PENTAGRAM

Special Issue:

In what direction does humanity evolve?

'Already for ages, theologians, philosophers
and scientists have been occupied with questions
where 'life' comes from and what its purpose is.
Theories of evolution develop further
by new technologies and still
the end has not been reached.'

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Birth of a new soul

In this special issue of Pentagram you will find a series of articles by pupils of the Golden Rosycross, who describe their experiences on their path through life. Sometimes this concerns joyful events, but sometimes also hindrances that are hard to overcome. They have written these articles hoping that the readers of our international periodical may draw inspiration and strength from them.

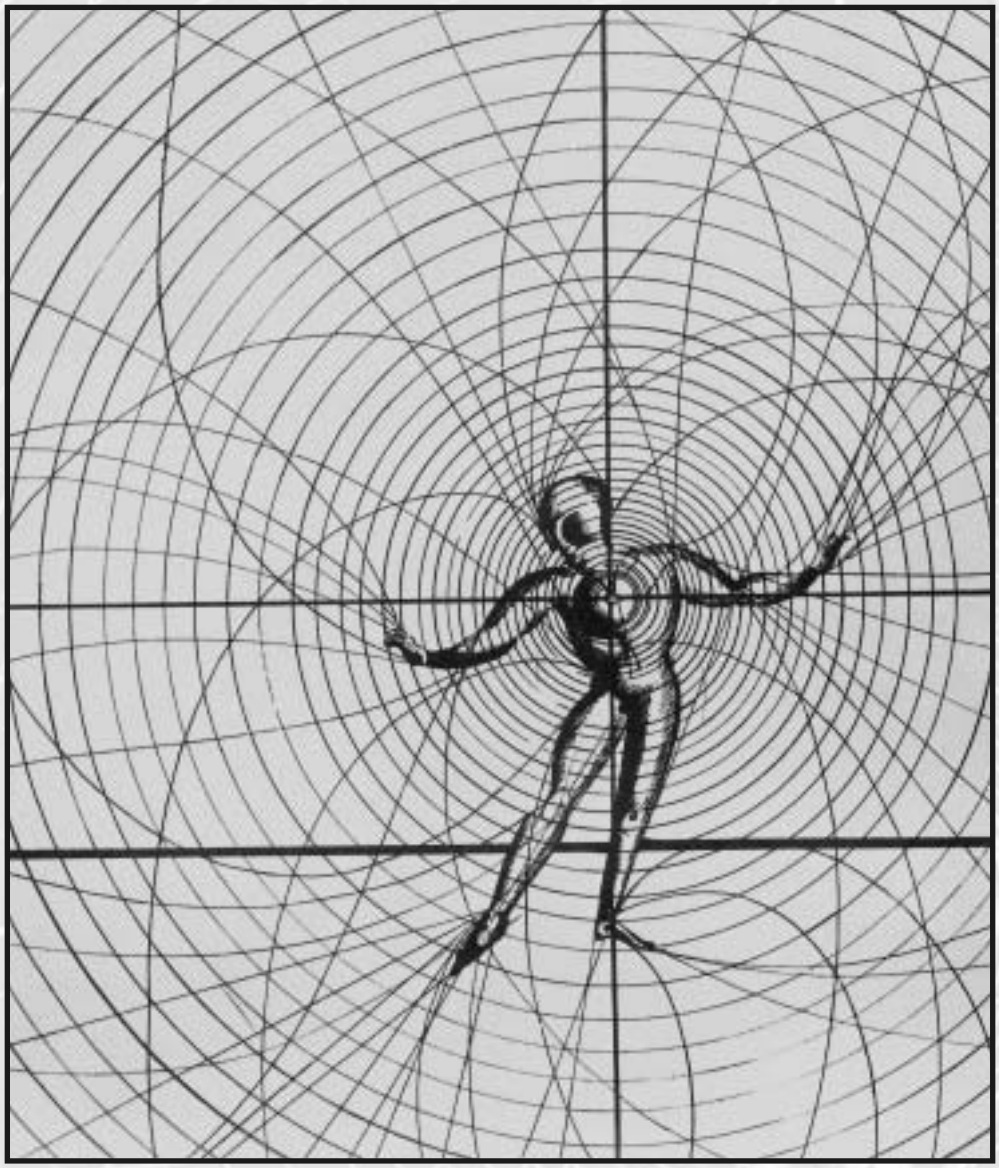
The possibility of a higher spiritual development is present in rudimentary form in everyone. It is a precious gift full of mercy, but also full of challenges. Spiritual development means ascending to higher insight and receiving wisdom. Development means overcoming difficulties. How can we recognise, see through and solve those problems which are different for each of us? How can we extend a spiritual basis into a reality? How can we, human beings of the 21st century, find and release this usually still hidden and unsuspected spiritual nucleus in our daily lives?

The key is hidden in the mystery of the new birth. '*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God,*' Jesus says to Nicodemus. (John 3:5)

In the modern gnostic world view this mystery of the transfiguration is fundamental. When we speak of the birth of a new soul, we assume that there is a bridge between our present, limited consciousness and a new consciousness that surpasses all earthly limitations. This is a state of imperishable joy and fulfilment. Jesus' words contain a clear reference to a concrete, daily alchemy of life, to a path on which the process of total inner transformation has to take place.

This process follows generally applicable natural laws, which can be recognised and experienced as such. It was and is the intention of the gnostics to show and prove this process to humanity. They stimulated their fellow human beings to seek, discover and walk this renewing path of life.

During this process the seeker for the truth is not left to his own devices. The inner path is an individual path, on which the link with all living beings is experienced. A human being is a cell in the body of humanity; the soul is a cell in the body of soul humanity. That is why the path of inner liberation can never be walked alone, but is nourished, borne and inspired by all who go in the same direction and who have already preceded us. Experiences of others can inspire and help and supplement and deepen our own insight. A small window may show a wide vista, be inspiring and warm our hearts. The path of the New Soul that unfolds for you and for us, is in all its simplicity the greatest a human being can accomplish.



The human being caught in the web of karma, blood heritage, religion, science and the arts.

Question: 'I cannot obtain a good idea of the microcosm. What is it exactly?'
Answer: 'The word microcosm indicates that we are dealing with a reduced version of the macrocosm, the universe. Microcosm means "small world". It is an inner and an outward representation of everything present in the macrocosm. In other words, everything that has already been created, but also everything that is yet to be developed. The microcosm in its present state is a damaged being. The teachings of gnostic transfiguration intend its restoration, so that the microcosm can occupy its original place in creation. You can imagine this when you think of a streetlight in the mist: a nucleus of light surrounded by a round cloud of mist. Infinitely enlarged, that cloud of mist can be compared to the universe humanity belongs to. Of a human being it is said that he is a microcosm. Everything is present in him and will in time be developed and manifested: the biological, but above all the spiritual.'

The true art of construction

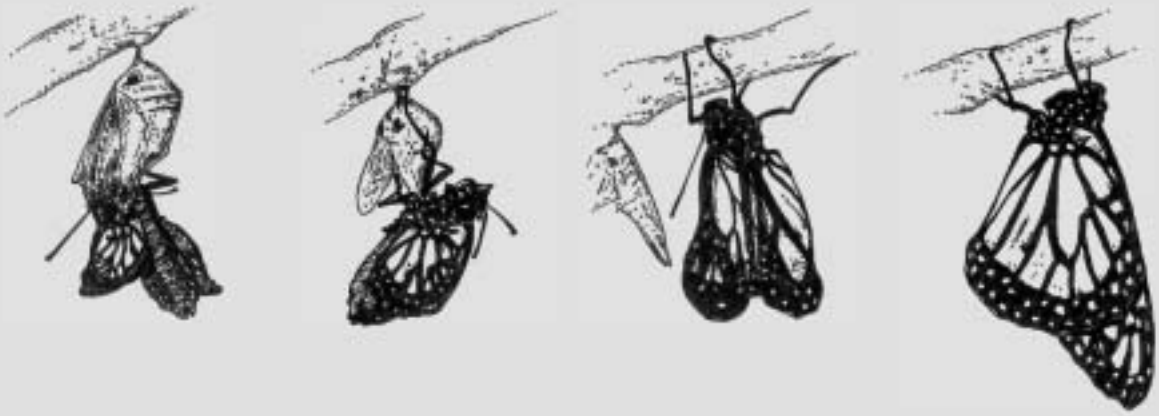
Perfect fulfilment and harmony are the fruit of true creating. This principle has continuously exhorted humanity to give form to his ideas and desires, to strive for harmony and beauty. He is constantly urged to new and better achievements. He seeks – must seek, from within – the true art of construction.

The natural soul is the mediator in the earthly creative process. This soul, the life principle of the personality, consciously or unconsciously, controls our metabolism, reproduction, perception and feeling, movement, desiring and willing, thinking and speaking. These faculties have developed throughout our involution into matter and are also found with other life forms. In each person they play an individual role, which is determined and influenced by cosmic, social and personal circumstances. The conditions of birth, family circumstances, education and culture, as well as one's own decisions and actions, form the character and vital principle of humanity: the nature-born soul.

Impulses from the environment and other nature souls are imprinted on this natural soul. Forces are vivified by them and transformed into ideas, feelings and concrete forms. The material and immaterial achievements of the nature soul thus rely on cooperation with other nature souls. This principle is expressed in all forms of art, religion and science and, as a consequence, in the development of political and social institutions. In short, in every 'cultural' achievement.

Only the nucleus does not change

This nature soul is, however, a temporary state, a phase of development, which must lead to its 'rebirth': towards transformation of the nature soul into a new soul with totally different possibilities, faculties and powers. That process is reflected beautifully by the caterpillar which metamorphoses to be reborn as a butterfly. (The Greek word 'psyche' means both 'soul' and 'butterfly') Now a butterfly is undoubtedly a completely different being than a caterpillar, even if we only consider its outer appearance. But it also has different organs, sees differently,



A caterpillar pupates into a butterfly. Illustration Pentagram.

moves differently and has the power to reproduce itself in order to preserve the species. The caterpillar feeds on leaves, the butterfly drinks nectar; the caterpillar crawls, the butterfly flies; the caterpillar is coarse and seems clumsy, the butterfly is light, delicate, a miracle of beauty. During this metamorphosis the caterpillar gives up both its form and properties as a source of food for the butterfly. Biologists have determined that all structures of the caterpillar become liquid. It changes into a viscous substance of protein and other chemical building materials. Only the nucleus does not change. There is one cell which contains the blueprint of the new form.

The metamorphosis of the caterpillar can be viewed as a metaphor for present humanity that is placed before a totally new development. In his natural state the human being is like a caterpillar. All his biological and psychological structures; his metabolism of chemical, etheric, astral and mental substances have been designed to preserve his current life state. His whole existence is determined by nature forces, in which he is entirely absorbed. These forces can express themselves as fear, anger, deceit, desire, laziness, lust and pride. But also as love, affection, hope, helpfulness, compassion and selflessness. These aspects can be tempered or refined through cultivation. But their essence does not change. They remain bound to self-maintaining nature and hence are doomed to self-maintenance.

The potential of the 'new soul' lies already within the human being. This soul has a different structure. It is the butterfly which rises up out of the unwieldy caterpillar. This state cannot be realised by refining and cultivating the caterpillar's state-of-being, but only through metamorphosis, by a complete transformation or transfiguration.

Our biological existence is the breeding ground for this transmutation, in which the germ of the new soul lies. Every-

Question: 'What do you mean by a nature-born person? Is not everyone born of nature?'
Answer: 'Indeed, as to his biological structure the human being is born of dialectical nature. His personality – consisting of four bodies – has been built with the elements of dialectics. On the other hand there is the soul-born human being. That is the human being in whom the new ensoulment has taken shape and is going to develop further.'

