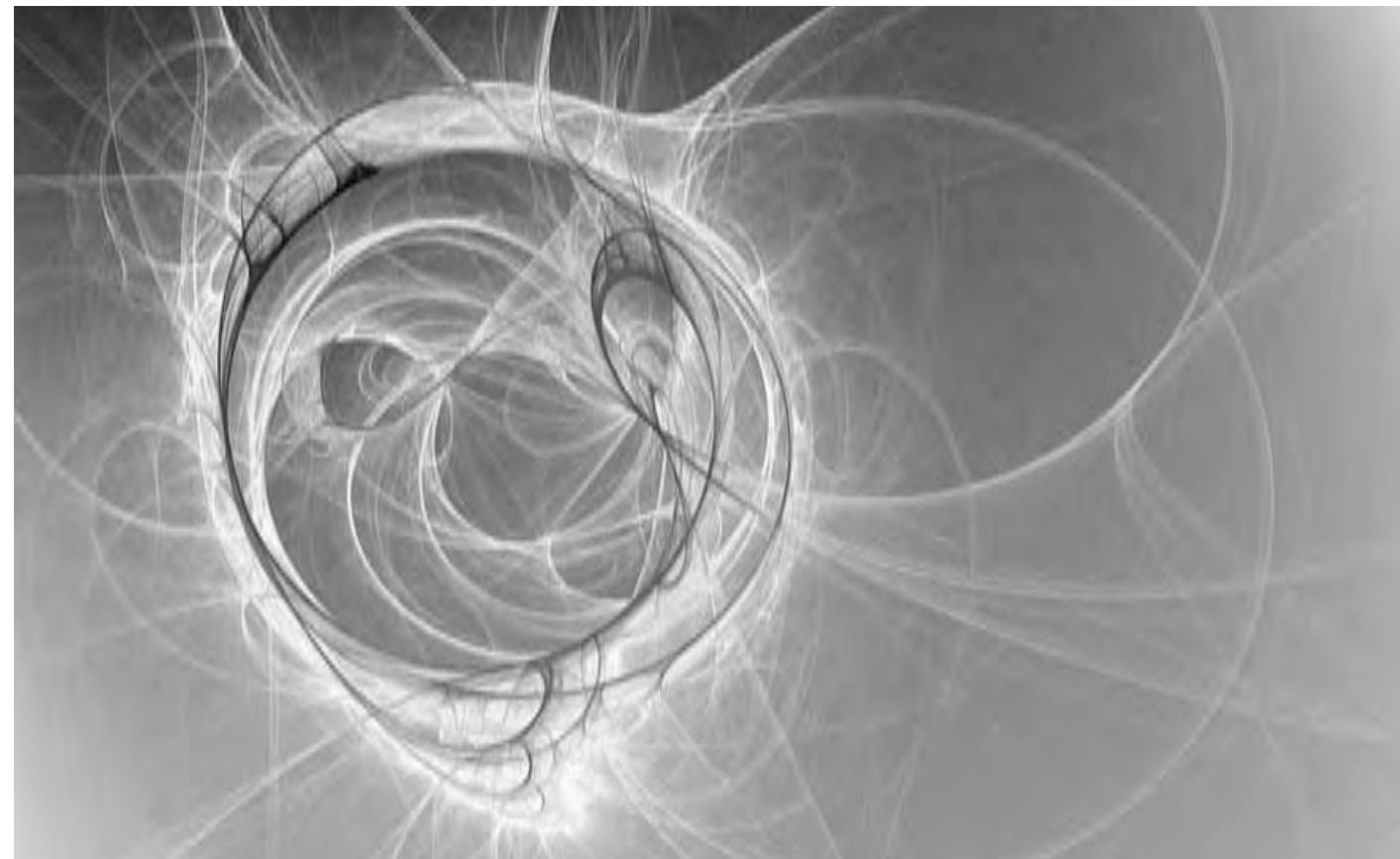
Another striking feature is that the front lobe is provided with blood by blood vessels (a network of capillary cavities), stemming from the entire blood circulation. This is not the case in other parts of the brain.

