

Introduction 3

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“As in the grand, so also in the minute.”

The world is moving as it always has because life is movement. The rate at which this movement takes place is not always the same. We see this when studying the history of the world. Modern technology, with its ever increasing progress, stimulates the tempo of the world’s movement with enormous consequences for humanity. Individual development must inevitably follow this raging tempo. Western humanity is being thrown back upon itself. There is no longer any belief in authority or tradition. Therefore self-authority is essential for further development.

There is an unprecedented quantity of information available in the area of science, philosophy, and spirituality. Flooded by this abundance, we are now more than ever forced to ask ourselves what we are doing with it.

On the emotional level as well, there are hardly any unknown aspects. Happiness, sorrow, pain, fear, love, hope, loss, new life, cruelty, hatred, friendship, and compassion are all within us to a greater or lesser degree.

Perhaps this explains our longing for spirituality. For is there a limit to our individual development? More and better never automatically lead to wisdom and happiness. On the contrary the result is most often a turbulent stream of anxiety, the tendency to continually look for something else.

What is that hidden source within us that carries us along in its stream while creating so many questions about life? And why do we not find the solutions?

Einstein gave us good advice by pointing out that a problem cannot be solved in the same way it was generated. Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world.” In Psalm 115 it is said, “They have eyes, but do not see. They have ears, but do not hear.”

For many years, all that was not visible was denied, and supernatural appearances were ignored as unreal or fantasy. This attitude seems to be changing. Now more openness exists so that there is less prejudice against mysteries, but for those who “do not see,” it remains vague.

The solution, however, does not lie in the supernatural. There is no need to look that far. We can find the answer within ourselves, as that hidden source reveals itself from an unfathomable depth.

Self-knowledge seems to be the only solution - learning to know the unknown “other” that we sense within ourselves. Although invisible to our eyes and inaudible to our ears, it is still perceptible.

The opportunity to penetrate this unknown area is now greater than ever during our accelerated evolution as we face the ultimate questions about our origin and the meaning of our lives.

What exactly is that hidden source, or nucleus, within us and where does it originate? How can self-knowledge reveal this source? “As in the grand, so also in the minute.” Where does my life connect to the greater source of all life? What is my relationship to the world around me, to the cosmos, to the Gnosis as knowledge of the All?

This third exploration invites us to address these questions.

Rosycross and Gnosis

The Heart as Spiritual Gateway

Gnosis is a living reality and a profound inner path, an experience that is activated by a working spirit-spark inside the heart of a person. This inner experience of the activity of the spirit-spark causes a shock, a shaking up and awakening by the power of the Gnosis. A new mode of life, a new directedness, results irrevocably from this. A process of inner change starts to take place, which at first forces a person to obtain self-knowledge. This self-knowledge leads toward an entirely new spiritual insight that unveils the origin and destination of the seeker on the path of the Gnosis.

We have seen that Gnosis is knowledge, living inner knowledge. In this third exploration, we will investigate how the task of the human being lies hidden inside this knowing. In the book *The Chinese Gnosis*, the question is raised, “How does one attain self-knowledge and so become illumined?”

Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri reply to this question as follows:

To find real answers to these questions, one needs to have had a certain measure of experience; one needs to have drunk from the bitter cup of suffering. For it is experience that makes such questions well up in the human heart, questions like: ‘What is the purpose of my life? What does it really mean to be human? What is the destiny of humankind?’

If you do not ask these questions in an intellectual way, but because you are driven by an inner need, because these issues are really problems for you; if these questions well up from the deepest depths of your being, then the urge to seek will emerge in you of its own accord. It is an urge that will be felt as a vital need, as a ‘to be or not to be’. Then, the whole of the Universal Doctrine will open for you, the whole of the divine plan for the world and humankind.

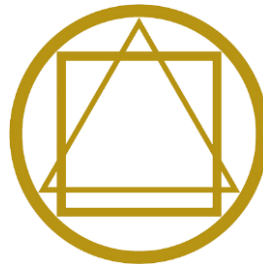
(*The Chinese Gnosis*, chapter 33-1, page 449)

In this quotation a number of questions are formulated:

What is the purpose of my life?
What does it really mean to be human?
What is the destiny of humankind?

These questions are complex. We would like to place them within the framework of the most important symbol of the School of the Golden Rosycross: the circle, the equilateral triangle, and the square. Further investigation of this symbol makes evident that all aspects leading toward knowledge about human beings and their soul-state are contained within it.

A symbol expresses concepts and meanings that can be approached on many levels. We will try to fathom the Gnostic contents of this symbol.