Remold the world! A cry of protest, but also a call to all who want to see it to take another course. Photo Pentagram.

thing old must 'dissolve' to give the new a chance. In the Gospels this alchemical process is called 'the rebirth of water and the Spirit'.

The soul is the life principle that vivifies the body, stimulates the thinking, regulates the influence of the aura and transforms vital energy, so that it can be used by the body. It has a regulating function, just as the moon has a regulating influence on all vital forces and biorhythms. The nature soul adapts to the rhythms of our natural life field, the new soul, however, has access to powers from a nature different than that of humanity. It has totally new faculties. Its primary faculty is that of the new thinking.

The new soul is the only portal through which the Spirit has access to the personality. All suggestions from the Spirit are assimilated by the receptive soul and transmitted to the personality before they can become active in the body. In this way, the spiritual sun can be reflected by the soul – the moon of the personality. In this way, gold can link itself with silver. Because the old soul surrenders itself, room is made for the new soul. The caterpillar can metamorphose into a butterfly. The original human spiritual faculty can be released. If this metamorphosis of the soul does not take place, it remains bound to the earthly body and the original divine plan in the microcosm cannot be restored. Then their relationships remain, for the time being, distorted; then the body with its animal needs keeps the awakening soul prisoner instead of allowing itself to be guided by it.

Transfiguration is not meant as a process of glorification as some religions present it, but as a complete transformation, in which the old, mortal being disappears, and a new, immortal being arises.

The wedding garment of the soul

The new thinking faculty, already mentioned, is open for impulses from the divine Spirit. That is why in Greek mythology the soul is represented as a woman. Eros, the divine Spirit, is male; Psyche, the receiving soul, is female.

Together they form the bridal pair through whom the alchemical unification can be accomplished. In other tales, allusions have been made to the wedding garment of the soul, the 'soma psychikon' or soul body that develops in and around transfiguring human beings.

The new thinking faculty is able to receive and understand God's plan. Through the descent of the Spirit the soul is illuminated and a focal point of the new consciousness arises. In hermetic philosophy this focal point is called 'Pymander', that is 'shepherd of men'. This new consciousness is able to lead the body, just as a shepherd leads his sheep. Direct perception of God's plan, inner illumination, has amongst other things the effect that the astral body is going to function in a different way. The etheric body is filled with unshakeable power and energy, and the serpent fire system and sympathetic nervous system in the physical body are changed. In *The Voice of the Silence* (translated by H P Blavatsky), some of the new qualities are described as love, harmony in word and deed, patience, temperance in lust and life, undaunted energy and wisdom.

Thus we can surmise something of the depth and beauty achieved in this process of spiritual renewal. Magnificent and moving sounds, dynamic harmony of values and forces, and expressions of life, far surpassing our ordinary daily life.

The new soul recognises, as it becomes increasingly free, more and more of the structure of the divine world and tries to transmit the impulses it receives to others. Its experiences can also be expressed by the instrument of the personality. For example, in Gothic and Renaissance architecture, in poetry, philosophy, music, sculpting and painting. The royal art of construction, of which the classical Rosicrucians spoke, is however still quite another thing. It is the expression of Life vivified by the Spirit in the life of the individual. This ensoulment follows the process of complete restoration of the microcosm. And the consequence of this is: transfiguration of the personality into an instrument suitable to serve the Soul in this art of construction.

To the casual observer, such a living soul being shows no special signs. He lives apparently like everyone else, but when we look more closely, we see that his whole mode of life is based on the precious link between the soul and the Spirit of God. His life is a testimony of spontaneous service to God, His creation and His creatures.

Question: 'What is the aim of our experiences in the darkness?'

Answer: 'The aim is to find the Light during such an odyssey, and with the aid of the Light one has found, to overcome evil and restore the original state. All the mysteries culminate in this. As soon as the human being becomes aware of this, his line of development turns upward again and returns to its origins. But with what an immeasurable difference! The human being sets out as an ignorant entity, he returns as one who knows. He sets out as a prodigal son, now he is the son who has been found again, and who returns to the House of the Father.'

(Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis*, Part 4, p.122)

Religion in the 21st century

'In the dialectical world order, two viewpoints, two orientations, oppose one another. On the one hand we see the orthodox-religious groups with their "man is nothing, and the world is steeped in evil – in the land on yonder side eternal bliss beckons." On the other hand we find humanism with its profuse, colourful gradations of religion, atheism, and esoteric, political and social aspects, with its "man is good and the world is good; all that has to be done is to overcome resistances and cure malignancies." On the one hand high and dry conservatism, on the other hand progressivism.'

(J van Rijckenborgh, *Dei Gloria Intacta*, chapter xv, 1962)

During its involution and evolution, humanity has been guided to make it aware of its place in creation. Many religions played an important leading role in these processes and laid the foundation for impressive cultures. From the impulses of, for example, Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Hermetic philosophy and Christianity, cultures emerged, which still determine the daily life of hundreds of millions of people. At all times two ways were and still are shown: a spiritual one and a cultural one. The spiritual way is shown to lift the human being above his biological way of life, the cultural one to instil in him norms and values, which make society viable. The ultimate purpose is to cross the border between mortality and immortality. Messengers gave instruction in the teachings and demonstrated them in practice: Lao Tzu, Hermes Trismegistus, the Buddha, Mani, Jesus and many others showed the way to restore the link between the Divine and the erring soul.

In many cultures, religion is the focal point of daily life. Everything happening to the human being is explained as a direct reflection of the law of God. The weather, movements of the crust of the earth, hurricanes and floods, epidemics... all of them are seen as signs of God's pleasure or displeasure with human behaviour. Thus religion determines the norms of life and determines the place of the human being in the world. By practising his religion he learns to see the purpose of his life.

The human spirit begins to stir

This method largely appeals to the earthly human being and his earthly body. God is outside him. God is portrayed, for example, as a father figure or an all-seeing eye, high above in a dome, above the altar or at the top of a stained-glass window. But as soon as the human being breaks free from the restrictions of his daily life and starts to travel the world and becomes influenced by other cultures, cracks begin to appear in that familiar, prescribed worldview. The human spirit, buried under centuries of dogmas and theology, begins to stir. Occasionally

original spiritual impulses are dug up and partially renewed or adapted to the views of the time. But this means little more than moving with the times. However, there are also completely new impulses for those who are ready for it and who can react to it. This is as it is now, and as it has always been.

Most of the time an impulse soon becomes rigid and turns into a cult and a cult into a culture. Ultimately having reached its top, the new wave loses all spiritual value and sinks into the routine of daily existence. That wave movement is necessary to create space for the original divine Spirit, deeply buried within the human being. Every culture eventually gets uprooted to create new opportunities for the human being to break away from ossified traditions, so that he can achieve his spiritual purpose. In all those wave movements, the divine principle in the human being – which can only be liberated by a total change of the consciousness – remains unaffected. It can be pushed to the background and suppressed, for example, by dictatorship, authority and the care for our daily existence. But ultimately it appears to be stronger than all suppression and then breaks free from its prison.

A new form rises to the top

History shows that humanity follows complicated wave patterns in its development. Inner resistance develops whenever a religion is forced upon people, when they have to learn to accept dogmas and to obey authorities. In the past, groups wanting to reform the existing official religion, were persecuted. This is not different in our time. The conflict between aeon-old traditions and impulses of spiritual renewal can last from a few years to decades or sometimes even centuries, but then the moment will come in which the dominant religion will have to give way and a new form rises to the top, to fall apart again into tens of warring groups that can make life pretty unpleasant for each other.

The innate spiritual task of humanity keeps all parties permanently in motion. One tries to achieve its purpose by hanging on to thoughts and insights of the ancestors, another wants to jettison it all and start all over again. One group

Question: 'Who was Mani? For me this evokes an unpleasant association with the word mania, but I assume you do not refer to that?'
Answer: 'Mani was one of the great messengers of the Light, of the Gnosis. He can be mentioned in the same breath as Lao Tzu, the Buddha, Zoroaster and Hermes Trismegistus. He is sometimes called "the last of the great Gnostics of that time". Legend tells that Mani was born in 216 AD in Persia. He said of himself: "I have come from the land of Babel to make a call resound in the world." He clearly speaks of two natures: the Realm of Light and the Realm of Darkness. According to him, the light spark in the human being will return to the Realm of Light and the earthly human being must devote himself to this. Mani was a passionate man who could not easily be silenced. Ultimately his opponents succeeded in blackening his reputation and eliminating him.'

'New magnetic power not from this world'

'Do not, however, bring this Fama with a big display of words, nor with a bombardment of ideas, but bring it in the utmost simplicity and unpretentiousness. Beware lest explanations should be a cause of delay, let all rush into the open arms of the Brotherhood.
What is the Brotherhood? It is different from what you may imagine, or from what you may have heard. The Brotherhood is the unity of the well-disposed, the community of the children of God. All those who through the opened rose heart enter into the manifested new radiation field, are linked into the chain of the Brotherhood. The power of this link is determined by ourselves, by our state of being and there is nobody who is able to prevent your being taken up into the Brotherhood, unless you stand in your own way. [...] The new electromagnetic power which is streaming into our world, is not to be explained from this nature. This fluid of the new life commences to flow into the human life system as soon as a person opens his being for it in the correct way and it swells to a broad stream as soon as more people do so. The cosmic laws explain this activity and so a new atmosphere is formed which at a certain moment surrounds and permeates the entire earth. [...] The Golden Rosicrucians of the Universal Brotherhood cordially love humanity. The Brotherhood wishes to serve fully all those, without exception, who will. It does not vouchsafe initiations, nor grants special privileges to certain people. It is for all and it stands in complete objectivity, regardless of nationality or race, free from political, social and economic insights and turbulence, because the Brotherhood in serving humanity has not the slightest interest in this ordinary dialectical world order. The Brotherhood devotes itself to the original Fatherland of the human race, the Immovable Kingdom, the Kingdom not-of-this-world. The Brotherhood devotes itself, and we say this emphatically, to the Kingdom of the Christ.

J van Rijckenborgh, *A New Call*. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 1952.

assumes a fundamentalist position, the other a revolutionary one. Yet, both will encounter obstacles which they can no longer overcome by the powers of their personalities.

Such processes occur in every culture. One person begins to search, because the imposed teachings of salvation suffocate him, another is perfectly happy with this and wants to protect his heritage. For one person the Church is an outdated institution and science and matter seem to offer a way out. Others concentrate more on the philosophical and human aspects of their lives. But the fact remains that everybody is being submerged in matter so deeply, that eventually – by lack of breathing space – they will scream for freedom and liberation. Humanity is adrift. Many look for ways to heal the crack in their worldview, others throw everything overboard and search for new ways. But, more or less actively, all are searching for the purpose of their lives. The human being has been thrown in at the deep end and now he has to show whether he can swim or not.

The road taken by materialism has not yet come to an end. Numerous scientific disciplines are seeking the truth in the infinite universe and every discovery presents a new challenge. These attempts and efforts are possibly logical to the thinking human being, but they do not answer the questions of who the human being really is and how he can achieve the spiritual purpose of his life. Ultimately humanity does not profit from glib solutions regarding details. Only knowledge of the essence of life can overcome individual interests and link the human being to the purpose of his life: the Divine Plan.

As reaction to the seven trumpets of God, the ark of the new covenant leaves the chaos of human life. Illustration Pentagram.

Inner truth or our own truth?