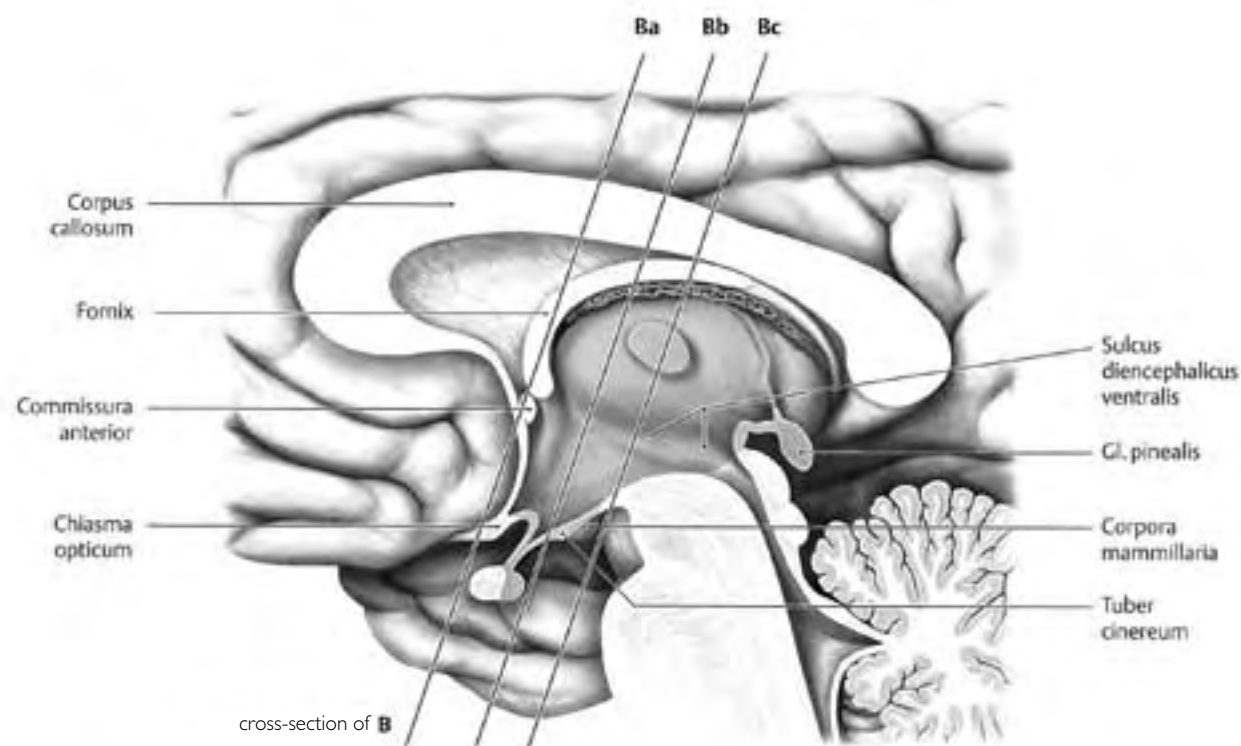
We might say that the blood circulation penetrates the front lobe. The rear lobe, the neurohypophysis, is formed by pure nerve tissue, just

as the other parts of the brain. But what is very special is that the blood-brain barrier is missing here, which hardly occurs in the other parts of the brain. The function of the blood-brain barrier is forming a special filter that prevents certain substances, which should not enter the brain, to penetrate it from the blood vessels. This means that the rear lobe (neurohypophysis) is open to extensive interaction with the brain cells. By its structure, the pituitary gland has the role of intermediary. This organ forms the intersection between the brain and the entire organism. We might speak of the 'heart' in the brain.

