

# pentagram

‘The human being will never be done with the interplay of changes. It has no beginning and no end. In keeping with natural laws, dialectics constitutes the borderland of the

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depths. And the human being finds himself in that borderland. But he does not need to go through it. He can rise from it. This underlies, perhaps, the human mistake: he wants to break through the boundary of the depths, but he must rise from it. The human being can leave this borderland any time, and raise himself. Many people are raising themselves from the depths all the time, but they fall back again with a thud. Until at last, in the end, sufficient insight has been born as a result of experience and conflict. And if there is insight, genuine insight, then there will also be sufficient power for raising oneself [...] And when a person has reached this point, he will begin to understand the words of Hermes:

*«Worship these words, my son, and revere them: there is only one worship, one way to serve and worship God, namely by not being evil.»'*

J van Rijckenborgh, *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis 4*, chapter xv, *The Sword of the Spirit*.

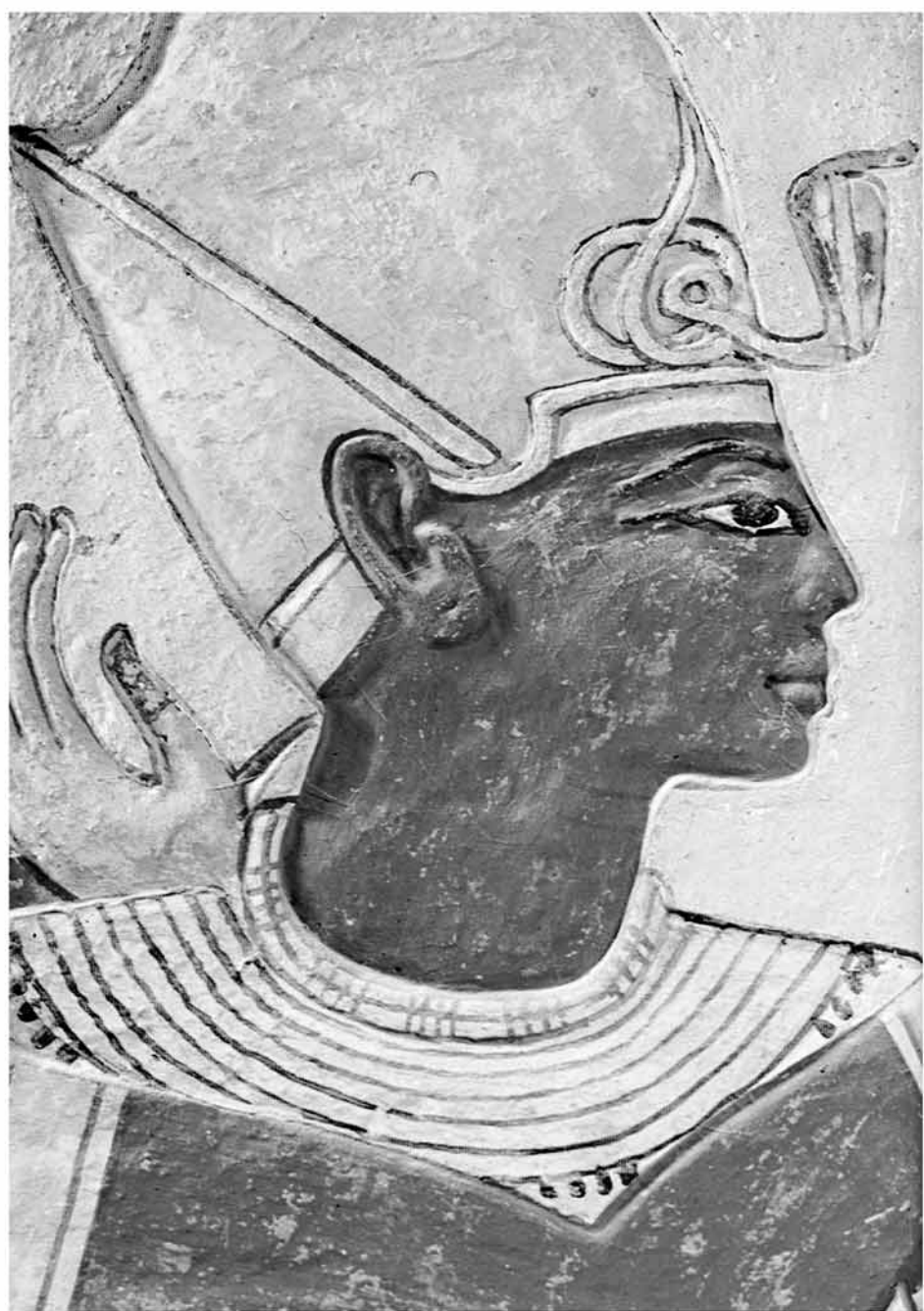
## Inhoud

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Cover: 13<sup>th</sup>-century tile picture from Takhti Sulayman, Iran

Page 1: The Ephesian, H Dal

Page 2: Prince Amon-Kher-Khopsh, son of Ramses III. Egyptian tomb painting from the 20<sup>th</sup> dynasty (1186-1069 BC)



# 'You beckon me, like in a dream'

*The things that endlessly surround us*

*suddenly they seem to come to a standstill.*

*There is music of steps, wondrously soft*

*You beckon me, like in a dream, to come to you.*

*There You are standing, to show me a way out*

*And Your hands radiant light of the moment*

*Now I see it, too: a crack in the gate of time*

*And a bridge of light shows itself, as wide as heaven*

Eugen Roth



# The archer

*'Will not the knowledge of the chief good, then, have a great influence on life? Shall we not, like archers who have a mark to aim at, be more likely to hit upon what is right? If so, we must try, in outline at least, to determine what it is, and of which of the sciences or capacities it is the object.'*<sup>1</sup>

ARISTOTELES, ETHICA, STANZA 1094

An archer aims his arrow at the mark, draws the bow with all his strength, and then, when he has increased the tension to its 'highest point', releases it. The arrow flies away and hits the mark. Bull's eye! Or not.

The sport-loving archer would, obviously, like to hit the mark. The meditative type is more concerned with the whole; rather the act itself is his mark. Because it is not essential from which motives he acts, this is what it is in principle all about: aiming – tensile force – releasing – hitting the mark. This way of acting can also be observed in everyday life.

## Which goal is envisaged?

'It is time for man to fix his goal. It is time for man to plant the germ of his highest hope. Still is his soil rich enough for it. But that soil will one day be poor and exhausted, and no lofty tree will any longer be able to grow thereon.

*Alas! there comes the time when man will no longer launch the arrow of his longing beyond man and the string of his bow will have unlearned to whizz!*

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE<sup>2</sup>

The goal we choose in life is always a very personal matter, because every human being has his own images of a goal, either only for himself, expressed inwardly, or lived outwardly, visible to everyone. But regardless of the way, in which someone deals with the images of his life's goal: the longing to reach a goal requires that we have faith in this goal and that we draw strength from this faith. In daily life, most of us know more or less exactly what we want to achieve. And here the word *want* to achieve is emphasised. On the basis of this wanting, we generate a great tensile force. We make a supreme effort to reach an as high as possible level, and to reach the envisaged goal exactly. It should be exactly as it is in our own conceptual universe. And this idea is one with the person, firmly connected, inseparable.

Most people have a firm belief in the realisation of the personality. This very belief is the basis on which every personal life rests. Are we able to realise the images of our goal permanently and accurately?

Unfortunately, this does not completely succeed. Certainly, goals can be reached, but the happiness of this achievement is not permanent and a whole series of disappointments will follow: '...too bad, you did not hit the mark.'

If you are the sports type, you train and try to increase the number of hits. If you are more meditatively inclined, you console yourself that the way is the goal and you are also glad about the failed shots, which at least provided experience.



Because of the never-ending series of new goals and the innate, continuous striving to reach them, you may become very tired. The faith in your own self-realisation is then no longer unconditional, but short interruptions occur in your hectic, daily activities. Then you are going to explore your inner horizon, because basically a human being wants to believe. In his innermost depth, the certainty vibrates that there must be an indisputable goal. And this certainty makes you ask the questions: 'Where do I find this goal? Where is the perfect link with the goal? When can I have accomplished everything – and can I be happy without desires? This result cannot be seen in my current life. What I perceive are achievements that are subsequently lost again. Holding on to them results in their loss. And releasing them may bring about a new encounter. There are good and bad goals, and often we cannot see which is which. Where is the solution of this problem? Where can we find a haven between the eternal motions to and fro? Where is the goal of my life, the eternal haven?'

### **The highest goal in life is recognised by the heart**

*'To die – to sleep;  
No more; – and by a sleep to say  
we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks.  
That flesh is heir to, it is a consummation  
devoutly to be wished.'* – WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE<sup>3</sup>

When you are able to continue asking until you hit the basis, the questions that lead to the core, this may quite well signify that you are experiencing an existential crisis. This crisis leads to the desire one day to be able to truly let go of everything. It is the homesickness for the perfect silence, for no longer wanting to exist. It may last a short moment, only a second. For a moment, there are no longer any goals that you want to reach at any cost. Being spontaneously focused on material and emotional matters stops for a moment, or for a longer period. A moment of standstill is created, a situation that we, as modern people, do not like to discover within ourselves and which we often immediately try to fill with new activities.

What happens when we do not fill this space with new, outward activities, but look into this silence in an open and 'creative' way?

*'I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come?'* — PSALM 121:1<sup>4</sup>

In this word from the Bible, our inner view is directed towards the highest possible point we can imagine. The mountaintop, from which we cannot go on, or which we may perhaps not be able to reach, is the spearhead of our longing. It is a spiritual orientation point, lying beyond our material comprehension. Here the mind experiences great problems in thinking along these lines. And we object: 'I cannot imagine this; and what I cannot imagine, I do not believe.' Thinking beyond our limited powers of imagination means opening our heart to an inspiring power, which works universally and breaks through boundaries. Opening our heart also means thinking with our heart. Generally speaking, it is good practice to leave thinking to the mind, but approaching a problem from the heart means breaking with quite some habitual thinking, which must be turned around. Do we believe in such a universal power that emanates from the source of life or which comes to us from the top of the mountain? Then we are standing in the middle of the revolution of our habitual thinking — that is unavoidable. And this will certainly result in our beginning to understand things with our heart.

There are two traditional ideas concerning the place of the universal source of life. One idea states that this place is infinitely far away from us, the other that it is present everywhere and, therefore, very near to us. Both ideas have a certain claim to correctness and each has its own merits, because the material world is not universal.

Because matter has spatial limits, there is a beginning and an end. Universal means *all-encompassing*, for everywhere where the material world is not, the universal world moves, and encloses *and* wholly penetrates the material world. Thus matter, i. e. space caught in time, is

continuously 'moved' by the universal power, Hermes says. It is the circle of eternity that encompasses everything. This circle is the place and, at the same time, the central goal of our faith. It is infinitely far removed from human existence and is simultaneously omnipresent, totally individually in every human being. This is hard to check for the mind. The mind would like to have proof for this statement. The heart understands it without any problem. It longs, it wants to link itself actively with the goal, because it knows that it is not only matter — namely a pump for the blood circulation — but is much more, namely a part of the all, of the universe. A human being can 'love, hope and believe wholeheartedly' and understand much more through this activity of the heart.

