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# pentagram

Lectorium Rosicrucianum

Help out - the harvest must  
be brought in

# pentagram

## And eternally the trumpet sounds ... help out!

Again we present a range of subjects, insights and perspectives, from one background and with one theme: this can stimulate and support us on our path to become a true human. The mystery language of symbols can help us over thresholds. J. van Rijckenborgh brings the deep meaning of Unicorn, Lion and Dove to life. Here, beauty forms a window to the divine.

The paintings of William Blake also offer such a window. He paints the golden compass from God's eternal workshop, 'to encircle this universe and all things made ... and He said: Let this be your limit, O world'. The same world is unimaginable without light and sound. Behind a true spoken word in the temple of the Rosycross is a world of Light. And sound is the carrier for the ether values that offer us comfort in healing the soul shards of Osiris.

The newspaper article: Help young people to discover what is really of value, apart from the bleak outlook of performance-stress, burn-out and depression, offers also a positive image: the future is soul growth, not economic growth. In our century a new sense of unity arises, of solidarity with all human souls. Life itself shall be the training ground of those values. Then a column: Eternally the trumpet sounds in the spheres, but the world continues with the order of the day. A few listen breathlessly and for them nothing is the same anymore ... In the folds and knots of this impossible world, still the path to true humanity is concealed. And another thought is worked out. Five words that you can hold on to if you have to go through a very deep valley: 'Everything is to your salvation'. That goes far, very far, and yet...

On what step of human development do we stand? Cultivation, civilization or moralization? On the third step, man becomes a law unto himself, in voluntary obedience to God, according to the holy commission: Love God above all and your neighbours as yourself. The realization of the human aptitude that Kant had in mind, then comes into view.

We are then in the flow of renewal, of the trinity of hylic, psychic, and pneumatic influence, otherwise of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Receiving everything, relinquishing everything, and thereby renewing everything. Do we have the courage to live in the dynamics of ever-changing insights? Where are we? Where are you? Think along, join in, help us, the harvest has to be brought in.

# pentagram

### Cover

Samuel Palmer, The Harvest Moon, ca 1833. The painter from the circle of William Blake was inspired by Jacob Boehme. He sought spiritual fulfillment beyond traditional religions, and saw in nature proof of the divinity of creation. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.



- 1 **And eternally, the trumpet sounds – help out!**
- 3 **World images**
- 4 **The unicorn, the lion and the dove**  
*J. van Rijckenborgh*
- 11 **The Superlative**  
Column
- 12 **Sound and light**  
William Blake – the man with the compass
- 18 **What is really of value**  
From economic growth to soul growth
- 26 **Back to school**  
A reflection
- 30 **Cygnus – the swan**  
Symbol
- 32 **Little white bird**  
The magic of an encounter
- 37 **Sword and cross**  
Cultivation - Civilization – Moralization
- 42 **The epic of the Kalevala**  
The epic of the Kalevala
- 50 **Three natures, three types of people**  
Pneuma, psyche and hyle
- 58 **The Convert – Stefan Hertmans**  
Book review



**In search of no-sound**  
Patrick Shen, the director of the crowd-funded documentary *In Pursuit of Silence*, traveled to various locations, among which Japan, where environmental expert Yoshifumi Miyazaki of the University of Chiba immersed 700 hardened Japanese city dwellers in a silent, woody environment. The results of his study

are remarkable. Their stay in the forest reduced the stress level of the test subjects as well as strengthened their immune system. In addition, the activity of anti-cancer cells increased by 56 percent. 'Silence is a preventive medicine', Miyazaki concludes. In short: a basic prerequisite for human well-being. .

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The Aokigahara forest, also known as the 'Sea Of Trees', owes its impressive silence to the solidified lava on which the forest has grown since the last eruption of Mount Fuji (Japan) in the year 864.

# The unicorn, the lion and the dove



A universal symbol can be regarded as an entity wherein an entire science, the complete wisdom of a sphere or a world is stored. A human being, who through inner work approaches the sphere of such a world, can be lifted over a threshold by such a symbol. Each symbol be also seen as a multi-faceted diamond, and each facet can then be explained in various ways. Since antiquity, animal symbols have been thought to have certain qualities. After the explanation by Jan van Rijckenborgh, founder of the School of the Modern Rosycross, certain animal symbols that are used in *The Alchemical Wedding*, obtain an exceptional spiritual relief when he discloses their significance.

