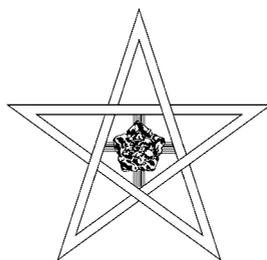


pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum

fight the good fight
time has been granted to us
religion and ethnic alchemy
art as exploration, silence as guide
Jan van Rijckenborgh schools
education with heart, head and hands

2014 | NUMBER 5



The periodical **Pentagram** is published on a bimonthly basis in Dutch, German, French, English, Hungarian, Spanish and Portuguese. On a quarterly basis **Pentagram** is published in Bulgarian, Czech, Finnish, Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian, Slovak and Swedish.

Publisher

Rozekruis Pers

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A.H. v. d. Brul

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New subscriptions can take effect at any time.

Printed by

Stichting Rozekruis Pers
Bakenessergracht 5, NL-2011 JS Haarlem
The Netherlands

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ISSN 1384-2064

Journal of the International School of the Golden Rosycross Lectorium Rosicrucianum

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

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

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

pentagram

volume 36 2014 number 5

Now that the planet Earth draws new energy patterns around herself, everywhere people commit to preparing new societies, freer consciousness, both the inner and the outer one.

This inspiration of the present days, linked to the inter-cosmic light penetration, has now become a reality right through the old magnetic fields.

Indeed, Light compels everything to declare itself. While large populations show nowadays an increase of satisfaction in chaos and destruction, it is also a fact that the majority of conscious people devote themselves to new developments. Wherever possible, they put all on the line to make the balance tip towards a new, positive orientation. As if attracted by a magnet, they stream towards a new environment, which is an inner state of being. They come from all horizons and parts of the world to absorb and populate this new state. On the contrary to our limited existence sphere, that field is never too small, or too full, for with each heart that breaks through the border and is welcomed, the space gets larger.



A path surrounded by flowers.
Picture taken in 2012

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religion and ethical alchemy

Next to the world wars, the growing technological and social transformations that took place in Europe in the 20th century, our times show a striking decline in religious consciousness. As a result, starting from the 2nd World War, church oriented religious morale has gradually been loosening its grip over social life. The following injunction: "love thy fellow being like thyself" has become a distant ideal that a historian and sociologist P.J. Bouman rephrases as: "the fellow being has become the other".

In his book "Damaged World" a historian colleague J. Huizinga points out already in 1943 the decreasing influence of Christian churches. He ponders over a possible re-awakening of Christian faith after the war, and hence, of Christian morale. He depicts a pessimistic point of view: "Tomorrow's world is not ready yet for the re-kindling of Christianity." According to him, people are mostly interested in "acquiring and enjoying"; "belonging to a church won't eradicate such propensities."

J. Huizinga doesn't expect, either, a sudden rise of interest in Hinduism or Buddhism, as he believes that Europeans are not able to live according to non-attachment requirements. He therefore quotes Aldous Huxley: "The only progress is a progress in charity." Yet thereafter, A. Huxley came up with a broader definition concerning love of the fellow being, assuming that human beings are primarily defined by the development of knowledge. Thus, man can recognize that the whole creation is rooted in the divine reality, which is hence present in every being. Man can only love what he knows, so love as a quality is a manifestation of knowledge.

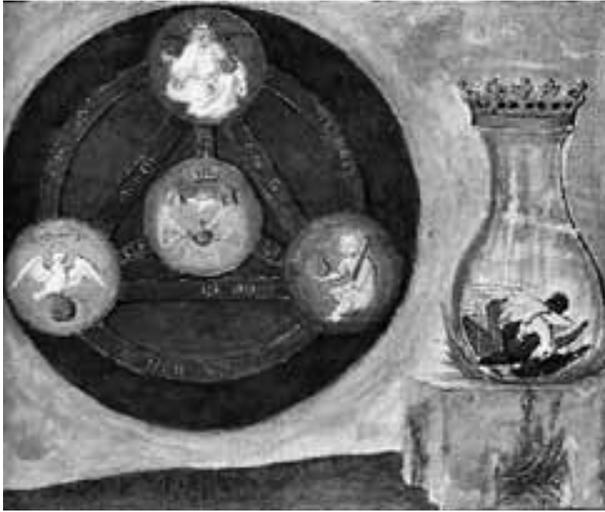
The same truth applies to the love of the fellow being; man acknowledges the presence of God in the other one.

Splendid possibilities of Nature.

Michael Maier; Viatorium

This love of the fellow human being, this love-knowledge, doesn't contain an ounce of emotion; it is unselfish, since it is a way of life centered on the divine. To live in accordance with this style means to be unaffected by possible consequences, this is what Huxley calls a joyful and "saint indifference". As Huxley states it, charity, love for the fellow being, is true humanity, a way of life towards which every being should aspire. At the end of the 40s, Aldous Huxley acknowledged the universal aspect of religion and therefore, of ethical behavior. Above all, he emphasized the deep meaning of the love of the fellow being.

NEW IDEAS, NEW SPIRITUALITY In the period after the war, people set progressive distance from religious life within the churches, whereas at the same time, during the second half of the 20th century, a more open-minded spirit could make its way towards alternative conceptions of personal spiritual development. Religious consciousness shifted towards a kind of spirituality, an inner life matching every one's specific state of being and absolutely freed from institutional beliefs. Since then, a great opening for new ideas has emerged and people have been seeking and inquiring about various orientations and innovative issues; although without committing or tying themselves. This mind, opened to different metaphysical ideas, enables people to be generally more receptive to interdependency between human beings, the world and the cosmos; the interdependency



that prompts people to again feel concerned about their fellow beings. What matters is personal spiritual development. At the same time a question appears time and again: is man, by essence, able to love the other one? Frans de Waal, a Dutch psychologist, a primate expert and an ethologist, concludes that morale doesn't specifically belong to the human race and is not related to religion. He proves this by stating that monkeys do have innate morale. Matthijs van Veelen, a professor of behavior and evolution, observes in his research that human beings have a moral sense, based on their own interests. Like de Waal, he draws no link between ethics and religion.

ETHICAL ALCHEMY As regards this natural human capacity of human behavior, Karen Armstrong, an expert in compared religions, very clearly states in an article dated 2009, that morale and religion walk hand in hand. Morality could even be a prerequisite for religion to exist. According to her, religion doesn't consist in a sum of points of faith, nor in a way of thinking derived from those points. For example, we shouldn't "merely believe in Tao". Trying to change oneself from the inside should matter first, a change of the lower, the selfish,

which rises to the higher. Only then can we really grasp Tao; only from that point can this understanding become knowledge in life. Not a written or described knowledge, but a real experience.

Therefore, true understanding occurs through experience following the quest for an inner change. Karen Armstrong calls this practicing of the "ethical alchemy", where morale is the condition for religion. The inner understanding of Tao, for example, sets us free from a self-centered way of thinking. She recommends a way of life where selfishness is replaced by an intelligent and open mind; the heart is consequently so changed that it can see and receive. Religion is then not the orientation towards what is external or superior to humanity; it is not the use and implementation of religious methods or techniques. It consists in discovering, within ourselves, the supra-human values of the highest quality, and in getting connected to them. Only then is a human being a complete being. This way of being is absolutely free from any race or religion concerns, even if, as Armstrong states it, there are indeed differences between Brahma, Nirvana, God and Tao, it doesn't mean that one is true and the other false. For what is truly superior and ultimate cannot be named, and never will be. She quotes the Tao Te King: "If Tao could be pronounced, it wouldn't be the eternal Tao." Everybody can live according to this life style. It is a universal religion and morale.

A CHARTER FOR COMPASSION Renouncing to our selfish dimension is not enough, though, as it would lead to an artificial behavior. Man must raise himself until experiencing compassion towards other men. Karen Armstrong quotes Paul: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." Such an attitude of considering oneself through considering the

other elevates the level of our human condition and leads us far beyond the love for ourselves. This conception about religion and morale is widely accepted, maybe because it testifies of Armstrong's own experience.

In 2011 Karen Armstrong was the designer of the "Charter for Compassion". Since compassion "is the root of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions", anyone can strive for "treating others as they would like to be treated". The implementation of this "golden rule" would bring peace and harmony to humanity. It would also lead to the elimination of the existing borders between religious groups and thus, religious quarrels. This initiative triggered responses from the whole world. In many countries, action groups, study groups or reading clubs were created. Yet the spiritual aspect remains unnoticed.