Whoever succeeds in freeing himself from all imposed norms and values, is touched by the power, which allows him to find the ultimate truth. He must be prepared to take complete responsibility for his life, without any help from any form of civil or religious authority. In many people resides more or less subconsciously the realisation that their life ought to serve a higher purpose. Not in the sense of 'dying for the fatherland', but of giving oneself away to the development of a different human existence, a spiritual human being, separated from all daily fray. Often they are searching, without knowing what they are searching for, and reject all infringement on their inner life. Hence, they often experience great difficulty in accepting a philosophical, ideological or religious system as a guide. Disappointed they turn away and start searching within themselves to find out if the key to eternity possibly lies hidden there. Thus their search for Truth increasingly becomes a search for their own true identity.

Although many free themselves in this way from external schemes and systems and are placed before the liberation of the Divine inner nucleus, they nevertheless easily drift off towards an 'outside solution'. Their longing for the everlasting then easily attaches itself to external things that carry the glitter of a

'temporary eternity'. Whether this involves modern movie, television, pop or sports stars, or glorious figures from the past doesn't matter. Again they are searching for the truth outside themselves.

Inner emptiness can stimulate seeking

Subconsciously sensed properties of the new soul, such as omnipresence and immortality, drive the seeker to perfecting his old self. Nowadays he has the benefit of modern technology, which grants him so easily the illusion of perfection. No matured individuality develops along this detour, no self-reliant self, but rather an identity like a patchwork quilt, without a genuine nucleus, without clear direction. And because of the very fact that a seeker experiences that inner emptiness over and again, he may be stimulated to renewed seeking, this time penetrating more deeply into his own consciousness to discover the origin of the never-ending urge to seek.

Whoever reacts in this way, can become inwardly free from external values. He can penetrate into his true self, which is not formed by cultural patterns. He discovers that the arts and science, theology, ideology, rules and thought patterns, good health and a comfortable quality of life, still do not give him what he is seeking inwardly. Only a religion, focused on the development

Question: 'How do you consider the phenomenon of "death?" '
Answer: 'There is no death. Think again of the monad. What is the monad other than a collection of living atoms, made by the Spirit, by God himself? The atom is life; the monad is a concentration of life, ignited by the Spirit of God. This enkindled, composite, collaborating life has an aim; it proceeds from an idea, a plan, that is carried out by radiation, by a complex of light energies. The radiation emanating from the microcosm, which we have called the Spirit-Soul, creates an image of the idea in the magnetic field of the monad, at the critical point designated for that purpose. This image, in turn, can be nothing else but an assembly of living atoms which ought, in combination, to carry the image, the aim of the idea into effect. In this way, they form an embodiment of the idea.
The flow of the idea into the embodiment is the vivifying factor, which is maintained between the idea and the embodiment, as if by means of light. It follows that the embodiment, or the image of the living idea, must be the great instrument that carries out the idea. So, whatever the situation, the body of birth in nature is always God manifested in the flesh, because behind all this boundless activity in the microcosm stands the Spirit, God. [...] Hermes Trismegistus shows that there is no death. That there has never been even one dead thing, because every atom is a living principle and a living principle is imperishable. An atom may lose strength, but it is vivified over and again, charged by the fundamental energy of the Deity. Death is decay and decay is destruction. But such a process of decay is impossible in the all-manifestation, Hermes states emphatically.
The process that actually occurs, and that so often deceives you, the process you call death, is the disintegration of a composite body. It is disintegrated so that it might live again, so that it might be renewed. For there is one, continuous movement throughout the All, an eternal progress of all things.'

(J van Rijckenborgh, *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis, part 4, pp.114, 124)*

of his true self, can satisfy his higher longing.

A confusing amount of forces, ambitions, convictions and desires occupy the human being. They are nourished by the endless variety in which creation expresses itself and are attuned to the experiences stored in the microcosm. Many lose their way through this diversity. They search for their identity and for truth outside themselves and allow themselves to be guided by alleged spiritual authorities. Yet, in the final analysis, the result of their search is nil. Is there nothing that can nourish and fulfil the emptied nucleus of their being with permanent values? Where does this hunger, this thirst for the unattainable stem from? Why does it never end? Where lies the mistake?

Doctrines of temporary value

There is no earthly happiness that can still the longing for heavenly happiness. There is no faith that can heal the eternal wound deep within the human being. Only the human being himself can bring about healing by giving himself away to this healing process. Jesus says: 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Hence, what is not existentially present within the human being, what God has not created in him as nucleus, may possibly get imitated temporarily, but it does not stay because it is not real. Doctrines, by which the I expresses itself, have at the most temporary value, but they do not bring liberation from death, not for the earthly human being and certainly not for the heavenly human being. They cannot lift the human soul up to the Only-Good, because they are a mixture of human good and human evil. As long as that vicious circle is not broken

Christianity and the Rosycross

'Interesting effects emanate from the etheric vehicles of great entities. Thus a great force emanates from the etheric body of Christian Rosycross, which can affect our soul and spirit. It is our task to become aware of these forces. It is to these forces that we, as Rosicrucians, appeal. [...] The smaller our faith in authorities, the greater our understanding of Christian Rosycross. We best recognise him, when we truly become absorbed in his being and become conscious that this spirit of Christian Rosycross will exist forever. And the more we approach this spirit, the more power will flow towards us. [...] We will also be able to understand the strange event of the weakening of Christian Rosycross, when we truly become absorbed in the work of spiritual science. It was in the thirteenth century that this personality lived in a physical body, which weakened until it was almost transparent, to such an extent that for a few days he was like dead. During that time, he took to himself the wisdom of the Twelve and also experienced the event near Damascus [...] Whatever the various religious movements had to offer was brought together by Christian Rosycross and his college of the Twelve. Within a few weeks Christian Rosycross returned all wisdom received from the Twelve, but in a totally new form. This form was as given by the Christ himself. And what he revealed to them, the Twelve called True Christianity, the synthesis of all religions.

The effect of this will be such that what has been given by these separate religions, what their believers have strived for and what they have longed for, can be found in the Christ impulse. This will be the development for the next three thousand years: to provide and enlarge the understanding of this Christ impulse. From the twentieth century onwards all religions will be united in the Mystery of the Rosycross. And this will be possible in the coming period, because it will no longer be necessary to teach humanity from what is contained in the scriptures. For we will learn to understand Paul's vision near Damascus by beholding the Christ in our ether vehicle.'

(Parts from two addresses by Dr. Rudolf Steiner on 27 and 28 September 1911 in Neuchâtel, Switzerland.)

through, the Divine nucleus is not liberated and life and death continue to alternate.

What religion would be able to release that force in the centre of the microcosm? What would such a religion look like? What are its characteristics? After all, it can only be a religion which is based on and stems from the divine nucleus in the human being, not from the I – the substitute – but from the Christ principle itself. Only by serving God in this way, can the microcosm be restored, can the imprisoned soul be liberated, can the Spirit be linked with the renewed soul and can the personality begin to fulfil its task in creation.

Question: 'Nowadays we hear so much about Gnosis, Gnosticism and Gnostic. And whoever you ask, explains these things differently. What exactly is Gnosis?'

Answer: 'There are indeed various opinions about the concept of Gnosis. In the Universal Teachings, as propagated by the Golden Rosycross, the Gnosis is the breath of God, God, the Logos, the source of all things. It is the universal force manifesting itself as spirit, love, light, power and wisdom. The Gnosis is also called the knowledge of the heart. And going even further than that: the living knowledge, which is of and with God and which is the share of those, who through soul rebirth attain the new consciousness. Thus the Gnosis has many aspects and effects, each of which operates under certain circumstances. You may compare the Gnosis with the power that makes the sun shine, but also with the rays that emanate from the sun in endless variety. Just think of alpha, beta and gamma rays, of X-rays, of warmth, sound and the colours into which white light is refracted. These rays touch, nourish and maintain the life processes of every creature. In similar ways the Gnosis works for all, although not everyone is aware of it.'

Manifestation of the Divine Man

Many personalities have already lived in the microcosm. They have left their traces behind and shaped a consciousness that can approach the gate to eternity for the present inhabitant. The Universal wisdom shows that the human being does not live to liberate his I, but to prepare his soul for its ascent into the Light. It is therefore not an imposed faith, but a process of inner change, a change so radical that everything already present becomes subservient to the unborn that is built and nourished by eternity. Neither is it a higher development of the personality of the earthly human being. But the purpose of such a religion is the manifestation of the Divine Man, whereby the earthly human being voluntarily surrenders to this process of renewal.

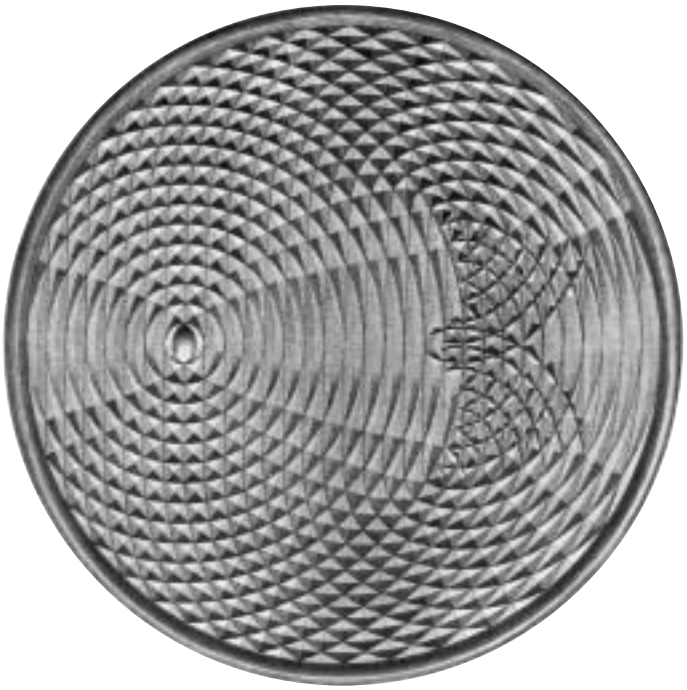
In this process, the consciousness, to this end purified from egocentric activities, has for the time being still an active task. Forces, released in the new soul, lead the consciousness to the nadir of its existence, where it might be willing to surrender to a new consciousness. The 'decline' of the old creates room for the ascent of the new, for a consciousness that is living from eternity, a consciousness that is one with the All-consciousness and that restores autonomy to the human being. A religion that has this purpose in mind develops in its followers a deep longing to go that path. However, this requires that they do it themselves, in their own daily course of life. Every human being must learn to release that path within himself. He *must* – in other words, he has no other choice! – clear his path of life with the help of the powers of the renewed soul. In that way the truth will become a living, inner truth for him.

This is the way shown by original, inner Christianity and which is now released by the timeless Gnosis to give humanity a new opportunity. 'The Truth shall make you free' (John 8:32). That is the spiritual guideline for twenty-first century humanity.

Does that process also reconstruct the crumbling worldview? Does that religion provide the seeker with general standards and values? Everybody must look in his own daily life for the centre of his life, which he cannot yet perceive. That centre is the essence of his existence. That centre is the Gnosis. In his search for the Only-Good, the human being gradually leaves behind the 'truth' of the matter-oriented mind. External affairs appeal to him less and less; he discovers that the Gnosis guides him through all inner and outward conflicts, when he dares to entrust himself to this guidance. He sees himself change, he also sees his fellow human beings change. Disagreements and misunderstanding are replaced by understanding. Loneliness and feelings of alienation lose their significance, when the old consciousness dissolves.

Thus daily life becomes a learning experience, a help and a bridge. Something of creation – and especially of our place in creation – begins to become clear. And from this daily renewing insight develops a wholly conscious way of managing all aspects of life. Because the unity of the human being and the world is experienced ever more consciously, egoism and ignorance are losing ground. How differently someone acts who no longer strives for the highest well-being, who no longer pays back aggression in equal measure, who breaks the vicious circle of animosity and regards all people as brothers and sisters. And acts accordingly! The true religion – in other words, the link with the origin – changes his thinking, feeling, willing and acting.