### The touch – the perception

*'... But the Holy Scriptures of all ages make it clear to us that that faith is not the confession or the acceptance of a dogma or of a church, a school or a god, but refers to the possession of something of which one must be wholly conscious. It is also stressed that such a possession should be experienced in the heart sanctuary, that it should "dwell" in the heart, or in other words that the primordial atom, the spirit-spark atom, should be vivified. Before this atom is awakened, there is no question of faith; there can be no question of it.'*

JAN VAN RIJCKENBORGH<sup>5</sup>

Eternity touches what is temporary. The universal light touches human beings in the heart, where the intersection of the two axes occurs. The human scriptures of all ages explain over and over again that the human being is not only touched by this light in a general sense, but also physically carries a concentration point of the Light in his heart. Every human being possesses a very personal point of contact with the universal light. We might now ask if this touch is felt. We might now ask whether this touch leads to the recognition that this touch is a power. Do we believe in this power? If we do, there is an opening in the life of a human being that also enables him to see the help that comes from the hills.

Then there is a guideline that enables him to walk his spiritual path. It does not matter at all at which point of this path a human being is found, because the question that the Light asks is always the same, at any level: 'Are you prepared?' Even the greatest one among the initiates, the friend of humanity, was confronted with this question: 'Your will, Lord, or do I act according to mine?' And the tensile force of the heart always provides the power of the faith and the knowledge of what has to be done. Whether this is done, is a matter which every human being must answer spontaneously again and again.

### The link

*Is it me who draws the bow, or is it the bow that causes the highest tension within me? Is it I who hits the mark, or does the mark hit me?*

EUGEN HERRIGEL

Standing in the knowledge of being touched by something is also called: being struck; being struck as by a ray of light that breaks through the darkness. One day, the conditions will turn around. Not the human being seeks the goal, but he himself becomes the goal. As he was initially confronted with his incompetence in loneliness, he now encounters a helping power. Eternity seeks what is temporary, what lives separated from the universal whole. The light seeks what is lost. What is lost must be found again. And is the human being not the prodigal son? Being touched by the light in this way means that we have faith. And faith in this sense means that we do not draw the bow by exerting ourselves, for example by lifting our life onto a higher plane through culture, but by consistently realising a revolution of our own inner point of view. Almost automatically, we will then move to a plane of life that leaves, if possible, everything banal behind. Rest and certainty come to the fore. Our own 'I want', that occupied a central position in the consciousness before, simply turns into 'Lord, what do You want that I do?' This is the not-doing, the zero point, by which the bow is drawn, which

shoots with a tremendous dynamism the arrow that has the possibility to reach the high goal.

### The goal

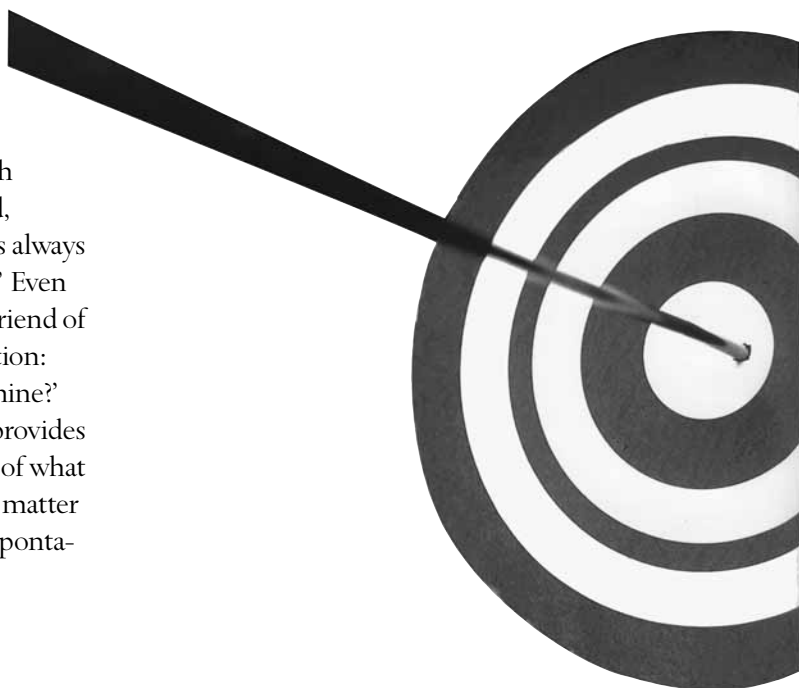
*If he endures this bold venture, he accomplishes his fate in the sense that he encounters, is entwined with and is reborn from pure truth, the truth that surpasses all truths, the formless origin of all origins, the void that is equal to everything.*

EUGEN HERRIGEL

Believing means possessing the inner tensile power to envisage the already realised, great plan! With the heart, you see the highest goal, you achieve this highest goal, and in this vision, you are able to let go of 'the idea of achieving anything', so that the arrow of longing hits the mark, becomes one with the goal, which actually lies outside the personality's power of imagination. The highest goal is the end of everything and at the same time the beginning of something totally new. It is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end.

*For notes see page 38.*

Pages 4, 6 and 8: According to the Zen concept of life, the art of archery is a way of totally submerging in the goal, the rose of infinite being. Photos: Jun Takagi, Japan, 2002.





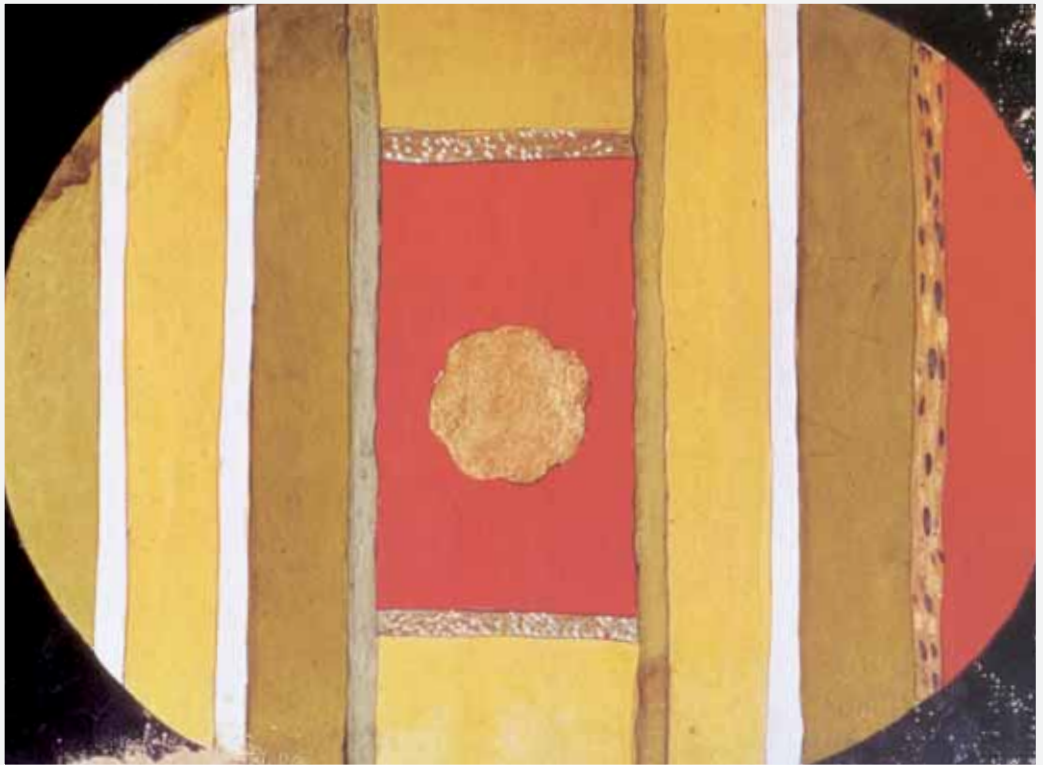
# The power of the rose

THE KINGDOM OF GOD is within you. These seven words contain a revolutionary truth. They can totally change someone's life; they can even change the living conditions on our planet! However, they contain a truth which is unacceptable to the ruling constellations of this world; they even carry an explosive charge. When this charge detonates, human beings experience a profound transformation, and consequently also a change of their direct and indirect environment. The change in the world is the *result* of something that occurs in a human being, when he truly takes notice of this powerful statement and is going to live accordingly. When you put the result first, you turn things around. Then everything remains a vain attempt in the world of bipolarity. How often did we not hear this already? The danger is not imaginary that the tendency to habituation gets the upper hand. The more often we hear something, the less it moves us. This is not *necessarily* so, but it usually is. What is *the Kingdom of God*? There is probably no one of us who expects a complete answer to this question. What can be said about it remains fragmentary. *Infinity* cannot be expressed in words, cannot be couched in thoughts, and cannot be determined by any image. Even *infinity* is a word... – some words approach it better than others, but this also depends on our individual experiences, as we are more deeply touched by one word than by another. We might say that *the Kingdom of God* expresses a certain consciousness: the highest consciousness that a human being can reach. Yet, in its turn, 'reaching' sounds possessive; perhaps we should rather say: it is the highest consciousness that may be granted to a human being,

provided that he is prepared to totally surrender himself to it, so completely that everything that is nature ego ultimately wholly vanishes.

## Consciousness

Jesus was the first one to use the expression *Kingdom of God*. It is a language, a way of expression that was used two thousand years ago. At the time, the word *consciousness* did not yet exist. The word *consciousness* was developed during the eighteenth century as part of the philosophical terminology of the time, and was not used more commonly until the further development of psychology and the growing expansion of our psychological insights. The *Kingdom of God* is a consciousness potential lying *within* us; it is the possibility to a life and existence which we can hardly imagine, but of which we carry 'knowledge', faith, deep within us. Even the word *faith*, at least in the original meaning of the word, points to a certain consciousness surpassing our mental thinking. The *Kingdom of God* within us is an inner power, a faculty unto the most sublime: unto truly universal consciousness, unto perfect life, unto immortality, unto gnosis, wisdom, knowledge, unto creative action, unto unification with divinity, unto unification with everyone and everything. Unto love. It is a mysterious power *within* us, a mysterious faculty. We are never separated from it. In times of distress, when we feel that we are totally bogged down in our problems and worries, *it* is with us, within us. In times that we are plagued by illness and suffering, *it* is with us. In times that we feel desperate, *it* is with us. In times that we surrender to outward joy and pleasure,



*it is with us. In times that we enjoy ourselves, it is with us. In times that it is dark within us and the world around us is dark, it is with us. Whatever may happen to us, it is with us, within us. We are never separated from the divine Light that radiates in the deep silence of our heart and calls to us from this silence, accompanies us, wherever our steps may lead us.*

### **The Kingdom of God is *within* you**

This is a revolutionary truth, provided that we not merely take notice of these words; provided that we allow these words to penetrate into us, that we do *not* take them for granted, that we deeply reflect on them, and also accept our faith concerning this truth – in other words, our inner knowledge or our consciousness of it. It is a truth that can totally change our life. The seed of the *great love*, the seed of ‘divine being’, is within us. We, earthly people with our smaller or larger uncertainties and doubts, carry something of the divine Light in us. An old proverb says: ‘God is nearest to people with a broken heart.’ Perhaps we can confirm this statement. In periods of grief and personal crisis, we are more susceptible to that which is present in the innermost depth of our heart. Even if we are overwhelmed by our emotions at such a moment, there is, deep down, a longing, an intense longing for *the other*, for *liberation*, for *love*.

When confusion overcomes us and we are afflicted by the vagaries of life, we are yearning for Light and wisdom, for inner guidance. Through this yearning, our heart opens. A broken heart is also an open heart. J van Rijckenborgh and Z.W. Leene express it as follows: ‘When the fullness of experience has been reached, the heart is susceptible to the divine mystery that radiates in the depth of our being. When we have reached the fullness of experience and our heart is open, wonderful things may happen.’

A truly open heart is a heart filled with compassion. The fullness of experience allows us to feel what others are experiencing – a heart filled with compassion knows that the divine mystery also

radiates in the other one; that the other one is accompanied by an inner Light. An open heart is a broken heart. The armour of the ego that enclosed the heart has burst, has broken. An open heart is a humble heart. It bows in silent humility for the miracle of the inner Light.