**I**t goes without saying that, provided that they fulfill the spirit's minimal requirements, all serious candidates for the Alchemical Wedding will eventually feel that they are inwardly now entirely free of all the dramatic turbulence relating to the judgments by means of the scales. They will enter the peace and silence of spiritual serenity, the peace Jesus the Lord promises to all those who follow him, the peace of unity with the spirit. Only then are the true goals of pupilship set free and only then can they make themselves felt. That is why we read in *The Alchemical Wedding* of the snow-white unicorn with the golden collar, and of the lion on guard at the fountain, and of the white dove with the olive branch in her beak, high sym-

bols of the fiery flaming triangle, of the *trigonum igneum* of the classical Rosycross. They relate to the three primary rays of the seven-spirit. When this fiery triangle is ignited in the candidate, he is worthy to enter the temple of initiation. For this triangle makes the candidate open to the Seven-Spirit as a whole. In the Bible the unicorn is mentioned several times. For instance, the book of Numbers speaks of "the power of the unicorn". In the wonderful book of Job we read: "Is the unicorn willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your crib? Can you hold him to the furrow with a harness? Will he till the valleys behind you?" And in Psalm 29 are the words: "The voice of the Lord shakes Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

J. VAN RIJCKENBORGH

The Southern Dutch carpets in the museum of Cluny (France) date from the 15th century, just after the time that the Alchemical Wedding CRC anno 1459 plays. The carpets show the lion and the unicorn (with the pigeon) several times, themes that have an important expressiveness in the story of the Alchemical Wedding.

The voice of the Lord strikes with flames of fire.” These quotations show that the unicorn is the symbol of a high spiritual ideal, of a one-pointed, ‘unicorn-like’ directedness. It is said that the unicorn is white, snow-white, and wears a golden collar about his throat. This draws attention to the purified new will, guided by the spirit and ignited by the first ray of the Seven-Spirit, the first aspect of the fiery triangle.

He who is truly ignited by the spirit of God proceeds from the absolute one-pointed orientation of the new will. Divine forces are at the disposal of those who possess the new will. Such persons discover that the unicorn will serve them absolutely, as an inner quality.

From time to time you impose a yoke on your will. You try to give your will certain orders. You say to yourself: ‘From now on I want to do this or I’ll stop doing that.’ In this way you fight with yourself. However, you should give up using such methods, for they will never succeed.

If, on the other hand, the new will has really been born in you, as a result of soul-quality and the new way of life, then as the Bible says, “the unicorn will spend the nights at your crib”. This means that spontaneously, from within, because it is no longer able to do otherwise, and entirely in the service of God, the will begins to determine your entire state of life, even when you are asleep and no longer have any control over your personality. Even then the new will shall determine your ways and your actions, because it is completely attuned to your task, to the way you have decided to go, to the process you have to undergo. In this way you will have yoked the unicorn to work the furrows of the harvest-field. In a ploughed field furrows are drawn in which the farmer sows the grain. This has to do with an ordered life. When the new

will is ignited in you, your entire state of life will give evidence of a harmonious and powerful order. The unicorn will be yoked to work the furrows of the harvest field and, if necessary, eradicate the weeds; it will harrow the soil.

The will is a mighty fire. He whose will has been ignited by the spirit of God will also possess a will from which the voice of the Lord calls forth flames of fire, full of might and glory. The will is man’s greatest magical instrument. If the will is not ignited in the spirit of God, you will never be able to enter into the practise of gnostic magic.

The lion symbol, too, has something grandiose to reveal. It is the symbol of the love of God, which is universal and all-encompassing. That is why the lion is the symbol of the second ray of the Seven-Spirit. He who possesses the unicorn will naturally also possess the lion-power, because God is love.

No doubt you will be familiar with lion-symbolism. We draw your attention, for instance, to Revelations 10:3: “He called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring; and when he called out, the seven thunders sounded”. This means that whenever the divine love is able to manifest itself to man, the Seven-Spirit is also present.

It is necessary to tell you here about false love, just as is done in the Bible and actually by all spiritual messengers. False love is also expressed by the lion symbol. We do not mean the emotional expressions of feeling with their familiar results and limitations of sympathy and antipathy, but the so-called “love” that slithers over the world like a hissing serpent, the venom of life in the nature of death, of which some people are such paragons. They imitate the voice of God and wear the sweetest of smiles, but are intent on



‘In the myth the unicorn is a shy and wild animal that lives in the forest, and cannot be tamed. Usually a damsel is needed to bring the unicorn to rest; in the womb of the damsel he settles down and finds his peace. In fact, you can take the horn off and then there appears to be a brilliant carbuncle in his forehead: the purified, beautiful mind that is spiritual.’ Fresco, probably by Domenico Zampieri, c. 1602 (Palazzo Farnese, Rome).

## The unicorn symbolizes a clean, purified spirit-led new will

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murder, the murder of human souls. Whenever the soul is murdered, this also means physical murder, for when the soul is crushed, the collapse of the body will inevitably follow. The person concerned will become ill; he will not be able to maintain his body and will die before his time.