When we look at the structure of the front lobe with its particular system of vessels, we can imagine that another energy can reach the pituitary gland. 'The fiery power of renewal',

the energy of another nature, stemming from the purely spiritual atmosphere around the heart (from the spirit spark) and supplied by the blood circulation, now rises above the medulla. We can now understand how longing and purification may bring the human being into contact with the spiritual energy, of which we have spoken. Each lobe has a different orientation: the rear lobe or neurohypophysis is oriented towards the heart and the front lobe or adenohypophysis towards the head. Heart and head may reach a perfect unity: one can be the reflection of the other, like the two lobes of the pituitary gland. On the basis of perfect understanding, the seeking human being achieves an inner balance, because the consciousness is attuned to the longing for wisdom, and the desires, inherent in human nature, move into the





Cross-section of the midbrain (the limbic area), containing the pituitary gland (bottom left in the picture), the pineal gland and the medulla oblongata (bottom right in the picture)

background. He who seeks the one truth, will irrevocably be susceptible to its spiritual energy. This energy touches him and promotes the attunement of both lobes of the pituitary gland. Increasingly, they begin to vibrate at the same frequency, until the point where the unity of heart and head has been accomplished.

A NEW STATE OF LIFE When the pituitary gland exists permanently in the light of the spirit, a wholly new state of life has been achieved. The pituitary gland gradually guides the organism to the new life, wholly taken up into the Light. What was initially noticed as being far away, is now experienced as close by. The human being experiences a state of life in which unity, harmony, freedom and love are

realities. He shares in a truly renewed soul state, which in the past was called 'enlightenment'. In this state, the sensory organism is in harmony with the vibration of the soul world as far as possible.

THE PINEAL GLAND Next, we arrive at a very important organ in the process of spiritual awakening. During the development of the human embryo, the pineal gland is initially situated above the vertex (the top of the head), outside the brain. During the prenatal development, it moves inwardly to the centre of the brain. During the night, the pineal gland produces the hormone melatonin, which controls the rhythm of sleeping and waking. The process of becoming

The pineal gland

The pineal gland is the most sublime organ of perception and assimilation in a human being, constituting the gate for the entrance and activity of the spirit (the wedding hall in the Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross). The difference with the ordinary eye is that the pineal gland is able to 'inhale' not only the image, but also the impression of what is perceived, with all its related radiations and forces, and affirm them in the system.

The miraculous, hormone-producing organ, the size of a pea, consists of pinealocytes and astrocytes, which are embedded in a basic skeleton of connective tissue. We may imagine them as compact strings and round 'nests' of nerve cells. Early in human life, tissue of the pineal gland is lost and cysts and brain sand (layered proteins, impregnated with calcium salts) develop. By the

abundance of brain sand, it is possible to locate the pineal gland radiologically. In an esoteric sense, the golden grains of sand work as minuscule aerials. The pineal gland has a radiation field that is sometimes called the pineal aura. When an impulse or mental force enters the brain, it is, by one of the pineal crystals, assimilated and reflected inwardly to the seven brain cavities (seven mirrors), which pass them on in a flash to the heart and the spinal system and from there to the farthest corners of the body. The pineal centre forms the point of contact for and the abode of the spirit.

J van Rijckenborgh writes about this particular radiation field:

We are speaking of a radiation field, because it is luminous, but it actually is wonderfully magnetic and attracting. It is also of a sevenfold nature. We are

able to clearly distinguish seven colours, seven hues of light in this radiation field. When this field of perception is touched, and this occurs unceasingly, we can clearly see a play of changing colours and radiations in this field, in this pineal radiation, because the pineal part of the brain is the instrument of perception par excellence, the most important human feeler!

The pineal gland is sometimes compared to a rose or a lotus with sixty petals. The Alchemical Wedding, part II, describes that the first encounter between the candidate and the King and the Queen takes place there. The Soul has risen from the heart to offer the Spirit radiations of the Seven-Spirit an entrance to the seven brain cavities. Then Spirit and Soul have been united and the separation has then ended.

ing conscious is a process of awakening. Not being conscious during the night is followed by the conscious awakening in the daylight. The production of melatonin is a physiological process that is also found in animals. It controls a natural rhythm, but we may see an analogy when we consider the pineal gland the organ of becoming conscious.