Finally a completely new life results from a renewed link with the Spirit of God. New knowledge, wisdom, new science develop. This will change the spiritual breeding ground of humanity and prepare it to lift humanity up to a higher level of development. Questions like: 'What is a human being? What do I have to do to be able to comply with "the image of the original human being"?' demand a clear and truthful answer.



In 1825, the brothers Weber conducted an experiment with a container full of mercury. They dropped mercury into the 'eye' and this beautiful wave pattern developed. Patterns like this appear not only in mercury, water, air, sound and light, but also in karma.

In what direction does humanity evolve?

Already for ages theologians, philosophers and scientists have been occupied with questions where 'life' comes from and what its purpose is. Theories of evolution develop further by new technologies and still the end has not been reached. Technically it is a game of chance, of a gene lottery, the outcome of which consists of all sorts of life forms that are resistant to life – or not.

It is studied what came first, the hen or the egg. Or whether single-celled organisms form the basis of the complicated life forms nowadays populating the earth. Or whether and how the first fishes crawled ashore and became land animals. or whether evolution develops in leaps or progresses gradually. Or whether 'the animal gifted with reason', as Hermes Trismegistus called it, was a logical development or a 'physiological early birth'. According to science, evolution is not finished yet. Humanity works collectively on its further development. This would clearly be demonstrated by the so-called genetic changes that occur occasionally. Biological evolution has brought self-awareness to humanity, so that it can investigate its descent and pursue perfection of its biological being. From the point of view of universal wisdom, this evolution is in fact involution, the descent into matter and materialisation of the life form. Then evolution concerns the process of spiritualization, of letting go of the form again.

Because in the meantime the biological involution of humanity has reached a certain maturity, the evolution of the spiritual human being can and should begin. This does not entail a further development or perfection of the biological human being, but the liberation and recreation of the divine human being that lies hidden in the biological human being. The craving for this new state of life confronts humanity with a different vision on ideas like evolution and involution. Involution – and hence descent into matter – has a clear limit: when the biological human being has become complete, he should serve as the basis for the spiritual human being that has to be born from him. It is the starting point for the higher, spiritual development that can be called evolution.

Acting as intermediary between Spirit and matter

The human heart is the intersection between two worlds. There earthly and divine life meet. The purpose of involution is building a being in which earthly and divine life are able to cooperate. Therefore human beings have an innate power to recognise and to reflect. For they should learn to understand the Divine Laws in order to be able to surrender to them. With the help of this instrument the human being can learn to focus on those laws and processes.

What are the conditions for the spiritual evolution pointed out in the Divine Plan? An invisible process of genesis pre-

cedes all visible creations. The germ of Divine genesis should be activated and developed with the help of a set of suitable instruments. The powers and building materials necessary for the development of the new soul and for the manifestation of God's Spirit must be attracted. To this end, the soul has to act as an intermediary between Spirit and matter.

In order to perfect the creation of humanity, a viable principle is needed, from which the natural ensoulment can be reborn just as the caterpillar metamorphoses into a butterfly. For only this new soul can be wholly attuned to the Divine, can be linked with it and can assimilate and process the inflowing forces and inspirations. Hence that soul principle is the Light bearer and the purified, restored personality is the bearer of the soul. When a human being turns towards his Creator again, the soul can gradually express the original image of God that is transmitted to him. That is spiritual evolution.

The human being is like *The unhappy inventor* by Georg Grosz (1919). He creates for himself a world that leaves him behind with eternal question marks.

In every atom a universe is hidden

Of every human entity there is a plan of creation. This individual building plan is contained in the microcosm as a basis. From this nucleus the soul is nourished, led and developed until it is 'perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect'. Together the original soul and the original personality – led by Divine Spirit – form the perfect human being. The spirit-spark is also called the Spirit-spark atom, because it is like an atom. In every atom a universe is hidden and hence it contains the same aspects and forces as the macrocosm.

Thus the earthly human being as it exists now is not the original Divine creation as intended in the Divine Plan. When it is said that 'man is created in the image of God', this refers to the original human being and not to the earthly one. The first one is immortal, unlimited and perfect love; in the second one these aspects are completely lacking. The human being in his earthly form is a creature of earthly nature, related to the animals. He has a limited biological awareness at his disposal. During his biological evolution his qualities have developed, so that one day he will be able to recognise his Creator and his place in creation. Only the possession of an intellect places him above the animal kingdom. He has received this intellect to be able to distinguish, to analyse his experiences, to develop thoughts, to weigh options.

It is the task of the human being to execute the Divine Plan within himself and for others. In other words, to develop the image he carries within from his origin. By lack of knowledge, however, he considers his ego as the highest purpose. He inflates it, develops and protects it. The ego is focused on matter; in its present form it is its product. In that way the human being remains individually and collectively caught up in selfishness, thus increasing the distance between himself and the omnipresence. This I-centricity, in which he is caught, that sum of his biological development, he must learn to give away in order to make room for a

The ABC of soul and body. Rabarama, Padova, Italy. Photo Pentagram.

Concepts like involution and evolution are often confused. In the universal wisdom a clear distinction is made. Involution is the process of the descent of the spirit nucleus into matter. In Indian philosophy it is said that Brahma took a handful of stars and threw them into matter. That was the beginning of involution, of being wrapped up into matter. Those stars sank into matter and were clothed in garments of matter. Whenever the universal wisdom speaks of evolution, it refers to the process by which the consciousness – obtained by involution – sacrifices itself to pass on the control of the biological system – the personality – to the new consciousness, the soul consciousness. Evolution in this sense is therefore rising above matter. Because this cannot or hardly be measured by scientific methods, its existence is usually denied and official science just investigates the biological development of the visible life forms on earth.

new ensoulment that can raise him up to a higher level. Only in this way he can take his place on the arch of spiritual evolution. In order to enable this, it is necessary that he:

- recognises that his soul is held captive by his ego; that his yearning for freedom does not stem from his ego, but from his soul;
- discovers and liberates the inner source of mercy;
- makes this source work, even if it is not always according to his own thoughts and ideas. This means that he learns to surrender full of trust and love to that purifying and renewing activity;
- arranges his life in such a way that the helping Divine energy meets as little resistance as possible;
- is going to cooperate full of joy in this great work of liberation – wholly on the basis of his new spiritual possibilities.

A bonafide Spiritual School can guide and support all these processes in the right way. And when the new soul has been born, it unfolds like a rose in the warming spiritual Light.

Catching a flash from reality

The seeker would like to form an image of the new soul. That is logical. However, he will discover that his ordinary intellect, his ordinary consciousness and his ordinary qualities cannot help him in this respect. His limited power of imagination is unable to assimilate the unlimited new soul. The opened heart may feel something of it; the purified thinking may catch a single flash of it. However, a clear image is impossible, because the new soul is beyond earthly

Question: 'What is the difference between transmutation and transfiguration?'
Answer: 'Transmutation is the process, by which the fourfold personality is made suitable to partake of the process of transfiguration. Through the ages there have been numerous systems, by which the personality – or a part of it – could be developed. Those systems were necessary to make the personality grow up, but nowadays humanity is faced with giving up the personality for the benefit of the divine soul. Hence: no longer cultivating it, no longer partly replacing it, but giving it up completely, so that room is created for a new, transfigured personality with a new consciousness and new possibilities. That is transfiguration. It is systematically being taken up – and in this way being completely changed – into the life of the spirit-soul.'

laws. To the extent that it is vivified and its influence grows, the image, the mental conception can become clearer. The ancient alchemists remarked about it: *'One should start with gold in order to reach gold.'* If no gold is present as a basis, no affinity nor any link with the goal aimed for exists.

As soon as the new soul awakens and develops, an impression, a vague image of it may be obtained. Gradually this can become clearer, when the personality behaves as the proper instrument, because the process of replacement of the soul demands an increasingly pure insight to be able to support it. This growing insight, however, only partly depends on the mind. Above all it should be borne by Love, by Love for the new soul. Without that Love pure soul growth is impossible.

Hence, the more the new soul can develop and the consciousness can become attuned to its demands, its intentions will become clearer. In this light the old human being can let go of his old, rusted ideas. If then, at last, the new soul is fully manifested, a preconceived image is no longer needed. Then cause and content have become one.

The Light knows no separation

Here we must point out that the soul is certainly not abstract. It is a living being. Because it stems from the kindled spirit-spark, it is God from God. Because God is Light, as the Holy Language says, its essence is also Light. Light has no limits, it is free. Light knows no separation. The consciousness of unity of the Light recognises the essence of everything created as Light and is reflected in it. The Light is manifested in infinite variety. It is omnipresent and breaks the darkness when it is answered from this darkness. Thus it can unfold into a clearly radiating power in every human being.

The Light is not dictated by time. The new soul, the Light soul, doesn't seek eternity in time. In it is the deep peace that surpasses all understanding. But above all it is Love. The Love! It does not know Love as humanity knows it, but it *is* Love. The thirteenth chapter of Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians leaves no doubt about that (see page 28).

Hence everything we have written here about the new soul cannot be more than a pointer, an indication. But who understands it, may he grasp it. For as soon as the spirit-spark awakens, the original soul can be vivified. And then this very important first step on the arch of spiritual evolution can be set and experienced consciously.

Nine times it is said: 'Blessed are...'

'We may not make platitudes of the Beatitudes. Indeed, it is as Ouspensky says: the Gospel in general, and the Sermon on the Mount in particular, was not written for the masses but for those who participate in a group with inner consciousness. It remains to be seen whether in the Bible or in any other sacred book anything at all could be found that is intended for those who remain on the plane of dialectical nature. The Word of the Lord, freed from all theological inventions is intended for those who can see and understand and who have reached a certain inner state of spiritual craving.' From: 'The Mystery of the Beatitudes', a book containing a series of underground addresses by Jan van Rijckenborgh during World War II in conventicles.

(Immediately after the war, in 1946, these speeches were printed, and are still available today.)

The beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount describe the way to the birth and development of the new soul. The new soulstate develops from the germ of the Inner Other One, and not by moral exertions of the I. As soon as this germ awakens, an insatiable desire for the new life, which in the modern Rosicrucian teachings is called 'the new soulstate', develops. From this desire a spiritual path spontaneously develops. This is why the first beatitude says: 'Blessed are the poor in Spirit', they who know that they are 'poor in Spirit.'

The second beatitude points out that the new soul is radically different from that of the I-human being. For it suffers under the tyranny of the I, of the individual that is separated from God. From this suffering however eventually rises a longing for salvation, that is: a desire for healing, a desire to restore the damaged state of life and to realise a new soul. 'Blessed are those who mourn.'

Freedom from desire and criticism

From this desire arises the willingness to put aside all interests and passions of the I-human being and to let them dissolve in the renewing Light. That dissolution keeps pace with the development of the new soul. Freedom from aggression and meekness are the results; the human being in the process of renewal is liberated from his desires and criticism. 'Blessed are the meek.' From that attitude grows a new order of life, the justice of the new soul. The human being breaks free from his lies and desire for retribution. On the basis of love and understanding, of giving and encouraging, a new behaviour towards humanity and the world develops. 'Blessed are the merciful.'

All these qualities taken together characterise the 'pure heart' ('Blessed are the pure in heart.') Whoever has a pure or

Return of the prodigal son. Drawing in pen and paintbrush by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669). Teylers Museum, Haarlem.

clean heart will not only receive the impulses of the original world, but also truly fathom them. The new soul has matured.