We have now seen two aspects of the *trigonum igneum*, firstly the unicorn, the symbol of the will ignited in God, con-

centrated on the one goal in singleness of purpose; and secondly the lion, which encompasses this concentration with universal love. He who is ignited in the spirit of God is touched and irradiated by this all-fulfilling love. From that moment on, this eternal love-power becomes the keynote and sustenance of one’s entire existence.

So when the candidate in the gnostic mysteries who is on his way to the temple of initiation, has crossed the

boundary after all the astral events in the borderland and has entered the peace and silence of the rose garden, it goes without saying that the unicorn will enter this garden and do honour to the lion, the guardian at the fountain. For God's will and God's love are fundamental to such a garden: the appearance of the unicorn symbolises the rejection of every earthly aspiration by the person who has entered the rose garden.

Let us now consider the lion with an unsheathed sword in his claws. When the unicorn, the will ignited in God, enters the garden of initiation, the lion breaks the sword in pieces and lets them sink in the waters of the fountain as proof that the fire of judgment has receded and the work of the Alchemical Wedding can now begin. The lion's mighty roar rises like a shout of jubilation. At this shout, a snow-white dove appears with an olive branch in her beak. As you know, the dove has always been the symbol of the spirit. Think of the river Jordan, where Jesus the Lord received the spirit by means of the dove that descended upon Him. The dove with the olive branch is specifically the symbol of the third ray of the Seven-Spirit, the active intelligence, entirely entrusted and dedicated to God, the ray which completes the *trigonum igneum*. Here, the dove represents that intelligent way of life that serves true peace, the peace that is of God, under all circumstances. The work must be accomplished in peace and through peace. That is why the dove bears an olive branch. That is why it brings it to the lion. And that is why the peace of God descends over the garden. See this glorious wisdom and great beauty clearly before you: one side of the triangle is formed by the fire of the will, the other by the clear white light of peace. In the Gnosis, fire is symbolised by the man, light by the woman. At the base



The lion is the lower self that is reassured in three phases, fed by the higher insight. On the second day the lion prevents CRC from entering; the heart is still not purified and a guard is needed to keep the lion in check. In the garden there is a second encounter with the mystery animal; the lion then has a sword in its claw, breaks it into three pieces and throws it into the well. The destructive power of the lower self is contained.

of the triangle, as the connecting link, is the second ray, the ray of universal love. Is it not logical that such a triangle must blaze with power? That is the *trigonum igneum*!

Now you will also understand the words of Revelations 11: "I will grant my two witnesses power to prophesy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" – symbol of the number 9, the number of mankind – "clothed in sackcloth" – the garment of atonement, the garment of sacrifice for the world and mankind – "These are the two olive trees and the two candelabra which stand before the Lord of the earth. And no-one shall be able to harm them."

The magic of these words has found expression in all preceding Brotherhoods and also in the young Gnosis. The signature of all gnostic Brotherhoods has always been, and will always be, that their inner leadership proceeds from a man and a woman directly called to their task. They form the two upright sides of the triangle, supported by the second ray of the Seven-Spirit, as an unassailable element of the universal Logos, of the fiery triangle, set in the midst of the nature of death before the god of this world. This reveals the power of the Gnosis, that ever and again, there are two olive trees: the fire, the first ray, and the peace which passes all understanding, the third ray, in the power of God's love, the second ray. That is why the young Gnosis is a true gnostic Mystery School: it, too, complies with this signature, which it did not give itself. And that is why the words of Romans 11, verses 17 to 24 are appropriate for its pupils: that they are like "branches, belonging by nature to the wild olive tree and yet, contrary to their nature, grafted upon the gnostic olive tree". The dove flies in and brings a branch of

the olive tree to the lion who swallows it in annoyance, but afterwards is content. The unicorn, too, returns joyfully to its place.

Do you fathom this language, this mystery language, which is so very strange? In the true garden of the Brotherhood, in the Mystery School, everyone who is entitled to enter there will be entrusted by the representative of the third ray to the universal divine love and its power, after the representative of the first ray has created the possibility. In this way, the wild, broken off olive branches are wrested from the god of this world and can be grafted onto the one vine.