Not long after Aldous Huxley, Armstrong emphasized the universal aspect and the interdependency of religion and ethics, as well as the deep meaning of the love of the fellow being. Huxley was well ahead of his time; his works were known by few people only. Men still needed to free themselves from dogmas and the search for new spiritual paths hadn't yet begun. Armstrong's vision stems from an intense research in a time when Western Europeans were looking for new forms of spirituality.

AN EXEMPLARY QUEST Aged 17, Karen Armstrong enters a nunnery in order to find God. This quest was for her a way to dissolve her miserable self, so that Christ, the Divine Word, could live in her. Seven years later, she leaves the nunnery in a disastrous psychological state of mind. "My heart and head seemed to be dead," she writes. The Voice of God, that she so desperately longed to hear, remained silent. She still cannot understand why the expression from the Bible: "You will love your Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your

mind, and your fellow being as yourself," was translated in the nunnery into terrible practices of repentance, ruthless severity and physical agonies. In consequence, her faith in the official doctrine, in the significance of never-ending routine rituals was irretrievably destroyed. However, her quest for God remains as strong as ever. She leaves the Church and continues her quest, this time dedicating herself to studies. In 1993, she writes her book "History of God", where she examines the origin of the concept of God, of the numerous views about Him, and ponders over His becoming in the future. In "The Case for God", written in 2009, the same year as "The Charter for Compassion" she develops her ideas about the links between religion and morale.

This book is of the utmost importance if we want to understand her views. Karen Armstrong's quest is impressive, in the way that her internal torments made her leave the nunnery, split from the Church and increasingly continue her quest despite the difficulties, to finally discover the divine inside of herself. And to continue with tremendous energy to explain the commandment: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." 🌟

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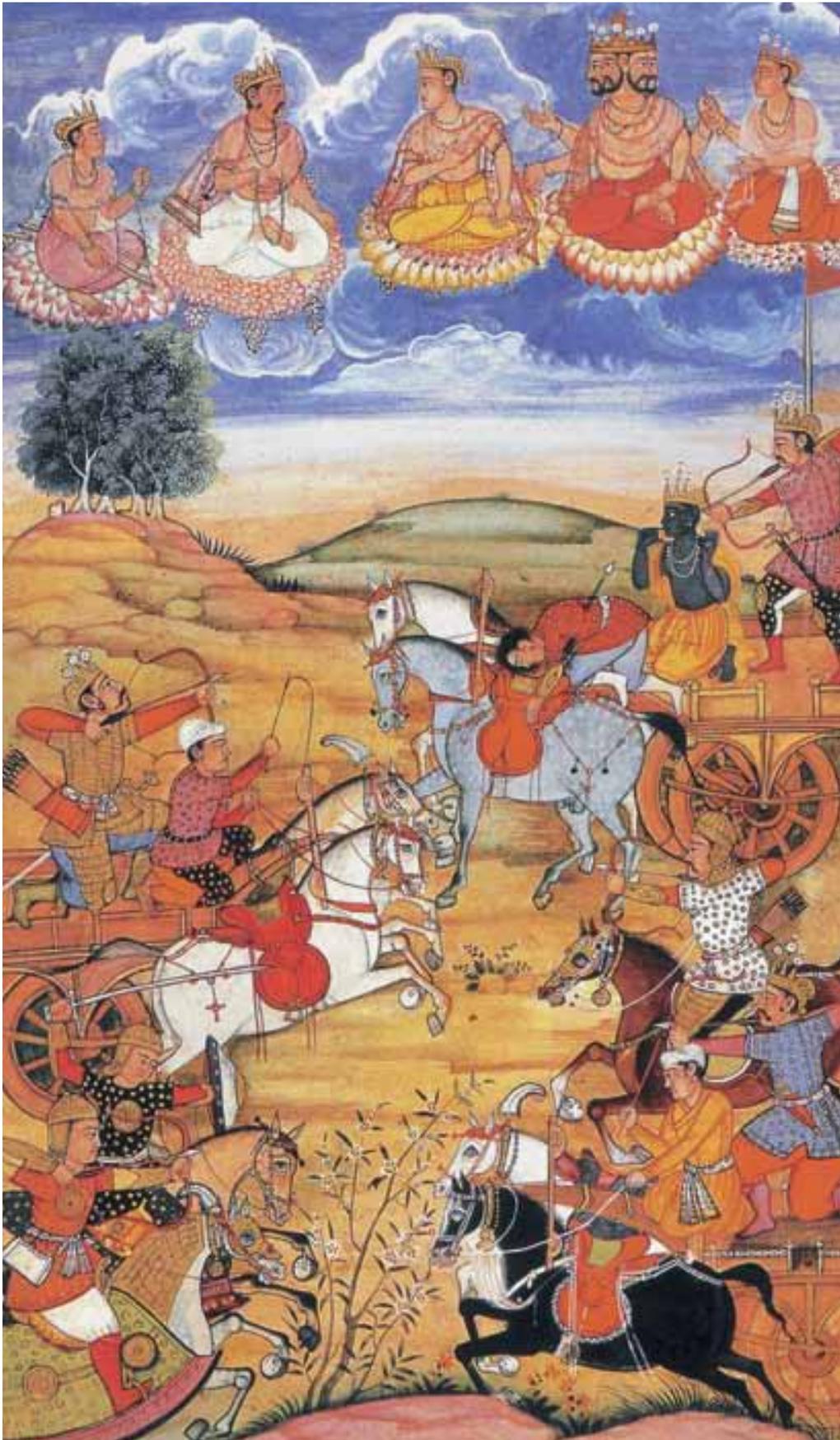
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Arjuna is guided in battle by Krishna as driver on his chariot. In the sky five gods assess the progress of the battle

fight the good fight

THE DANCE OF LIFE IS SURPRISING, ENDLESSLY FLEXIBLE,
WONDROUS AND TRUE

The *Bhagavad Gita*, the ancient Indian gospel, narrates the clash of two opposing forces. It is the story of a striving man fully conscious of the fact that life is a battlefield and with this knowledge he enters this arena with different eyes.

Knowledge is essential in a process of fundamental change. Firstly, a pupil striving on the road of inner development needs to recognize his direct opponent: the aural self. He knows that the essence of this process is the regeneration of the broken unity of spirit, soul and body.

His reaction to the call of the inner voice, to the vibrations of the Gnosis from the distant fatherland, is vitally important.

From that moment two voices will speak within him: the voice of the Gnosis in his heart as well as the age-old, well-known voice of the aural self, the karmic self, that will resist with all the means at its disposal this new influence, the non-logical non-conditional Light of the Gnosis.

The striving seeker has thus become the battleground of two forces in his microcosm. Two forces which in the long run cannot go together. Therefore the seeker has to make a fundamental choice. Either for an external and finite life with worldly enchantments and attractions or a choice for the elementary new life: delicate, innocent, and pure. This will prove to be an all-or-nothing choice.

Between these two opposites we may discern the path of pupilship as a bridge between two alien worlds. It is a bridge that does not allow one to stand still, but is only to be used to cross to the other side.

There is a catch, however. If you choose the Gnosis you will have to break the hold and the dominion of the aural self, the sum total of

your past, which has bound you with its cords. This is eminently possible through the Gnostic Light that beckons us and is so near to us. When a striving pupil abides with that delicate, innocent and pure element, there need be no fear to fall victim to the various influences trying to lead you away from the Gnosis, from freedom and your love for humanity.

Then you walk, in all humbleness, the road from Bethlehem to Golgotha within your own being and will not keep wandering around within the sphere of a limited and externally oriented way of life.

The *Bhagavad Gita* describes this clash magnificently.

The striving pupil in this story is a prince, an heir of the realm, the kingdom not of this world.

Arjuna is his name. He finds himself situated between two armies, in both of which are friends and family members and acquaintances, waiting for the sign to take up the bloody fight.

This represents the image of man divided within himself because of his lack of knowledge.

Long were the preparations of Arjuna for this battle. His thoughts, feelings and actions were fraught with them and he is now placed for its ultimate outcome: a crisis breaks out.

In his conversation with Krishna, his chariot driver, in other words his inner guide, he becomes aware of another reality than the one he knew: the unity and interconnectedness with all life.



Krishna teaches him: “In the heart lies an element that has no dimension and that connects you with the Universe. It is the shining Brahma who lives and moves in the most inner room of the heart. It contains the Universe, for it is the essence of all that moves, breathes and changes. Know it, pupil, for it is thyself.”

THE EFFECTS OF OUR DEEDS Our universe is ruled by more or less predictable cause-and-effect principles. Everything repeats itself, comes and goes, turns about in a hermetically closed circle. In this mechanical repetition of phenomena it is impossible to find the meaning of life and eventually this makes us humans depressive, aggressive, cynical and fearful. Tied to the revolving wheel of Samsara man knows no freedom, no love, no unity. Every-

thing changes into its opposite.