Anyway, all the properties of the new soul are present simultaneously, first as a germ, then they are born, that is: awakened. After that the process of development into maturity begins. This is not a process in which one property after another is individually developed. They exist within each other and spring from each other. As soon as one property makes itself felt, all the others already exist and are active in it as a principle. If there is tranquillity, there is also understanding; if there is understanding, there is also love; if there is love, there is also insight; and if there is insight, there is also joy. For the new soul is the fruit of a life field in which all these properties and skills are interwoven. It lives from that field and from the powers active in it.

Love must be manifested

When the soul has sufficiently matured to be able to behold God, the Spirit can enter. The peace, that surpasses all outcomes of the mind, arises from it. Through its nourishment from the Spirit it brings peace. 'Blessed are the peace-

'Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

makers, for they shall be called sons of God.'

The two final beatitudes concern the life of such a peacemaker in the world. He shall be persecuted and taunted, for the I-human being will not be able to understand him. But how else could the soul react but with tranquillity, understanding, love and insight into the effects of good and evil and joy? Just as the sun shines upon all – good or evil – it spreads its light and excludes no one. That is the nature of its being. Love must be manifested, it is the basis of its existence. But as soon as it speaks and witnesses of its inner peace, it evokes struggle in all, who do not wish to accept the nature of God. Jesus says: 'I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.' It is the sword that strikes the human being deep in his heart and that distinguishes between light and darkness. Firstly, in the human being searching for the Light, secondly in all of humanity that has to react to the Light impulse of God. The last beatitude therefore brings consolation with the words: 'Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

The beatitudes

'Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets, who were before you."

(Matth. 5:1-12)

The Sermon on the Mount describes the life of the new soul

Of old, the 'Mountain' has been a symbol of the sublime sphere of the Spirit. When Jesus turns to his pupils 'on the Mountain', it is clear that he speaks as a spiritual teacher to people and explains spiritual matters. He speaks about the new, spiritual soul. How does this new soul live and act?

The new soul expresses itself quite differently from the ordinary human soul with its stereotype patterns of thinking, feeling and willing. But because it is present as a germ in every human being, all who are open for it can sense something of its intentions. On that basis Jesus describes the new soul to his pupils. He himself has realised it; he *is* the new soul. His pupils are working to achieve that new soul state. Jesus describes the properties of the new soul in order to strengthen the awareness of them in his pupils. As Master, he developed a power field in which the energy of the new soul is active in such a way that it supports his pupils in the birth process.

The old soul and the new soul

Right from the beginning Jesus clarifies that the attributes of the new soul are not moral virtues, which can be acquired through a lot of exertion. The new soul is not a state which can be attained by strict morals. Such a state would merely be the result of an imposed 'You must!' Such commands are indispensable for the structure of our social life and the development of our earthly personality, but not for the development of the new soul. The time will arrive that these imposed standards and values must be replaced by new inner values, which emanate from the new soul state described in the Sermon on the Mount. Then the essence of the true human being must surface, grow and develop. Hence the new soul is not an improved version of the old soul, but a completely new being that can only be born of the germ of that true being that has been implanted in the old soul. In order to clarify this, Jesus confronts the 'you must' of the old law with the '*Truly I say unto you*' of the new soul he himself is.

Attributes of the new soul

The old, earthly human being tries to control his aggression. Moses' law states: '*You shall not kill.*' However, the new human being in whom the new soul is vivified, does not *know* any aggression. He is still; he moves with the energies emanating from the Divine nature. How could he feel anger when his personal interests are thwarted? After all, personal interests no longer exist for him! He is immersed in the Divine powers of the All and is one with them, just like the rays of the sun are linked with the sun.

The old human being rightly tries to control his passions and desires '*You shall not commit adultery.*' But the new soul does not covet someone else's possessions.

Question: 'Many explanations of the concept "soul" I come across regularly confuse me considerably. It is as if there are many different souls. Could you clarify this?'

Answer: 'Indeed, there are many ideas about the soul. The Rosicrucians clearly distinguish between the animal soul and the divine soul. The first one has in fact as many aspects as there are people. The animal soul is the consciousness that is formed during the development of the human being. It is different for everyone. Broadly speaking, it reflects the characteristics of the nature it stems from with all contrasts existing in it. In principle it is only focused on its own salvation. On the other hand there is the divine or immortal soul that originates from the Rose of the Heart. In most people it is a dormant principle. It is the link between God and the human being. Once it has been liberated from its captivity, it develops its properties and faculties for service to its fellow creatures and the whole of creation. Hence the natural, mortal soul has arisen from the world of opposites; the immortal or divine soul originates from the forces of the Divine nature. It lives out of the Gnosis.'

Such desires simply are not part of its being. For the new soul the other one is always a subject, never an object. It longs to cooperate with the powers of the Divine nature, so that the Kingdom of God can be realised in itself and for others.

The old human being rightly tries to live honestly in word and deed. '*You shall not bear false witness.*' However, the new human being does not have to be occupied with honesty and no longer needs to prove his honesty by taking oaths. He no longer has to take oaths at all. His words and deeds result from the fact that he is totally attuned to the laws of the Divine nature; that he is standing in the Truth and *is* Truth.

Having the courage to call things by their names

The old human being, the human I, lives according to the principle '*an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*'. He is convinced that this principle belongs in the earthly world and hence is legitimate. However, the new human being does not know revenge. Were he to repay evil with evil, he would first have to be part of evil himself. And then he would not move along with the Divine.... and hence not be a new human being. Suppose that someone is irritated by the fierce rays of the sun. Would they then – out of revenge – burn him more intensely or would they then leave him alone? Whoever does not know revenge nor applies it, need not necessarily be a slave of injustice. If necessary, he should clearly call things by their names. Jesus did just that before the High priest Annas (John 18:22-23) or Socrates in his defence before the Council of Athens. He doesn't do that to defend his own interests, but to realise his task in asserting the Divine right. He does this in absolute serenity and absolute trust. The human being of the old nature loves his friends and hates his enemies, because his personal interests dictate this attitude. However, the new soul is taken up in the Divine love and cooperates with that power, just as the rays of the sun transmit the message and the power of the sun to all. The new soul no longer distinguishes between those who serve his interests and those who oppose them. After all, he does not *know* self-interest!

The realisation of the new soul is a possibility for every human being. It is our true purpose in the time that has now arrived. All religions describe the five attributes of the soul. The Buddha says:

- *the first one is: serenity. In the unpolarised state of harmony with the Divine nature, aggression, desire, lies, revenge, fear and criticism are absent;*
- *the second one is: compassionate understanding. Every human being is respected and understood, when harmony with the laws of the Divine nature rules;*
- *the third one is: love. From the new soul arises a stream of Love that excludes nothing and no one and that gives away without calculating;*
- *the fourth one is: insight in good and evil. The objective power to distinguish between true and false teachers and between truth and lies;*
- *the fifth one is: joy. The highest creativity of the new human being is experienced in the Spirit.*

These five attributes form the pentagram, since time immemorial the symbol of the new soul. They correspond to the five soul fluids, of which the Spiritual School of the Golden Rosycross speaks:

- *serenity – the renewed blood attuned to the vibrations of the Divine world (the new chemical ether);*
- *compassionate understanding – the new hormone fluid (the new life ether);*
- *love – the new nerve fluid (the new light ether);*
- *insight in good and evil – the new serpent fire (the new mental ether);*
- *joy – the new and glorious Mercury consciousness (the fire ether).*

When the old human being gives something, he always speculates on his own advantage. Either he receives an equivalent present in return, or he obtains immaterial things as reward, like recognition, praise and honour, or even 'intercession' with God. That is the way he calculates, but the new soul gives from the fullness of its new powers and attributes, because it cannot do differently. Its life is giving what it receives from the Kingdom of God. Hence it can only give what is Good, and not depraved or perishable matters. Hence it does not collect earthly treasures that do not have eternal life. The more it gives, the larger its joy. Whoever can and does give from that abundance of heavenly treasures, experiences the heavenly law: receiving everything, giving up everything and thus renewing everything.

The inexhaustible source

The old human I constantly worries about his life, his possessions and his future. And rightly so, because everything in his earthly existence is constantly affected and attacked and will eventually die. The new soul, however, lives out of the fullness of God and consciously stands in the energy flows emanating from that source. It need not worry about the fact that this source might ever become exhausted. It performs its task in the world when confronted with it. And it takes the laws of earthly nature into account without harming anyone or seeking its own

advantage. It knows that it 'cannot add a yard' to its life.

The earthly human being constantly criticises. After all, he has his standards! He is taught how human beings and matters should be and which requirements they should satisfy. And he confronts his own behaviour with those requirements and standards. The new soul, however, sees how things and human beings really are, unhindered by the restrictive judgements of others. Hence it does not have any prejudices. It judges correctly, just as the eye, which itself is colourless, can see all colours correctly. Hence the new soul does not bother its fellow creatures with ideas, standards, criticism or guidelines. It is available for everyone and helps everyone in their quest for the Divine Kingdom.

In the new soul, Truth – the Divine law – is the standard for its insight. It recognises what is true and what is false, and can distinguish what pours in from the Divine Kingdom and what originates from human self-interest. The new soul also knows who the true teacher is and who is only pretending. It acts from the renewing energy it receives and according to the insight it is granted. God's truth and life are one in it. It does not boast about its faculties, but lets them speak for themselves. It *is* the 'Light of the world', 'the salt of the earth', which propels the development of humanity. In it, the Spirit is active and that is the most profound joy.

The old and the new law

And Jesus said:

'You know the commandments: Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honour your father and mother. (Mark 10:19)
You have heard that it was said to the men of old: You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement.
But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement [...]
You have heard that is was said to the men of old: You shall not commit adultery.
But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart [...]
Again you have heard that it was also said to the men of old: You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.
But I say to you: Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply yes or no [...]
You have heard that it was said: An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
But I say to you: Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also [...]
You have heard that it was said: You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.
(Matth.5:21-43)
But I say to you: Love your enemies; bless those who curse you; do good to those who hate you; and pray for those who abuse you and persecute you.
(Luke 6:28-29)

The song of Love

'If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not behave unseemly, does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So faith, hope and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.' (1 Cor.13)

Photo Pentagram.

Question: 'From your periodical I draw the conclusion that you do not consider the figure of Jesus as a human being. Is that right?'

Answer: 'You may see it like this. We do not consider Jesus and the Gospels in the first place as a historical figure or as a historical account. We rather consider it as a Path, a way of life which every human being should follow in his own life, and which is recorded symbolically in the Gospels. Whether Jesus has lived is debatable nor has any undisputed evidence been found of it until now. We do not want to be drawn into that discussion. What matters is the symbolic expression of the Path every human being has to go. That is why it has been written: Be imitators of Me. Who then is Christ? The Christ is a radiation fullness of the Universal Gnosis, that is: the Universal Source of Wisdom. This Christ power fills, when it is evoked by the purely focused heart, the whole being of a person. It gives him strength to achieve a complete revolution in his life. It is a power that then totally renews heart and head. Acquiring gnostic consciousness is reaching the pure unity of the reborn soul with the Spirit. Then the human being has become a Jesus man, with whom the Spirit of God can be linked. This path leads to the transfiguration of the microcosmic human being. We see that this gnostic path is described in the Gospels, although unfortunately no longer in its original purity.'

The help of a mystery or spiritual school

Since time immemorial, mystery and spiritual schools explain the meaning and purpose of life. They are the instruments that help the human being that is seeking for the truth to find his divine origin. Such schools appear periodically. They place the teachings of liberation before those who are open to them. They lead them through a process of inner liberation and spiritual renewal. Even in these turbulent times such spiritual schools are active.