It is not surprising that a fountain is to be found in the garden of the Brotherhood, for the fountain is the symbol of the wisdom and power radiations of the universal spirit, which are manifested unceasingly. That is why in Revelations 21 it is written: "I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life without payment". That is why a continuous stream of wisdom, love and power flows through the young Gnosis: a living fount of divine water in which all who are open to it can wash their hands and heads. That is why it says in the text of the *Alchemical Wedding*:

'We were to wash our hands and heads in the fountain, and there to wait a little while, until the King had returned to his hall through the hidden gallery. After this we were conducted to our former lodgings.' Who is the king mentioned here? It is necessary to know this, too, if we are to understand even more clearly how closely the contents of the *Alchemical Wedding* relate to us. The temple of initiation depicted in the

Lion, unicorn and dove - a flaming triangle of force

book corresponds exactly to the temple of the Living Body of the young Gnosis. It is a field of spiritual development closely connected with and proceeding from the universal Gnostic Chain. That is why the spirit itself is active in this field, emanating from the seventh aspect, the resurrection-field, the Golden Head. And the unicorn, lion and dove, the *trigonum igneum* personified in the two leaders of the Inner School, are present there as representatives of the Spirit, the King. They are there to welcome to the garden of the Brotherhood all pupils who are ennobled to it, so that with them they make the Living Body great. During every necessary activity, the spirit itself is also at work in the Living Body. And all its representative rays and servants cause a mighty current of light and power to flow into all aspects of the Living Body, after which the spirit withdraws again to the domains of the Golden Head, the resurrection-field.

After bathing in the spirit, all candidates are left to their own state of being, so that they may accomplish their alchemical process of transmutation. Yet, even though they are left to their own state of being, they are all in the exceptional condition of being permitted to dwell in the gnostic Living Body, the habitation of the Brotherhood. Thus, in this respect they are alone, but never forsaken. And that is why it is a special state of grace – because every candidate who is permitted to dwell in the Living Body receives, whenever useful and necessary, the help of the spirit itself. That is why the text says:

‘Meanwhile the Maiden took leave of us. She asked us to await the following day patiently, for then we would be presented to the King. ☼’



After the weighing, which he has withstood with flying colors, CRC receives the Golden Fleece with the flying lion: the lion who relieves himself from the heaviness of the earth. Staying behind in the garden with his loyal alchemists, they see a lion and a white unicorn at the well, who comes running down and lays down with the lion. A pigeon with an olive branch flies and the lion roars, but the pigeon gives him the olive branch, which the lion swallows and on which he becomes calm. In essence, these images are again the entire initiation path.

In the near future, the Rozekruis Pers plans to publish *The bird of paradise and other mythical animals – primordial images of soul-life*, by Ankie Hettema, illustrated with aquarelles by Theo Lamers.

Source of the captions: Jaap Sijmons. The chemical marriage of head and heart - an anthroposophical vision. In 'The heart that knows', Rosicrucian Press 2016.

## The superlative

This is ‘amazing’ ‘awesome’ and ‘mindblowing’. In this way we resort to English superlatives to express, in a rather exaggerated manner, our amazement and bewilderment of the things we experience. But in doing so, we too easily forget that even the most extreme experience is spatially determined, and therefore still relatively restricted and limited. It may perhaps denote a yearning to go beyond the known, to what surpasses it all: the limitless and endless, that challenges us to transcend our boundaries. For example, cosmological science uses ingenious satellites to scan the most distant horizons in search of water on Mars and life outside our planet. And at the same time, conversely, highly educated quantum physicists are in search of ever smaller particles, searching to penetrate deeper and deeper into matter, where physical matter seems to transform into the spiritual. But in doing so, do we really touch the truly superlative level that rises above all experience of our limited three-dimensional perception? Is not all our knowledge and experience that stops at

.....  
 And the most important question: do we ourselves also live this knowing?  
 .....

whatever boundary, already outdated before it has reached its conclusions? Is not every endeavour with a pre-set goal in mind doomed to fail, even before it has realized anything whatsoever? Where shall this all end? Surely, ultimately everywhere. And at the same time nowhere! For it can't be anywhere other than where time and space collapse, and all plurality finally either disintegrates or amalgamates. In a unity that both includes everything and transcends it, and where the many universes and dimensions that surround and penetrate us, are all One. We know all this intellectually very well. But are we also truly aware of it? And the most important question: do we ourselves also live this knowing? Has our state of consciousness really become a state of life.... a life that

has merged into that absolute unity and has given up all identification with separateness....a life in the light of an eternal and boundless reality? If so, there will be no room left to deviate, no more time to postpone. Then there will only be the one and only option to devote our entire being to it. Now that truly is ‘amazing’ and ‘mind-blowing’.



# Sound and

# light

Above the entrance of the Rockefeller Center in New York one can see an Art Deco relief of a man with a beard and a compass, with a text of Isaiah: "Wisdom and Knowledge shall be the stability of thy times." Wisdom and Knowledge are the solid foundation of your time. Flanked by two figures that symbolise sound and light. (p. 14)

**B**ecause the RCA corporation used to be located here, it seemed as if the artwork had to do with television and radio. But it turned out to be an image from *The Book of Urizen* by William Blake (1757-1827), which belongs to a poem.