### **The heat field**

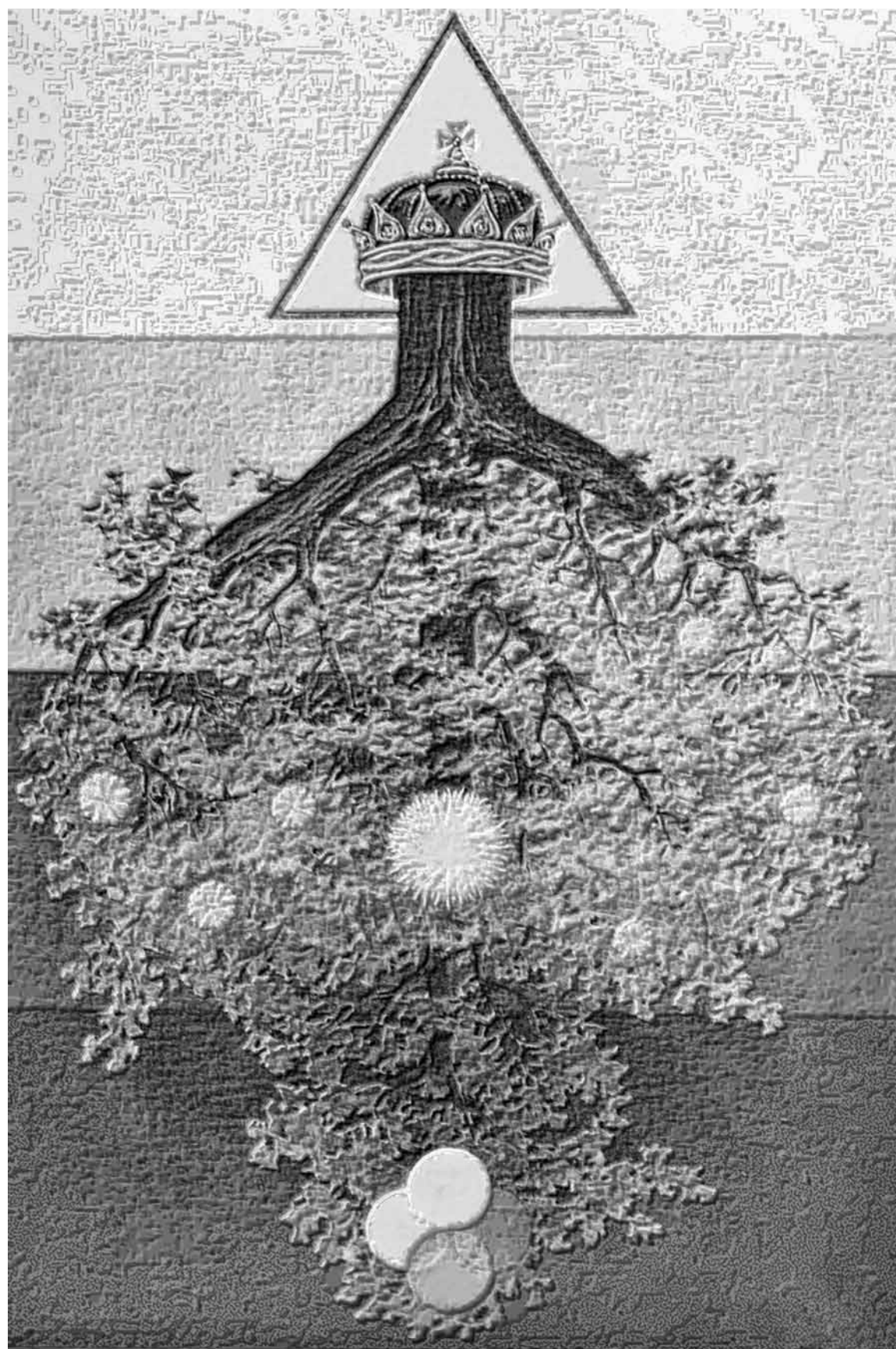
The Kingdom of God is within you. It is said: ‘The Kingdom of God does not consist in many words but in power.’<sup>1</sup> It is an unearthly power *within* us, and at the same time omnipresent. Regardless of how many words we may use, it cannot be reached with words. It is this unearthly power in us that can fully be manifested, that fully manifests itself through the opened heart.

Just like a seed or germ, a fertilised egg contains all possibilities and forces of new genesis. An egg or a seed is a miracle. It contains an unimaginable amount of information, information about nature, about the cosmos and even about intercosmic space, living information.

However, to lead the new life to development and manifestation, the egg needs more than the information and forces contained in it. It must, simply said, be hatched. To this end, a few things are indispensable: heat, protection, envelopment, and being surrounded – we might say ‘being irradiated’ – by more or less immaterial powers. The golden germ we carry within us similarly needs a number of

Left: Some mythical cosmogonies postulate that the visible universe was created from an enormous egg, which stemmed from the original chaos. ‘The universe existed in a form of darkness, imperceptible, inaccessible to reason, unknowable, totally immersed in a deep sleep as it were. Then the divine self appeared with an irresistible creative energy, which rent the darkness.’ (From: The Laws of Manu). The continents gradually developed from this nucleus of divine Light. Source: S Golwin a. o., *The great myths of humanity*.

Below: the golden egg of Brahma. Hiranyagarbha, India, 1775-1800.



conditions to achieve new life: a 'heat' field: love, radiation, vibration, devotion, affection, possibilities for growth, light, wisdom, unity, power. Heat is a powerfield, and in this powerfield, the germ can open and develop. The powerfield of the Spiritual School is the 'heat field', within which the seed can germinate. In the book *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, J van Rijckenborgh says:

'Everything that can serve peace and freedom, everything that can serve to bring about the manifestation and true development of man, [...], dwells as an idea in the mighty life field of the entire Universal Chain. It exists there as a spiritual idea, as power, which constitutes the astral expression of the spirit... and therefore also in the magnetic life field of the Young Gnosis.'<sup>2</sup>

The egg or seed only develops through interaction with such a life or heat field. The so-called 'I will do it on my own, I do not need anyone or anything, for is God not everywhere' would have to be very profoundly considered. Certainly, God is everywhere, omnipresent. God is the infinite, unlimited primordial intelligence, which brings forth, irradiates, nourishes and sustains the all. He is the intercosmic or macrocosmic wisdom and love that enables all of life. And the human being is called to realise this unlimited mystery within himself in freedom and consciously. Therefore, we can read in the *Aquarian Gospel*: 'Man is a thought of God; all thoughts of God are perfect like seeds'<sup>3</sup> – but they must be manifested after a long

path of development, for it ultimately concerns self-realisation. Self-realisation does not mean 'I will do it myself, on my own'. Self-realisation is living interaction; interaction is becoming conscious; self-realisation is bringing the *divine self* in the human being to manifestation.

### It is like learning to swim

*The Kingdom of God is within us* is the possibility to true life. The powerfield or the heat field is the condition, through which and within which the potential within us can develop. And there is a third factor: we ourselves.

We must cooperate, absolutely cooperate, unconditionally. When we want to swim, we have to undress. When we are warmly dressed, swimming is very difficult and we cannot move freely in the water, unobstructed and detached from everything. If we are truly striving for the truth; if we truly want to immerse ourselves in the ocean of the divine reality, we must undress inwardly, we must discard any inner covering and everything which obstructs us: the thoughts prompted by our ego, the concepts, images and ideas, all of which originate from our mentality. We must discard the attire of our ideas, the I-centred desires and longing, the judgements and prejudices. These are probably the heaviest garments, but there are more, of course. Briefly: discard the garment of selfishness or egocentricity, the garment of illusion.

Only *naked* can we enter the waters of life. Only *naked* can we approach the inner altar, on which the divine fire is burning, on which the spark is waiting to be fanned into an unimaginably glorious fire. The inner undressing begins with our thinking. Thoughts are, after all, tremendous powers. Obviously, we will continue to use our thinking for the ordering and functioning of daily life. We do not have to deal with this here; it does not concern this kind of

Left: The tree of life with the ten Sephirot, which emanate from the crown or top (Kether). Both in the microcosm and in the macrocosm, they form the link between the highest and the lowest aspects of creation. Adaptation of a picture from...Hall, *An encyclopedic outline of hermetic, cabbalistic and Rosicrucian symbolic philosophy*. San Francisco, 1928.

thoughts. It concerns those thoughts that nourish, strengthen and firmly anchor the ego in this emergency order. Human existence is intended to be a 'springboard' to return to the depth of the divine life. It is not meant to stay here forever, to bury ourselves in it and to fixate our I-centred life in it. Even if we resist with hands and feet, even if we flounder like a fish on dry land, one day we will have to leave this life behind – and enter the divine life as spirit-soul human beings.

### The power of thinking

The great change can begin in our thinking. This is where the revolutionary transformation begins that the presence of the *Kingdom of God within us* demands. A thought is manifested as feeling and as word. Feeling and word are manifested in action. Action develops into a habit. And the habit crystallises into our character, into our earthly nature.

Therefore, heed your thinking and where it leads you. Let your thoughts originate from love, from love for the *Kingdom of God within you* and for the Kingdom of God around you. From that love, the compassion with all creatures originates.

Your thoughts are like the shadow of the body. Just as the shadow follows the body, we *become* what we *think* – this is an inviolable natural law. Therefore, allow only the eternal call from the divine depth of your heart penetrate, ensoul and control your thinking.

The Kingdom of God is within you, within us, but this statement is not the end. This statement is revolutionary, extremely dangerous for the powers and forces that try to keep the world and humanity in their grasp. For just imagine that human beings were to accept this statement truly and completely; then they would launch a revolution within themselves, a total revolution: the inside is turned outside and is manifested outwardly, and the outside dissolves in the inside, wholly surrenders to the inside that begins to manifest itself and breaks out.

### The beauty of the rose

He, the other one, the inside, must increase; I, the ego, the outside, must decrease in the inside, in the other one. And this also determines our attitude towards our fellow men. Look at a rose. The whole rose: the flower, the branches with the leaves, and the stem with the thorns. Someone gives us a bouquet of roses; we are glad, we think the roses are beautiful and we love their smell. We are grateful. We do not say to the giver: 'I think your roses are beautiful, but do you see all those thorns; they look dangerous, they prick you and hurt you.' No, we do not say that, we do not even take notice of the thorns; we think the roses are beautiful and we enjoy them. This is also the way to deal with our fellow men. Why would we be irritated by a few thorns, by a few mistakes or weaknesses of others? Why would we continue to react to the stem with the thorns? Regardless of how many thorns a human being may have, this is not our concern, we do not judge, even though we try to deal with the thorns adequately. As far as we are concerned, it is the *rose* that matters, the *inner Kingdom*, the divine seed that can develop in the heat field, in the powerfield that surrounds us *and* through our unconditional surrender. Love God above everything, the omnipresent God within you. Love your neighbour as yourself. Your neighbour carries the *Kingdom of God* within him, just like you. It is the greatest power in the universe and *outside* and *above* the universe. It is the greatest power that has been put at the disposal of humanity. Live from the deep awareness that you carry this power within you. Allow it to enter and be activated through you.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 4:20

<sup>2</sup> J van Rijckenborgh, *The Alchemical Wedding of Christian Rosycross*, part 1, chapter 24. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, The Netherlands, 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Levi Dowling, *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, p.18...Fowler B Co. Ltd, Romford, United Kingdom, 1977.