The Bhagavad Gita explains us man and his relation with the world and other human beings, in which all their deeds are focused on power, honour, glory, prestige and property.

Arjuna, the warrior, observes the results of these deeds: they create division in all and everything. And he becomes aware of the impotence of man in this situation. He asks Krishna, his secret support, to assist him in making the choice with which he is now confronted. The answer of Krishna makes him tremble all over. He must comply with an inescapable condition. If the immortal, undivided soul is to be won, he will have to free himself from all patterns, forces and values that now constitute his life and chain him to a life of oppositions and illusions, to the wheel of Samsara.

The battleground is nowhere else to be found than within the striving pupil, in their relationship with others, with the world, with the cosmos, with God

Krishna, the inner voice, urges him to take up the battle: "Once you resolve to fulfill this duty, you will find it is unworthy to be afraid. There is no thing better for a warrior than to fight the good fight. Through this glorious and unsought fight, which is granted to the privileged warrior only, Arjuna, the gates of heaven will be opened for you according to your desire. But should you choose not to fulfill your calling to fight this good fight then you will forsake your natural duty and honour and be guilty of a crime."

The striving human being who desires to see 'the gates of heaven opened' will be confronted with this choice and will have to do battle. It is a totally different fight however than the fights he had fought for so long and which were never won and decided.

The deciding fight, in terms of the school of the Rosycross, the self-surrender to a new life and a new attitude to life in the radiance of the Light, arouses fear in Arjuna. "When all this (my old life) shall pass, will I still exist? I feel lost, I am reduced to nothingness."

The projections of the many idealistic images that kept Arjuna on the move within the framework of the old nature will lose their colour and value. They are of no account anymore. The striving seeker stands face to face with the truth: it is life or death, truth or illusion, all or nothing.

Arjuna refuses the battle. He wants to turn away and leave the battleground and so avoid the true meaning, the higher reality of his life.

But this will mean a living death. Krishna, the inner voice, makes this clear to him. He urges him to do battle: "Fight, friend, fight. But do not fight for the glory of the I..."

THE BATTLEGROUND The battleground is nowhere else to be found than within the striving pupil, in his relationship with others, with the world, with the cosmos, with God. Can he remain true in these relationships, undivided, in an inner equilibrium?

Or will he persist in a state of ignorance, of confusion and in conflict and disharmony with all and everything.

"Take action, Arjuna," but on your own conditions! And do not attach any value to the result of the fight. Seek and find the living, itself always renewing, Source, Brahma, without the 'conditions' you have known in the structures of your old life.

The question arises: is there in truth within me indeed a scintillating connection with the ever itself renewing Source? Or is the living water from this Source only a theoretical concept, just a word, a passing image with which I narcotize myself? Will I be a puppet no longer and manipulated by the phenomena of the exterior life flowing in an endless stream, without beginning or end which endlessly project their images on the screen of my consciousness.

Good and nasty images, beautiful and horrible ones, exalted and lowly pictures, friend-and-foe thoughts and always the conflict, the disputes, the division.

THE FIRE OF KNOWLEDGE Krishna represents the voice of Christ in the heart: indivisible, pure, wise and loving. He transfers to our consciousness the pure and perfect knowledge that leads to self-knowledge and therefore to the battleground. In the arena of life, and not in an abstract sense and in privacy, we must labour and learn every day and every minute. "Birth and death were the factors in your life, Arjuna, but beyond these is the indivisible, the intangible, the undetectable. Become aware of them. Fight against the disorder and the unreal, the results of your life in ignorance and darkness."

In this darkness we seek for the origin and the source of all life, both in its smallest and its largest aspect. But after all is said and done, we stare into nothingness, and an unfathomable emptiness.

The divine creation knows no ageing, no time, no past, no future. It is renewed every second and does not repeat itself. This life is hidden for your brain and cannot be explained by it. You cannot think it, attract it, grasp it.

The dance of life is unprecedented, endlessly supple and true. In its aspect as the god Shiva, it breaks up all that is crystallized and eradicates everything that does follow the dance and in this way it cleanses the heart and the head to open them for the unsuspected wonder of creation.

"As fire, Arjuna, will reduce firewood to ashes, so will the fire of knowledge burn all human deeds to ashes." But honour the part of crea-

tion that is revealed to us as much as its source, that which is not revealed, the unknowable!

It is the ignorant, the one with doubt and without faith that will be lost. He knows no happiness, not in this world nor in the next, nor in any other world.

The fate of the doubter is the empty void. With the sword of knowledge cut yourself free from all doubt and ignorance that has lodged in your heart and resort to knowledge. "Arise, Arjuna!"

Thus Arjuna is taught by Krishna to fight against all that isolates him from the one reality and so understanding increases in his heart. It is cleansed and open to the unspeakable mystery of the one true life. In the equilibrium and the stillness of the knowing heart, fearless and in objectivity, the hindrances on the path are one by one revealed to him and he accepts the fight to defeat them.

He will act without desiring any fruit from his actions. In this way, in the power of Christ, the grip of the aural self will gradually become less. The striving pupil is fully focused on the path.

Arjuna means 'the white one, the pure one'. Arjuna has opened his soul for the universal Gnosis, which speaks internally not externally. He has turned away from the self-created, misleading and deceptive images that are the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. His soul is now fed with the fruit from the tree of life.

Will he finally, in all circumstances, persevere

This is the sacrifice of the Light: from the most pure and unsullied virginal inner worlds, it descends through all the worlds of illusion and penetrates our deepest inner realm

in this battle with world, mankind and himself, that he took up freely and intelligently?

Will he be able to stay focused on the never diminishing Light, unhampered and undamaged, in an arena in which the opposites are alternating constantly?

The Light that illuminates his path ‘as a lamp before my feet’?

For always there is the support, the knowledge, the uplifting sound of Krishna’s voice, the voice of Christ in the heart: undivided, pure and wise, loving, which illuminates him.

THE SACRIFICE This is his sacrifice: the Light from the most pure and unsullied virginal inner worlds that descends through all the worlds of illusion and penetrates our deepest inner realm. How do we open our doors for it? By breaking through the magic circle, through the sphere within which we have made our life but which is also our prison.

By indeed opening our heart to it and so, knowing it as the Light and the redeemer of the larger world, as well as our little world. This is the sacrifice that we can offer. Making the sacrifice of our blood – that is the soul, our life – means: breaking loose from the ever-stalling circulation of our own blood in the power of Krishna. Or in the terminology of the Christian mysteries: of Jesus Christ. This sacrifice allows the battle to be successfully fought and the aural self overcome.

Did not the Christ say: “You are already cleansed through the word that I have spoken

unto you”? This word, this essence, this ‘blood’ became ‘flesh’ as we know and came to live among us.

The energies of the original realm penetrate our reality of life. Every second they pierce the darkest regions of our life sphere, the large as well as our small world, our microcosm. It is with this new substance that we may build a new eternal body.

This spiritual blood pulses and circulates also in the Living Body of the spiritual school as a concentrated liberating substance. He who understands this word and admits it in his being that was formerly so completely directed by the aural self, and who begins to live according to its directions, he will be fundamentally transformed.

The sacrifice of the most pure is not a once-only occasion. It sounds forth continuously in the striving pupil as the liberated word and should you fall – and who doesn’t – there will always be the lovingly helping hand of the Father who goes out in compassion towards his son because you have structurally broken through the circular movement of mortal life. In this sense and you know yourself as a prince, like the white and pure Arjuna and a son of the All-Highest!

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart. Then you will truly find rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” ✪



The bipolar fluctuations of the astral field of the spiritual school are not an automatic system. These currents of the highest level must be generated and continuously maintained. This work is undertaken by workers who have taken up this task for their friends. It is a work of the inner temple, a work that always demands more workers. As these workers go out to the harvest fields and the harvest is gathered in, as the barns are filled and more and more people are attracted, does it not stand to reason that there is need for many harvesters?

Women harvesting olives. Vincent van Gogh, 1889.
National Gallery of Art, Washington, USA

T H E H A R V E S T



We are all image bearers of a divine essence and called to the wondrous task to liberate the fallen microcosm and thus give ourselves the gift of eternal life! That is why the serving brotherhood follows our progress closely and moreover accompanies us to convey to us, in this time and age, the new life-field in which the harvest of these times is gathered in and we are led out of the serving quarters, as a new group, the youngest link, in order to be forged in the chain of the universal life.

Farmers and children in Salem (Palestine) had four days to gather in their olive harvest. © Jillian Kestler-D'Amours

silence as guide

Happiness and Fear took a walk together.