At the end of the eighteenth century, there was an intelligent group of people in England who achieved spiritual depth, with their own symbolism and language. This English group held weekly meetings in the small room above Joseph John's Bookshop in London.

Here, at Joseph Johnson, Blake discussed politics, philosophy, religion and literature and met the writers who often came to the bookseller. Frederick Tatham, a friend of Blake in his later years, wrote about him: "His mental skills were incredible; he had read almost everything in every possible language, which he had always taught himself."

Of the theosophists who influenced Blake, Jacob Boehme was the first and most important: Boehme, like Blake, used beauty as a window to the divine.

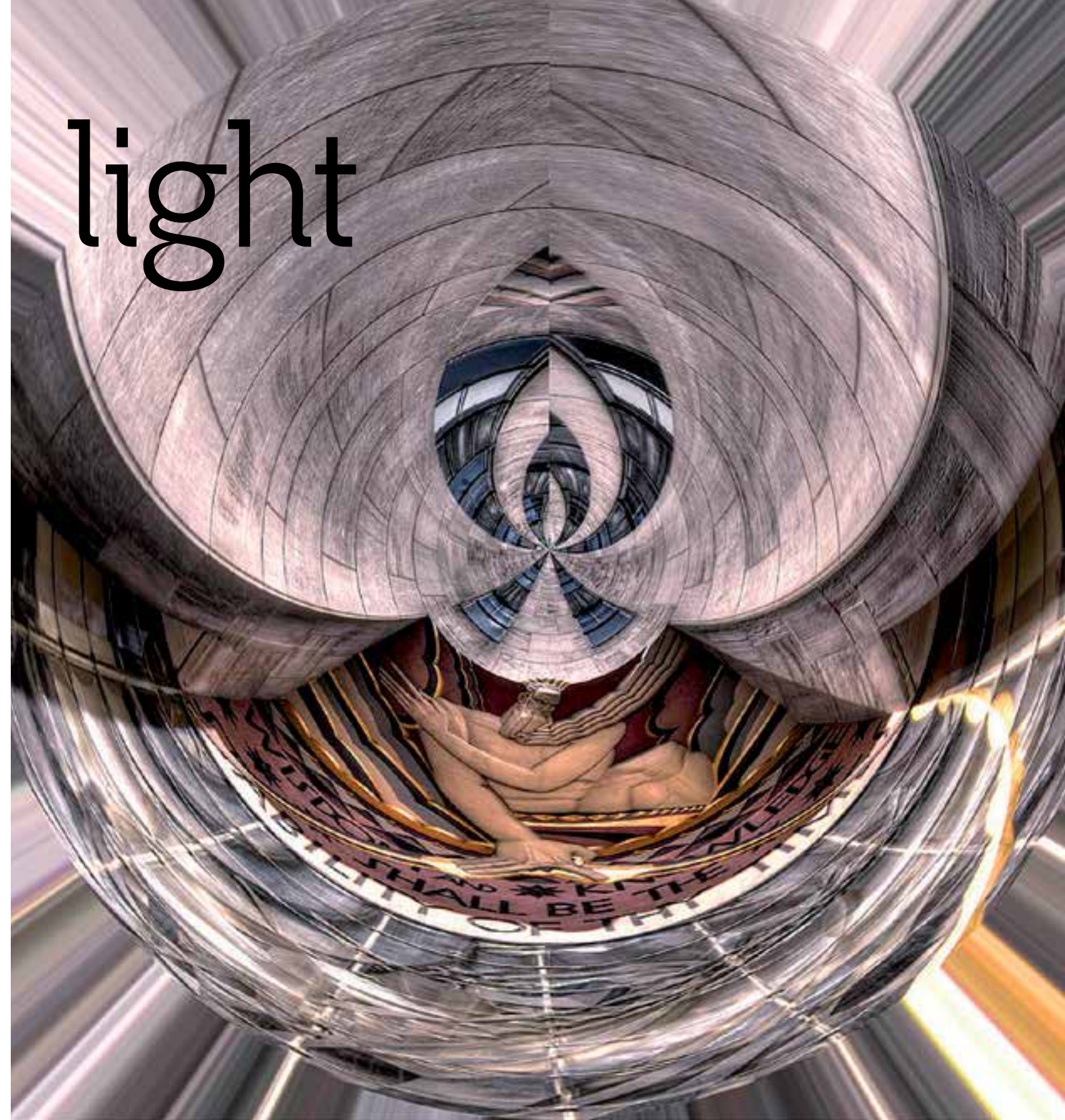
Robert Fludd and Thomas Vaughan (Vohn) provided Blake with ideas about alchemical symbolism; Blake shared the opinion of the Hermetists that man is the microcosm of the divine and he was familiar with the works of William Law who translated Jacob Boehme into English.