In a mystery or spiritual school three impulses are active, emanating from the Body of the Doctrine, the Body of Joy and the Body of Transfiguration. These three bodies, fields or heavens, grant a bonafide mystery or spiritual school the opportunity to fulfil its task. You can to a certain extent imagine these bodies as energy fields of a very high unearthly vibration. Through these bodies the approaching candidate can come into contact with the Christ power, that is poured out to help him on his path.

First he is touched by the Body of the Doctrine. This Doctrine is not aimed at the intellect, for that is not suitable to comprehend it, but to the nucleus of the divine soul. It shows the candidate his orgin and the purpose of his existence. The living power of the Body of the Doctrine awakens the spirit-spark atom in the centre of the microcosm and stirs it up into a flame to the extent that the I-human being withdraws and is gradually extinguished.

The three universal bodies

'The Body of the Doctrine, the Body of Joy and the Body of Transfiguration correspond with: firstly, the all-penetrating field of the Father; secondly, the Light-revealing field of the Son; thirdly, the healing, regenerating field of the Holy Spirit. The Father grants us the possibility, the Son grants us the Light of knowledge, the Holy Spirit brings us the one and all-encompassing path of liberation in the power of God and in the Light of the Son.'

(Catharose de Petri, *Seven Voices Speak*. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 1990)

Whoever inwardly accepts the Doctrine and thus begins to experience the effects of it within himself, shall also experience the joy of a glorious new consciousness. The Body of Joy then envelops, guides and uplifts him. And finally, entering into the third body, the Body of Transfiguration, he is going to partake of the total renewal of his microcosmic system. The Doctrine, the plan of development into a Divine Man, is then accomplished. A new soul garment is then built, the goal has been achieved.

The purpose of this process of cleansing and renewal has been included in the plan of action of the three co-operating universal bodies. That purpose is

Monads flow into space to the point where they have to fulfil their task in Creation. Illustration Pentagram.

first projected into the candidate. He receives the image of it and then has to free himself from the most basic obstacles impeding his progress. It affects as it were the candidate and confronts him with his opportunities. In addition, he also receives all necessary help to execute the plan. The plan takes shape. In this way a new personality is built that, in turn, can function as an instrument of the three universal bodies. This whole process takes places on the basis of voluntary participation.

The Body of the Doctrine

The Doctrine provides clarity on the 'where from' and 'where to' of the human being. Within that Body the human being learns to see himself as part of a development: first of the biological development or involution and then of the spiritual development or evolution. Involution provides the ego with a fourfold personality and leads it to the moment when it can surrender to the evolution of the indwelling Spirit. Whoever becomes conscious of this development can understand that

the end of his involution has to be the starting point of a new development. This can be described as 'the return to the world of the Spirit.' That is true evolution. On that path, the candidate can develop himself into the true, perfect human being as described in the Divine plan.

Through the Body of the Doctrine the candidate can begin to see why the human being is described as a microcosm. The Hermetic principle 'as above, so below; as within, so without' explains all movements and processes in the human being and in life around him. His spirit principle is a spark of the Love that ensouls the All. And as an heir of God the candidate learns to recognise his place in Creation. The knowledge he receives serves as an inner law. The Bible says about this: 'I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts' (Jer.31:33)

The Doctrine always refers to this inner law. The candidate must discover, in 'word and image', why it is so important to follow the call of the Spirit from within. In the beginning self-knowledge and inner observation are as yet insufficient to explore autonomously this path. External guidance and advice are therefore necessary. They form an external aspect of the inner law. This 'external' law serves to guide the insufficiently experienced human being. It serves as a sign and support. Whoever follows these guidelines on the basis of inner conviction shall not see them as dogmas or rules. One day he will discover that they are helping him and correspond to the spiritual law of the new soul.

At a psychological moment, everybody is addressed by the Body of the Doctrine at his own level of consciousness. That contact – which often takes places while we are unaware of it – will kindle the desire for unification with the divine field of life. That desire the Rosicrucians call the longing for salvation. The way back is illuminated by that contact, and from it the candidate draws new energy to continue. In this way he will partake of eternity. And from that moment on, his aim is no longer his own liberation only, but also that of all of humanity, and of the field inhabited by it. That field exists in constant change, because it is part of the continually progressing All. Through the

Question: 'Why do you speak of a Christ principle and the Christ power and not of the Christ?'
Answer: 'The Christ principle is the germ or nucleus of the new ensoulment, put into the human heart. This germ is also called the primordial atom, the spirit spark, the Divine spark or the Rose of the Heart. The Christ power is the universal force that awakens this principle and develops it.'

Wooden model of the microcosm after Leonardo Da Vinci's famous drawing. Museum Leonardo Da Vinci, Vinci, Toscane (I). Photo Pentagram.

The rope of saving Light is lowered into the darkness. Illustration Pentagram.

changes in the All the life processes of individual people and of humanity as a whole are influenced.

The Body of Joy

After being repeatedly touched by the Body of the Doctrine, the human being is placed before an important decision. Is he only familiarizing himself? Will he remain a listener? Or is he willing to accept the consequences for his own life and unite with the Body of Joy? Is he willing to accomplish the process of surrendering his continually crystallising I and of devoting his powers to building the new soul? Only then can be manifested what has been put into him by God to be manifested. Only then can he be of service to the renewal processes in Creation. If he says and does 'yes', he will also receive all strength needed.

Where does he receive this strength from? The field from which he draws this strength exists through co-operation with the three universal bodies. A bonafide spiritual school is a living organism that can only be manifested if all those involved in it cooperate according to the basic plan. Every force flows from a centre. In a spiritual school as meant here, that centre is the Gnosis, the fountain of explanatory and renewing power, also called the Christ power. In the hexagram this activity is represented: the threefold divine power descends into the human being and becomes intimately linked with thoughts, feelings and actions.

Hence the activity of a spiritual school is fundamentally different from that of all other earthly organisations. The energy released in such a school doesn't belong to dialectical nature. It is a stream of divine grace that, although omnipresent, is concentrated to be able to touch and nourish every opened human heart. In this way the soul inhales new, pure ethers, giving it strength, vitality and spiritual joy. And because it allows itself to be nourished in this way, it becomes one with it.

Within such a community all bear the burdens of all. They form a community in which all are equal, although their tasks may be different. If one of them is violated in his weakness, the power of the collective field is strong enough to support him and help him overcome. Aspects of the new soul – such as insight, perseverance, surrender, compassion, love, conflictlessness and power of discernment – gain strength.

The determined candidate 'dies in

Jesus the Lord.' He notices that the inclinations and impulses of his nature-born soul lose their strength and are replaced by new inner powers. Inner tranquillity, peace and joy fill him. They enable the candidate to work towards a goal in group unity. Although for a while the I still wants to play a part in this with opinions, emotions, self-willed ideas, sympathies and antipathies, these influences will eventually disappear. The new soul, the new ensoulment, takes over the control of the personality. And the renewing forces that are received can be given to all who need them. In this way the three Bodies work in, for and through the human being, provided he is open to them. That means that his personality is prepared in such a way that these renewing forces can have a positive effect in it.

The Body of Transfiguration

In a mystery or spiritual school the candidate is taken up in a process of regeneration of the microcosm. That requires a meticulous directedness towards the goal that has been shown to him. And the aspects he has to attend to within himself are really something. Conflictlessness, non-criticism, harmony in thinking, feeling and acting, loving his neighbour – these are properties of the new ensoulment. The candidate on the path to life leaves as it were the school of dialectics and enters into the school of the Gnostic path. The process of transfiguration opens up before his consciousness. He learns the 'not-doing' of which Lao Tzu testifies.

On this basis a new personality can be built. New thoughts, motives and feelings lead the candidate to a new way of acting. The path that a mystery or spiritual school thus points out culminates in the total renewal of the microcosmic human being. The new ensoulment isn't aimed towards the individual self, but towards the whole: towards restoring the world and humanity.

Question: 'The Rosicrucians speak of dialectics and of two natures. Isn't there but one nature?'
Answer: 'Dialectics is the world of opposites. Good versus evil, light versus darkness, love versus hate. One inevitably brings forth the other. The human being experiences these opposites in his daily life and thereby develops consciousness. That consciousness eventually makes him realise that there has to be another nature in which these opposites do not exist. That nature is called statics, although it certainly isn't static. Dialectics encompasses everything that the human being can perceive with his senses. The 17th-century German philosopher Jacob Böhme called dialectics the House of Death, because everything born into it will also die. The Rosicrucians consider this realm as a school, in which the human being must build the instrument of the soul, with which he can enter statics. To enter from dialectics – the temporary world – into statics – the eternal world – the path of transfiguration has to be travelled.

Receiving everything, giving up everything and thus renewing everything

The Ego speaks to the New Soul:

'O soul, my mysterious companion,
countless times my heart breathed out your words
– as white birds in their flight to the light,
born in the valley of desires
between the rocks of darkness.
I listened and listened,
I only wanted to listen,
ever since my childhood days.

Thus I heard the mountains moaning,
grass and flowers whispering softly,
animals wailing, winds fighting,
waters complaining and in the night
the requiem of stars.

Yet for beauty my eyes
eagerly looked everywhere
and they discovered it
in the majesty of the mountains,
in the dance of the winds,
in fragrance and colours of blossoms,
in the profusion of the animal world
and in the infinite glimmer of the stars of the All,
yes, even in the works of man
and in his coming and going.

Like a splendidly adorned hall
with a richly set table
the world appeared to me.
All my senses were prepared to receive.
But how strange:
though I feasted on its treasures,
I tasted bitterness.
Though I found safety with men,
I detected infinite loneliness.

Only gradually I learned to distinguish
you and the voice of my yearning
from my desires
and I learned to understand:
while I eagerly received the treasures of the world,
you were in greatest need.
I know: your nature, your longing
is of a totally different kind.
Who are you?
Who am I?
Where is the Light
in which we may recognise each other?

O, listen to me:
I am here – in the desert of life,
as a lonely Ego.
You, o soul, companion of my heart,
you, hidden in mists,
you, alas, we are far apart
in the shadow of the earthly worlds.

But the sighs of your desiring
have cleared a path
in nature's thickets
and send me their messengers
ever since my childhood days.

Here I'm standing now, in surrender to you
and totally grasped by you,
as if I were full of desires,
to meet you, o soul,
silently to be extinguished in you,
completely being taken up in you,
knowing you for ever
without being separated – without Ego,
without you.'

The rock-hard I in all its loneliness. Photo Pentagram.

And the New Soul answers:

'O, my companion,
the flaming words
of my yearning for freedom
I burned into your heart,
already since your first days of life.
But do you truly understand them?
Do you not want to keep me
in the valley of your darkness,
while my beloved calls me
to go through the gate of freedom?
You do not know me,
and you do not know yourself.
Even less do you know Him,
whom I call my beloved.
For Him is my yearning,
my sighs in your heart,
He has many names, but no one
who can speak His true name.

He moves the stars
but does not move Himself.
From one spark of His Love
a universe is created.
He is the Light,
on which my love is kindled.
He is It, in which we recognise
ourselves and all worlds.

In com-passion with my distress
He chose you to accompany me.
Above the mysterious gate of freedom
before which He now places us,
we read fiery letters:
'Receiving everything, giving up everything
and thus renewing everything.'
In order to be able
to open the gate to freedom,
I must possess the key
that was forged in triple way
in His glow of love.
Faith, hope and love are its attributes!

For aeons
I have forged on this key.
Now it is almost finished,
now that you, my companion, are truly prepared
and do not recoil at your task.
I do not ask anything
but to listen to the voice
that rises up from the depth of your heart
and follow it.

Photo Pentagram

I am a drop from the great ocean of love.
Do you hear, my companion, how
He comforts me?
Then cloak yourself in silence and listen well!'