The pineal gland is situated on the upper side of the fourfold tubercles or twin tubercles that form the rear side of the third cavity. The two upper tubercles have a darker hue than the lower ones and contain the centres of the optical reflexes. The two lower tubercles contain the centres of the acoustic reflexes. In these two sets of two reflex centres, optical and acoustical information is changed and

processed. The fact that the optical and acoustical links are situated in the anatomical vicinity of the pineal gland suggests that the pineal space is related to light and sound. The optical and acoustical structures are very important for forming our worldview and our system of values. What is the essence of light and sound? Through reflections of light, the eye of the nature-born person only sees the outside of things. The light seen with the eyes is unable to transmit any information to us about the interior of things.

Two things of a wholly different nature may have an identical aspect. When form, colour and radiation are identical, our eyes are unable to distinguish a bronze clock from an imitation plastic one, or can we? However, sound has a

Sound is less able to deceive us than light, because it emanates from the inside of things

wholly different quality. If we make both clocks resound, we can immediately distinguish them, with absolute certainty. Sound is less able to deceive us than light, because it emanates from the inside of things. This is why the spirit touches us first by the Word.

In the prologue of the Gospel of John, we read: 'In the beginning was the Word.' Through the word, we become acquainted with the quality, the essence of things and we can recognise what is good and true. He who allows himself to be guided by sound and not by the prattle of many words, by the tone that resounds from the innermost depth of all creatures, gains valuable experiences and matures. In summary, we might define the pineal gland as the 'Light-perceiving organ' and as the organ of the 'awakening of the human essence'. This organ contains the culmination point of the process of renewal. The Rosicrucians speak of the alchemical wedding. Christianity speaks of Golgotha, the place of the skull, symbolically also considered the place where these processes occur.

The pineal gland and the pituitary gland are linked by the space of the third cavity. The third cavity is situated in the centre of the whole system of brain cavities. Anatomy distinguishes four cavities in the brain, spaces containing cerebral and marrow fluid. However, our point

of departure is the existence of seven cavities. There are two lateral cavities, the third cavity and the 'sella turcica' constitute the fourth cavity. The fifth one is situated around the corpora mamaria, the sixth one is the pineal space and the seventh one corresponds to the fourth cavity, to be found under the cerebellum.

The brain-medulla fluid is also found in the spinal column and around the brain, which is wholly surrounded by fluid and is bathing in it as it were. This fluid offers nourishment to the brain, but it is generally assumed that it also works as a buffer for the brain. Perhaps it is more important than is currently assumed. The brain cells gradually disperse conductive substances via the brain-medulla fluid. This means that the cavities also have a function for transmitting information between the nerve cells. We can imagine that the cavities with fluids are spaces of information.

THE SPIRITUAL WEDDING Essentially, the fluid consists of water of a very magnetic nature. By scientific research into homeopathy, it has been shown that other substances are able to change water due to the hydrogen content of its structure. Then water receives other properties, another vibration key, which it is able to transmit. In this way, it is possible that the alchemi-

cal wedding may begin in the environment of the third cavity. At the end of this process, the union of the bride and the groom, the union of pituitary gland and pineal gland, the union of the new soul and the spirit, can take place. This process emanates a radiation activity that realises an immortal, luminous etheric-physical garment in the whole microcosm, in which the new human being, the primordial image of the original human being, is expressed indescribably majestically.

This trinity of spirit, soul and body is a three-fold, universal principle that alchemy calls sulphur, mercury and salt. Sulphur is non-flammable and represents the spirit; mercury is a fluid and symbolises the soul, and salt is solid matter, but also dissoluble and represents the body. This trinity appears in any process of creation and is present in everything that is created: sulphur, the spirit, is the energy, the fuel; mercury, the soul, is what is ignited, what is reflected, and salt, the body, is the result of combustion, it is the salt that is present in the ashes. Where is this sea, this mare, this matrix to be found? It is the water of the third cavity, uniting spirit and soul, pineal gland and pituitary gland.