# The leaven of Aquarius<sup>1</sup>



The new era, symbolised by the constellation of Aquarius, demands openness of the human being in order to be able to develop the gifts of his soul: friendship, knowledge, truth, courage and fellowship. Aquarius – from J Hevelius, *Firmamentum Sobiesianum sive Uranographia*. Gedani (Gdansk), Poland, 1690.

ANY STRUGGLE has two aspects. Just as a human being emerges from the dark womb of his mother and breaks through to the light, humanity rises up from the nature of the earth and is called to the Light. There are a natural human being and a spiritual human being. Dark mysteries entwine and bind us; glorious solutions enlighten our consciousness and liberate us.

In this world, negative and positive, feminine and masculine, are each other's opposites. And leaven represents the revolutionary power that leads us to this duality. Leaven causes a process of fermentation that brings about a revolution and causes one explosion after the other. The effect of this process of fermentation is destructive and upbreking, resulting in degeneration. But there is also a leaven that permeates the entire dough and even-

tuallly makes the bread digestible. This is why leaven can have two effects: a good one and a bad one. On the one hand, an image of degeneration and pernicious modes of life becomes visible; on the other hand, we see an image of persevering, penetrating activity. This is the way that the leaven of Aquarius works in our time.

Aquarius is the era of expansion, freedom and enlightenment. How much enthusiasm can radiate from the word 'Aquarius' for those who know the true meaning of this sound! Many people, and those interested in the spiritual side of life in particular, have focused their thoughts on the aim of Aquarius: a long anticipated and cherished ideal.

No one can escape the influence of Aquarius. The radiation power of Aquarius works right through humanity, just as leaven permeates bread. It can be a



blessing for all who open themselves to its positive effects, so that they persevere in the endura and break through to truly spiritual experiencing. But those who approach this activity in a negative way and react unconsciously to this cosmic influence, will experience the power of Aquarius as pernicious, destructive and degenerating. They feel affected by a power that knocks cherished values out of their hands. And fear overwhelms them.

There are people who think that Aquarius will bring the long-desired peak of civilisation: the whole world will become acquainted with its culture and blessings. And we see that this indeed happens in our time. But not all people are experiencing this contact with modern culture and the so-called Christian religion as a blessing! However, the true radiation of Aquarius can only bring joy. It wells up from the heart of Christ.

### Aquarius and Christ

Because people cannot understand, or refuse to understand, how Aquarius, the cosmos, has united with the Christ, a lot of foolishness is and was spoken and done all over the world. The profound mystery of Christ is still not understood by humanity. This mystery is briefly expressed by the Rosicrucian formula: 'Of God we are born: *ex Deo nascimur*; in Jesus we die: *in Jesu morimur*; we are reborn through the Holy Spirit: *per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus*.' When we, seekers for the spirit, die with a last sob as to this nature, die in the loneliness of the withdrawing I, the soul comes into contact with the spirit, and is reborn in Christ. That is the mystery! In order to understand the effect of Aquarius, we must know the effect of the holy tri-unity: nature-Christ-Spirit. If we do not understand this effect, and concentrate exclusively on this nature, the leaven of Aquarius will lead us to ruin, and we will decline in such a way that we are not reborn in the Holy Spirit.

### Aquarius and choice

We recognise the symbol of Aquarius in the man with the pitcher of water, whom the disciples found at the gate, on the directions of Jesus Christ. 'Follow the waterbearer into the house that he enters,' He said. Follow the path that the living water clears in this dying world, and you will find the 'Lord's supper' prepared. He who follows the waterbearer, will be called to the fulfilment of the *Via Dolorosa*. And they who are prepared to see this waterbearer as the leader, as a leaven which breaks them up for the better, will be disciples. And Uranus, which controls the electricity and the ether power, adds his radiant and warming fire to the streams of living water. If we are spiritual, we join head and heart. The water of life flows from our heart to the holy fire in our thinking, and then we become new human beings, who make truly new discoveries, strange discoveries, and unveil wonderful mysteries. The two streams lead the human being of the crowd to decadence, to discoveries that will destroy and break up in a negative sense. From such negative reactions, among other things, destructive weapons are generated, which pour out an all-consuming fire over humanity. If a human being is attuned to the threefold supporting power of the Divine unity, he will be guided to break through the inner boundaries of his consciousness and to broaden his spiritual horizons. This time is very favourable for the development of occultism, as is shown by the increasing interest in the magical, mediaeval mysteries and those of primitive societies. Aquarius is truly bringing something new, either good or bad. As the threefold leaven of our cosmos, Aquarius affects the whole of humanity and drives it to what it must become. The ultimate result will demonstrate whether matter was able to cope with this leaven, or not.

Right: Mosaic in one of the caves in the field of the shepherds around Bethlehem. Photo Pentagonam



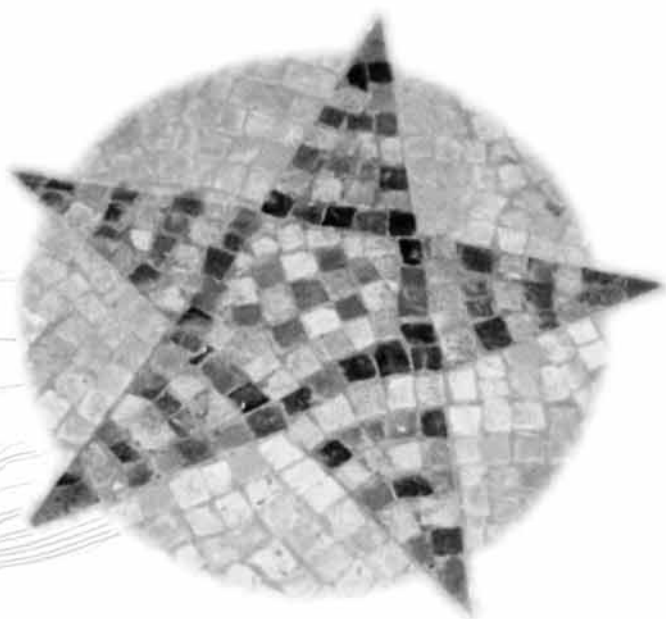
## Aquarius and inner experiences

It may happen that a human being who, solely on the basis of abnormal and primitive curiosity, wants to acquaint himself with the Hereafter, stands up and begins to discuss interesting topics, which he is absolutely unable to understand! He also feels affected by the influence of Aquarius and thinks that he has become a spiritual human being. What an illusion! The heaven of Aquarius has done its work in him and has stirred his being with its revolutionary power. Then the explosions occur in him in the form of a series of experiences. And whether he wants to or not, he *will* be driven along on the path of inner experience.

Would we be able to experience the altruism, with which Uranus confronts us, without living through the 'in Jesu morimur'? No one can ignore the influences of the Zodiac. No one but he, who is prepared to wholly decline in Jesus Christ in order to be resurrected in the Holy Spirit, is able to do so. For such a person, a new world opens!

And which of us, speaking and gesticulating about freedom and about removing borders and altruism, did already accomplish such a process? The Christianity of the Gnosis is a *Divine power*, and not a dogma. This is why a Rosicrucian, who is a follower of his symbolic predecessor Christian Rosycross, says: 'Jesu mihi omnia – Jesus is everything to me!' All those who think that they can live without Jesus as their strength and true Saviour, and who, therefore, do not die in Him, will be broken up by Aquarius and fall back into the materialism of this nature.

It is understandable that the natural human being tries to escape, in fear and trembling, from the revolutionary and compelling power of the Christ. True Christianity can be experienced only by those who possess sufficient courage and insight to be able to die as to this nature.



In this time, Christianity will show its true face. It will discard its outer garment and show if underneath *gnosis*, the knowledge of God, can be found, which leads humanity to the truth of the threefold magical formula:

*'Ex Deo nascimur, in Jesu morimur, per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus.'*

*Born of God – through the will. Died in Jesus – through wisdom. Reborn through the Holy Spirit – in action.*

*This is the threefold task of the gnostic Christian. All those who experience this threefold event, will become the reborn sage who says: 'Jesu mihi omnia.'*

<sup>1</sup> An address given by Z W Leene in the Temple of the Rosycross in Haarlem in 1935.



# The moment of truth

‘Time is infinite in your hands, O Lord.  
Your seconds are counted by no one.  
Your ages follow each other,  
in the perfection of a small wild flower.’ (Rabindranath Tagore)

*Nothing is without purpose in this world; everything that is or becomes, offers at least an opportunity. What is this opportunity? It is a new starting capital for a higher development, or, when the chance is not taken, a dissolution, which forms elements, used as ‘building materials’ for a new beginning somewhere, sometime.*

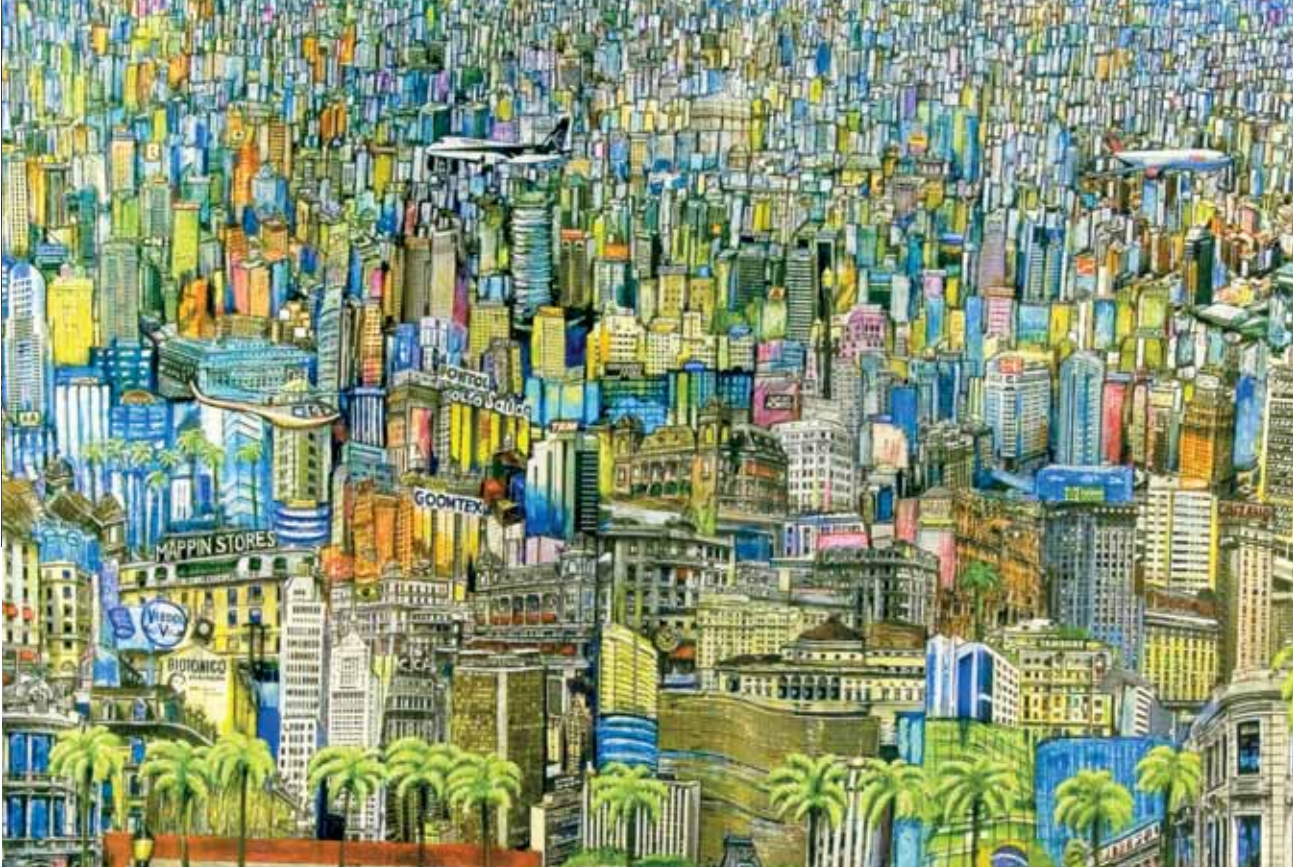
Our world is a world of phenomena; nothing is permanent. Only the ‘motor’, life itself, cannot be changed. We refer to this motor as ‘nature’. ‘Nature’ means: that which became, developed, was born and created, in the universal chronology also referred to as: a day of manifestation. It is a cycle of seven immense periods, of which the first three signify a descent into matter, ‘involution’. The fourth period, which is referred to as the ‘nadir’, is followed by three periods of dematerialisation, or ‘evolution’. The word ‘nadir’ has an Arab origin and means ‘the lowest point’ or ‘the opposite point’; diametrically opposed to ‘zenith’ or the highest point. Currently we are living in the

mentioned fourth period, the earth period, somewhere halfway the cycle referred to as ‘day’, not more than a point in eternity, but to our consciousness a period that far surpasses our imagination.