Fear asked Happiness: "Tell me - what is the highest happiness for a human being?"

Happiness replied: "When a human being loses himself, when the borders of his I disappear and he merges into the ineffable."

Fear nodded knowingly.

Then Happiness asked Fear: "What is the greatest fear for a human being?"

Fear replied: "That he would lose himself, that the borders of his I would disappear and he would merge into the ineffable."

Smiling they continued their walk.



Silence, an exhibition in the Menil Collection, Los Angeles (USA), by Toby Kamps (2012)



Those who recognize themselves in the preceding are travellers on the universal path. They get to deal with a deep longing for the unnamed and timeless on the one hand, and with the demands of the temporal world they are faced with on the other hand. These two seem to be in contradiction. These human beings find themselves in a difficult situation, experiencing a great need for both support and guidance. Fortunately these are abundantly available and actually within themselves in the form of inner stillness and silence. They give rise to the emergence of the 'doctrine without words', which then becomes the travellers' guide and their companion.

There are two types of silence: a temporal and a timeless one. In the bipolar world stillness and silence are of a temporal nature and are always connected with their opposites: unrest and noise. They continually alternate with each other, giving thus rise to the spatio-temporal world.

The timeless silence is not polarized, does not know its opposite and is thus of a permanent character. Timeless silence is omnipresent, penetrating also the manifested, this way becoming accessible at any moment to the desirous human being. Timeless silence is connected with the divine nucleus in the heart of man.

The human being longing for the highest, timeless happiness has to deal with everything that comes upon him from the world of the temporal, including himself! A human being is spontaneously directed towards everything

that attracts his attention, with all that comes up from the outside, but also what takes place inside. All these elements change ultimately into their opposites; this phenomenon creates unrest that fills human heart. Thus, the traveller on the spiritual path keeps himself prisoner in the world of the temporality, while at the same time he so intensely longs for the great, silent happiness.

The soul manifests itself from the eternal nucleus in the heart, making its pressing needs known to the timeless silence, a stillness that is not from this world and therefore accompanied by an indescribable bliss.

The Voice of the Silence so speaks about it:

“Sweet is rest between the wings of that which is not born, nor dies.” This sweet rest requires from those who walk the path to be silent.

It’s about the silence, not in the sense of an absence of noise, but in the sense of a conscious withdrawal from the perpetuation of the polarities.

It’s about embracing what one wishes for oneself and not rejecting the unavoidable other side of the same coin. In other words, the candidate is urged to practice non-conflict. It is the moving along with all the antithesis of life itself, which creates the greatest tumult.

The old Chinese sage Zhuang Zi puts it this way:

“The sage is silent.

Not because one says that being silent is good, But because none of the ten thousand things present are able to touch his heart.

That is why he is silent.

When the water is still, it reflects everything, including the beard and the eyebrows;

The water surface is of such a perfect level that great carpenters take it as a paragon.”

If the still water becomes so clear, the more so the spirit! Those who tread the universal path have to ask themselves about their position with regard to the world of polarities. We are and remain ordinary people and regularly have to do with situations that bring us out

of balance. The question is now if we remain stuck there – which results in great unrest – or whether we are able to keep the balance by means of orientation towards the timeless silence in our heart. Here goes a story by the same Zhuang Zi, to illustrate the above:

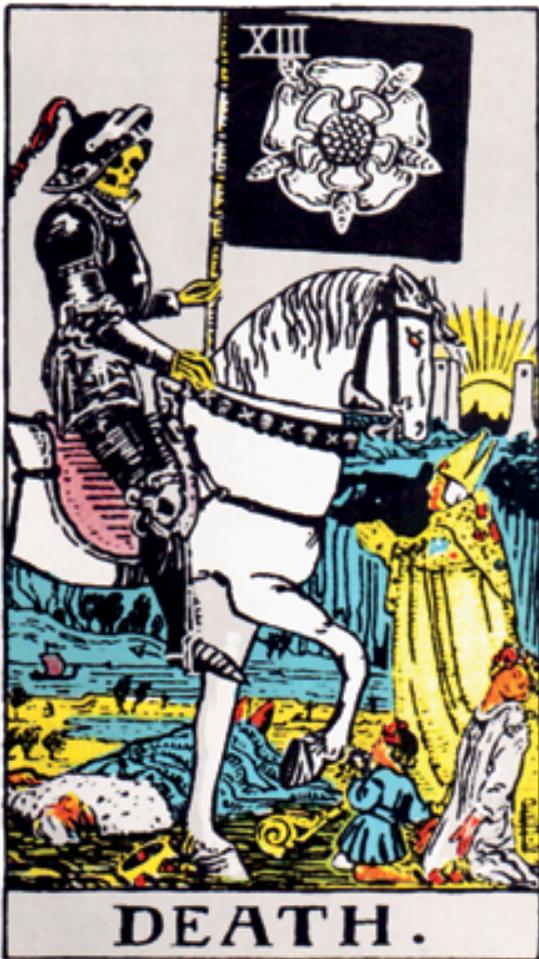
“The wife of Zhuang Zi had passed away and a friend came to offer his condolences. The latter however did not find the old sage immersed in tears, as he had expected, but saw him quietly sitting in front of his small house, singing and playing the drum. The friend thought this unbecoming. Indignant he reproached Zhuang Zi about his lack of respect for his wife who had just passed away, the woman with whom he had gotten children and became old with.”

Zhuang Zi reacted with these words:

“When she died I was of course deeply saddened, just like everyone else. But then I reflected about her beginning, and how originally there exists no birth. In darkness and vagueness everything was mixed up. Through the first change qi came into being, through the change of the qi a body originated, and through yet another change she was born. Now once more a change has taken place and she has passed away. That is the cycle of life. Now she lies quietly asleep in the large room of heaven and earth. Imagine that I now pursued her with a great deal of noise and tears, she would find that I had not understood anything of fate. Thus, I have stopped with all that.”

The first reaction of Zhuang Zi is one of ordinary human grief just like everyone experiences who must do without a loved one. It is however remarkable that he does not fight against it, does not adopt an attitude expected from a sage to rise above his sorrow. If he had done that, his sorrow would have gone ‘underground’ and from there it would have claimed its recognition. In consequence, he would have got out of balance and troubled by physical or spiritual disorders.

As he did not struggle against his sorrow, an



inner space within him emerged. Therein he could reflect upon the miracle of life. This is how he realized where his wife now was and knew that this was good. Remaining in balance allowed him to go beyond his sorrow and sing and play his drum, as if nothing had happened. This attitude is a sign of a great soul quality: Zhuang Zi was able to accept life as a ripple in time. He did not worry about the coming period when he would certainly feel pain because his wife wasn't there anymore. He was able to surrender to what was greater than he himself. All human beings who come up to letting themselves go, are immediately connected with the timeless voice of the silence. From that voice emanates a love-force that never turns into its opposite. As a result, the heart of the

traveller on the path becomes purified. This voice appears also as guide for the soul. It is the silence of this voice, which gives the traveller the power to stand more and more in the 'non-action', and not let himself continually be pulled along in the world of the ten thousand polarities.

This is a path that is of all times and surmounts all cultural differences. Zhuang Zi spoke about it already three hundred years before our era:

"Silent is the heart of the sage!
Truly! In the being open and silent,
With peaceful mildness and in a lonesome
calm not-doing,
Therein lies the highest expression of the Te of
the Tao.
That is why the ruler and the sage always stay
therein.

'Staying' means: being empty.
Out of emptiness comes fullness.
With fullness comes completeness.
Emptiness means: silence.

Silence means: wu-wei, non-action.
And by non-action those who are charged with
assignments will complete all their tasks."
He who surmounts the borders of his I –
loses himself – out of the timeless silence
hears the doctrine without words. This voice
is his guide along the travel through the
world of temporality.

He who can listen to the one, is able to do the
appropriate. His entire being radiates – unin-
tentionally – timeless love.

With that he helps, modestly and silently, his
fellow human beings on the path to the inef-
fable happiness. ☸

The stories in this article come from:
Erich Kaniok, www.zinnigeverhalen.nl
www.sinnige-geschichten.de
www.parolesdesagesse.fr

H.P.Blavatsky: *The Voice of the Silence*
Kristofer Schipper, *Zhuangzi*, Publisher: Augustus,
Amsterdam.



In the same way as a house with many rooms can be built for a family, so there are many gnostic spheres serving the various successive harvest groups of humanity. As soon as the harvest of a magnetic body has been gathered in, that body disappears from the earthly abodes and continues on the road to fulfillment in the immovable kingdom – to the original state of the fallen microcosms. And when the ordained time has come, a new magnetic sphere will have to be construed to gather in the next harvest.

