

pentagram

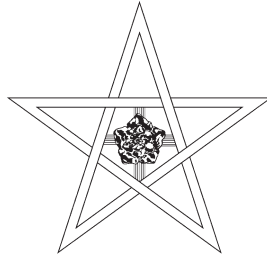
Lectorium Rosicrucianum

can we be explorers of what does not yet exist?
he who knows himself, is illumined
infinitely nearby
wholesome borders, a timeless story
seven valleys
mantao II
the rediscovery of the gnosis IV



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The periodical **pentagram** intends to draw the readers' attention to a new era in the development of humanity.

In all times, the pentagram symbolises the reborn human being, the new man. The pentagram also symbolises the universe and its eternal genesis, through which the divine plan is manifested.

A symbol receives its current value when it drives to realisation. The human being who realises the pentagram in his microcosm, his small world, has entered the path of transfiguration. The periodical **pentagram** invites the reader to enter this new era by accomplishing an inner, spiritual revolution.

pentagram

volume 37 2015 number 4

The amount of poets, thinkers and harbingers that indicate the spiritual path to the mankind is impressive. However, there are only very few who devote all their lives to follow this path and who last in their engagement. Following this sevenfold development invariably leads to inclusion in the chain formed by the bearers of the Path, those that have mapped it out and have thus become its guardians. And they all say, without exception, that the Path is sevenfold.

Those who with earnestness make the first step, accomplish it out of time. They experience an understanding of an Eternal Being, in their own interior and around them. An immense joy fills and warms their hearts, dissolving all that was still rigid.

At the same time they are confronted with a pile of difficulties of seven different tones which cannot be resolved otherwise than by returning to the depth of the creative power of the heart. The heart, being also sevenfold, is always challenged to pass a new border. And each border requires a passport: Universal Love. This Love is a unique valid visa, with no expiration date and no limitations of time or space. Indeed, what is universal englobes all and everyone. In the universal, we and others are One. To grasp this fully and to be integrated in this movement, we need real understanding. The last step turns out to be the first one.



Cover: Laughing children in the field of marigolds in Panskura, West Bengal, India.

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He who knows himself is enlightened

A friend or a relative, for example, will precisely depict you the way you are. And, what's more, who you are. So precisely, that you'll come to believe them. Don't those people, close to you, rely upon facts? Why should they present matters in a way that differs from reality? However, are you aware that numerous are those who were thus put on the wrong tracks? Your wife, your husband, your brother or your sister, your partner, tells you, "This is what you are"... and you come to believe it. And you will adjust your life, your way of being, to the conclusions drawn by others. Eventually you will think that you possess a sound knowledge of yourself.

J. van Rijckenborgh

If you take matters plainly, you will acknowledge that, from time to time, you fall prey to such a situation. We can refer here to well-known evidence from a classical source, relating that the Lord Jesus and his noble followers and workers, couldn't achieve any result within their own environment, within their own country, even for their own relatives and acquaintances. Just remember this famous sentence: "Can't there come any good from Nazareth? – Nothing! We know it all but too clearly!"

For, though getting to know people could prove useful and of importance to you, when we come to consider correct assessment, there are more wrong assessments in your life than correct ones. Who understands this and dares to admit it, also knows that, as regards self-knowledge, they are constantly erring. Most human

beings are, faced with such a question, either too optimistic or pessimistic, and not at all realistic. "How can this be?" you will ask. The answer is simple: because the human being is not equipped with any sensory organ, any internal power, that would enable them to observe themselves objectively, as they act; and that they are not able to observe the inner emotions that drive them to act in such or such a way; and even less the astral motivations that lie behind the veil. The book of causes and effects, the book of personal karma often remains, as regards personal life, a closed book.

This is also true concerning the occultists, who, as we are often told, particularly own detailed knowledge of their personal karmic state. Our modern Spiritual School dismisses occultism because it provides a method that enables the consciousness of the self to get to the very core



Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri are the founders of the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross. In this School they have in a variety of ways explained and shown their pupils by their example how the soul may be liberated, often on the basis of original texts from the universal doctrines.



of the mystery of life. This is possible, but up to a certain point only. And the result is always consciousness of the self as hard as the stone and a life that is completely entangled in the astral sphere.

NEW FORMULA As far as eternal salvation and real and true life are concerned, occultism is of no use to the human kind. For a secret must be discovered. And the formula of this secret is:

- Firstly: to get to know oneself and thus to get enlightened;
- Secondly: to overcome oneself and thus to become all-powerful;
- Thirdly: to develop new energy and thus to unfold the magical power of the will;
- Fourthly: once arrived at the end of the journey through matter, to enter eternal and new life.

Do you want to study this formula, to try it and

enjoy the results? This formula that comes to you from the ancient past bears the radiance of infallible truth. The question is now: "How do we get to know ourselves and thus get enlightened?" And: "What is enlightenment?"

Asking such questions requires certain amount of experience and having drunk from the bitter chalice of suffering. For it is only through experience that questions reach the human heart: "What is the purpose of my life? What is a human being? What is mankind destined to? »

If you ask yourself those questions, not in an intellectual way but because they are now and truly internal questions, if those questions arise from the inner depths of your heart, then the need for the quest makes its way through you. Such a need, from the very start, is felt as a vital urge that can be expressed as follows: "to be or

We can consider the personality as the half part of creation, since it is the entrance door to the true development of man

not to be”. Therefore, the person has come to the point where the Universal Knowledge is fully delivered, for it is the plan God has designed for the world and mankind.

Such a quest has nowadays become easier for a candidate. The Spiritual School of the Rosy-cross provides a full display of literature, and the adept studies it pushed by their inner vital necessity.

You will notice that when we refer here to study, we consider it at a very different angle than what one means by it in ordinary terms. The candidate examines, seeks knowledge, as they are now driven by this inner vital need. They then discover that consciousness of the self is only a driving activity, which is mostly suited for the maintenance of the personality; that the personality represents but half the part of creation, since it is the entrance door leading to the true development of a new human being; and, finally, that the life of the personality, as the person understands it at the moment, is not a life that honours the true state of a human being, but only refers to an animal way of life.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE IS KNOWLEDGE OF GOD As soon as the student reaches this understanding – and they will understand only if driven by this inner vital urge – a latent element in the

personality wakes up, develops and blossoms: the rose of the heart. Through this rose a voice speaks, the voice of the monadic flame, this part of the superior man who, thanks to the soul, must be tied to the inferior man, enabling the inferior man to transform and transfigure. As soon as this scheme is fully understood, and the candidate opens to it and understands it otherwise than intellectually, living and growing innerly according to the plan God designed for them, illumination occurs. It is here that lies self-knowledge, the knowledge of God, the understanding of the words: “The realm of God is within you”. This is what the enlightenment is. And in enlightenment, through enlightenment, the human being treads the path of victory, the victory upon the self. ☸