According to Blake's worldview, celestial man, the microcosm of the universe (Albion, in Blake's wording), is separated from his deity by his fall, and has to reunite with the divine again in the course of centuries. In Blake's view, the soul has fallen apart and every fragment of her being has to reconcile itself with her again on the path back to eternity.

This is reminiscent of the ancient Egyptian myth of the tearing apart of Osiris at the beginning of time, and the duty of man to collect the torn parts to regain spiritual wholeness. To do this 'man constantly needs a new selfness', as Blake expresses it. 'Self-conversion' is what is necessary.

### **Seven guards**

*The Book of Urizen* begins with the story of the fall of the heavenly man into matter, in the vortex of experience, "the valleys, dark with selfishness." And he is struggling with the task of converting the "naked (basic)" passions into the pure gold of the eternal. To assist in this cosmic process, Blake introduces the fiery Orc-the-consciousness-awakener, the spirit of





revolution and renewal, he who sings: "The times have ended; shadows pass." It is important to include in this revolution the special time in which Blake lived: it was the time in which Mozart composed his revolutionary works of genius such as Die Zauberflöte; it was the time in which the "Godfather" of renewal and revolution, Uranos, was discovered as a planetary force in the solar

phase ("the times are finished"). Nature is renewed by fire (Ignus Naturae Renovatur Integre, INRI). "Burning bright". In Blake's worldview there are 'seven guards who watch over fallen man', whom we have to pass and which simultaneously guide us on our path of development and always adapt their actions to our state. The name Urizen is derived from binding or limiting, the saturnic creator spirit or 'the lord of the firmament' - or the first self-imposed boundaries. Blake wrote a poem about it. In his original engraving the text can be read: 'In his hand He took the golden compass



system (1781), with all its consequences to culture and society. In Blake's England, this initially affected some to turn against the established rational culture of works and laws concerning the mechanical, measurable and materialistic world view (Newton and Locke), which reduced the All to just a timepiece. Blake said: "May God keep us from single vision and Newton's sleep". According to Blake life is not measurable and can't be captured in quantitative 'laws of nature'. Orc, the fiery innovator, not only should be awakened but also must become an effective force in consciousness. Only by the fiery and electric Uranus forces the fallen soul will be able to renew itself and overcome the Saturnal

from God's eternal laboratory, to encircle this universe and all things made. He centered one point and the other he spun around through the big deep darkness. And said, there is your limit, thus far you are bound. Let this be your limit, o world.

**Sound and light**  
 What are the limits of our world? Not the physical limitation of our earth. We now know that we can't fall over the edge into eternity. We know that we are trapped within a revolving system of birth and death, from which we normally can't escape. How far does our perception go, how do we see and hear the world around us? Are sound and light not part of a larger system? Because of our being we are bound to space and time. Only through sound and light we can perceive something of the world in which we are placed. Sound and light can be seen as a wave phenomenon, moving continuous-

ly through the zero point from positive to negative in time and therefore bound to time and space. Can we imagine a world without sound and without light? We could do nothing. There would be no experiences, no progress would be possible, we would be nothing in a world, dark, cold and empty without the life we know now. No sparkle of light in the spring, no budding of flowers, no life that unfolds, no Seven-spirit driving everything and bringing it into being, no Vulcan sending out its rays. Sound is an ether force with which we shape our atmosphere - constructive or disruptive. Sound is only a whisper in our atmosphere. Pertaining to the atmospheric pressure of 1 Pascal, it is only 20 to 80 micro Pascal with six digits after the decimal point. But behind a true spoken word in the temple of the Rosycross is a world of Light! 'As a soul we are deeply connected to sound,' says Mrs. Blavatsky. The soul immediately responds to sound, that comes to her through our body shape. Much faster than it's reaction to light, which is of a higher frequency. That is why we can be touched so deeply by a chord or a melody. Sound is the carrier wave for ether, clean and noble, to take us to the outer limits, raising us, comforting us and offering consolation. That is why music is so important in the temple services of the Rosycross.

**Sevenfold**  
 In what way are the tones in music built up? A pianoforte has seven octaves, each with seven tones, so a total of 7 times 7 makes 49 tones. Octa is eight, with seven tones within each octave and the eighth being



Sound connects us with the etheric energy, light is astral

the connection with the next seven tones. We speak of a scale of tones, but if you consider it as an ascending spiral, every higher series is linked by the eighth tone. Seven tone spirals, each connected by an eighth. We can't live without sound, we can't deal with real silence.