Midday rest (to Millet). Vincent van Gogh, 1890, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

T H E H A R V E S T



Imagine that five hundred or thousand pupils would fully become part of the magnetic field, of the sevenspirit of the magnetic body of the young Gnosis. This group of five hundred or thousand enlightened ones would spread out over all parts of the gnostic realm. Yet the bond between all the brothers and sisters and the living flaming heart of the living body is kept intact. If this group of fully conscious inhabitants of the young gnostic realm returns to the original unity, then, as an atomic explosion of the light of thousands of suns, the unrecognized light will strike recognizably through the world. Wherever you may travel, you will be in living contact with the central focal point of the living body. The intense force of the living body will travel with you and make itself known in every corner of the gnostic realm. In this way, how could it be otherwise, the Gnosis will gather in its harvest in a very short time. J. van Rijckenborgh

Farmers at their lunch during the grain harvest in Texas. © Gordon Coster, 1979

art as an exploration

The language of artists is art: "Fine art is my life. It is what I do, how I see things and what I breathe in. It is most wonderful when somebody is so deeply touched by my art that communication can happen without words."

*Did not the light shine in the eye,
How could the sun at all excite us;
If God's own strength did not within us lie,
How could the things divine delight us?*

Goethe

Art is considered as breathtaking, ensouled. Does art exist without being ensouled? Can artists live without it? Since all creation originates from the One, the source of all life that is light and life, and thus the breath to everything, we could assume that also all fine art is ensouled. However, one piece of art deeply touches us while another one does not. We often keep searching for art that speaks to us, that we can inwardly relate to.

Why is that?

What we possess inwardly is sought for and attracted by our eye. This is the way we approach the world and also the fine arts: mainly by our sensual perception. We look for the essence, the content and the form expressed by the artist. We recognize their source of inspiration, their inner idea that takes shape in lines and structures; paintings touch us, become alive and nourish us. Art can touch the heart. A particular work of art can resonate in our heart. It can strike us like a thunderbolt and bring us to an immediate standstill.





Marcel Proust, in his famous novel *In Search of Lost Time* refers to a shocking experience of looking at a piece of art. Marcel Proust based this episode on a personal experience he once had while visiting a Dutch exhibition (1921). Since he was very weakened by asthma, the incident became almost fatal for him. A painting from Vermeer *View of Delft* had touched him in his deepest being.

We can read this impact in *The Captive*, chapter 5 of the *Lost Time*:

"Bergotte, the writer, while visiting an exhibition, had read in comments of an art critic, that in Vermeer's painting *View of Delft* there was a little patch of yellow wall (that he could not remember before) painted so well, that "one would look at it as a priceless specimen of Chinese art, of a beauty that was sufficient in itself (...)" When Bergotte entered the exhibition, he would become completely dizzy (...) Finally, he was in front of the Vermeer which he remembered as more striking, more different from anything else he knew, but in which, thanks to the critic's article, he noticed for the first time some small figures in blue and that the sand was pink, and, finally, the precious substance of the tiny

patch of yellow wall. His dizziness increased; he fixed his gaze on this incredible patch of the wall, like a child upon a yellow butterfly that it wants to catch. "That's how I ought to have written," he said. "My last books are too dry; I should have gone over them with a few layers of colour; made my language precious in itself, like this little patch of yellow wall." (...) He repeated to himself: "Little patch of yellow wall, with a sloping roof, little patch of yellow wall." Meanwhile he fell down into a circular settee, whereupon he suddenly ceased to think that his life was in jeopardy and, reverting to his natural optimism, he said to himself: "It's nothing, merely a touch of indigestion from those potatoes, which were undercooked." A new attack struck him down; he rolled from the settee to the floor, where visitors and attendants came hurrying to his assistance. He was dead."

From Marcel Proust's
In Search of Lost Time,
chapter 5 *The Captive*

Yes, art that can lead us into our inner world is truly royal

At this moment our inner limitations disappear. The experience of beauty touches us in our heart and our soul. We begin to long for more. A yearning for our true home arises from deep within us. This deep pre-remembrance can be released within us. Longing for another, higher life unfolds and an opportunity for a new perspective opens up. Maybe this is the reason for our interest in art, why we visit exhibition after exhibition. We keep searching for what is lost. Does art help us in our search despite the fact that we often do not find what we seek? And...is it clear what we are looking for? A life that apparently does not exist, but nevertheless must be found somewhere, things that can never be known? According to Mikhail Naimy, "Art is of little importance, unless it develops into a force that can liberate man from the bonds of their limitation and lead them into the Infinite." An artist uses his utmost inspiration he can find in this world, to make something visible that had not been so before. A true artist precedes us herein. True piece of art is always born of the experiences of the Infinite. Infinite beauty, form and imagination; with these qualities an artist is able to forge a connection with another reality.

A successful piece of art can let us experience with great intensity that we human beings are in fact two-fold beings.

Yes, we are mortal.

Yet we are also able to experience something that goes far beyond that.

We are part of the world of nature, this cannot be any different, but we are also connected with an inner world that is eternal.

In our heart we are connected with the 'power-line-structure' of our microcosm, a miniature world, with the radiating bright flame of our spirit spark atom in its middle.

Yes, art that can lead us into our inner world is truly royal; art as a development and a manifestation – in dynamic glory – of what God intended for a human being, enabled for this glorious becoming by the divine forces and values which originate from eternity.

"He who possesses art and science has also religion."

Goethe



education with heart, head and hands



50 YEARS SINCE THE FOUNDATION
OF THE SCHOOLS OF THE ROSY CROSS

Fifty years ago the first schools of the Rosycross were founded. In these schools children get to know, alongside language and math, their place in the world. A learning environment where they can discover that thinking is not possible without feeling and acting, a school that teaches them what it means to be a human being.

Children can grow up and flourish in an environment that offers space and freedom in addition to safety and security. Space to learn to think with the heart and freedom to play allow emergence of worlds full of fantasy. In these conditions a child can be a person on its own, a person who finds out who she or he really is. Each child is granted to learn playfully; nourished with love, attention and care: this is what everyone wishes for a child. This ideal was envisioned by Jan van Rijckenborgh with the founding of a primary school.

Fifty years ago, this dream became reality: in 1964 the first school of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum opened its doors.

The years were full of hard work, many plans had been made, many proposals rejected; municipalities had not cooperated, parents had doubted. However, strong will and courage remained, as well as a firm conviction that a school was needed: “to cease the delusion that penetrated our youth learned”, as expressed by J. van Rijckenborgh and Bram Hamelink in 1961.

“We must not forget that our schools provide the basis for the future. Young people who graduate from the schools of the Rosycross, in addition to proper arithmetic, writing, etc., are also well equipped when it comes to answering existential questions, especially if a person asking the question is not much different in age. The focus is also brought to education at home (...) We cannot let the upbringing

simply run its course, with the idea that the Gnosis will do it. It requires our common effort.” A year later, on January 12, 1962, the Foundation of the Schools of the Rosycross is legally confirmed. Two schools start two years later: one in Haarlem and one in Hilversum. The school in Haarlem must close its doors four years later for financial reasons; the number of students is not sufficient. The school in centrally located Hilversum can continue to exist, and gets its name Jan van Rijckenborgh School in 1970, as it “has proven worthy of the name.” During the name-giving ceremony the board expressed the gratitude: “Jan van Rijckenborgh has never abandoned his work nor his mission; he did not stop at any resistance. This is how it had to go with this school, a school that he had envisioned.”

MORE VALUABLE THINGS THAN I To the school children of that time, it was explained as follows: “Look, this is the purpose of the Jan van Rijckenborgh School, it teaches you not to focus with your whole being on the I and what I will become and it explains that there are much more valuable things than the I; that we do not have to focus everything on a life in this world and that we need to collect only a minimum of superfluous things. We do erect a wall, because we cannot escape it completely in this world. But it is a wall full of holes, a wall where the Light can shine through to the inside. So what we do in this school, apart from preparing ourselves to find our proper place in the



The time-flower song

Here grows a time-flower
near the fountain
it tells the people
of the sun

Sun, moon and stars
golden bow
its leaves grow
upwards from below

Her flower opens
and gives time
Hours look like
eternity

Momo and the *Time-Savers*

society, is to prepare ourselves for our real goal, our calling by God. It is to this goal that we want to devote our hearts, heads and hands.” The education is not aimed at building the personality, but is an attempt to let the personality grow to its full potential in the servitude to the soul. Let the child discover and develop what it finds interesting, let the child be curious, that is the underlying curriculum of the Jan van Rijckenborgh Schools.