W O R L D I M A G E S T H E J O U R N E Y T H R O U G H T H E S E V E N V A L L E Y S

Farid un-Din Attar, a Sufi poet who lived in the twelfth century, wrote the “The conference of the birds”. This story relates a quest for Truth described as a journey through the seven valleys. Each valley is both an aim and a pitfall. In each valley there is a guide who can lead you through that valley and over the mountain into the next valley. It is the hoopoe that describes the seven valleys, as follows:

the first valley, Talab

the valley of searching: the continuous search due to the heart and to the mercy

the second valley, Ischc

the valley of love: being consumed with the fire of love

the third valley, Ma’rifat

the valley of inner knowledge: the heart awakens

the fourth valley, Istigna

the valley of letting go and unchaining: letting go of anxiety and desire

the fifth valley, Tauhid

the valley of Unity: free from the duality and from the ‘I’

the sixth valley, Hairat

the valley of astonishment; going through the desert of sorrow, pain, loss, destruction

the seventh valley, Facr-fana

the valley of destitution and realization, the unity (‘fana’): spiritual poverty and destitution

In order to pass through a valley we have to give up some of our luggage that we are attached to. This process of giving up and letting go leads us to a new manner of living that brings us closer to freedom. We need two legs in this journey. We are predestined for eternity – that is one leg – and the other leg is our perseverance in achieving that goal. We need to continue investigating our motives on our way, in order to be sure that vanity and self-love are banished. Instead, we want to know the Truth. We are prepared to offer everything of what we thought to be us.

The reader will find the impressions of the seven valleys on pages 13, 18, 19, 27, 34, 35, 36 and on the inside cover:





“He who knows man is wise; but he who knows himself is enlightened,” said the Chinese sage Laozi twenty five centuries ago. “It is easier to penetrate Mars than oneself,” sighed the philosopher Carl Gustav Jung halfway of the previous century. Reflection on the concept of self-knowledge is of all times. But apparently for man self-knowledge is a form of knowledge that is not as easy to acquire as the word at first hearing suggests. Basing ourselves on a series of quotes we try to show in this article how we arrive at self-knowledge.

Self-reflection is valuable and self-knowledge is vital for our social functioning. Self-knowledge is a life necessity for everyone who wants to follow the liberating, spiritual path. The old sages all agreed upon that. But that does not mean that self-knowledge is easy to acquire. He who thinks of himself as a man of action appears to be a dreamer at another moment. He who reacts anxiously in one situation turns out to be very courageous in other circumstances. He, who likes to be among people, appears to have traits of a lone wolf at other moments. The only thing that we can say with certainty about ourselves is that we are variable, that we are sometimes a barrel of contradictions, yes: that we regularly surprise ourselves.

Observing and judging others in their doings is an easier task than perceiving ourselves. A phenomenon that occurs is that many people often rely for their necessary self-knowledge on the judgement of others. Like J. van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri explained in the previ-

ous article, our wife, husband, brother, sister or friend can, well or ill intentioned, tell us precisely: ‘So are you’. And so firmly, that we at last come to believe it.

Why is it that most people can perceive themselves so poorly? And they say furthermore: “Man has no sensory organ, no inner ability to observe oneself objectively in their doings and is not able to perceive the inner impulses that give rise to those doings. And even less the motives that are behind that. The book of cause and effect, the book of personal karma is in the case of one’s own life usually a hermetically closed book.”

That we are inclined to base our lack of self-knowledge on others or on external aspects is therefore somewhat understandable.

But it seems that to obtain a living, true self-knowledge, we have to turn into ourselves. It becomes absolutely clear from the following excerpt from *The book of Mirdad* of Mikhaïl

Break the seals yourself and everything will be unsealed

Naimy: “If, then, your world be such a baffling riddle, it is because you are that baffling riddle. And if your speech be such a woeful maze, it is because you are that maze.

Let things alone and labour not to change them. For they seem what they seem only because you seem what you seem.

They neither see nor speak except you lend them sight and speech. If they be harsh of speech, look only to your tongue. If they be ugly of appearance, search first and last your eye.

Ask not of things to shed their veils. Unveil yourselves, and things will be unveiled. Nor ask of things to break their seals. Unseal yourselves, and all will be unsealed.

Neither wish that things break their seals. Break the seals yourself and everything will be unsealed.

If you have thoughts that stab, pierce or claw, know then that only the “I” within you did equip them with their sting and tusk and claw. And if your heart hosts thorny bushes, know then that only your ‘I’ allowed them to take root. If there are evil phantoms in your universe, then realise that only your “I” brought them into existence.”

THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE BIRDS There are numerous symbolic stories of myths that portray the laborious quest of man to himself, to his true self. One of them is *The conference of the birds* by the Persian poet from the twelfth century Farid Ud-Din Attar. The story tells how

all the birds of the world gather in search of the king of all birds, the Simorgh. They choose a leader: the hoopoe. It relates that the king is very far away and that the journey to the palace is dangerous and difficult.

We can see these birds as human souls – or as properties of the human soul – that are in search of their king, of their origin.

At first the birds seem enthusiastic: there is nothing else that they want more than to find their king, but gradually they find all kinds of excuses. The sparrow is too scared to go on such a late stage, the owl finds itself too home-loving to leave the nest.

The nightingale is a poet who is too much on his own song. His love is the rose with her ephemeral beauty and sensuality. That he certainly would not forsake.

The nightingale: “I adore her so much that I forget my own existence, I only see her purple leaves. The journey to the king is beyond my powers. The love for the rose is enough for me. How would I be, even one night without the love that enchants me?”

The hoopoe responds incisively: “Nightingale, you are drunk of the outer appearance of things.

Do not give in to that and stop with it. The love of the rose is full of thorns, she has overcome you and keeps you in her spell. The rose can be very beautiful, but her beauty is fleeting. Work on yourself. Leave the rose and blush of shame, since with every new spring, she does



not smile at you. But she laughs at you and then she disappears.” Also, a turtledove which is madly in love, invents all kinds of excuses not to go. “Great hoopoe, love has chained me so much that I can hardly move anymore. Love has taken my senses, my heart, yes, my soul. Without love I go through hell. How can I take the road when I am captured in the blood of my lady love. There is not a moment that I can tear myself loose from her lovely face. So great is my pain. I am beyond faith and disbelieve. She is my idol, I perish from grief, my love brings me nothing but trouble. Without her I am lost and I drown. That is my state; tell me what I should do.”

The hoopoe answers him: “You are the prisoner of beautiful appearances and superficial love. That is nothing more than craving of the flesh. Just love the perfect. Search for the unseen

world, true beauty. When the last veil is pulled away, the splendor of the earthly beauty perishes. He who loves outer appearances, is himself an enemy, while he who loves all the time the absent Unseen Friend, is embraced in the pure love that knows no end and lives eternally.”

It is evident that the admonitions of the hoopoe are meant for those who want to follow the spiritual path but are ultimately deterred by, e.g. cowardice, excessive attachment, laziness, hypocrisy or earthly appearances. We are stimulated by the hoopoe to learn from that and to discover our inner destiny.

A large group of birds eventually sets off to seek their king. It is a grueling journey with great hardships that seems too much for many birds. The pilgrims have to cross seven valleys, designated consecutively by the poet as the valley of search, love, knowledge, detachment, uni-

The thirty earthly birds saw their own face reflected in the countenance of the heavenly king, Simorgh

ty, bewilderment and finally hardship and death. The birds that endure this, eventually reach the goal they had in mind. Only thirty birds arrive at the gate of the palace of the great king. There the heavenly sun starts to shine in front of them, reports the poet, and 'something incredible' happens.