The world record in a sound-dead room is three quarters of an hour. This is a research room where no background noise, no reflection can be heard. In such a space we are no longer able to orientate ourselves properly, we develop balance problems, feel very uncomfortable and want to get out as quickly as possible. Sound connects us with the etheric energy, light is astral. Within light we observe the same structure, also an octave, so to speak. We can see and distinguish daily objects by their reflection of specific light frequencies. Light that travels through space without being reflected, is invisible. Only when it reflects on an object do we see something.

Thus we see the world around us, the landscape that changes with every step on our path of experiences. And a rainbow seems to move along with every step we take.

Within the light visible to us, we may distinguish seven colours. If we place this in a colour circle, then an eighth colour arises, magenta, the colour we may regard as a higher connection to the - for us - invisible spectrum.

By analogy with the seven octaves on the scale, we may therefore assume that the spectrum of visible light, the 'octave', has



Behind a true spoken word  
in the temple of the Rosycross  
is a world of Light!

.....

a counterpart in a part of the ultraviolet region, in a part of the infrared region and up and down in the infinite series of electromagnetic wavelengths.

According to the theosophist G. de Purucker 'the ultraviolet and infrared rays lie in the border area between our physical universe and the astral areas directly above and directly below our own physical world'. Because these wavelengths also influence the physical area, we feel the warmth of infrared rays and we become tanned due to the ultraviolet rays. As overtones we may experience something from the other octave spheres. Why do we see, hear and experience only part of this creation? Why are we still so imperfect, and rarely able to hear the whisperings of the ether sphere? Ah friends, our soul is still too disintegrated. She is still gathering the seven torn-away parts, just as Isis collected the cut-off limbs of Osiris. Our soul can see too little of the new light as yet.

We have no way of detaching ourselves from the system that revolves around us, while yet the light moves us to where Chronos sets the limits of space and time. Only his rebellious grandson Kairos gives us moments of insight and lets us taste from wide vistas, flashing in images and fiery flames.

Only when the light lives in us, does the heavenly soul give proof in the second seven-circle.

Then the seven soul shards are healed and revived again.

Then we can pass through Saturn's boundary, where love awaits us.

This is the Limit in the poem by Blake. Spirit, soul and body are then united, all three crowned with a golden crown of kings. Three kings travel to the star in the East. The Spirit and the Soul first. The third King is uncomfortably following God's way. He's often losing track and fluttering, searching, brings up the rear, writes Mr. van Rijckenborgh.

'Behold! thou hast become the light, it says in the book *The Voice of Silence*, 'thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one.

We know a very small part of the road and a part is shown to us in Kairos' soul flashes. And a part we still will discover. ✨



What is really of value

# What is really of value

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What does society really offer young people?  
A training in sixteen stages.

- 1. From a worried teacher:**

[...] Burn-outs, depression, too much alcohol, and the risk of suicide – the first results of a large-scale investigation into the mental condition of the nation are shocking. [...] Young people feel that they are under 'high voltage stress'. As if they must not lose a second, and cannot drop any stitches, ever. In every way they should constantly perform in their lives. 'Excelling' is the norm, not only at school, but also in the social field and in all sorts of outdoor activities. [...] Research shows that many young people suffer from this ordeal - one in five even feels that maybe they do not want to live such a life. [...] The real problem is the focus on effectiveness and material prosperity. Our education is a reflection of society. Already as early as in the maternal consultation office, it is said that a child 'lags behind' or 'performs well'. We are our achievements, which means: the time that you have 'spent' in a 'useful' (read: economically productive) way. A student who is considering to have a gap year (this is a year of free time between two studies for instance to make a trip, to investigate what you want, what you are good at, to discover new things, etc.), anxiously asks of him- or herself: 'But what if I will 'lag behind' because I am not moving forward? I would tend to ask: "what is valuable in life? What is really meaningful?" Then, if there is no answer to that, courage drops even more. Just like for so many other students. Young people suffer from performance anxiety. [...] There is nothing wrong with making efforts, with wanting to deliver a special accomplishment. Performance anxiety can in that respect also be positive. But it is only so when the effort is meaningful. And it is precisely this meaningful context, this larger framework, that is lacking. If we really want to prevent a generation of zombies, it is time that we break the

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habit of a life that revolves only around individual achievements that ensure economic productivity. As teachers and educators, we must first of all help students to relax, but more important: to help them to discover what is truly of value, who they are, and how they want to generally shape their future [...] Our education is restricted by the one-sided attention to performance. It is time to free ourselves from this straightjacket. We have to teach students to learn to relax and discover what is really of value. ‘Help young people discover what is really of value. (Newspaper article – Volkskrant, 11-4-2018)

## 2. Performing for the sake of performing

Recently, this disquiet in the Netherlands has even increased, because the suicide rate among young people has significantly increased.