A child is not a blank page. Each human being carries forces and possibilities in them and in every phase of their life certain structures and contours get revealed and developed. Every human being is unique. The aim of the Jan van Rijckenborgh School is to see a child as a whole human being and to address it in this way. By offering the lessons, not only in fixed rows and delimited exercises, but also in projects with consistency, you give the child a broader worldview and a perspective. It will be able to see already at a young age the interrelationships and it will not be restricted. Since the world has no linear learning method, so why should one raise and educate children accordingly? A child explores concentrically: its interest is aimed at all sides at once; it wants to know, is studious and curious.

THE SONG OF THE SOUL Every human being learns from an early age through gaining experience; a child starts young with its search to obtain answers to questions like:

Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?

A child finds out, through its growing that behind this searching is life, life full of riddles and solutions, life of happiness and disappointments. But it is not only from nasty experiences that you learn, the setbacks that you encounter. No, it is also by the beautiful experiences, the joy that you can have with each other, from which you can draw your life long.

That is why every day of the school starts with an opening; the children get the opportunity to tell about the things that they are experiencing; they sing together a youth temple song and they listen to a nice story. Learning to listen carefully, recognizing words, being able to place, speak, read and write are important, because language is a magic creative instrument, because language can be a song of the soul. The stories that are told are in line with the phase of life of the group of children and with the philosophy of life that the schools propagate.

“After all, it is important that very early in the young life two sensory states are developed: on the one hand the pure focus on thinking that should reveal in the future as ‘soul’, as ‘soul-consciousness’, and on the other hand the manifestation and activation of the heart-atom, the spirit-spark with all its positive-directed consequences. On this basis an enormous potential is liberated in the young child.”

Catharose de Petri

As examples we can take the books of Michael Ende, *The Letter of the King* by Tonke Dragt, the books of Astrid Lindgren or the story *The Secret Garden* of Frances Burnett, but of course also many other current stories. This common start, every day again and again, ensures harmony in which the children can work, learn and experience.

At the early age they know already what life is and can be. They see this confirmed during the four temple services that are held on a yearly basis and that are frequented by all the children and their parents, also the children of parents who are not connected to the Lectorium Rosicrucianum. The schools are accessible for every child and they do not need to be youth members, as their parents do not need to be members or pupils of the Rosycross.

The only condition (already from the very start of the idea of these schools) is that they feel themselves at home and that their parents agree with the philosophy. And there are many children that fit in the atmosphere of these schools. In fact all children would fit, since the atmosphere corresponds totally to the spontaneous reactions of the soul of the child. In this there is no distinction. Or, as it was said in 1963: “The young person, that will one day leave our schools, will certainly not step in society as an alien, we take care of that. He will not lose himself in the struggle of existence, if he has understood our meaning. On the contrary, he will place the struggle in the first place in himself, in order to come to the

life reform. These shouldn’t be schools for a selected group. Instead, we hope that there will be many that will recognize our intentions and will send their children. They are all welcome!”

ATTUNED TO TIME AND ETERNITY The youth flag of the Rosycross has been waving in the school yard since 1978. In that year the school was completely subsidized and therefore recognized by the government. Another Jan van Rijckenborgh School was founded a year later in Heiloo.

The flag is the crowning and shows the message to the world: the opened hart with the holy rose in the middle and the golden star as the classical symbol of the resurrected soul-being. A treasure that can be shared by many, since human beings that are attuned to time and eternity can better fulfill their function in society, being thus liberated from the self-maintainer that they are by nature.

And children know this flag as the flag of Noverosa, the conference center that calls every seeker. Dutch and foreign children know Noverosa from the youth conferences of the Rosycross; and all children from the Jan van Rijckenborgh Schools know Noverosa as one of the undisputed highlights of the year: the school camp in Noverosa. One of the other highlights is the drama show at the end of the year with the whole school. All children play in this spectacle, from toddlers to teenagers, with self-made decors and beautiful garments, made by their parents.

Is it possible to share freedom?

Last year, there was a boy in group 4 (around 8 years old) that gave a presentation about squirrels. In the chapter "The life of a squirrel" the topics 'living in imprisonment' and 'living in freedom' were treated. At the end of the presentation an awoken classmate of the boy asked the whole class this question: "Do we really live in freedom?" Everybody was fiercely nodding "Yes of course we do! We are not sitting in the cages?" Yet the questioner continued looking around in a challenging way and the teacher felt that he was not yet finished. "What do you think yourself?" she asked him. "Do you live in freedom?" "No! Certainly not in the school!" he answered straightforwardly. That got her as a teacher thinking - and the remark kept her busy long afterwards. Half a year later, she stands in front of groups 7 and 8 (around 11 and 12 years old). The curriculum covers the project on world wars. A good moment, she thought, to investigate with these children the notion of "freedom" again. And look how serious these children take this! They continue the week thereafter. With the answers given by the children as a start, groups of four parents come to philosophize with the children in small groups about freedom. Every child in the small group feels completely free to speak and lively conversations occur. And if they were not so contradictory, one could call them 'fascinating'.

What does freedom mean for you?

Being myself, without being disturbed.
Being able to do what I want.
Going with the wind.

When do you feel free?

When the school is finished.
When I am drawing, or reading, or running over the heath.
In the water.
When I sing or dance or am with the animals.
When you are dead.
When I am in a football field.
In the nature.
When I am myself.
Possibly when I am floating in space. But then again I am imprisoned in a space suit!
A famous pop star is never free. He has always body guards.
When you are allowed to do everything in your own way.

Can you give examples of lack of freedom?

Being locked up in yourself.
A pet.
When you do not find out yourself that you are free.
The Chinese that have to make the iPads.
If you are stuck to money and things.

'As free as a bird'... Is a bird really free?

Yes, it can fly everywhere.
No, as it has to land somewhere, when it is tired.

What does 'Freedom, equality and fraternity' mean?

That you are free, that you are worth as much as everyone else and that you are brothers and sisters with each other.

A play that is always exciting, beautiful, funny and moving and ends with a closing song that sparkles with hope, love and togetherness. Music, theatre and handicraft play an important role in the proposed education method. There are specialized teachers that let the children make wonderful things. No craft according to a tight pattern and a given model, but really free expression that often leads to true pieces of art.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EACH OTHER Human beings are formed for an important part by their experiences, by their living context and their educators. Children learn from each other. That is why classes are combined; younger children see what the older do, and the older children help the younger ones. They learn to take responsibility for each other. They discover what it means to love all people, how difficult it is to be without fighting and how natural the egocentrism is. This



Do you know what a free-thinker is?

Someone who is never stressed.
Who has no fixed ideas.
You cannot imprison thoughts, they are free.

Do you have your own free will?

Everybody, except one, gives a positive answer:

What is free in a Friday (free-day)?

Nothing! This day is probably named after a famous person.

Are cows that are freed in the meadows, after a long winter in the stable, really free?

No, since there are fences around the meadows, aren't there?

No, because afterwards they will be locked up again.

No, since they do not live in the wilderness.

No, but they feel like it!

Their freedom is inside.

What is a person, who feels free, able to do?

Someone that feels really free can help the group.
Because then everyone notices their own freedom.

Can you serve out freedom?

No, it is not a thing that you can grasp and share.
Freedom is huge and belongs to everybody.



way a child can learn alternative values. Obviously parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, classmates and surely teachers of the school have a great impact on this development. The Jan van Rijckenborgh School teachers try to give a good example of life. Not that they know better, or because they are connected to the Lectorium Rosicrucianum, of course not; but because they always try to act intelligently. Teachers or masters definitely are and remain

human beings who learn their way in life by ups and downs, in as much as parents are humans that make mistakes. Nowadays children see this very quickly. Yet children may also experience that this is the case as long as the constructed field stays pure and gives them a feeling of security. As a matter of fact, this has not always been easy to establish. Everybody can recognize, especially in these hectic days, that it is not always easy to find tranquility and to maintain the purity.



Nevertheless there exists this incessant 'striving', by having a real interest for every child, by the desire to set an example as a logical continuation of the education in the family. It was not easy to found the schools; it is not always easy to maintain them and the political climate is not always favorable. Still the intention, courage and the firm conviction remain, even though rule and legislation determine increasingly the conditions that education has to fulfill, and the required expertise makes it complex to run a small school. This is the reason that plans of parents and teachers in other countries could not be carried out. There are many snags and pitfalls, from the required minimum number of pupils to the available teaching personnel, appropriate location, rule and legislation. It was and still is difficult, also in the Netherlands; e.g. the Jan van Rijckenborgh School in Duiven had to close after ten years.