"The thirty earthly birds saw their own face reflected in the countenance of the heavenly king, Simorgh. Deeply bewildered they wondered whether they were themselves or they had changed in the king. Then they looked at themselves and - miracle of miracles - the same thirty birds seemed to be one Simorgh! And then they threw a glance at both again, they were convinced: they and the Simorgh were essentially one.

And the king spoke: 'Now go joyful and resplendent in me and find yourself in me.'
*Then the birds were lost forever in the Simorgh.
Thus the shadow faded into the sun.
Traveler, trail and guide no longer existed.
When they found the king, they found themselves,
their divine self."*

The pilgrimage of the birds shows us that man is not capable of true self-knowledge if he frantically holds on to the fears and anxieties, joys and pleasures, but also the ideals that are inherent to this world.

However, that it is not so easy to distance oneself from that, teaches us the nightingale and the lovesick turtle dove from this Persian tale.

TO SILENCE ALL OUTER VOICES Also Carl Gustav Jung has written about this and he puts forward two answers to the question why man loses contact with his core essence so easily. One of the answers is that some separate, instinctual temptation or emotional idea can easily let man lose his balance.

An explanation thereof can be seen in a comparison with the animal world: a sexually excited deer will completely forget his sense of hunger and security.

The second obstacle that Jung sees before human being can penetrate its core essence is the domination of his ego-consciousness.

According to him, it is strongly inclined to block the impulses and messages coming from the inner center.

By striving for unbiased knowledge of his being and living conditions in this world, in short, by being himself, it is possible for man to come to a full turn of events. He realizes that he can no longer hide behind others, behind educators or parents.

On the way to his innermost being man has to silence all the outer voices of others, but also his own, not entirely pure, motives. Only then can his being open up to what the seventeenth-century Rosicrucian's called 'knowledge of the heart': Gnosis.

FIRST MAN He who consciously tunes in to the inner call of the Gnosis, follows a path of inner life and experience under protection and in the

power of the Gnosis. The more one is opening up to the call of the Gnosis, the sooner he acquires self-knowledge that will totally change his being and life. He will experience that there lies a small but important power in him from the divine essence: the light core of the other. That light core, which is a divine principle, is often dormant, but from it radiates a penetrating call. Who listens to it, in him a reminder is created of that 'first man', a call to its origin, and its mission to become again a person consecrated to God, a child of the Gnosis, becomes clear.

"For such a man the urge gradually arises," according to J. van Rijckenborgh, "to learn to know the purpose of life and the plan that underlies his existence. Gradually he is fed by this plan and his heart opens for this wonderful accomplishment. The rose blooms and the higher man, which is holding the microcosm, manifests itself. So the pupil is nurtured by the plan that cherishes him. In this new, emerging state it may happen that in this man, a totally different life orientation arises. Everything he considered important before, seems to lose its value. It is like nothing in light of the new day. A new power is released. This makes it possible that beside the heart also the head functions according to its true, original purpose. Head and heart, heart and head work in this way together in an enlightened state-of-being."

"Man know thyself" becomes "Man be thyself." It is this man that Laozi has in mind when he says: *He who knows himself is enlightened.* ☸

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André Zegveld: *Een plaats om te wonen, over spiritualiteit en menswording (A place to live, spirituality and human manifestation).*



the first valley: Talab

the valley of searching: the continuous search due to the heart and to the mercy

The first valley is the valley of investigation. This is in fact the first initiation and a step in an unknown direction. We enter the valley to find God, truth, peace, ourselves or whatever that makes us enthusiastic. 'Intelligence' or 'desire' do motivate us to seek, but neither of them is able to find the goal, however they do motivate us. In this valley the 'I' is searching. We assume knowing the 'I' but the aim of our search is directed to something different than the 'I'. Sometimes people stay in this valley for many years, if not their whole life. They go from one teacher or method to another and become stuck in the search itself. Some people are content with this valley and believe that they are enlightened. However deep yearning for something beyond the fascinations of the 'I' brings the seeker over the mountain to the second valley.



wholesome boundaries

Three old men had almost reached the top of a mountain, with arduous efforts. It was not even a very high mountain, but they had followed a very strenuous path. Their feet often slipped and their hands had much difficulty to find support.

A TIMELESS STORY

They had been travelling for a very long time already, for centuries. They were wearing clothing of their times, as we would see before: long robes and strange head-pieces. Two of them had long white hair and a beard. The third had been hairless all his life.

Some day in the past they had set out on their journey. They could not remember anymore the place where they had started. Their only desire was to get away and to keep going. Together they had endured many adventures, experienced wonderful moments, lived through many different emotions, argued with each other, suffered through fear, were deeply moved. They were friends although strangely distant. They did not help each other to climb. Time had shown that it was not necessary to help each other.

They reached the top of a mountain. The oldest of the three managed to heave his body on a small plateau. As usual, he first looked around himself before he sank with a deep sigh to the ground. A strange light had captured his gaze. It was far away, though it seemed to touch him. He glanced at the two others and decided that this light, that apparently was alive and seemed to dance, was more important. He sat there and gazed at the light.

By now the two others had also reached the mountain top. Their attention was caught by

the light as well. With a hoarse voice the oldest man slowly said, "I would love to be there." The bald man smiled but said nothing. His gaze was fixed on the light that seemed to come nearer but then again withdrew. The third companion sat silent and solemn. He could not turn his gaze away from the light.

Despite of their tiredness the three rose up and began their descent. The force of attraction of the light was so great, that the three grew wings. The first man flew to a city.

He was overjoyed. He had felt the love of the light and was overflowing. All people were his brothers and sisters. He felt one with the entire world. His love had no limits. He stayed in the city and loved all people. Whatever they did, he forgave them. If somebody inflicted evil on him he offered his other cheek to them. If people spoke to him with hatred, he in return had only good wishes for them. He loved God and his days were filled with prayer. If someone stole from him, he gave him even more money. He had to restrain himself not to embrace everyone he met. He regularly approached random people to look them deeply into their eyes and to give testimony of his love with a warm voice. At first people were positively surprised, but soon his expressions of love began to irritate them. 'He is probably crazy' they said to each other. They could not stand his expression of love.

This caused him much suffering. "What am I doing wrong?" he asked himself desperately.



They searched for the light and immediately could feel its gentle touch.

“Only the light is without limits and boundaries...”

“Isn’t love the most important thing?” The second man flew to a mountain. There he found a big cavern that he turned into a temple of light. His head was fulfilled by the encounter with the light. He had access to boundless wisdom. He generously shared it with everyone that visited him. Even when people only passed by the cavern, he did not hold back his advice. He spoke truly wise words, but over time people found him intrusive. His words were not understood anymore. To him it seemed that he said the right words, but people understood them differently. Whichever approach he tried, people remained dull. This let the man become bitter. In the end,

nobody wanted to listen to him anymore. In his desperation he called out: “What should I only do? I received the gift of wisdom and want to pass it on to all people, but they don’t want it. Of what use is the wisdom then for me?”

The third man flew in a very impoverished area. The soil yielded only poor crops and people were sick. They couldn’t read and write and had no notion that life could be any different.