We just spoke of seven brain cavities. Just as a human being has seven chakras and classical astrology speaks of seven planets, there are also

seven kinds of energy, seven spiritual energies that drive people to renewal and make it possible. These seven spiritual forces, the seven rays of the Seven-Spirit are buried in the seven brain cavities. In these seven cavities, the seven energies kindle their light, the seven candelabra of which John is speaking. The notion of omnipresence has been realised again ✨

A list of references may be requested from the editors

grief of the world



I still see you standing there in the railway station. It was cold and we both were waiting for our train. During our conversation, your eyes were darting to and fro. Suddenly, I saw, under your woollen hat, the face of fear and I got an image of how fate was pressing down on you. I, too, bear a heritage, though different than yours. Should I tell you? Do you feel up to being confronted with it? Like a flame of light, I have often been sent into this world of fermenting darkness. Time and again, on my parents' orders, I came to serve the one God, who is love. I have known many mystery schools; I have experienced the cosmic law of change by surrendering my soul to the eternal spirit. I no longer know how often I have died to live in truth. Splendid was the circle of the arch-Christianity, where I learned to bear the chalice with the jewel.

It is not knowing, but only an intuitive feeling that still links me with the power, which at the time irradiated the darkness with a bright light and attracted thousands of people, until the black power and its vassals marched against us. They stole the symbols, falsified their radiance, erased the traces of everything that was alive and replaced them with dry dogmas. Ever since, the Light bearers have been persecuted, and they who stole the Light, were the persecutors. During my travels to the mystery places of the earth, I also came to be in Persia, where I found Mani, who re-established the Christ mysteries. Mani, the able gardener who restored the destroyed rose garden, and who accepted me in his circle. The Seven-Spirit of the Paraclete irradiated us, and gave us the radiant lustre of a pure light vesture. We were free, even when, after Mani's vio-

lent death, the black horde sent most of us to our death. In this way, the work for the Light of the World began for us, during a large number of years in secret places and under ever changing names. In the name of Christ, we ensured that the crystal chalice with the jewel was always passed on. Just as in your case, my microcosmic heritage is lying behind a sealed door. If it were to open, you would be overcome by horror, faced with the boundless grief that the persecutors inflicted on the persecuted. This grief varied from fleeing to torture and death. This is why I leave this door closed and will open another door to you, though I only leave it ajar: do you hear the song of victory, arising from the hearts of countless people and resounding through all spheres of the cosmos to the innermost mystery? Or do you only hear a faint echo in your heart,

brother? In spite of this, it is evidence that something is vibrating within you. Despite this glorious song of the brothers and sisters in the service of the Light of Love, we have lost people. Therefore, do not hesitate to help those, who time and again proclaim the Light of the chalice and the jewel in the world, so that they do not do so in vain. Look, brother, I was able to tell you this today, on the day that the cosmic cross of light separates the persecutors from the persecuted, and simultaneously erects the luminous bridge between the abyss and the Light. On this winter evening at the station, I suddenly saw your fear, the fear of being separated, the incompatible fate of the former persecutor and the Light that the persecuted were bearing. And I, who once was persecuted, am suffering with you. Let us proceed together ✨

Sauntering the pavement or riding the country by-road, faces!

Faces of friendship, precision, caution, suavity, ideality,
The spiritual-prescient face, the always welcome
common benevolent face,

faces

The face of the singing of music, the grand faces of
natural lawyers
and judges broad at the back-top,
The faces of hunters and fishers bulged at the
brows, the shaved
blanch'd faces of orthodox citizens,
The pure, extravagant, yearning, questioning artist's
face,
The ugly face of some beautiful soul, the handsome
detested or despised face,
The sacred faces of infants, the illuminated face of
the mother of many children,
The face of an amour, the face of veneration,
The face as of a dream, the face of an immobile
rock,
The face withdrawn of its good and bad, a castrated
face,
A wild hawk, his wings clipp'd by the clipper,
A stallion that yielded at last to the thongs and knife
of the gelder:

Sauntering the pavement thus, or crossing the
ceaseless ferry, faces and faces and faces,
I see them and complain not, and am content with
all

•

Do you suppose I could be content with all if I
thought them their own finale?