The ancient wisdom speaks of the four elements earth, water, air and fire as the material basis. Or of mineral, plant, animal and human being, as expressions of life. The purpose of the development through which we as humanity have passed is the reconstruction of the original human figure, which is also fourfold. With the construction of successively the physical, the etheric and the astral body, he finds his place in this nature. The mentioned fourth period, the earth period, is a field of development!

During this period, humanity can add a fourth aspect to its appearance, a mental *body*, an individual consciousness that enables it to control the world, for the better or for the worse. He can also form the link – which he essentially is –

Right: ‘Progress’.  
From the series  
‘The universe  
called Sao Paulo’.  
Mixed techniques,  
Armando, Brazil



between this nature and the realm of the spirit.

Although a human being, together with his four vehicles, is mortal, a gate to eternity lies hidden within him. This gate forms a field of transition, which gives access to true life. It is clear that this link belongs to another order. After all, everything in the lower nature order has a cyclical structure, an endless process that is often symbolised by two serpents biting into each other's tail, thus keeping each other captive.

### **There is a cyclical movement in everything**

It is the play of opposites, sometimes bewildering and frightening, sometimes clownish and grotesque. We can cry or laugh about it – and sometimes we do. In the best of cases, these opposites will one day lead to the notion that all of this is part of myself, and that I am part of all of this. We have parcelled out this unity into countless pieces, and nobody

is able to bring them back together.

That perfection is not of this world is not merely a statement. It is a law; the unrelenting law of Nemesis, the goddess with the balance and blindfold, who ensures that everything that we undertake returns to its starting point. At the same time, it is the law of the Lovelight, which ensures that any development has a resting point when necessary, but does not stagnate.

In the course of their development, people spread out over the continents. Forms of government developed, both dictatorial and democratic ones. Within a democracy, decision-making is often difficult due to internal discord, because each opinion or decision usually has approximately the same number of advocates as adversaries.

Whereas people first grew apart, nowadays the world is once again condensing into one big town square, in which we often run in each other's way. Closer to home, we see an exceptional mobility turn into traffic jams, medicines



causing new diseases and hospitals turning into sources of infection. All our comings and goings are controlled by laws, but these laws often have a contrary effect and more and more frequently, the limb of the law intervenes to maintain order. While new means of communication become more refined by the day, people become more lonely and isolated. 'Extremism' is characteristic of our time. All differences of opinion are driven home, to a tension which will inevitably lead to a new 'big bang', this time perhaps not as spectacular, as the eruption has already clearly set in. On a spiritual level, the descent into matter – or the separation, the alienation from unity – has led to increasing atheism. *Facts, nothing but facts*, is the credo. On the basis of the search for those facts, a new deity developed: materialism. In the meantime, the effect was that spirits, witches, sorcerers and everything that could not be defined by the dominant pattern of *centimetre, second and gram* disappeared from the stage. To many, this was a source of indignation and irritation, yet to others it meant room to

breathe more freely. A lot of narrow-mindedness, concoctions and phantoms were replaced by new insights, based on reason and sober perception.

But 'reason and sober perception' also have their opposites. The tendency 'to throw everything old overboard' often meant that the child was thrown out with the bath water. Materialism promised a better world and enhanced it with gadgets and comfort, but by doing so, it created an uneasy vacuum for the inner life. It became anxiously cold in this world. Facts, nothing but facts.

A vacuum has a tremendous suction power, is seeking fulfilment, a balance between outside and inside. In every person, a child is living that believes in miracles, that seeks the sensation of the extraordinary. It is a hunger for which the spirit of our time has an ample supply of food. Publications about life, death and reincarnation, political and historical scandals and juicy stories about the church are in great demand. Some people may consider it wheat, while others consider it chaff, but both are doing their work: the confrontation of the accomplishments of human culture with the signs of a new

Satellite picture of the earth by night. Source: ESA





time. It is simultaneously the task as well as the opportunity of this earth period. It is often said: 'We are living in a fascinating time.'

### **Who is responsible?**

Have there ever been other times, and what is so special, so fascinating about our days? It increasingly seems that humanity is approaching a turning point in its history. Myths and legends from different cultures relate how humanity once left the original order and arrived in an emergency order, the nature of the four levels of life. In this order, everything is arranged by hierarchies and behavioural codes in all forms of society, whether we speak of humans, an ant colony, a herd of buffaloes or a tropical rain forest. In this context, daily life develops according to fixed patterns and structures. Through the ages, nothing much has changed in this order; cultures came and went, but the order persisted. Parallel to the development of the physical figure, the involution created a third vehicle: the astral body. It was generated due to the development of the brain. A mental faculty was added to the, until that moment,

dominant existential drive. Traditions, customs, doctrines, rights and obligations came into existence, leading to the development of the so-called common decency. It was a state of relative security, based on material exploration, social structures and perspectives of the future, the human quest for the ultimate miracle.

In our days, however, a clear change is becoming visible. The ultimate miracle appears to be an empty box. After the divine order, now in its turn, this nature order is left to its own devices. One by one, established values are brought up for discussion and are broken apart; ethical, economic and cultural ones.

Everything is wavering. Security is replaced by insecurity. Who is an authority? Who can be held responsible?

### **The new human type**

Even if humanity rejects any order, the cosmic laws are still valid. Chaos must ultimately lead to a new genesis, a new manifestation, perhaps not as spectacular as thunder and lightning, but equally radical, because in the coming centuries, this will occur with a new human



type that, as a pioneer, can lead creation a step closer to its goal. After the divine order and this nature order, we unmistakably recognise the signs – sometimes vaguely visible, sometimes shining as the dawn before the spiritual eye – of a new order that we might call the human order. This order, in its turn, opens the possibility for the recovery of the divine order, so that the circle is closed again.

It will have to be a totally different human type that can surpass the earthly certainties and established structures and that finds its safety in the order of the spirit, in knowledge and a clear consciousness of what is true and living. The signs of this new human type have already been announced for a long time. All holy language speaks of it. And what else are the different gospels, however mutilated they may be, than this joyful message? Because: 'The kingdom of God is within you.'

We do not want to project this into the future; this kingdom exists in the present, but does not belong to the world of space and time! The

Sermon on the Mount is addressed to anyone who, today or tomorrow, sets his foot on the path of liberation. Knowing this is also a sign of the development of a new consciousness. Humanity is balancing on the zero point between involution and evolution.

The time for this second path has come. The past is a story, the future a dream. The living present is the time of making choices, decisions and of acting; *mode* of life instead of *contemplation* of life.

### The moment of truth

During this earth period, our microcosm experiences many incarnations. Each life can lift us higher – collectively and individually. Nothing can force us to do so; we have eternity ahead of us. But in each incarnation, the question resounds: 'If not now, then when?' With the inner compass as our sole guide, self-authority based on a totally new orientation, we have to accept the 'order of the kingdom' as our inner guide and source of life, instead of storming its gates with natural violence. Or in mystical language: 'Not I, but the Christ in me.'

Night. From the series 'The universe called Sao Paulo'.  
Mixed techniques, Armindo, Brazil



## The moment of truth

The past is a story, the future a dream.

The living present is the time of making choices and decisions, and of acting; mode of life instead of contemplation of life.

‘If not now, then when?’

FOR MANY, this moment has come. The élan of the earthly development is fading. Disappointment on the one hand and the purification of thinking, desiring and willing through experience on the other, will lead to stillness and the manifestation of the voice of the spirit-spark. A new world is dawning on the horizon. The dominance of instinct and intellect make room for the inflow of a new ensoulment.

This is a unique chance for humanity, collectively as well as individually. The unmistakable decline can be turned into an ascent, but this time perhaps not as a way back within the play of opposites – within us and around us –, so that everything ultimately still remains the same. No, this time it will be as the harvest of the involution, through which we have passed collectively as humanity and individually as human beings. It is the voice of the eternal principle that shows us the way-out to the other realm, in which concepts like space and time, heaven and earth, life and death no longer have any meaning.

We speak of ‘the human being’ as if there were only one human being, and this is actually the case. Collective and individual are closely linked and keep each other in balance. The collective does not take away the individual’s character nor does the individual impose his will on the collective. It is an interaction of power and mutual support.

Initially, humanity as a collective is a fairly abstract concept. This is why in many people, who have recognised the stream of life, the power of ‘the human being’, within themselves,

the desire automatically arises to give this concept a concrete interpretation, like a compass needle pointing north. This can take shape in the contact with like-minded people in a spiritual school. When the magnetic needle is charged strongly enough, this seeking for contact is mutual, because of the relationship between collective and individual.