A mighty power filled him during his flight. He transformed it right away into action and went to work. His energy was infinite. He plowed

Three elder men.

© Bob Masse, Poster (photographic artwork),
Salt Spring Island, BC, Canada

fields, went to look for good seeds, planted and tended to the crop and then harvested it. He helped the sick and ailing, treated injuries, taught children. He helped everyone who came to him. People were so glad to have him in their midst. Soon a line-up of people already waited for him when he got up in the morning. The man kept helping and grew very weary and tired by doing so. But as soon as he stopped helping, the problems grew bigger, so he had to keep doing what he did. People came and took advantage of him. When he noticed that he was exploited by them, he collapsed and he sighed: "I am doing only positive things. I have worked so hard, but I do not see an improvement. I don't know anymore, what to do!"

The three men were so enthusiastic that they did not even notice that they lost sight of each other. When they came to this realization they were overcome by fear. All of a sudden they recognized their situation and noticed that their wings had disappeared. They were frightened and full of despair. They searched for the light and immediately could feel its gentle touch. "Only the light is without limits and boundaries" said the light. "You cannot be without the other and you also need boundaries. You found them apart from each other. These boundaries are wholesome. Reflect about the meaning of a boundary, a limitation. Every creation means a limitation and a boundary. If everything were white, you could not see anything. Things and people are not all the same, even if they are tru-

ly one in reality. The ear listens, the foot stands, the eye sees, and it is good like this. Each is different but still belongs to one body. Not everything is good to be done, but having the possibility of doing it is good. Not every food is healthy. What is good for the body is not always good for the soul. The ability to differentiate is one of the most important powers of the human being, but it has to be developed. It was wise that you did not fly directly into the light. You would have been burned by it.

Hereupon the light disappeared. But it left a track behind. The men followed it to find each other reunited in a clearing of the woods. High trees surrounded them and there seemed to be no other path. The three men talked to each other for a long time. They spoke more than they had ever spoken. About love without wisdom, about wisdom without action, help that could not yet be accepted and many other things. And during this time new wings appeared again for them, wings of an all-pervading power. They found soft patience, unity of love, wisdom and action. And then there was light. ✨



the second valley: Ischc

the valley of love: being consumed with the fire of love

Entering the valley of love we experience something that surpasses our self (I-ness) and breaks the feeling of isolation and loneliness of the previous search. We find a teacher, a group, a concept of God or something we fall in love with. Maybe for the first time in our life we experience love. This experience is so fantastic that we are attached to it for the rest of our life.



We think that we have finally reached our goal. The 'love' is found at last. This is a wonderful experience but also a deep pitfall and difficult to pass through. If we can see that this beautiful experience is not the final goal then we are able to cross the mountain into the following valley – the valley of knowledge.

shifting of limitations through restriction of limitations

In “The Googlization of everything”, an American professor for media, Siva Vaidhyanathan, concludes that we are much too careless in our non-committing search behavior in the Internet and the resulting “hits”. Is it still possible to evade the commercial interests of advertisers that are being served through our keystrokes? Is this possible despite a search engine’s mission statement for

EXPANDING OF LIMITATIONS OR RESTRICTION OF LIMITATIONS We currently witness simultaneously that our urge for differentiation from the collective has shifted to a focus on oneself and individuality. As a result of this shift from interests of the group to personal interests, today’s choices are characterized much more by autonomous self-responsibility. So we observe that the role of once powerful religious and political organizations diminishes. Overall, as a result of these vanishing limitations of the collective, we have come closer to the limitations of the personal desires and actions. At the same time we are being directly judged by what we have to do or accomplish, whereas this pressure was alleviated in the past by the group-feeling.

On the other hand, we experience increasing restrictions through intangible and anonymous structures which seemingly took over power in our globalized world. Concurrently, financial interests have become predominant; everything is done with purpose and according to well thought out production models in marketing and profit. All this is structured in the service of powerful and at the same time invisible corporations; individual resistance against them has become increasingly difficult. A feeling of powerlessness creeps up on the individual; all seems to be determined without much transparency and outside of their control, the individual seems to have no other choice than to go along passively with the masses.

WHAT TO DO NOW? When will we find a sort of insight that allows us to free ourselves from this hamster wheel? Maybe at the point when we feel forced because we simply can’t keep up and have to separate ourselves from it? We see that this already happens with older people who feel left out and redundant in this hectic world. It seems as if they had never built all we benefit from now. Typically, our society discriminates against minorities such as migrants, people of color, lower income families or the unemployed. Sooner or later we have to pay up for this treatment.

Wouldn’t it be better to escape from the civilized world? Escape from the world of meritocracy where one can only make a name for himself according to his degree of performance and where one consumes or at least participates in the advertising, where you are a loser if you can’t be a winner?

Many already started by turning away from Facebook or by turning their backs on the money markets. Another example is Ed Wardle, a documentary film maker who recently published on National Geographic his film “Alone in the Wild”. He made an attempt to survive for 3 months in the Canadian Yukon Territory without any human contact. He endured his isolation for only 50 days. He did not manage to talk with himself any longer. Finally, Ed Wardle had to reconnect with his familiar environment which, fortunately, remained accessible to him.

“free access to all available information”? Blinded by what is offered to us, we are being pushed through a kind of funnel as it were towards the advertisements which we were not actually searching for. And thus, we are not even touching on the credibility and correctness of what the Internet dishes out to us.

Perhaps behind all these escape attempts lies hidden a religious drive; a drive in accordance with the original meaning of ‘religare’ – ‘renewed connection’. Shifting the limitation is an area that cannot be directly perceived with our senses. We do not have concrete evidence for it; we do not have a common sense for it. Something we give, out of simplicity, the abstract title “god”, although we deny his very existence through the superficial ways we deal with our fellow men.

The essence of all this is that Google is unable to provide us with adequate answers to the great existential questions. Unlike simple, superficial knowledge, these questions concern a deep inner reality. Let us ask ourselves about the condition of this experience, of this contact. Contact in a tangible and accessible sense in this field of existence that our fellow men are familiar with in connecting with one another and in comprehending it.

Somewhere in our worldwide quest, we lost the most important search criteria, the comprehension for everything outside the horizontal plane, the vertical dimension, the transcendent reality; past the limitations of our personal accomplishments, even past the human contact with like-minded people and everything they agree upon in superficial human dealings. We lost something which makes contact with us as human beings and over which we as individuals or as a group have no control. It is no longer about you or me. It is

past the limitations of me and you. It is where we are being taken out of our own hands.

In the end, this is about crossing all set limitations. To penetrate into the reality that god, that the other one, does not exist outside, in that outside world which we want to explore infinitely, but also not in us, not in our inexhaustible psychological interior or in the chasm that exists between us. However, it is about exceeding and transcending of all human limitations. Yes, because we were able to endure for so long, to deny or repress these limitations out of all sorts of personal reasons or group interests, sometimes through misleading programs or deformed encapsulated in worn out dogmas, while it announced itself, filled with love over and over again, in waiting, until we are able to react to it, able to respond to this important moment.

We can devote ourselves to this moment; attune our thoughts to it and to accept the beginning of a responsibility; the beginning of truly renewing, creative, self-creative thinking emerges; surpassing the limitations of our intellectual thinking and our sense perceptions; emanating from an original coherence between our heart and our head. Intuitive and innovative knowing.