The Spirit of Love speaks
to the New Soul:

'Your sighs, my beloved,
should turn into a song of joy,
your captivity into freedom.
You are lonely
amongst the children of earthly darkness,
while you are linked as a brother
with the sons of the Light.

The ether that pervades all worlds
is filled with My sounds.
Whoever hears these sounds,
hears the song of freedom.
He feels how joy vibrates in mountains,
how fiery rustling moves through the air.
He feels how iron chains are broken,
and yearns for fiery wings
to lead him through My wide heavens.
How would you, My beloved,
yet receive those heavenly treasures,
if you were unable to give up
everything that is of the earth?
You can only wear a new heavenly garment,
when you lay aside
everything that is of the old earth.

Be wary!
Light and darkness
are the twin forces of this world,
from which your earthly companion lives and
works.
Don't allow them to lead you astray again.
Anxiety, worry and fear are the waylayers
on the narrow roads your companion must go,
in the convolutions of the brain,
in the cavities of every cell.
Everywhere they leer at struggle.
You will see the armies of good and evil
before you assembled on the battlefield of
emotions and thoughts and fear them.
For you are linked and intertwined with them
by your long odyssey in the earthly realms.

But keep to My Light, to My Love,
and you will recognise all of them
as phantoms of a shadow world!
My Light will grant you new fiery wings!'

The New Soul speaks to the Spirit of Love:

'I feel Your power,
it makes me trust.
I find already rest
in Your infinitely large heart.'

The Spirit of Love speaks:

'Be wary,
so that nothing is robbed from you!'

The New Soul speaks to the Ego:

'O my companion, do you hear His call?
It is His Fire that sets your heart aglow,
it is His Love that attracts me to Him.
My companion, do not resist the truth
and do not fight Love,
which is infinitely greater than the spark
that, linked with Him, glows in your heart.
Be not afraid of the Love in you!'

The Ego answers the New Soul:

'Not I, but you are the child of the Light.
O, how dual I feel!
Although my heart is well-disposed towards you,
I must confess
that cold shivers are running down my spine
by your mighty longing for salvation.
Your freedom means to me
"that I no longer exist".
Suddenly it is as if I resist
you and your Love.
A hurricane of forces
assails feelings and thoughts.
They are the voices of those beings
that have seen the world as their playground
since the beginning of time.
They turned me into the one I am.
Their voices are like honey:
they whisper and coax:
"We make you king
of heaven and of earth.
Only believe what you see,
not what you cannot see.
What is abundantly visible,
that you can grasp, draw.
It is the mirror which shows you your greatness."

Their voices are like whiplashes
in the silence of my heart,
that silence that makes me inert to the world.

'When your thoughts become silent,
you will lose everything
that is valuable to you.
Your work, your daily bread, your life!
That which is invisible, is empty.
Show us the God your companion is speaking of,
we will kneel for him.
But ah, you do not know him.
You want to live, you want to exist.
Well, do live, with the treasures of the earth.
You have the intelligence and your will is strong.'

O soul, you mysterious companion,
are you still in my heart?
Are you still with me?
Do you also hear seducers speak to me?
The temptation is great,
because my fear of the void,
of no longer existing, is agonising.
Yet my ear has heard your soft voice.
Your longing caught a ray of light
of the great Love that now illuminates me.
And dismayed I now see:
as I am, I am your enemy!

Photo Pentagram

A wondrous bird in many bright colours descends from heaven. Edmund Dulca's Picture Book For The French Red Cross (1914).

But I wonder:
how can I serve you as a useful instrument?
What will close my ears for the voices of the world?'

The New Soul answers the Ego:

'A part of this road you go together with me, sometimes in discord, sometimes in unity.
Until we have recognised each other completely
in the Light of truth.
Thus you receive new strength and deeper insight and you unmask the phantoms of creators and creatures; they only inflated themselves in the storm of my desires.
New insight will silence them.
My companion, do not fear the void that to me is the one life.
Do not doubt what you cannot see.
Trust him who opened my dormant eye for the shine of His perfection,

the world of My beloved.'

The Ego speaks to the New Soul:

'My companion, I know:
my tarrying and doubts create
light and darkness, warmth and cold,
dryness and humidity.
Fast as lightning, the world
with its thousands of voices
and its blind fury
has withdrawn us from insight's protection.

I am here again, an ego lost in loneliness,
and you are far away again,
hidden in a mist.
But vibrating of remembrance, your sighs,
your calling arise full of desire,
renewed, and stronger than ever.
Finally I am truly prepared
to merge with you,
totally to be absorbed in you!
What would my heart still fear,
now that you abide in it, you, who are
the precious pearl of the great love?
I myself could never give true Love;
through you I begin to suspect what that Love is.
Your Love will tame my feeling and my thinking.
I want to learn to be silent until I am only silence.
Through my total silence
you can hear the song of the stars again.
Everything that lives will listen with you,
and my deeds will testify of your Love.
O, my precious gem, your joy makes
golden blossom open up in my heart
and transform it into Light.
What is Light, can return to the Light!'

The Spirit of Love speaks to the New Soul:

'My beloved, do not swoon
when thus your companion speaks to you.
Place my Light before his lame foot,
so that he knows how to follow your trail.
For without Me neither of you can do anything.
Do not hold on to anything,
let your Light flow out,
give away what you receive from Me.
Then the fire of your desiring will consume
the darkness that is around you
and fill all spaces with My Light.
Then your spaces will be unlimited,
your time will be timeless.
My breath will be your breath,
My life your eternal life.
Hold on to your goal,
as long as you are linked with your companion!
Be faithful to your choice
when My voice says to you:
"You see before you, O Soul,
the abode of things apprehensible by sense, and
the abode of things apprehensible by the Spirit.
Both are placed before your eyes;
you have learned by experience
both the one and the other,
and you have seen them both
with your own eyes.
Choose now which you will." '

The Ego speaks to the New Soul:

'Follow, O Soul, my precious friend,
the Light that came into the world.
I have attached you to the cross of my nature,
and have become your tomb,
so that you descend and ascend,
and renew everything by your Love.
Always write the fiery symbols of your Love
in my heart,
set the fiery sign on my forehead aglow.
Turn me into your new companion,
who not only understands your word of Love,
but who has become the living word himself.'

Quote from: Hermes: *De Castigatione Animae*, translated by Walter Scott. Hermetica, volume IV, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936.

Dialogue between Hermes and Tat

Tat: 'From what matrix is man reborn, and from what seed?'
Hermes: 'My son, he is born from the wisdom which thinks in the silence, and from the seed which is the Only Good.'
Tat: 'From what seed, from what matrix, is man reborn?'
Hermes: 'From the Sophia, that is: from wisdom.

'Many people think of wisdom as a kind of higher, wider knowledge about things. People speak, for instance, about "the knowledge of wisdom". This idea might make you think that wisdom can be absorbed and experienced by the intellect. But although this attitude is common, do not be deceived. In the world of dialectics the philosopher is the would-be possessor of the Sophia, someone who uses his intellect to analyse everything. He gathers every shred of information he can from the sources available and then uses it as a basis on which to form his own opinion, his own insight. This insight may well be beautifully formulated; it may be pure and good in many respects, but as en intellectual construction it will always remain speculative, to be valued and followed for a time, but sooner or later superseded by some new product of dialectical wisdom, some new philosophical fashion.

This intellectual globetrotting, often so fruitless and misleading, is of course not what Hermes means when he speaks about the matrix of the Sophia. He is thinking of the sphere in which the four bodies of the personality – the physical body, the etheric double, the astral body and the cognitive faculty – operate. The physical organism is maintained by the ethers of the etheric body. If the circulation of these ethers is weak or sluggish, a disturbance or weakening of the physical body will result.

The etheric body is activated by the radiations of the astral body. Now what ought to happen, is that the astral body should be motivated entirely by the cognitive faculty. The cognitive faculty, in turn, should breathe in the Sophia, which is an even more subtle and refined substance than the mental one. In practice, however, the cognitive faculty is far from mature and in fact can barely be spoken of with regard to most human beings. It is only present in a rudimentary form, and cannot develop any further as long as we remain in our present state of being. The cognitive faculty of present-day humanity cannot mature.

The intellectual organs and their functions only constitute the basis for the true mental body in all its nobility. In his present state, man's lower thoughts are motivated entirely by the three lower vehicles of his personality. That is why it is impossible for an ordinary human being to rise above his natural state. His thoughts remain of the earth, earthly, and there is no question of any Sophia, for his whole system is fed by the astral substance of the nature of death.

You should see it like this: you are here

in your dialectical personality – physical body, etheric double and astral vehicle. At best, your cognitive faculty is visible as a centre at the top of the head sanctuary, radiating light to a greater or lesser extent. In that state, the cognitive faculty is not capable of enabling you to absorb the Sophia. Nevertheless, your personality has to maintain itself. So it is inevitable that your personality will be nourished by the astral substance of the nature of death. You are not living, but *being* lived. You are trapped in the retrograde motion we talked about earlier. That is the reality.'

Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis and its call in the eternal present*, part 4, chapter XIX. Rozekruis Pers, Haarlem, 1994.

Question: 'Who was Hermes Trismegistus?'
Answer: 'Hermes Trismegistus is the Greek name of the personification of a series of manifestations of the Egyptian primordial wisdom. In Egyptian writings he is also, amongst other things, called Thoth. The addition "tris-megistus" – the thrice great one – refers to spirit, soul and body in a sublime or glorified state. In Hermetic philosophy, which is thousands of years old, it is exactly shown how the new soul or new ensoulment should be accomplished, what the human being should do and not do for it and how that new soul is touched by the Spirit and what the results of it will be. The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis is still just as topical as ever; for the present-day Rosicrucians it is an important source of inspiration.'

The development of the new soul

The new soul is, according to the prologue of the Gospel of John, 'born of God'. Its origin can be found in the mysterious spirit-spark atom, the spark of eternity in every human being. The biography of Jesus, as portrayed in the Holy Language, is a symbolic description of the development of this new soul.

The new soul, while increasing, will become self-conscious, just as a child that grows up and becomes aware and assumes its place in life. The new soul, however, is directly nourished with the powers of its original nature, the divine realm of life. Those concentrated powers are present in the atmosphere and also work within a bonafide Spiritual School. They can only be unveiled and activated after a very drastic transformation of the ensoulment that controls the personality.

The soul becomes conscious of the pitiable surrounding in which it is living. Was not Jesus born in a stable? In the parable of the prodigal son, the errant soul even eats together with the pigs from the same trough. The traditions of the Buddha relate how the young prince Gautama discovers that the beauty and wealth of the world mask suffering and death. The new soul also experiences the limitations, the forces and qualities of the life field into which it was born. How much it feels like a stranger here! How far away from home! Gautama leaves the splendour of the earthly world and begins the search for his heavenly fatherland. The prodigal son turns away from the pigs' trough and sets out to seek the Kingdom of God.

How can the developing soul become acquainted with its surrounding? With the help of the personality that wants to serve it! Whoever gives it room, will experience that it sees with his eyes and hears with his ears! The personality becomes the mirror in which the new soul learns to see its task. Its self-knowledge arises only from acting. It is going to express its faculties in the instrument

The departure

'I gave the order to fetch my horse from the stable. The servant did not understand me. I went to the stable myself, saddled my horse and mounted it. In the distance I heard a trumpet. I asked him what that meant. He did not know and had not heard anything. At the gate he stopped me and asked: "Where are you travelling to, master?" "I don't know", I said, "only away from here. Ever more far away from here, that is the only way how I can reach my destination." "So you know your destination?" he asked. "Yes", I answered, "I already said it, away-from-here is my destination." "You have no provisions with you", he said. "I don't need provisions," I said, "The journey is so long that I will starve, if I don't get any food on the way. No provisions can save me.»' Franz Kafka

of the personality that has been prepared for it.