- The circle refers to the eternal fullness that encompasses humanity and the world. This is the divine fullness or source from which all life emanates and to which we must return.
- A continuous magnetic call goes out from this fullness to a humanity that needs to become conscious of its origin and twofold nature.
- The triangle refers to a threefold Universal radiation power:
 - the power of love that lies at the basis of the divine plan and through which the soul—the immortal aspect of the human being—can be liberated from the material world;
 - the power of knowledge that, as light, reveals the plan for humanity; and
 - the power of action that enables us to place our feet upon the path of return, an upward spiral to true freedom.
- The square represents the foundation upon which the rebirth of the immortal soul being takes place, with the help of the universal forces.
- This inner renewal is the grandeur to which we are called and lies within us as a hidden task.

In its deepest essence, Gnosis is the cause of the quest of each and every person for higher fulfillment. The spirit-spark inside the heart forces us to seek unity, love, freedom, and all-encompassing knowledge. The explanation for this seeking cannot be found in the ego.



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We approach everything in life from a focal point of consciousness, referred to as the “I” or the ego, the person that we think we are. We always place ourselves in the central position. We are our own center and we look, openly or secretly, for satisfaction of the self. We do not observe ourselves, but we look from the inside to the outside. For that reason we are thus directed toward what is outside. We live and experience life through the senses, creating an unbreakable bond with the world and with the people that surround us.

The thinking capacity is a special ability of human beings. Thinking gives us the opportunity to develop ourselves and, through experience, learn.

The earth is ordered according to the laws of space and time. Its signature is movement, with the intention of allowing change and development to take place. If people want to develop themselves, they must accept this movement and go along with it. Those who choose to hold on to the past will crystallize and thereby suffer, as this crystallization blocks the source of the Gnosis within, causing a state of oblivion before they are able to discover their true purpose. When we recognize the limited ability of our “I,” we are ready for the next step. Then there is no standing still. Through longing, new opportunities are born within us.

Longing

Longing, desiring, it is as if a mystery is challenging us. We long to look beyond the clouds, higher than the stars, deeper than thoughts, past life and death. Longing is also a form of suffering through the emptiness that is experienced. This longing rises up from the source, from the heart’s inner subconscious knowing that life fulfillment and permanent happiness really are possible.

This inner knowing acts as a pre-memory within a person, a different knowing that the perspective sought cannot be found in life’s present form. This insight, together with inner knowing, forms the beginning of a renewed consciousness, consciousness of the true nature of our being, our twofold human state. People are longing for Gnosis, and through Gnosis they are released from ignorance.

What are the consequences for an individual, for a personality, when Gnosis breaks through in the heart? Such a person knows that they are called and feels that there are consequences, namely to become the servant of the latent spirit-spark. That was the original intention of religion.

- *The hidden power, O mystery, inviolate eternally,*
- *O clear and tranquil fountain, true life's source:*
- *In deepest essence, are we truly one with you;*
- *For, from the One, the multitude flows forth.*
- (Lao Tzu, Teh, paraphrased by C. van Dijk, strophe 233, quoted in *The Chinese Gnosis*, page 17)

SUPPLEMENTAL QUOTATIONS

The all-penetrating, omnipresent rays of the Only Good do exist. And you can enter into a link with these rays. Nothing stands between you and these rays of the Only Good! No creation, no creature, no theologian and no spiritual leader of a Spiritual School. As an autonomous creature you stand before 'It', and 'It' alone. It is possible to live and to exist out of the radiations of the Only Good: it is possible.

(Jan van Rijckenborgh, *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis*, Part 3, chapter III, page 31)

This study leads to the discovery that the I-consciousness is only a motoric activity whose function is to keep the personality alive and well, and that the personality is only a part of the whole creation, intended to serve as the basis for the development of the true human being. Furthermore, one learns that the life of the personality, as one knows it, is not life in the ultimate sense of the word, which has to do with the true human being, but is a purely animal existence.

When the student understands that – and it will be understood if he is motivated by an inner need – a point of contact latent in the personality will awaken and begin to bloom: a point known as 'the rose of the heart'. [...]

When the pupil begins to be inwardly aware of that plan, when it opens up for him and is no longer understood merely as an intellectual concept, he will begin to live and grow in the direction intended for him by the divine plan. That is what it means to be illumined. Only then will there be knowledge of the self, and knowledge of God. Then one really knows that 'the Kingdom of God is within you.'

So that is what illumination means. In the light of that knowledge, the path of victory, the path of self-conquest, can be walked.

(Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri, *The Chinese Gnosis*, chapter. 33-I, pages 449–450)

If you, from inner distress, reach for external knowledge and bow to outer authority, you will experience even bigger problems, because every external authority means stronger ties. Your thirst for liberating freedom can only be quenched at the source of living water, in which you must submerge, within your own being.

If you truly seek for this living water, you will have to walk the path of self-authority.

(Jan van Rijckenborgh and Catharose de Petri)