In return, no more escaping into the excesses of sham-knowledge – the way we always liked to do – but to pause at the new beginning and to remain faithful. To possess in autono-

Shift the limitations. Experience that the one infinite creator, the wholly other one, whom we want to explore infinitely, must first find a living recognition within us, within our never-ending spiritual self, before he can be found outside



mous self-responsibility the courage to pause at your own existential questions:

What is transpiring within me, what are the consequences of my actions in my life and what is this telling me?

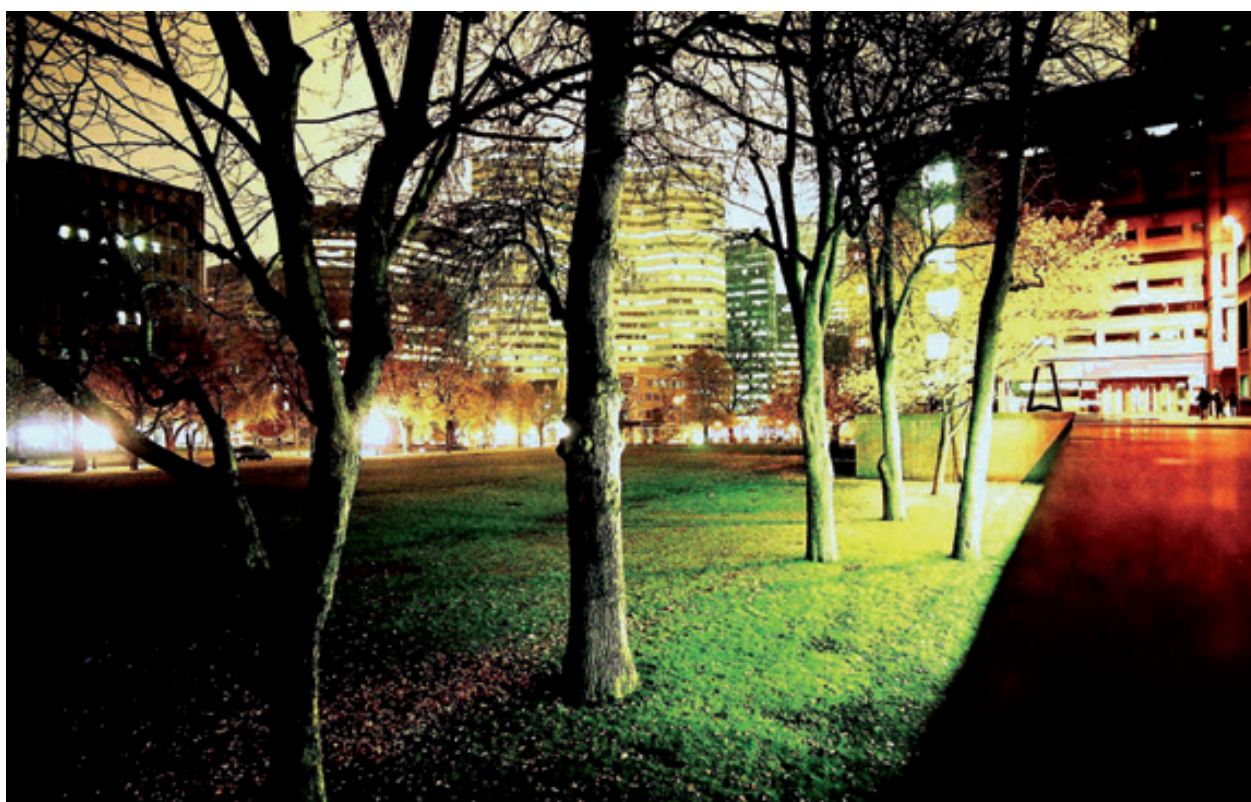
Isn't this something I have to stand by myself instead of leaving it up to coaches or gurus? Perceived authorities who only want to dictate how I have to position myself in the hustle of work and private life, life in society

and personal life, freedom and restrictions.

Best to begin with admitting that I got stuck somewhere in my lifelong quest.

And that I can't help but ask myself what I occupied myself with during all this time instead of listening to my own innermost voice.

Where I passed by myself while the answer was right in front of me or even reverberated within me.



SHIFTING OF LIMITATIONS THROUGH RESTRICTION OF LIMITATIONS Has the fruitless struggle been meaningless? All the earthly shifting of limitations finally contributed to the encounter with my own earthly limitations. Was there another path to enable me to see the only shifting of limitations of the other, of the divine in me? So close and devoted because it does not know limitations. Because it is limitless love. It wants to take me into a

new communicative network where limitless insight is bestowed without end. ♣

mantao's journey (II)

C.M. CHRISTIAN

After we had travelled through the country for a good while we reached a lonely, high rock. Close to it in its shadow sat a very old woman beside a spring of crystal clear water. I silently bowed my head to greet her. She looked sharply into my eyes. Then she pulled out a cup, filled it at the spring and spoke:

“He who sinks deep has to climb high.
He who thinks highly of himself has to bend down low.
He who is tied to the wheel is caught by time.
He who steers to the middle will find eternity.”

She passed me the cup.

“My heart, drink until nothing is left
Drink the water of life to find your health.
All illusions leave behind.
To all misery be of comfort.
Make room for the light.
Return home to God.”

I thanked her and drank thirstily from the water of this wondrous spring. It immediately refreshed my heart, revived my head and strengthened my body. My companion refreshed himself with this water as well. The old woman said:

“Keep the cup and guard it well. Whenever you are thirsty of pure longing, drink from it and you will receive strength. Go and have courage. God's blessing be with you.”

I took her gift with joy and thankfulness. Then we continued our journey to the East. Soon we reached high mountains. It was a wilderness with deep canyons, waterfalls and many caves. We climbed over barren cliffs until we were very exhausted and rested in front of a cave. We heard a strange whining, weeping and crying from inside the cave. We were too tired to search for its origin, though. After a while we saw a gloomy looking gnome jumping out of the undergrowth. He hurriedly collected jewels and ducats from a secret hiding place between rocks and rubble. Then he dragged everything with much effort back into the densest undergrowth. I called out to him: “Can I help you?” Thereupon the little gnome yelled angrily: “Only trash and thieves come to this place to steal my goods. Get away from here, or you'll get to feel my claws!” “Calm down, gnome! Your gold cannot tempt us. It is hard and dull. The treasure we are looking for is much better. But it wouldn't be of any interest for you.” The gnome scratched himself, stepped a bit closer and snorted with greedy eyes: “Is it possible? Are you looking for the Philosopher's stone? This one I know quite well.” I replied laughing: “Everyone knows the stone by 'hearsay'. But who truly wants to find it has to renounce such gold and its power!” At that the gnome stretched as high as possible, yet he still shrank. And with a scornful expression he said: “These are only old-wives-tales. I don't believe in them!”