This now is too lamentable a face for a man,
Some abject louse asking leave to be, cringing for it,
Some milk-nosed maggot blessing what lets it wrig
to its hole.

This face is a dog's snout sniffing for garbage,
Snakes nest in that mouth, I hear the sibilant threat.
This face is a haze more chill than the arctic sea,



A Poem by Walt Whitman

Its sleepy and wobbling icebergs crunch as they go.
This is a face of bitter herbs, this an emetic, they
need no label,
And more of the drug-shelf, laudanum, caoutchouc,
or hog's-lard.

This face is an epilepsy, its wordless tongue gives
out the unearthly cry,
Its veins down the neck distend, its eyes roll till they
show nothing but their whites,
Its teeth grit, the palms of the hands are cut by the
turn'd-in nails,
The man falls struggling and foaming to the ground,
while he speculates well.

This face is bitten by vermin and worms,
And this is some murderer's knife with a half-pull'd
scabbard.

This face owes to the sexton his dismalest fee,
An unceasing death-bell tolls there.

•

Features of my equals would you trick me with
your creas'd and cadaverous march?
Well, you cannot trick me.
I see your rounded never-erased flow,

I see 'neath the rims of your haggard and mean
disguises.
Splay and twist as you like, poke with the tangling
fores of fishes or rats,
You'll be unmuzzled, you certainly will.

I saw the face of the most smear'd and slobbering
idiot they had at the asylum,
And I knew for my consolation what they knew
not,
I knew of the agents that emptied and broke my
brother,
The same wait to clear the rubbish from the fallen
tenement,
And I shall look again in a score or two of ages,
And I shall meet the real landlord perfect and
unharm'd, every inch as good as myself.

•

The Lord advances, and yet advances,
Always the shadow in front, always the reach'd
hand bringing up the laggards.
Out of this face emerge banners and horses —
O superb! I see what is coming,

I see the high pioneer-caps, see staves of runners
clearing the way,
I hear victorious drums.

This face is a life-boat,
This is the face commanding and bearded, it asks
no odds of the rest,
This face is flavor'd fruit ready for eating,
This face of a healthy honest boy is the programme
of all good.
These faces bear testimony slumbering or awake,
They show their descent from the Master himself.
Off the word I have spoken I except not one--red,
white, black, are
all deific,

In each house is the ovum, it comes forth after a
thousand years.
Spots or cracks at the windows do not disturb me,
Tall and sufficient stand behind
and make signs to me,
I read the promise and patiently wait ☆

Parts from Walt Whitman's poem Faces (stanzas 1-4)

mani's guideline

Countless people are convinced that a higher power exists, an invisible power, a deity, by whom man and world were created. Believing in such a higher power implies that, in view of his original descent and apart from a mortal body, every human being also possesses some kind of immortal aspect.

In a time in which the more traditional religious ideas are losing their attraction and many people are striving for new forms of religiosity, this is a fascinating topic.

The intensity of this interest obviously strongly varies. We can draw this conclusion just like that, or we can focus on it very deliberately, and attempt to practise everything we consider valuable in it in our daily lives. And there is a large group that no longer wants to be bound again and to follow absolute truths or authorities: I myself will decide with what I occupy myself, and how I will fit it into my life.

It is not always clear to what extent we are being obstructed. Gaining insight into other religious beliefs in an uninhibited way is difficult, if we first have to remove the established ideas about God, the biblical figures and the content of the texts from the Bible, regardless whether we have a church background or not. Ecclesiastical religious ideas are rather strongly anchored in western culture.

The serious seeker also experiences the wide range of 'schools of thought' within the non-church

religious beliefs, the new forms of spirituality, as a problem. The field is complex, just as with the established forms of religion. Moreover, the leading figures of new spiritual schools of thought usually also experience a development themselves, due to their contacts with interested people. They broaden their views, and adapt them.