Jan van Rijckenborgh Schools stand for small scale, individual education, but they need to have a minimum number of pupils to be able to maintain themselves and to survive. This is a requirement of the government and the number of teachers is in close relation. The schools do not want to become private, bearing in mind the ideas of the formation,

as one can read in the minutes of the special school meeting in 1961: "More than ever it is important not to isolate our children from the world and at the same time to keep them away from the decay of this world. If you can deeply realize how important a school is in a life of a child (...), you will then certainly understand this historic moment and you will be thrilled beyond measure to see that the plans become reality, taking into consideration the existing laws of our country."

Those ideals have not changed in the past fifty years. The schools are a chain in the upbringing of the youth. The education attempts to find equilibrium between the hearts, heads and hands. The schools try to raise the children in an environment in which there is a balance between thinking, feeling and acting, in which these three are inseparably linked, on a basis of love and unity. This unity is what a child experiences when entering the school, what the parents see. Or what a mother said one day: "Our heart is here at home." ✪



and then there was **light!**

Last spring pupils of the superior classes of the Jan van Rijckenborgh School in Hilversum took part in the educational project “And then there was Light!” of the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, developed together with the Academy Minerva of Groningen and the Theosophical Library.

On April 15th, 21 pupils of the groups 7 and 8 of the Jan van Rijckenborgh School in Hilversum could enter the treasures chamber of the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica within the framework of the educational project “And then there was Light!”. A threefold programme allowed the children to discover some pearls of the library. The first part consisted of a guided tour among the coloured works of the exhibition “Beauty as the Imprint of the Cosmos”, where children could see that every human being is a creature of light bearing their colour, which is constantly changing. They were then transported into a magnificent story on the colours and the origin of the rainbow. The second part took place in the reading room, where the artist Evelien Nijeboer made prism experiences with the children and showed them that what we see depends on the angle from which we look at things and that nothing is what it looks to be. The third part took place in the beating heart of the library, on the floor of the Old Books. That was the place of the central treasure, the discovery of the master pieces of wisdom.

Wisdom questions the imagination, it is hidden under multiple forms, and each of them is unique, directly linked with its creator. Wisdom can hide in a book, sometimes of a size so small that we can hardly hold it in our hand, and sometimes so large that we cannot raise it.



The children saw books emanating with magnificent illustrations, invaluable calligraphy, handwritten notes, but also bound books or diaries, handwritten in India ink. Everywhere, piece by piece, all works with personalized character. Wisdom belongs to all eras. In Tibet, India, Egypt, Israel, and also in our European world, the elders would speak about wisdom and write about it as they heard it. Wisdom does not disappear, it is ceaselessly renewed and, at any time, it is also reflected in matter. It withstands time.

In the educational project “And then there was Light!” colour, light and darkness were at the heart of the project. All that we see has a colour. The most beautiful colours, as those of a rainbow, are born from the light in the atmosphere above us. Also tangible objects, as flowers, fruit or clothes, have a colour. Colour can be an attribute of both light and matter; it forms a

AND ELOHIMS SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THERE WAS LIGHT!



A collage of photos made during the visit in the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica by the pupils of the Jan van Rijckenborgh School in Hilversum



Seven chakras in the colours of the rainbow. To the right, Ouroboros, the cosmic snake which bites its own tail, is close to spinning wheel of life



Coming from the work *Man Visible and Invisible*, written by the theosophist Charles W. Leadbeater, first edition 1903

connection between what is earthly and what is celestial, between the world of spirit and the world of matter. Or, as Goethe, a German poet and philosopher put it: colour arises from the interaction between light and darkness. In the universal teachings, colours of the rainbow are associated with rays of consciousness. Seven rays relate to seven metaphysical principles which influence the development of the soul.

In our body, these principles are found as seven gates of light, the seven chakras. We can see the circle of colours as a symbol of the circulation of the soul in the human being or the microcosm, but also as the circulation of the soul in the world, the macrocosm. In Vedas, collective work of the oldest scriptures of the Hinduism, the circulation of the soul is represented by the wheel of the life, a Bhavachakra.

Colours are not only to be seen, they can also be felt. Every colour has its own energy which we can apprehend by observing it, experienc-

ing this way the frequency, the vibratory field of the colour. Varied sacred texts see man as a being of light. Apart from the physical body, we also have a more subtle, invisible, etheric body. Our emotions manifest themselves in colour and form, impressed in our aural field. The aura is a bioenergetic field of delicate radiation; we often associate it with the astral body which is a special light body. It can be seen by people with extra-sensorial capacities or by those who stimulate their senses by special spiritual exercises. The aural being was named so already in the old Hindu times and Buddhist writings. In Europe it was accepted much later, in various western currents, such as described by the Theosophical Society and Antroposophical movement.

The educational project "And there was Light!" was possible thanks to Iona Foundation. ✨

the eyes of a child

What would a child become without education and conditioning?

Does a human being, does a child need help to be?

Can existence be practised and what shall you practise?

Couldn't we just trust life and the potential within the child?

Or would this be irresponsible?

For a small child everything comes naturally. It does not measure things, does not interpret things and has no opinion. It is spontaneous.

A child does not exclude anything. Everything is allowed to be.

A child doesn't think then?

What looks through the eyes of a child? And what looks through the eyes of a grown-up?

A child is unpretentious, natural and not as firmly tied to time and space yet.

A child's eyes are not clouded by all kinds of thought-images yet.

Beside the pure microcosmic self still radiating through the eyes of a child, there is also something of the experiences of past lives to be noticed.

The eyes show also some, or a lot, of the characteristics of the parents, as well as indications of physical health.

All these factors radiate at us through children's eyes and the different lights can be confusing for the child, but also for its environment.

A very small child is entirely wrapped by the state of its own being and looks very unconsciously at the surrounding world.

A child is intuitively connected with knowledge of revelation, but since it is not consciously aware of it, the knowledge cannot manifest itself.

Alike, the conditioning of the ego is not present yet, nor the karmic burden.

This is why we are drawn to the ease, the inner

calm and puzzling curiosity in a child's eyes. It reminds us of something deep within us.

However, with time the 'God's book' closes also for the child's eyes and the memory and intuitive knowledge slowly fade away. Still, the microcosmic self never vanishes, even if it is hidden now. It is always present in the human being and experiences make it more and more noticeable.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE OPENNESS OF A CHILD?

A child shows a unique joy of life, which differs from the thirst for life that becomes apparent in later years.

In the beginning, time and space are not relevant for a child. It is not focused on its future yet. It lives in an inner balance.

An infant is surrounded with love and tender care and is given all the attention it needs.

The child slowly develops its emotions and begins to identify with its own body, and with the help of parents it gains this self-discovery and growing body-awareness.

Yet alongside this process of entering life, something else is lost.

The child repeatedly hears that it is a body with a name.

But doesn't it feel insufficient and incomplete? It isn't only a thing. Is it?

The child observes objects and movements, but what or who is actually looking from within its body out into the world? You have to become someone. But who or what are you now?

It is the child's vulnerability that touches us

EDUCATING AND CONDITIONING OR NOT?



Kayaking eyeballs. © Carolyn Dube www.acolorfuljourney.com

You will show 'real adult' behaviour once the unceasing amazement for the unknown makes place for the logical and reasonable thinking

so deeply, even if we are thoroughly hidden in our shell of individuality.

But aren't we precisely more vulnerable when we are somebody with a distinctive individuality, as we then need to protect ourselves?

A child does not incarnate without a reason. The child is now and here, in time and space, to make the necessary experiences for its microcosm, as we all do.

Yet, its gaze sometimes still wanders to what can be found behind the eyes. However, the child has entered the path of materialisation; the new house of the body has to be furnished now. Many new abilities have to be developed to equip this new house. Just until recently life would still take care of itself, as it was only a dynamic aspect of consciousness. Now the child has to learn how to live, receives education, but above all conditioning.

The growing child's cognitive consciousness, that processes perceptions of the sense organs and the intellect, lands now in the adult mental world.

The circles of thoughts and feelings are drawn closer and closer. In this way the self-image does slowly develop. The memory of a small child until the age of 3 or 4 is not so much focused on speech but on the senses.

When the child begins to concentrate on complex thought-images, its memory starts changing. Most people can remember only very little of the time before the age of seven. The reorganization of the mind during these first years of childhood changes the self-image. It is increasingly separated from its surroundings. The child learns to take care of this image of a self. It has to summon up his energy for this process and begins to feel guilty when it occasionally withdraws from this new reality of

the self and turns towards the 'silent self'. The child has to 'earn' its existence. "You are what you think," is the child told by the adult world. With this self-image the child will be at the mercy of its thoughts; and therefore also to the opinions and fears. This is how the avoidance of fear and pain, while simultaneously searching for joy and happiness, become a life habit. The child is trained to live life as a personality, a difficult and complex life. Nonetheless we still have to trust a positive development. In the beginning the child does not think in terms of a personality and its language yet. It will show real adult behaviour once the unceasing amazement for the unknown and enigmatic makes place for the logical and reasonable thinking.