Suddenly I heard again the whining and asked the gnome: “Say, what is this whining in the cave?” “This is none of your business,” he mockingly replied. “Even if it were a hundred thousand souls, it is none of your business!” He angrily stomped his hove and disappeared in the undergrowth. When I saw his hove I guessed what I heard in the cave. And great compassion led me three steps into the cave. In there

it was so dark that I could hardly recognize my surroundings. It was as if I saw in the flickering light of glowing coals a big net with thousands of birds caught in it. Following my inner voice I pulled out the cup and – oh what joy – I found a few drops in it. I quickly let them fall into the glowing coals and then my donkey and I walked away. For quite some time I could still hear the steamy sizzling, whistling and rumbling. When we had reached the mountain ridge we saw

above us between grey clouds and billowing smoke fast flying and loudly screeching black birds. The poor souls were freed of the net of hell. Will they choose heaven now?

Many days had passed. We were climbing the mountains and sun, moon and stars were our guides. Eventually we arrived at a wide plateau surrounded by majestic mountain peaks reaching far into the hazy distance. The plateau seemed to be endless, grey and barren like a desert. The sun radiated a scorching heat that burned the desolate earth like an angry fire. No plant, no animal, no human being was anywhere to be seen. Only a wide dried out riverbed meandering through the dry and dusty sand. Uncountable skeletons seemingly from fish and other sea-animals were scattered everywhere in the riverbed and glistened in the heat to the midday sun.

Suddenly we discovered an old boat stuck in dry mud. I could not believe my eyes when I saw a tender, small being sitting in the boat and welcoming us with open hands. "It is so good that you came! The great fire-woman drank our river and burned our land! I am the only one here waiting for a miracle to happen. Can you help me?" he asked with so much trust in his eyes. Was it a child or a being from heaven that welcomed us in such a place with such bright eyes and clear words? I didn't know. And who would be able to accomplish such a miracle? I couldn't do it. Although I felt rising up in me such an eagerness to face the challenge of this place and to break the ban of the fire-woman by pure deed.

Then the cup came to my mind again. Humbly I pulled it out and sang quietly: "Oh, you, fountain of truth, stream of life, source of love, wine that creates miracles. Who strives for you, who lives with you, does not pray in vain. Break the

old fires power, fill the cup with your might!" I sang my little song wholeheartedly until night approached. There, the cup was filled up to its rim and I went to pour out the stream of life over the dry land. Wherever droplets reached the sand, it began to grow and to flourish.... And even more happened! My song broke the spell of the Fire woman whereupon she repented. Tears trickled from the rocks and formed a brooklet. Clouds appeared in the sky and began to cry. A miracle had happened! The dried out river bed filled with water. And the river rose to a stream that watered the thirsty land. New life was emerging everywhere.

But where was the small child? We searched for a long time. My grey friend and I could not find him...but a flower grew beside the old boat. It had seven petals, bright and pure like snow, amazingly fragrant and so tender. It was its seal...

I picked this flower and from then on I carried it close to my heart as my secret. ☆

(to be continued)

*The Story of Mantao's Journey is an adaptation of the book *Die Reise des Mantao-Ein Perlenlied der Gegenwart* (Mantao's Journey – a Song of a Pearl of the Present) by C.M. Christian, DRP-Rosenkreuz Verlag, 1994



the third valley, Ma'rifat

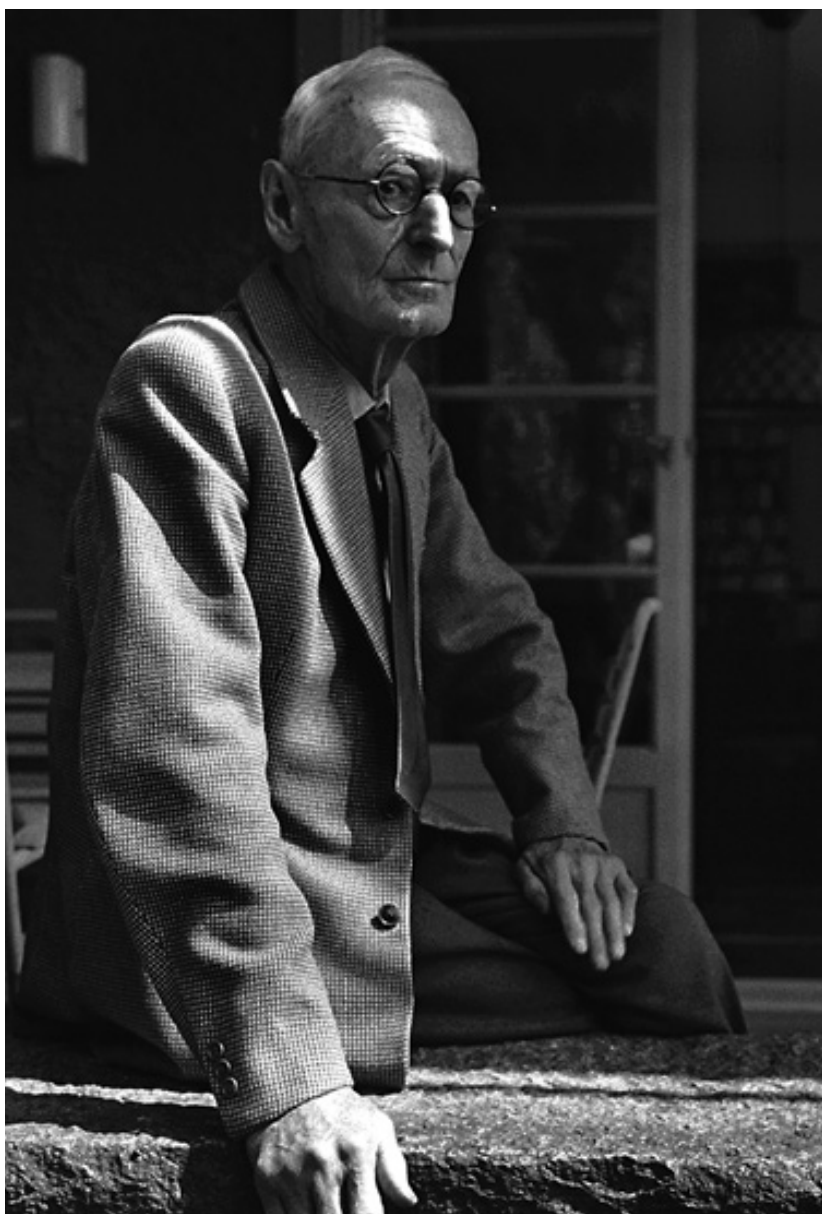
the valley of inner knowledge: the heart awakens

It is said that some are predestined to know God and some are predestined to know God and His ways. In order to be truly serviceable we have to know His ways, the divine laws of the universe. We must know who we are and why we are here. We need insight in order to know how to help each other and the whole planet. We enter the valley of knowledge when we realize that we know nothing. The pitfall in this valley is that we try to explain everything by our intellect, but reason can only live in a world of comparisons. True knowledge surpasses comparisons. It cannot be learned from books. It is not just more information. We only receive real insight when we let go of our own opinions and open up ourselves for the truth.

can we be explorers of what does not yet exist?

We are hindered less than ever by space and time constrictions and the inertia of the physical world because of our communication options in less than seconds via Skype, Facebook and Twitter in the hope to alleviate at least partly the sluggish earthly ways and to follow our deeply seated desire to tread the sparkling way to the stars.