Therefore, an orientation into the way in which the unity between this higher power or the Light and the immortal aspect of the human being can be restored, is a quest, during which we will have to revise earlier ideas more than once. We will have to undertake this quest wholly independently. Only our own inner being can be the point of departure. Our own inner being is the place, where we, as human beings, can experience the divine aspect. Only this aspect, this element, is able to recognise the truth about God and its relationship with the human being. This is, therefore, the essential aspect of the human being, the nucleus, the soul.

Psychology only gives a few hints about what the soul is exactly. This science only outlines objectively knowable expressions of the human being (thinking, feeling, behaviour). For knowledge of the soul, we need other sources. The *Bhagavad Gita*, for example, speaks in the 'Eighth conversation between Krishna and Arjuna' about 'the soul' that is present in a human being apart from his I. And the inner essence of the soul is God.

In the sixteenth book of the *Corpus Hermeticum*,



Manichaean miniature of Mani's pupils from a manuscript, found in Turfan

'Hermes to Ammon: About the Soul', Hermes expresses the same idea. 'The soul' is a divine power, dwelling in the body, apart from 'a human soul', the personality.

In *The Coming New Man*, J van Rijckenborgh speaks about 'the original soul', created by the divine spirit from primordial matter, and about 'the mortal soul', stemming from the perishable world. Both are present in the human being.

From the three mentioned sources, it is clear that

there is an all-encompassing 'creator', lying outside the human being, but at the same time present in the human being. The statement 'the kingdom of God is within you' has, therefore, a radical meaning: two voices are 'speaking' in every human being, the divine one and the human, physical one. The obvious question is how we are able to distinguish these two 'voices', so that we will find a basis for our striving for the union of the most sublime, God, with the divine-human essence.

What matters in our investigation is our striving for the unity of what is most sublime, and because of which we expect, fear or know that a change of the human being as to thinking, feeling and acting will be imperative

Here, theory does not help us. After all, God is the highest reality. And this choice can, therefore, not be a theoretical activity, dissociated from our thinking, feeling and behaviour. Therefore, when we, in our quest for a new basis, become acquainted with any religious idea and try to use this knowledge in our daily lives, we are actually testing 'what touches us inwardly' or 'what appeals to our innermost being'. What matters in our quest is our striving for the unity of what is most sublime, and because of which we expect, fear or know that a change of the human being as to thinking, feeling and acting will be imperative. After all, the human being did not yet achieve this union. Therefore, the test is in doing it.

The description Mani (216–274) gave of the properties of 'the Light soul' and of the 'physical soul' is of an ultimate purity of argument, and may in this context form a practical guideline. To the founder of a Christian, gnostic religion, these two were fundamentally different. The Light soul originates from the powers of the kingdom of the Light and the soul of the body from the same dark matter as that from which the perishable world also originated. However, both souls have the same properties, but how these properties work out in practice differs fundamentally. The properties concerned are: consideration, thought, intellect, intuition, decision. The results demonstrate the fundamental difference between both souls. In the soul of the body, the following properties result: wrath, lack of faith, desire, hatred, stupidity. In the Light soul, they generate: patience, faith, perfection, love, wisdom!

Therefore, as human beings, who want to restore the unity of God with the inner divine element on the basis of thinking, feeling and acting, we can distinguish from which soul we are living and acting. Mani wrote the following about this in one of his hymns.

What should I do, o Light, so that I may truly live?

Give your hands rest, and clothe yourself with the pure truth.

*Give your consciousness love, give your mind faith,
give your thoughts perfection,
give your decision durability,
and your considerations wisdom.*

*Make room within you for the white-winged dove,
do not place a serpent next to her.*

*Do not make room for sadness or anger.
Conquer desire,
overcome self-elevation and arrogance,
do not desist in your Love to God.*

*With perfection, you become perfect.
With patience, you will bear everything.
With the Gnosis, you will understand everything.
Keep to the inner law.
Perfect your deeds.*

*Remain unbreakably faithful to these things,
for ever.*

And you will live, my soul ☸