On the other hand the seeker knows very well that his earthly soul is living in a pitiable situation. Now that a fundamentally different power enters into him, saying: 'Not you have chosen me, but I have chosen you', the restlessness of the earthly being becomes constantly more evident; his fickleness, changeability and hesitation are outlined ever more sharply. The bright and the dark sides of the earthly soul and the constant alternation of good and evil come to the fore only too well. The old soul overestimates itself, it is the dominant I. The fears and doubts hidden in it will be uncovered. It also realises that in some situations unpaid bills, resulting from former lives, are reflected. Sometimes it feels bad considering that it cannot offer a palace as an abode for the new soul, but indeed merely a stable. However, the search for renewal by means of the power of the new soul leads to revolutionary experiences. Many changes take place in the old system and the old life. Then it always appears that a new path, an upward path, will be opened up – even if there are ever so many doubts! Thus the seeker will gain confidence in the power that was unknown to him before. His experiences confirm that. An unmistakable consequence is that he is going to realise the importance of his new task in life. He is to become a sound instrument, a worthy sounding board for this new power.

Limits of personal striving

The formulation of the question now changes. It is no longer 'How can I improve my conciousness?' or 'What profit can I gain from it?', but 'What shall I do?' This question cannot be answered by the I, since it does not possess the required facul-

The sunflower follows the sun in its daily orbit, until it turns, ripened and full of seeds, to the earth to pour out its wealth. Photo Pentagram.

Question: 'Is alchemy related to the mediaeval alchemists?'
Answer: 'The teachings of the Golden Rosycross mean by alchemy the spiritual transformation process, in which the new soul is born and prepared for its encounter with the Spirit. The ancient alchemists represented that process in a kind of secret language. Lead was transformed into gold, etc. In other words, lower nature was transformed into spiritual nature.'

ties. In this stage of development the guidance, the inspiration and the example of a Spiritual School are indispensable, first of all because the human being is so strongly individualised that he can hardly overcome his own limitations. Hence the answer to the question 'What shall I do?' will not be given before the seeker no longer wants to be a 'master', but has become an apprentice, a pupil in the great mysteries of the Universal Wisdom.

This moment coincides with the inner recognition and realisation of the Light that brings purification and renewal. Then a completely new mode of life is no longer a programme but a self-evident, spontaneous observing of the law of renewal. Enthusiastically the pupil sets to work, eager, with joy and idealism, for he wants to comply with the requirements of this new development. A soul human being, he thinks, is loving and patient. He helps without demanding anything, and his life is an uninterrupted surrender to his spiritual path.

But while he tries to comply with all those requirements, he is constantly confronted with himself. And like Job, desperately scratching himself with the broken pieces of his vain efforts, he asks himself: '*Why don't I succeed? Did I do everything wrong?*

That is not the way it is. He has merely tried with his whole arsenal of natural and cultural faculties to achieve what can be exclusively realised by means of the faculties of the new soul.

Yet, these seemingly fruitless efforts absolutely have their effects. One of them is that the I-centrality is reduced to reasonable proportions. Thus every sincere effort helps to go one step further. This is important on the way to gain complete experience! The purification emanating from the power of the new soul will become ever stronger and more certain; it will intervene ever more profoundly, so that the soul can be liberated from all its chains. And clearly it comes to mind what really matters now: the will needs – no, must – no longer exert itself according to its own preconceived and imposed standards. A new feeling of responsibility and a simple certainty make the candidate do what the new life demands and what is due to the old one.

Another consequence is that the ambitious striving and desiring achieve a certain tranquillity. The respiration field of the soul becomes calm and silent. The rays of the Light can enlighten it ever more easily and strongly. The new power of life can flow into the whole personality. By true pupilship of a bonafide Spiritual School, the waves of emotions, lack of patience, doubts and worries calm down and cease dragging the whole being along with them. Benevolent from within, without sympathy or antipathy, the necessary things can be done on the basis of an uninterrupted and determined inner orientation. Nevertheless personal interests will over and again require attention and lay a claim on the personality. They constantly try to involve the human being into everyday concerns again. Yet, the increasing inner neutrality creates more and more room for the activity of the new soul. The new soul consciousness

grows in strength and clarity. In the many everyday impressions still occupying the mind, gradually clear outlines of thinking and insight appear. And relationships are unveiled to the soul's eye, which were unsuspected before. Thus daily life is placed on the new soul basis.

New mode of life

There is a peculiar contradiction hidden in the efforts to reconcile the new mode of life with our daily life. For while the candidate seeks for the right balance, he sees ever more clearly that the new soul has nothing in common with his earthly system. The forces of the new soul do not support the interests and objects of the I. On the contrary: in the light of the new soul the dark sides of the old consciousness are unmasked. The world of relativity, opposites and transience uncovers its grievous limitations, because in the consciousness more and more recognition of eternity appears.

Two fields of life are speaking in the seeker. The voice of the new one is ever more clearly perceptible in the chaos of everyday thoughts and emotions. A ray of the Spirit has activated his microcosmic system, and he supports that activity, as far as possible, with joy. Thus he gradually moves on to a new life. It is not an attitude that is learned, but it is practised from within, guided by the Spirit of God. That means first of all that conflicts with fellow human beings disappear into the background, because conflicts arise from the identification with certain earthly goals, on which thoughts, emotions and will are focused. How could the suggestions of the new soul in such situations of conflict still be perceived? When conflicts deteriorate into rage or hate, an intense fire is kindled that leaves the person behind inwardly shattered, and first of all the subtle ethers of the new soul will disappear.

Through experiences of living and working under the guidance of the new soul, a continually growing confidence develops, so that there will always be possibilities to escape from the web of sympathy and antipathy. In the beginning the candidate still hesitates on that wondrous path. Doubts attack him over and again. But with great joy he discovers that also new powers and new thoughts spontaneously originate in him. And he learns to trust their permanence. In this way he changes from a 'seeker for the new power' to a 'pupil' of it. He learns to place his feeling, thinking and acting in the light, to calm his respiration field and thus to open up his whole being for the light of the new soul. Deviating from the new path brings about unrest and tension.

Resistance of the auric being

Natural life oscillates between the two poles. It is never in balance; it is always busy with inhalation and exhalation, attraction and repulsion. Whoever, continually striving for the one Light, no longer vivifies these poles, disturbs the laws of the energy field in which the personality has lived until then. But natural energy fields and karma make themselves felt over and again – they cannot do anything else! – in order to neutralise the new soul. In the Universal Wisdom these opponents are sometimes called 'the auric being'. This auric being suggests to a human being for

example that biological life is more important than spiritual life and that the old soul is tangible while the new soul is only an illusion. And the candidate, the seeker for inner truth, is cast to and fro between transience and eternity. This cannot be otherwise because both life fields are present in the microcosm.

Everybody carries about unfinished situations, waiting for their solution: Karma. This part of karma can be regarded as tasks from the past, which have not yet been executed or only partially. They force the personality to act, so that experiences can be gained. However, in the daily struggle for life the difference between the two life fields is constantly outlined more sharply, and the choice between them becomes ever more visible. Those unfinished situations stored in the karma form the dynamic germs of thinking and acting, are the results of many incarnations. Do not expect moral or spiritual purposes of them, they only want to express themselves by deeds. Thus the auric field evokes thoughts and emotions and in that way determines the result: the activity. Everybody has a different combination of karmic germs, with different colours and different results, but as to their nature they are the same: contrary to the new soul.

The personality is determined by the polar power centres of the auric field, together with the contribution of the genetic material of the parents. Together with the physical body, the auric being is 'father' and 'mother' of the personality in the earthly field of life. Perhaps you can now understand why Jesus said: *'He who loves father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.'* It is the new soul, nourished by the Christ power, that is able to renew the consciousess. By its activity, the forces of the natural soul, penetrated by the power of Eternity, are eliminated and replaced.

In this context it is special that the purified human being, now having become simple and still, can experience the brilliance and radiation of the power of eternity very clearly and distinctly, but also that no single astral touch of earthly nature can be linked to it! This change is referred to when myths speak of a suit of armour or a shield protecting the warrior from all kinds of attacks.

The new astral Light power

The new soul lives in and through the perfectly pure powers from the divine world. These harmonious forces never mix with the impure substances of the world. That is why a person, who is allowed to experience something of this pure state, feels as if lifted up into a wonderful happiness. At such moments, perhaps only for a very short time, he understands the true meaning of concepts like truth, joy or love. And in a poignant clarity he then perceives the poor imitations of these three mighty faculties in the bipolar world! A certain melancholy fills the candidate, when he has to resume his daily routine, because there he encounters nothing, or hardly anything, of that sublime state of life. The difference between the bliss of the new and the flatness of the old world indeed hurts and can touch a human soul very deeply, but it can also be a profoundly radical experience, an impulse to continue seeking.

Thus the microcosmic life field is put 'in order', and gradually everything occupies the place where it belongs. The Temple that has to replace the old stable

must be erected stone by stone. The amount of contemplation, patience and insight necessary for it can hardly be overestimated. Over and again sober insight into our own situation is required.

The new Light power leads the human being to such a state of inner balance in which the consciousness can orientate itself and acquire a certain clarity necessary to set the next step. The person learns to use the pure soul powers received, even if his ordinary patterns of thinking and acting are resisting. It may perhaps be difficult that friends dissociate from him, because he no longer shares their enthusiasm. But others will be surprised by his remarkably balanced new mode of life. The effect is that the power concentrations from the auric field are no longer able to control the whole personality. At first a small sphere is cleared, but gradually the whisperings of the voice of the silence can be distinguished much stronger and better. Our whole life will be attuned to the energy of the new life field. After all, now that the heart is touched by the divine Love, the human being cannot do otherwise any longer! It is that power which purifies the entire microcosmic system and makes it blossom forth, just as the sunlight manifests the beauty of the blossoms. And the whole being learns to cooperate ever more intensely with the new soul in its merciful activity and work.

In this new mode of life all functions of the soul and all values concerning the world, our own personality and our own character change. The human being experiences, knows at a certain moment that he is a cell of the body of the world, of True Humanity. Full of joy he comprehends the importance of his contribution to the development of that great body, and he lives entirely in the harmony in which all active souls look forward to the Spirit.

The vistas of the field of Creation open up before the inner eye. It becomes evident how anxiously fallen nature awaits its redemption, in humanity as well as in the whole of Creation. The new soul has recognised its path. It takes the lead on the path to the divine origin. Yet it raises not only uncompromising demands, but always gives also the energy to carry them out and instructions how to act. It grants power and requires the deeds possible at that moment. The personality is entirely taken up in the new soul; a pure consciousness, a safe feeling and a will submitting to the All-will, are the result. Thus the Soul Man prepares himself for the crowning of his path. For after that, through the renewed link to the forces of the Spirit, a new human being will be created, as a perfect unity of Spirit, soul and body.

Question: 'What is the difference between esoteric and exoteric teachings?'
Answer: 'Esoteric teachings are called the Teachings of the Heart in Buddha's teachings, the exoteric school the Teachings of the Eye. In this context, the concept of esoteric teachings refers to inner teachings, to the forces and powers behind the world of phenomena. Exoteric teachings deal with the outside of things, with that which human beings can observe with their physical sensory organs. The third kind of teachings, not yet mentioned here, are those of the Gnosis. Those are the teachings that show the path of development of the Rose of the Heart to a new ensoulment. That new ensoulment or new soul is ultimately crowned by the descent of the Spirit of God. That gnostic path is the bridge between dialectics, the world in which we live, and Statics, the Kingdom of God.'