Is that indeed possible – to be a precursor of what has not yet been manifested? Can we extrapolate the promise of ever more speed in our era past the confinements and barriers of this world? Is it not our highest faculty that we have the potential to be born again in a new Life-field? No longer mortal men but people being-born. For this we need the awareness of a status nascendi, a prenatal, embryonic state, here and now, for ourselves as well as for all other world citizens. And this in a world that finds it so hard to take leave of old conceptions and therefore groans with labour pains. Even as a new earth is being born under our eyes, we may welcome her already. We are dwellers in the border country, living on the division, on the tear seam of a totally new era from where we may glimpse another, an original primordial Universe. O certainly, it is as yet a vague and indistinct view, as if in a misty mirror but soon, yes soon..... So let us be precursors!





*As every flower fades and as all youth
Yields to old age, so life at every stage,
As well as every virtue, and our grasp of truth,
Blooms in its day and may not last forever.*

*Since life may summon us at every age
Be ready, heart, for parting and a new endeavour,
Be ready bravely and without remorse
To find new Light and leave the old for ever*

*In all beginnings dwells a magic force
That guards us and encourages us to live.
Serenely let us move to distant places
And let no sentiments of home detain us.
The Cosmic Spirit seeks not to restrain us
But lifts us stage by stage to wider spaces.*

*If we accept a Home of our own making,
Then well-worn habits will breed indolence.
We must prepare for parting and leave-taking
Or else remain the slaves of permanence.*

*Even the hour of our death may send
Us speeding to a fresh Space to discover,
And Life shall summon us to quite another Place.
And so, my heart: take leave and do recover!*

Hermann Hesse

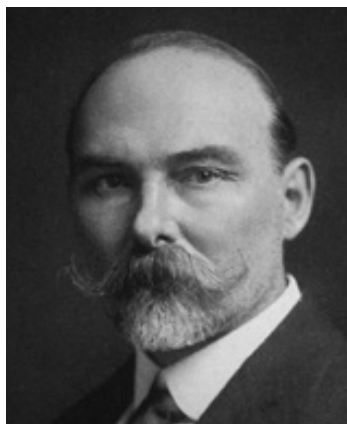
the re-discovery of the gnosis (IV)

On Sept 6th, 2013 when introducing the book “Echo’s of the Gnosis” in the *Pentagram- Bookstore* in Haarlem, Netherlands, a lecture was held with the title: *Why George R. S. Mead may be called the first of the modern Gnostics*. We are publishing this lecture that presents the history of the Gnosis - in a number of episodes. This is the fourth part.

It was during the turbulences in the well-known ‘Sterkampen’ in the Dutch Ommen around the time of the ‘discovery’ of the young Krishnamurti, who was celebrated as the coming Maitreya, that Rudolf Steiner, the secretary of the Hungarian-German division of the Theosophical Society, broke his connection with the Society. Steiner, along with a large number of other members, decided to go a different path. Steiner put the Christian Drama of Salvation in the centre of his Spiritual Science. His esoteric vision showed him how all of Eastern wisdom passed over into the West. Ties to the East meant for him a falling back of Western Consciousness. With his Anthroposophy, Steiner wanted to continue building on the mysteries of the Rosycross. However, while trying to realize his concept of the inner path of initiation, Steiner got stuck midway, because otherwise he would have lost a large part of Anthroposophists. Steiner suffered when his followers focused on trivialities. Maybe it was also his oversight by believing – from a Theosophical viewpoint - in a continual path of experience along the lines of development of cosmic evolution.

Furthermore, Steiner did not actually follow here in the steps of the Gnostics and the Neo-Platonists from whom he distanced himself. He followed more the line of the Church-Theologian Thomas Aquinas and even further back that of Aristotle. The concept of world solidarity fellowship was important to these two, which according to Steiner was missing in mystical-all-unity, Spiritual Oneness.

Yet, there are talks today that the time has come for both streams of Eastern and Western mysticism to merge together and that, in this way; the Gnosis can show a new openness. Let us now return to Robert Stowe Mead with the question: Which place must we grant to the former Secretary of the HPB amidst all these stormy developments? We see here in particular how Mead would never let himself get entangled in all of the intrigues around him, how he always remained in the shadows of the political winds. Mead consistently stayed away from politically organized affairs. As a privileged witness, he must have experienced everything from up close. Nevertheless, he kept completely in the background and was one of the few that were never mentioned. In addition, Mead refused to take a position with regard to planning a successor for HPB nor did he take sides during the chairmanship dispute between Besant and Judge. We might also add that Mead did not make much of Judge’s claim that the Mahatmas had more of a personal interest in him (in Judge). This whole issue of the arrangement of a successor received a lot of attention in the impressive biography of Sylvia Cranston; however, regarding Mead, a few paragraphs sufficed, since he was barely involved. This is the case although it was Mead who addressed the audience when HPB resigned, because, apparently Besant was not available. Cranston merely refers to a newspaper article which states that “a young man with fine features stepped forward and gave an impressive talk.” She, herself, however did not pay much attention to Mead’s memorable resignation speech.



GEORGE STOWE MEAD,
THE FIRST MODERN Gnostic

Possibly, Cranston acted like this because, at a later stage, it became very clear that Mead did not appreciate the cult aspects around HPB. His objective was the spirit that manifests beyond the human appearance and the work that always continues.

Mead said: "It is true that the personality that we know as H.P. Blavatsky is no longer among us. However, at the same time, her noble and courageous individuality who has been teaching all of us – men and women – how to lead a pure and selfless life, this great soul – is still effectively helping us."

Much later – Mead had long left the Society – he realized expressively that Theosophy did not stand or fall with the person of HPB: "The foundations of Theosophy continue to be strong and solid because they are completely independent from Mrs. Blavatsky. Theosophy is our main-point of interest. It remains an immovable rock of power and support, an inexhaustible source for studies and the most tenderly loved path which we could follow." At the same time, Mead continued to appreciate Blavatsky because she had started and supported him in his spiritual quest.

Obviously, Mead is someone who was able to see much further than his direct environment. Maybe it was a saving grace that he could, from the beginning, and amongst all of the upheaval, focus on his own contribution to the theosophical work, a contribution that was of a very profound nature.

That does not mean that Mead did not pay attention. He was quite alert when Besant took

the often mentioned Leadbeater back to be her confidant – especially since previously Leadbeater's reputation had plummeted causing him to disappear.

These are the reasons why Mead thought it important to distance himself from Leadbeater's 'occult experiments'. 700 members decided to leave the Society with Mead. All of this happened, although in 1907 he had been offered the position of President of the European Division.

At the same time, Steiner separated from the Theosophical Society. It was pointed out, that Steiner and Mead must have met at the 3rd Congress of the European Section of the Theosophical Society. The meeting happened in 1906 at a gathering in Paris where Mead was a speaker – according to Steiner's report about the event. When Mead left, he did not want to create a group of dissidents and to lead public opposition against the Theosophical Society. It is also noteworthy that Mead never caused any kind of trouble nor did he keep a grudge.

He focused all of his energy to quietly start a new project. It was the project involving the Magazine *The Quest*, with the aim of searching for esoteric sources in the West. For another 30 years, Mead was completely devoted to this work – with total commitment! In every new edition, the Magazine published an article written by him.