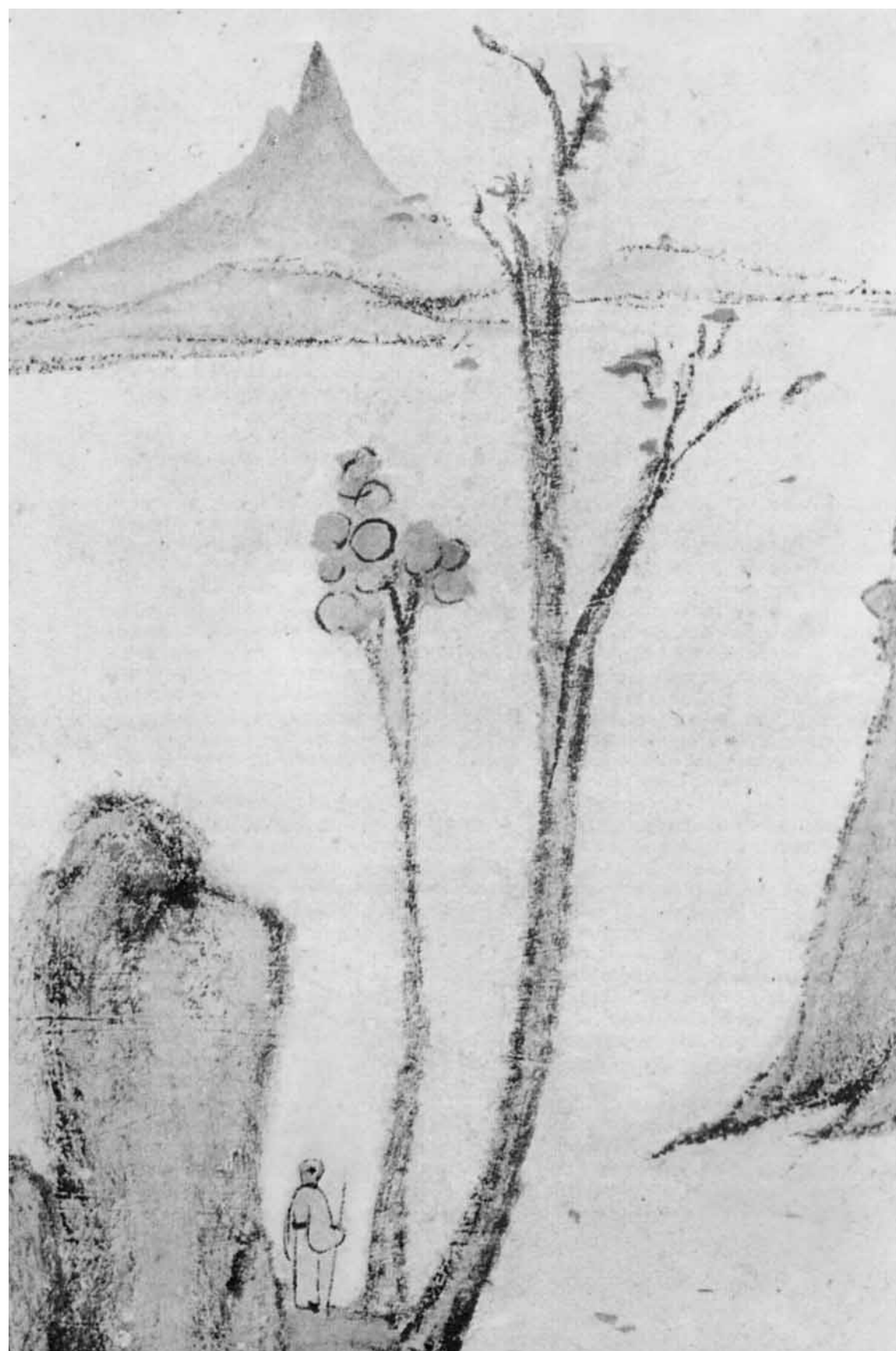
This refers to a soul community that surpasses personal ties. The ensoulment is the common factor, but the path must be walked individually. This path leads through the rubble of blind violence and egoism to the long-sought missing dimension, the true life, the true engine behind nature and human being.

### Humanity in motion – the world in motion

That to which we today refer as pollution, destruction and loss, are perhaps only the birth pangs of a new world with totally different conditions of life; and is the decline of the old human being and his world, but also the simultaneous dawning of the new earth, of and for a totally new human being. Anyone who turns his life towards the other realm – which in reality is the only one, all-encompassing and without opposite –, again ensouls the new earth, also referred to as the dwelling place of the true Man. Man as he was always intended: guardian of the word and fellow-worker in the Garden of Eden.

Page 24: Contemplation on the essence of the mountain.  
Hua Yen (1682-1765)







# In paradise, everything is different

ORIGINAL MAN, whose creation by the Elohim is described in the book *Genesis*, was created both male and female, and hence was not separated. Yet, one of the fundamental points of departure of our world is the separation of the sexes. The myth of the tree, the serpent and the apple in 'paradise' offers an imaginative explanation of the 'fall', corresponding to the human consciousness at the time of the 'fall'.

## Illusion and truth

Is our current worldview therefore based on an illusion? This question can be clearly answered in the affirmative. Yet, the separation of the sexes is an indisputable reality.

Our whole world is a succession of opposites in a continuous alternating or cyclical movement. Of old, it has been the highest ideal of all philosophical and religious movements to overcome this state, to be liberated from it. The expression 'Dao' or 'Tao', describing this state for which we are striving, refers to the image of the hub of a wheel, the central part of a wheel or millstone, holding the axle. He who finds himself in the centre, in the hub, calms down, liberated from all opposites, and observes the rotating turmoil of the world, without partaking of it. He still lives and works in this world, but is no longer of this world and needs no longer suffer under it. Throughout all times, it was and is the task of priests and prophets to show and exemplify to people the way to the centre.

Do we, therefore, absolutely have to reject all theology based on the Old or the New Testament? And are not all essential books from all world religions used in a materialistic way? Should we also reject or once again adapt those books in our time? During the last

thousand years, many people have tried to do so on the basis of the Bible, particularly by 'correcting' ancient translations, that is, by going back to the, often mutilated, original fragments that are still available. Often the result is a 'Bible', in which the original message has only partly been preserved. Each 'correction' changed the meaning, even to the extent that countless parts have become meaningless ever since and can only be identified and understood as to their original meaning by the attentive reader. To this end, we have to refrain from interpreting the Bible literally. 'The letter kills, but the Word gives life,' the ancients used to say, and this wisdom is demonstrated again and again.

The 'correct' translation of the Bible according to feminist principles, like the one recently published in Germany, is no exception. Many statements have been 'translated' into their absolute opposite. A few examples will make this unequivocally and absolutely clear.

However, the (lack of) knowledge of the reality behind the letters and behind the images they express is more important.

What do masculine and feminine mean in the context of the esoteric writings, to which the Bible originally belongs? It is the most important pair of opposites in the visible as well as the invisible universe, to which reference is made in this way. First of all, we will understand that the over-simplified points of departure 'men are...', 'women are...' cannot be maintained on this level and that we have to bid farewell to any value judgement related to it. It should rather be said that we might call *properties and emotions* masculine or feminine. When we consider them in an esoteric-scientific way and dissociate from the usual prejudices, we receive the expanded insight that a

profound meaning underlies these pairs of opposites.

Unfortunately, the initiators of the 'politically correct' translation of the Bible completely bypassed this. The claim to a 'correct' Bible according to human standards can only lead to catastrophe. The claim that its authors believe they can lay on 'justice' demonstrates this. The result shows, therefore, that such primordial-human 'justice' is a very subjective and very limited matter!

### Shepherds and shepherdesses

Modern translators hardly respected the principles of seriously editing texts. Neither the historical or the spiritual and cultural conditions at the time, nor the linguistic and literary facts were taken into account nor were the universal, philosophical aspects considered. Only in this way it could happen that we read of *shepherdesses in the field* in Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era (they did not exist at the time nor do they exist nowadays). Only in this way, it could happen that the name *Adonai* was violated (conceptually, this name can only be approached with the plural of 'my Lord', as it is done with 'Elohim', and is therefore not feminine). Only in this way, it could happen that *the spirit* (the emanating divine power) was replaced by *Sophia*. Sophia is wisdom in a spiritual sense, the positive transformation of a spiritual effect in a conscious creature, as experienced by himself. All that was needed was that Christ had been turned into *Christa*. However, we also have to understand the initiators of this translation: just as the Pharisees and some rabbis within Jewry have absolutely marginalized the position of women; just as current society (until recently?) assigns a subordinate position to women, also the inventors of the so-called

Christian church have excluded women.

Peter purportedly made the infamous statement: 'Women do not deserve to be alive.' And to Paul the equally infamous statement is ascribed: 'The women should keep silence in the churches.'

No true disciple would ever have been able to say something like that; they are expressions of male lust for power. They cannot have anything to do with the original gnosis. In original Christianity, one loves *every neighbour* like himself. In gnostic communities, and therefore also in that of Jesus, son of Mary, women played an important and complimentary role. They had absolutely equal rights, fulfilled the same ritual functions and were honoured and held in high regard. This applies in particular to Mary Magdalene, who was initiated in the highest mysteries.

That these two men, Peter and Paul, have been used to become the cornerstones of the church of Rome, and that an unsympathetic attitude was ascribed to them, which became ingrained in the church and was only partly remedied by the reformation, are two clear demonstrations that this church still has to earn the predicate *Christian*.

This is counteracted by the recently found and published texts *Authentic words of Jesus* and the *Gospel of the Pistis Sophia* with appendices (Mary Magdalene's questions to Jesus and his answers). However, the hostile attitude of the institutional religions towards women can hardly be a justification for turning the whole Bible upside down by interpreting the texts only with the head instead of with the heart. That the result, the 'feminist Bible', has become a bestseller does not prove its spiritual value.

Of what does the mentioned complementary aspect and the resulting dynamism

consist? To understand this, we must think of the ancient, yet still valid symbols. We should first of all not only *want*, but inwardly *know* that all creatures in the universe mutually differ, but are at the same time also essential at their own place and therefore 'of equal value', equivalent. Everyone has an individual significance and function for the equilibrium of the universe. However, it is typically human when we think that this equilibrium should be 'improved' by wilful intervention, while denying the responsibility for the consequences which any small disturbance of this equilibrium involves. This concept is contained in the currently familiar yin-yang symbol. Any actively or spontaneously emanating or generative powers are considered to be masculine energy and dynamism in this equilibrium, while any receiving and manifesting powers are considered feminine.

The four human bodies – physical body, etheric body, astral body and mental body – are alternately positively or negatively polarised, that is active or passive, or in other words, emanating or receiving, opposite in men and women. A totally merged pair of human beings would then possess both qualities or dynamisms in each 'body'; or a zero dynamism would be generated, a state of total equilibrium and rest. We understand that men and women should not want to match each other, because in that way no equality of powers is achieved, but struggle, conflict or paralysis. Understanding and combining this dynamism in an intelligent way leads to harmoniously complementing each other and in that way to harmony and double power and effect for all. In antiquity, this cooperation culminated in holy matrimony, the highest mystery.

## Some numerological aspects

It is also interesting to consider these things from a numerological angle. Until the tenth century, not the individual was the determining factor, but the community, family or tribe with a common fate. At the moment that, in the tenth century, the male number appears as the most important number, the man, the masculine energy, comes to the fore. The individuality, the spirituality and the intellect develop, with the exaggerated egoism and violence of the number 'nineteen' as its pinnacle (two world wars and numerous smaller wars). The number 'one' represents the ego, the sun that is a fiery, development-promoting light, the spirit, etc. This development resulted in a totally unbalanced division of forces. It is obvious that this is not naturally inclined towards equality, but towards the opposite situation, a state that is beyond bearing, thus, briefly, a state of contrary imbalance. At the beginning of the new century, this assumption is already visible in the numbers. The feminine number 'two' represents the moon, the soul, a soft, growth- and prosperity-stimulating light, and being on first-name terms. The 20<sup>th</sup>-century women's movements already initiated this approaching state, though, unfortunately, with masculine energy.

Because at the same time the Age of Aquarius began, which is so important for the soul, the new century offers great opportunities and great expectations. It is expected that women will succeed in becoming conscious of their true significance in an intelligent way and that women will soon begin to occupy their rightful place, a leading role, in our development, but not as a kind of exaggerated matriarchy, as we have known it for thousands of years. In a certain way, the past century was an un-

conscious 'revenge' for this. However, this does not justify crimes. This development is rather an incentive to universal soul development in a balanced state of the sexes. 'Leading means serving!' – in the service of the future compensation of biased masculine and feminine forms of energy and phenomena – until the human being once again, in the distant future, becomes male-female, in full possession of all his powers and king-priestly wisdom. Then he will look back and smile about those centuries of erring and separation, about the illusion of the 'former' human being who had to stress and distinguish his specific features as woman or man instead of uniting in peace and perfect harmony, as was the case during this so-called sixth day of creation in 'paradise'.

### **The cycle of the universe**

Underway as it were, this also includes an intelligent understanding of the Bible, not as a mirror of society, but as a mirror of the cycle of a universe that rises, shines and fades and in which every creature is equally loved by his Creator, because 'God is Love!' Depending on his consciousness, a person can understand the Bible on different levels. Firstly only intellectually, analytically, literally; then it is a dead book like most others.

Secondly, we can read it on the basis of the religious doctrines of some denomination; then the lack of independence of the human being, who is not yet ripe for a living religiosity, is strengthened.