Yet, from time to time, something else still flares up in your eyes. Is it the longing for something lost?

Being a child and going through the stages of development requires a lot of energy. But this energy is naturally available with the child. Later on, during the puberty period, when the young person is confronted with their karma, an intense process develops, which requires much more energy – it can then weaken.

WHAT DO THE CHILDREN'S EYES SEE Does education consider that the child is not complete yet? Does a child necessarily have to become a copy of its educator?

The child will naturally be well taken care of until it is independent. But what does the 'independent' stand for?

There is a difference between taking care of the child and its future and the stifling extreme caution that hinders natural development.

When can we talk about attention and loving care within the family nourishing for a child?

When would it be overfeeding and when malnourishment?

The educator has to remain extremely careful about this subtle and sometimes challenging borderline.

Due to often tight family bonds it can happen that the child's unique being is sometimes misunderstood. But at any time of recovered trust, there is always considerable inspiring energy. This trust brings a deep unconditional feeling of security for the child. And in this trust it can find refuge after puzzling experiences. It shouldn't then constantly be corrected and rationalised. In this way it can shape its life without all the fears and delusions.

A child experiences the dependency on its parents differently than the parents see the same dependency.

Many children experience our behaviour as unnatural, as if something essential was getting lost. The adult's unaware authority and conditioned projections might greatly distract a child. It is a direct offense against everything that is 'whole' and perfect in the inner being of the child. As a consequence, the child's incarnation in this world deepens ever more.

An embrace without love feels like a constraint. Thus the open door to the universe slowly closes.

Through the eyes of a child is still radiating an unconscious inner balance and peace. But the child often does not find the reflection of this inner balance and peace in the eyes of adults. It cannot find support with them and therefore often closes up before adults. Or could it be that it tries to help us to find again our inner balance? The child does so to protect itself and others and hereby it takes on an enormous task, but has often not enough strength for it.

The child has to immerse into the material world first. There the conditioning of the 'I' is tested until the child has collected enough experience. Maturity from experience is essential for the child to face the fundamental questions of life and to find its inner balance again.

SCHOOL A child once asked: "How can I really learn if you always send me to school?" Many teachers do their utmost.

Isn't it so, that as children we already know all the important things in life; that it's only a question of everything being covered and masked and difficult to remember.

Confusing, as this hidden, inner knowledge reveals completely different from what it is taught in the class.

Superficial knowledge and abstract facts threaten to dry up the source of the inner knowledge. The child becomes thus estranged from its own inner source.

With many tests the school system tries to determine whether the child (even when it is still young) has understood what it was taught or not.

The restrictive framework of these tests forces the child even deeper into the rigid, academic consciousness.

In this way the brain, originally meant to reflect the universe, is abused and merely seen as a computer hard-drive. It threatens to crystalize. The brain gets (over?)loaded with information, while own experiences - the ability to differentiate - are forced in the background and the essential is at risk to die.

Nevertheless the child does imitate the life of information and data, because it is told that all of this is needed to be able to find one's place in the society.

"Experience is understood knowledge," says the philosopher Immanuel Kant.

Many children try to create a space to find again their inner balance through abnormal behaviour.

The child uses even analytical thinking in its search for security.

It does not know anymore that the source of wisdom, eternal and unassailable, lies within its own inner being.

But for the time being the child has arrived at the arduous place that we call matter. The young person assumes to be able to think and

Parenting is not a one-way-street. It shouldn't become an unavoidable burden, but can be a common experience and an exciting adventure. This is the natural way; learning from each other liberates energy

wants to be 'someone'. It lives after the statement "I think, therefore I am."

But who am I? Am I a thinking being, which creates thought images as a basis for understanding life?

Isn't it heartless to think that the head and heart, the organs of thinking and feeling, have to cope with life on their own, deprived of wisdom?

GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATING CHILDREN

While educating a child it can happen that beside the natural capacity for love a sense of failure slowly develops. This raises the question whether a parent can ever be completely successful. Is education truly education? Is upbringing children truly upbringing them? Has a grown-up truly grown up?

Moreover, the educators are always of a different generation than the children. Circumstances do change, too, and so does the human being, with ever changing character. Every generation is born under another star, another influence. Is one generation's conditioning able to educate properly the next generation for the coming times? Do parents and children expect too much from each other?

At this point it is worth mentioning that the birth of a child brings also a totally new potential for development and inner growth for the parents. If a child and parents 'open up' for each other in the security of mutual trust, the unknown potential of inspiration and inner growth can unfold.

Parenting is not a one-way-street. It shouldn't become an unavoidable burden, but can be a common experience and an exciting adventure. This is the natural way; learning from each other liberates energy.

ASK THE CHILD A child does not think or express things like an adult. Although the possibilities of new times still have to awaken within the child, it can already manifest some of them. "What would you like?" "Something good!" Of course the child wants to have something good because it cannot put its true wish into words yet. The child longs for someone true and authentic; someone who recognizes possibilities within the child with attentive openness and supports their development; someone who enjoys and hopes for the unfolding of its being: "You are of interest to me!"; someone who stands beside you, not above you, that is not in your way of the development, with all those unfulfillable expectations. If our expectations are unfulfilled, it is not fair to project them unto our children. A child senses unmistakably whether through your skin flows inner peace and wisdom or not. The fact that we have lost this ability, does not mean that a child does not have it.

In this light we see various aspects of a child and an educator; seen individually they are different. However, our past should not be a charge to us, as the future shouldn't impose any worries – as long as we are able to meet each other in the present. Our past and the child's future are not in each other's debt. The parent cannot be blamed if a child goes its own path. But what can happen is that a child transcends their own potential and the potential of the parent.

If we stand in the now, ignoring duality and separation between me and you, then we can raise a child without fear. Then parents and children explore together hidden common treasures.



Flowers, bird, spring. Copy of a bas-relief attributed to Augustin Pajou (1730-1809)

Who educates whom? In both, child and parent, wisdom and the truth of love are addressed. Thus we can find inspiration in a natural way and draw from its hidden potential without having to disregard the life in society. In this way we are creating a unique opportunity for the overall consciousness of mankind. Being a parent or a child is then only a role, as the essential, the eternal principle, in both is jubilating.

SHINE OF CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

The light in the eyes of a child unmasks in its own way our grown-up thinking and our idea of what we are. A master once said: "Become like children!" That's why once again the question echoes: "What is it within us, that recognizes itself in the eyes of a child?" We experience small children as innocent, because they do not have rational consciousness yet. What is 'innocent'? Does it only mean 'being free from current experiences'? In every child we can see something grow and become aware of itself; something that eventually will perish again. But the essential inner core does not grow or change; it remains itself. It had already existed before the rational consciousness developed. Is this the reflection we find in the child's eyes? While going through the school of experiences, human being is given the chance to

learn to distinguish between the microcosmic self and the dialectical body with its limited experience-consciousness. In the school of experiences one learns to ask questions. Yet once at home in the microcosmic self, there are no questions anymore, only further developments.

TWO MIRRORS The child dreams, and so does the grown-up. What an awakening when we discover the same questions in our heart and those radiating from the eyes of a child! Aren't we still capable of being amazed like a child? The so called childish questions remain with us for our whole life as something essential. They form a vulnerable, yet at the same time indestructible inner security; they are our bright guides in the searching. We feel that our understanding, despite many advantages, has finally led us further away from our inner essence. But suddenly there is something else that is taking the place of the intellect. We don't have to keep going; we don't have to try to become 'someone'. We already are! Like a small child that trusts us in a most natural way and finds inner security in this trust, for us grown-ups this encounter can also bring back our inner security. However, to encounter you, I need to go the place of the truth, the heart of our being and the mirror of two eyes which can show us all possibilities. ☘

T H E H A R V E S T



Wherever the Gnosis manifests itself, there is pronounced the Word of creation; the fundamental force comes to existence. That is why the force field of the spiritual school, in which the plan of creation of the great harvest and liberating work lies hidden, is also the Word that sounds forth as the 'Fiat' of Creation. In the force-field everything is potentially available; in the Word lies the principle of life that must be revealed from and through the divine Will. In the Word all is encompassed.

Texts under the world images: Jan van Rijckenborgh

Fresh hay. © Chris Kaan