George Mead's house also served as the quest office, where Ouspensky, after he had left Gurdjieff, could hold his talks in the years between 1920 and 1930.

Besides Mead's personal articles, the Magazine

George Mead's house also served as *the Quest* office, where Ouspensky, after he had left Gurdjieff, could hold his talks in the years between 1920 and 1930



G.I. Gurdjieff

also served as a forum for contributions from other important authors. For example, works were published from the poet *Ezra Pound* and from the previously mentioned historian *Arthur White* who was known for his historical research about the Rosicrucians. The Magazine also served as a platform for the writings of Jessie Weston regarding their renowned studies of the Holy Grail, for Gustav Meyrink, for the Indian poet Tagore, for Evelyn Underhill, who had done a continuously highly-valued study about mysticism, as well as for the Irish poet W.B. Yeats.

We also know that the familiar Ouspensky, pupil of Gurdjieff, was welcome at the Quest Office where he could hold his lectures. It is understandable that one of Ouspensky's books was entitled *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* - being inspired by Mead's first work 'Fragments of a Faith Forgotten'. Later the book's title was changed into 'In Search of the Miraculous'.

The Quest Society was also busy organizing well visited gatherings. These were a kind of forerun-

ner for the Eranos-Meetings, which were located in the villa of the Dutch Theosophist Olga Frobe-Kapetyn on Monte Verita in Ascona, Southern Switzerland. Mead himself was always very tender when he spoke about the Quest, about the search that always continues: the search that is only fulfilled when you realize that it means for you the beginning and the end of all things.

The search does not only lead to the discovery of the surface of all things but also their depth, it leads to life instead of death, to eternity and not the temporary. No matter which direction you try or how many steps you make along numberless ways on the steady path towards 'becoming', the end-result will not be obtained because there is always 'More', constantly something 'Greater', something 'Different' than the previous outcome or the sum of all other attempts.

With his Magazine, Mead continued the work that he had already started as a Theosophist and in this way he stayed connected with the very first developments within the Theosophical Socie-



P.D. Ouspensky

ty. This meant – as set forth in the original policy statement – the reconciliation of Eastern and Western wisdom and an objective to thoroughly study their similarities.

The reason why Mead chose his own path, after all, was due to his understanding that the liberating impulse was lost in the Theosophical Society and that he was meant to fulfill another task. For this special task he needed to free himself from all other commitments and disabling ties.

Mead felt called to serve a much greater aim, he wanted nothing but the highest truth. It was his mission to make the first sources of Western Esotericism accessible and to illuminate the correct understanding about the origin and essence of Christianity.

Mead put all his energy into this preparatory work that had a deeper reason. He was an untiring and hard worker that was perfectly cut out for this task. These abilities were already laid in his cradle.

As a graduate from Cambridge, with subsequent

studies in Orientalism in Oxford, Mead was extraordinarily skillful to hold on to eternal wisdom, the eternal wisdom that had been taught since the beginning of time. Mead never did anything without objectivity; all his work had a perfect scientific foundation.

At the same time, it was very clear that he was, above all, very sympathetic towards the Gnostics. He described their insights with devotion and the highest respect.

Mead always defended the Gnostics against the accusations of the Church Patriarchs who were fighting against them with fire and swords: Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus and Epiphanius. Mead commented on Irenaeus' contemplation of the thoughts of the Carpocrates: "The stupidity of the Bishop of Lyon is the result of his completely wrong set of priorities on which he bases his actions while even for a beginner of Gnosticism everything is as clear as day-light."

Without doubt, Mead possessed a keen pioneering spirit, faithful and steadfast; and he was even more gifted than that. In his modest ways, he wrote his all-embracing, extensive Oeuvre, which says more about him than the sparse biographical facts that we can track down about him.

Mead already had started his own Oeuvre at the time when he had to reconcile it with his extensive task as HPB Secretary. Even after her death he would still sign multiple works of HPB, being the editor in charge, for example *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence*. ☸

(to be continued)

1. Quotation from: Claire and Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Introduction to G.R.S. Mead and the Gnostic Quest*, page 3.
2. G.R.S. Mead, *Concerning H.P.B.*, in: *The Theosophical Review*, 1904, pp. 141-144.
3. Quotation from: R. Gilbert, *G.R.S. Mead and the Gnosis*, in: *G.R.S. Mead, Echo's from the Gnosis*, page xix.
4. G.R.S. Mead, *Fragments*, p. 282.



the fourth valley, Istigna

the valley of letting go and unchaining: letting go of anxiety and desire

By letting go everything we think we're entering this valley. Entering this valley is perhaps the most difficult step of all because we have to be prepared to let go of all the knowledge and experience that have brought us to this point. We are going into the unknown on our own. We find ourselves in a vacuum; there is nothing left to stick to. It is a time full of unbelievable changes made possible by no longer being attached to old concepts, habits and desires. We can let go of the things we held on to for years, they just fade away. We often will feel lonely and deserted, which might well be a pitfall in this valley. We feel deserted because the two move towards the One, the separation between 'you' and 'your experience' dissolves, so there is less of 'you' and 'your experience'. Perhaps we feel lost and fall straight back into the first valley and choose from there in a different direction. But when we remember the leg of perseverance, we can pass through this valley and continue on the valley of Unity.



the fifth valley, Tauhid

the valley of Unity: free from duality and from the 'I'

We can only enter the fifth valley of Unity if we leave behind our old concepts of who we were. From the valley of letting go we arrive in a world that awakens again. Our eyes re-open again and discover that everything is One. Everywhere where we look there is only Unity. In this valley we are completely here on earth. As Rumi said "I know that the two worlds are One." In this valley of Unity there is no real separation between the 'inner' and the 'outer' and we know that everything originates in the present.



the sixth valley, Hairat

the valley of bewilderment: passing through the barren desert of sorrow, pain, loss, destruction

At this point we are conscious of our unity with God. We realize that we were always one with the one and endless creator, and that the apparent separation between us and the absolute is only an illusion. From now on every deed is a deed of God, every being a divine being. We have gone beyond the experience of the limited and separated, the drop becomes part of the ocean again, or even better the ocean is in the drop. Every illusion has disappeared and there is nothing else but God. Only the light of the pure intelligence does remain and the true 'gnostic' is born.

THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE SEVEN VALLEYS



Seventh valley

FACR-FANA, the valley of poverty and annihilation (fana) - unity.

At this point, we are aware of our oneness with God. We realize that we have been always one with God, and that the apparent separation between ourselves and the one infinite Creator is nothing but a mere illusion.

From now on, every act is an act of God, each being a divine being. We left behind the experience of separation and limitation. The drop is again included in the ocean, or better yet, the ocean is in the drop. Every illusion is gone and there is nothing else than God. Only the light of the pure intelligence remains and the true "Gnostic" is born.

Can we discover what does not yet exist? Isn't the highest human power to see that we can be born again, in new circumstances, through will, longing, effort and grace. Then we are no longer mortal people, but rather people of birth, as Herman Hesse writes:

*Perhaps, also the hour of death,
will youthfully send us into new spaces.
Life's call will last forever ...
Well then heart, bid farewell and recover*