Thirdly, we can understand it as a collection of myths and fairytales; then we become bogged down in the old visual consciousness, as if the last 2000 years did not occur.

Fourthly, we can read it as an allegory, a parable, a symbol; this corresponds with

the tradition of the mysteries, which is no longer necessary.

Fifthly, we may consider it as the mediaeval, monastic mysticism, focused on piously being together and prayer.

Sixthly, the Bible may be seen as a history book, in which each story is interpreted as the representation of true events, corresponding to the rational tendency of the Enlightenment and the discoveries of the new archaeology.

Seventhly, it may be understood as to its inner, esoteric content which, in spite of all manipulation, still strongly radiates in the profound texts of the New Testament. This seventh way of reading corresponds to that of the Gnostics, who were persecuted as heretics for centuries and were exterminated by fire and sword.

No Bible dominated by men or women is needed, but a possibly not falsified, 'pure' and undogmatic Bible, of which the major part is devoted to the core message of love: the command of the love for God, our neighbour and ourselves, surpassing any religious denomination. Just like all who know, the classical Rosicrucians and the gnostic 'heretics' said after all: 'God is Love.'





# The fragrance of Shamballa

QUITE A FEW GODS can be found in the human consciousness. One of the most striking features of these gods is power. Each of us shapes this power according to his own insight and needs. Sometimes this god is a tyrant, whom you do not want to cross, but whom you rather set on your enemies; sometimes he is the prototype of Santa, to whom you may turn with all your desires, and at other times, he is a vague, unpredictable producer, who pulls the strings behind the scenes.

The framework, within which we, Westerners, are living, is called the 'Christian tradition', of which mainly the tradition has been preserved. To the extent that, in the course of time, the material thinking increasingly replaced the religious element, the concept of 'god' became ever more abstract and ultimately totally withdrew into the background, until it could finally and triumphantly be said: 'God is dead!'

## The undercurrent

In our days, the word 'Christian' does not directly refer to the concept of 'Christ', but mainly refers to order, to a social system – and to some folklore. Believing in something like a god or not is a private matter, an inner affair and not a topic for discussion. Yet, expressions like 'Thank God', 'God forbid', 'May God give', 'God knows when and why' and their many variations are never far away, regardless of the speaker's conviction. But this has rather to do with tradition, at least superficially, because apparently an undercurrent is mixed in this tradition and touches every human being.

This undercurrent, which has always existed and will probably always exist, is going to manifest itself ever more clearly, no longer as tradition, custom or dogma, but spontaneously, as an unexpected aspect of everyday thinking and living, from which virtually all concepts of religious practices have disappeared or are called differently. Nowadays we hear of 'new age', spirituality, meditation, workshops, reorientation.

Particularly this reorientation is characteristic of our time. Humanity has lost its bearing; that which once was an inner compass, has turned into dogmas and precepts. An artificial, outward world developed, built on second-hand knowledge and fear. The new orientation is no longer primarily based on what has been said and written, but concentrates on the awakening, inner knowledge. How do I experience and value what rises up within me?

## The island in the spirit-soul

This is indeed quite another, new approach. How new? The quest for concretisation, for shaping the fresh rediscovery of this bearing, confronts us with ancient, yet surprisingly fresh oriental and western movements, in which the small flame, which once caused the global fire of the great religions, proves still to be quite alive! There is an indestructible temple, in which the fire has been preserved throughout the ages. This temple is Shamballa, the spiritual centre of the earth. It is the holy island, H P Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine*, where the saints from the Lemurian era found refuge. Yet, we cannot find this place anywhere in a desert that we might look up

in an atlas, but it can be found in a realm that is equally inaccessible and inviolable to the earthly fire: the human spirit-soul. Every time in history that this spark flares up again in sufficient hearts, however modestly, these sparks join into a fire. In the light of this fire, the temple appears again, inwardly, as insight and intuitive knowledge. This is why we want to use the word 'God' only sparingly. References like 'the Source', 'the Light', 'Gnosis' are less charged. And when we nevertheless write about God, we link ourselves as little as possible with an image of God that stems from the patriarchal ideas from the Old Testament or from other myths and legends. We leave this concept of 'God' alone for the time being, but we can do something about the charge.

### **The study that matters: self-knowledge**

In the workshop of the inner temple, concepts like 'conceitedness' or 'complacency' cannot be used. However, the highest demand made of people is: 'I am'. Then the question is: 'Am I, in the sense of enduring life, of original life, of eternal life?' This question raises the danger that the old charge of these concepts overrules true 'being'. We realise that this happens, but sometimes it is tempting to give in to it. What do you mean, tempting? What is wrong with it? Does not every wrong step bring me closer to the part of myself that cannot be defined? Is it not a path, an instrument, a task to systematically lead everything that I experience outside myself back to the concept of 'myself'? The outermost aspect expands to a story; the innermost aspect to a new piece of the overall picture of reality. Each particle of it is unveiled and recognised as belonging to 'myself'. This recognition is called self-knowledge.

I am the stage, the actor and the audience. The stage is constructed of what has been said, written and experienced of the 'story' behind the scenes. For centuries, the story formed the décor, word-by-word and dream-by-dream. And just as the stage has worked on the actor for ages, the actor has worked on the stage for ages. But today is *the* day: everything is still standing a bit unsteadily and inadequately, but what is needed for the great encounter is there: the décor is ready and the actor is waiting for his cue.

The spotlights are switched on; the actor comes to life. The tyrant shows his impotence – and leaves compassion behind; Santa shows his poverty – and leaves devotion behind; the producer demonstrates his ignorance – and leaves insight behind, and all of this simultaneously, in a flash. Then the image fades into a beneficial vibration within and around me, a mild presence, in which the stage light is only a shadow. Against this background, the great knowledge radiates: the human being is the temple; he is God's house.

Perhaps that which 'has been said and written' is for us, people of the twenty-first century with predominantly the fire of the earth in our blood, initially still indispensable for this reorientation. We will gratefully use it, but often sources outside ourselves offer a distorted image of what is 'on yonder side'. This 'distorted image' differs individually as to its composition and quality. It can only be comprehended with the spark of the spirit, even if it is still living in the shadow of the earthly fire.

Page 31: This bodhisattva represents loving affection for all beings. It is a Tibetan representation of the heart of the universe with eleven faces and a thousand arms. Bronze, Philip Goldman Collection, London.



## Approaching hesitantly

Consciousness is, amongst other things, knowing, perceiving, surveying something. Without it, ensoulment is the effect of natural forces that maintain the appearance of a 'self', that maintain something with small and large cycles like day and night, the seasons, 'rising and fading', the small world. But the spark of the spirit has been taken up into a process of awakening. The dormant great knowledge is awakened in us and shakes off all influences that try to displace this knowledge. The insight breaks through that God cannot be anything else than my deepest self, and at the same time, the awareness of the suffocating tangle that has been wound around this nucleus in the course of time breaks through.

And then it becomes clear that, to the extent that we are able to protect ourselves from any outside influences and to allow the inner being to speak, we can say: 'I am living in two worlds, and simultaneously two worlds are living in me.'

The moment will arrive that both worlds within me are ensouled by a consciousness, so that I can live in both. I have encountered the tyrant, Santa and the producer within myself, and experienced their impotence, poverty and ignorance. That is also *alive* in me. I clearly have to *do* something with it, but do I also have to *be* it? Again and again, we are confronted with this choice; again and again, the stream confronts us not only with the shadow side, but also with the world of compassion, devotion and insight. And after you have run from the stream for the umpteenth time, you hesitatingly come home again. You expect an uneasy silence, but instead, a flower is waiting on the table, of which the fragrance surrounds you with a 'welcome home', and you recognise the mild admonition because of the not-recognised love, the exhortation of the power of the great world that drives everything to the 'good end'.

## The Name

We are familiar with the gifts of the old small world: fear and worry, distrust, struggle and loneliness, although there are unmistakably also beautiful, pleasant and interesting aspects. But an intense contact with them soon leads to the objection: is that all? How different this becomes, when we are going to limit our role in the story to what is necessary and are going to look for the reality of the undercurrent. It seems as if discovering and consciously beholding this reality activates the stream of 'well-being', even if we have to suffer the human inconveniences; even if we also become wet when it rains. But things have changed; it is as if we have been taken up into another field, the Light-protecting field. And we stay behind with a feeling of profound gratitude for everything that was, is *and* is to come. We are just as vulnerable as everyone else, perhaps even more so, because the soul is on edge, yet somehow unassailable, undeniably protected and led by a Power that we do not dare to give a name, because we do not want to be considered dreamers or fantasists. *But the Name vibrates thousandfold in the inner temple!* Is it actually necessary to comprehend, understand God mentally? Do we not also live with sun, light, warmth, and experience their comfort, without our wanting to explain this effect?

Perhaps the whole mystery can be found in the ancient Cathar hymn:

*'What is God?*

*Let us, who came hither, be silent.*

*Let us not mention His Name.*

*Let us remain silent. — Let us pray in silence.*

*He who wants to say who He is, must be who He is.'*





*Music evokes certain moods and, since time immemorial, this is used consciously. During joyous events (like weddings and victory celebrations), music is played that makes the guests happy and cheerful and/or invites them to dance. But music is infinitely more.*

## The psychology of music

13<sup>th</sup>-century tile  
picture from  
Takht-I-Sulayman,  
Iran

THERE ARE SERIOUS STUDIES showing that mediaeval people were less depressed, because festivals and fairs kept them 'on the right track' and completely involved them in the community again! At funerals, the bereft often bid farewell to

their beloved ones with solemn and heavy music, in an atmosphere that, often involuntarily, leads to turning inwardly and contemplation. In times of war, drums drown and anaesthetise – both in primitive tribes and in more

civilised peoples – the feelings of fear of the soldiers, while marching music causes the advancing fighters to feel invulnerable, so that they approach the enemy proudly and confidently. We know that during World War II the Scottish regiments had miraculous successes, because bagpipers continued to play their shrill, piercing tunes in the midst of the horrors of the battlefield. This killed two birds with one stone: it made the enemy flee, but simultaneously encouraged the Scottish soldiers.

The film industry uses music in an advanced way. A whole range of sound effects takes advantage of the feelings of the audience. When the shadow of a hand reaches

for the door handle, with an unsuspecting person behind the door, it is above all the music that affects the audience's nerves, and their breath stops when the intruder opens the door with a swift move. It has been demonstrated that during pursuits, the increased tempo of the music also increases the public's pulse. There is soft, swooning music when the plot unravels and the lovers fall into each other's arms...

### The sage of Syracuse

In Western tradition, Pythagoras was one of the first people who systematically investigated the influence of music on the human psyche. Legend tells that he decided to embark on this research, when he passed a smithy, where several blacksmiths were forging a sword and in turn applied a hammer blow. He wondered why each hammer produced its own pitch and timbre. By experimenting with a device with strings that were stretched by different weights, Pythagoras discovered that there was a relationship between pitch and weight and that the consonance of some tones was harmonious, while that of others was not. In the Pythagorean theory of harmony, knowledge of interval relationships between simultaneously sounding tones and series of tones that were ordered along rhythmic and melodic lines in time, was expanded to a system of universal principles, which the Pythagoreans also recognised in the order and the structure of macrocosm, cosmos and microcosm. The wisdom of their mysteries did not consider the solar cosmos a mechanism, a dead mechanism, but this cosmos was seen as manifesting a logos. It was known that behind the visible forms a living, pulsating, divine primordial power was active. Just as the ancient Indian Hindu sages, who heard the all-pervasive fundamental tone 'AUM' in the heart of creation, the Pythagoreans departed from a cosmic ground tone that

Lyre player, Tarquinia, Tomba dei Leopardi, 774 BC

Right: Flute player, Tarquinia, Tomba dei Leopardi



was divided into scales, whereby each tone of a scale in turn produced other octaves. All celestial bodies, all constellations, all suns, planets and moons, have their own tone, their own vibration and together sing the beautiful song of creation. Of Pythagoras it is said that he, as an initiate in the ancient Egyptian and Indian mysteries, could really observe the 'harmony of the spheres' with his inner being.

### Pythagoras learned in Egypt

The core of Pythagoras' teachings concerning measures and numbers is to be found in Hermes' principle: 'as above, so below'. This means that the order, the laws, the mutual relationships applying to life in cosmos and macrocosm are also applicable to microcosmic life, that is, to the life of each individual.

There is harmony in the coherence between spirit, soul and body, when the spirit – always new, and always renewed – vibrates *on* and *with* the vibrations and movements in the cosmos that surrounds and penetrates the human life field from all sides. When the spiritual impressions of the Supernature penetrate into the soul, states of mind will emerge on their rhythm, which the soul would like to express in poetry, in song and in dance. This is why the Pythagoreans liked to compare the human body with a musical instrument and with the seven-stringed lyre in particular, the instrument that Pythagoras himself played masterfully. When the human soul totally focuses on the spirit, it will, through the wonderful power of inspiration, spontaneously begin to sing its song of the soul, and attune its instrument, the body, to this song. The essence of music, measure and number, rhythm and harmony, causes in the body equilibrium in the rhythm of heart and respiration, in the rhythm of waking and sleeping, in the assimilation and digestion

of food, in the stretching and relaxing of the muscles. Finally, the inner music of the soul resonates also in the elegant movement of the body, in a supple way of walking, in an agile and expressive face, in twinkling eyes that reflect both mischief and the depth of the soul life, and in a singing voice.

The Pythagoreans attributed illness and disturbances in the mental, psychological and physical functions to disharmonic conditions in the complex human life system. They found the main cause of disharmony in egocentricity, in only looking after one's own interests, in being deaf to the 'music of the spheres'. The I-personality cuts himself off from the vibrations emanating from the divine world, which



grant light, power, harmony and health to the human being who *is* attuned to them. Therefore, separation develops false, that is not-tuned, tones in the psyche, which ultimately may lead, literally and metaphorically, to a cacophony of unhealthy dissonances, to chaos of noise and racket.

### Music as therapy

In Pythagorean therapy, the principle of order in music plays an important role. First, the illness and the underlying disharmonic tensions were analysed. If the imbalance between, on the one hand, too weak, and on the other hand too strong soul factors was exposed, the too strong soul factors (like anger, fear, hatred, jealousy, self-pity, conceitedness) were tempered, and the too weak soul forces (for example self-sacrifice, compassion, longing for unification with the greater whole, for truth, beauty and harmony) were strengthened and dynamised. The principle of this therapy is clarified by a story, in which Pythagoras was able to bring a man, possessed by anger and on the brink of committing murder, to his senses with his lyre. With certain sounds, he evoked insight, calmness, and self-control in the man's psyche, in spite of his anger. This reminds us of the biblical story, in which David was able to influence the psyche of the sombre, jealous and murder-inclined Saul with his harp.

We do not know which music the Pythagoreans exactly used and how it was applied. However, we do know something of the principles they employed, and it is interesting to see how they reappear in the modern practice of music therapy. In centres for music therapy, restful, harmonious music often successfully steers, for example, increasing emotional instability – a result of our hectic and noisy society – in the right direction again. Even specific therapeutic effects of the music of certain composers are scientifically established.

Mozart's music, for example, supposedly alleviates rheumatic pains; Schubert is purported to be good against sleeplessness, Handel against emotional problems and Bach works supposedly on the digestive system. Of the Parisian E.N.T.-specialist Alfred A Tomatis it is said that he achieved good results in the treatment of autism and hearing disorders (like certain types of deafness and Meunière's syndrome, an affection of the organ of balance originating in the inner ear) by working with Mozart's early symphonies.

Recent brain research shows that the brain has a fundamental need of rhythm. When this rhythm, which differs individually, is missing, disturbances of the brain functions arise that particularly manifest themselves in stress. And stress may have disastrous consequences for our health. Patients suffering from extreme stress appear to benefit remarkably from drum therapy. The patient, who is drumming himself, spontaneously seeks the rhythm that suits him and this rhythm works beneficially on the nervous tensions in his body. Such drum sessions have also demonstrated to slow down, stop and even revert the progress of diseases like autism, dementia and Alzheimer's syndrome.

The 'new age' movement, in which emotion and sensitivity play an important role, deals in another way with music. The basic idea is that the psyche of modern people has exploded like a cluster bomb. The human being has condemned himself to loneliness by dissociating from the natural order; he did not only lose contact with his own past and that of the group, but also lost the link with Mother Earth, with the sun, the moon and the stars. With subtle, often synthetic series of tones, which contain elements of old liturgical church music or of music of ancient, almost forgotten cultures (like that of the Celts, the American Indians and the Australian Aborigines), it is attempted to

restore the chasm between the tattered, fragmented life and the deeper self. With Tibetan singing bowls and overtone singing, it is even tried to evoke powers, which magically link people with a world community that surpasses race, religion and time.

### **The cosmic tone of 442 Hertz**

Apart from activities in Pythagoras' mystery school, in modern music therapy and in the 'new age' movement, the conscious use of music for achieving certain results (like healing or the development of one's deeper self) is only applied by a few people. In ancient China, however, the whole social order was based on and organised according to musical principles. Obviously, these principles largely corresponded to the Pythagorean teachings of rhythm, proportion and harmony. During the prime of Chinese civilisation, society was not organised according to the principles of human weaknesses like lust for power, exploitation, oppression and forming coalitions on the basis of well-understood self-interest. No, it was attempted to organise society according to cosmic principles. Earthly life could be a reflection of the divine order and the perfect harmony that controls the cosmos, so that earthly life could be permeated with heavenly energies.

Just as the ancient Hindus, people in ancient China believed that an inaudible sound, a primordial tone, underlies everything manifested, underlies spirit and matter, matter and energy. They called this primordial tone the Huang Chung or 'yellow sound' or 'yellow bell'. The term Huang Chung was also used for the concept of 'supreme ruler' or 'divine will'. Yellow was the colour of both heavenly wisdom and the ruling emperor. This heavenly, inaudible Huang Chung corresponded to a certain audible sound: the

earthly Huang Chung of 442 Hertz. And it was this Huang Chung that linked heaven and earth; that ensured that the divine will was passed on to mortals through the heavenly and the earthly ruler.

We know that Chinese civilisation was very much focused on ceremonies and had a multitude of rituals. Numerous precepts, rules and laws caused social life in the immense empire to develop in a very ordered way. During these ceremonies and rituals, music played an important part and all this music derived from the Huang Chung, the Golden Sound. To the ancient Chinese, music meant much more than amusement could offer or a devout, serene mood could evoke. It was an energy formula with which the holy power of the sound was evoked and spread. Through this music, eternal truths were transmitted to the human consciousness, and the inhabitants of the empire were lifted onto and kept on a higher moral level. An ancient Chinese manuscript states, for example: 'Through the influence of music, the five social tasks are spontaneously accomplished, the eyes and ears are clear, the blood and the vital energies are balanced, lust is overcome, the customs are improved and the empire achieves a state of perfect peace.'

### **The tone is the measure of things**

The relationship between the heavenly and the earthly Huang Chung was above all expressed in a musical system, in which an octave, just as in our Western tone system, consists of twelve tones. Each of these twelve tones was associated with a sign of the zodiac, and depending on the time of the day and the month of the year, a specific tone played a prominent role in the music. The character of the music thus followed the celestial movements and was a transit channel of cosmic energies. The idea of the perfect state, based on the

Huang Chung, went so far that also the institutions of the state, like departments, and the government officials each had their own tone and their own ceremonial music.

The measures and weights were also derived from the Huang Chung. The standard length was the length of a string that produced the golden sound and the standard weight was the weight of a metal rod of the right diameter that also produced the golden sound. The prototypes of these measures and weights were stored in the Ministry of Music. Music that was not based on the Huang Chung was often considered gross and sensual. Due to the immoral influence on the population, this music was often banned by the authorities, when warnings were not effective. Ultimately, the ancient Chinese civilisation, which reached its pinnacle with and through music, also declined through music. The traditional Chinese music was too much forced into a straightjacket of rules and precepts, and in this way declined and was subsequently overrun by foreign, mainly Western influences.

In this example, we clearly see that, although music can be the carrier wave of eternal truths, the form is subject to change. The essence of music, therefore, always seeks new forms of expression that are suitable for the developing human psyche. And even if some musical expressions experience a long prime, they sooner or later end up, just as other forms of culture, on the scrap heap of time. Above, a few times reference is made to the secret, hidden power of music, about which the wisdom of the mysteries speaks. Something of this wisdom of the mysteries can be found in the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice (see also Pentagonagram 4, 2007). This Greek myth, which can be interpreted in many ways, has inspired a number of composers (like Monteverdi, Gluck, Offenbach) to set to music what is

sometimes called 'the tragedy of the impossible love'. And not without reason: there is, after all, no art form that approaches the spirit of divine love so closely as music does.

Just as the spirit, music is fleeting and elusive. Just as the spirit, music has no past or future, but comes to life, into action, in the immediate 'present'. And just as with a spiritual touch, sparks may jump over: sparks of the divine fire.

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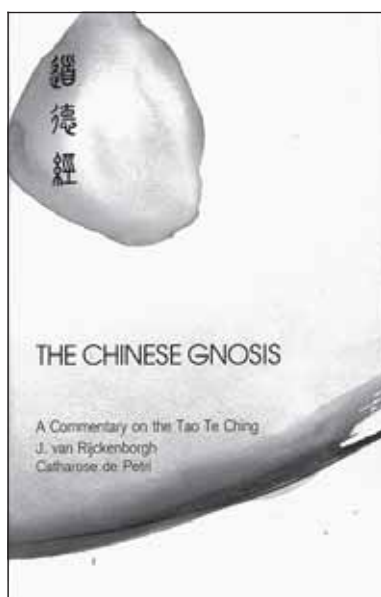
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Right: Harp player, playing at the banquet of Rekhmire, vizier and governor of Thebes (1505-1450 BC). Detail of a tomb painting in the necropolis at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, on the Western shore of the Nile near Luxor, Egypt







# THE CHINESE GNOSIS

*A commentary on part 1 of Lao Tzu's*

## TAO TE CHING

by

J. van Rijckenborgh

and

Catharose de Petri

459 pages, hardback, ISBN 90 6732 245 8 2

Never has there been a commentary on the *Tao Te Ching* like this one, in which the *Tao Te Ching* is seen as a gnostic text and interpreted on the basis of gnostic insight. As the authors explain, Gnosis – the original divine Knowledge which gives access to the path of liberation – is not limited to one particular country or nation. Gnosis is universal and intended for the whole human race, and wherever in the world the Messengers of the Light may work, it will always be revealed.

That is why it was manifested not only in the Middle East, but also in ancient China, in the form of Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*. Written down some 2600 years ago, the

*Tao Te Ching* is a brief text consisting of only 81 short chapters, yet it is so charged with meaning that it contains everything the seeker of liberation needs to know.

Take this verse from chapter 33 for instance: *He who overcomes others is strong, but he who overcomes himself is omnipotent*. The authors' interpretation of this verse is as follows: *'being omnipotent means unlocking and participating in the core essence of the Godhead'*. In a few words, this summarises the whole magnificent task underlying human existence. *The Chinese Gnosis* not only explains this task, but also shows how it can be accomplished.

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