This educator rightly indicates that the first phase of psychological help in essence exists of: ‘the unlearning that life revolves around individual achievements that ensure economic productivity’. Even if the insight that ‘performing for the sake of performing’ is meaningless, society still ensures that its targets are met through a school and work path in which, “targets are to be achieved, so that the insight of futility cannot cause damage to the economic growth objective” and the student who had the insight of its futility receives the penalty of exclusion, or is labelled a ‘loser’. The latest psychological qualification is that stress is only for ‘losers’; if you have stress, this means that you cannot organize yourself ...

## 3. Extreme performance pressure and depression

Certain nations are more sensitive to performance pressure than others. For exam-

ple in Chile, the compulsion of economic growth has led to the desired result, but also to social misery: it has led to people having debts and working very hard, so that they hardly see their children anymore. Children who therefore grow up with little love and subsequently build up a huge student debt. And then this repeats itself in the next generation. Nowhere in South America will you see so much depression and suicide as in Chile. Japan is also notorious for the over-exploitation of extreme performance and this, combined with socio-psychological pressure on health and life, results in the problem of ‘karoshi’ – that is: working yourself to death. The tradition of devoting one’s life with an absolute solidarity to the company and the family is strongly anchored in the Japanese ‘soul’, in the Japanese ‘national spirit’. This is the reason that also in Japan we find an extremely high degree of depression and suicide.

## 4. Save talent?

Does a constant pressure to perform thus result in psychological failure? Is continuous economic growth always a disruptive abnormality, relentlessly driving everything and everyone to pieces in the long run? By examining the current relationship patterns, Philipp Blom in his book “What Is at Stake”, points out that the rabid market economy is an outdated business model, in which profit motivation leads to a devouring of people, nature, and the earth. To ‘unlearn’ the idea that life requires of individuals only those performances that ensure economic productivity, is of course not a recommendation to spend the rest of your life in idleness. We have been given a dire warning for this in the Biblical parable of the talents, in which the person who buries his soul potential in the ground cannot count on any credits in our

# The future must be in soul growth, not in economic growth

.....

‘Christian’ civilization....

## 5. Soul growth

The future must be in soul growth, not in economic growth. The values of importance are values of the soul, because it is only through those values that young people can ‘have’ something to stand strong in society, and no longer be part of the money-orientated and profit-demanding world. Nevertheless, it is important not to place soul growth in opposition to economic growth. For the values of the soul must first pass through a zero point; soul growth is only possible when a human being has come to complete peace and quiet. And economic growth is trying to avoid zero growth and possible stoppage, for otherwise the shareholders will start complaining, and perhaps begin to cut back and require reorganisation. Stagnation is always seen as a decline: the water in pools e.g. deteriorates when there is a lack of movement and no aquatic life.

## 6. Afflictions and a corrective master

Hermes, on the other hand, teaches us with regard to the soul, that it has to forgo various afflictions (termed ‘freeing oneself of the 10 corrective masters’) and the first thing that the soul should discard is ... the ambition to grow! This is quite special, because in the same Hermetic texts, it says that after the separation of the sexes, it was specifically a task for humanity as a species to grow in number.

(Go forth and multiply!). This is a contradiction that in our time is apparently invalid, for through ‘progress’, overpopulation threatens the human species and in the long run will affect every balance.

## 7. Blossoming of the Rose without growth?

And now we have to face the question of how the rose of roses can grow within us toward the unfolding revelation of the soul. Is such flowering even possible without growth? And which order of our ‘garden’ is conditional? Every garden benefits from a natural rhythm of life, because only then can the diversity and beauty become a natural harmony, in which the chance of dominance by one species is small. Psychologically, it concerns the harmony in the alternation of activities, which is an important condition for the flowering of the rose of roses.

## 8. Life goes too fast

Our ‘heart environment’ is our garden for the soul, which includes the diversity of disorders that arise from our nature and our character. This requires a definite control, lest there be an unbalanced proliferation, as Hermes indicates. And outside that garden, there is no longer a natural rhythm anymore: we make too much noise, and we live far too fast, unnaturally fast, especially since the digital revolution. It seems as if we have become musicians in an orchestra that has started playing



Education for everyone? An abandoned classroom in Brazil.

The faster something moves, the warmer it gets. A burn-out is the result of too much speed and not enough slowness

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twice as fast. Are we still able to enjoy the slower rhythm of life from *before* the days of computers and mobile phones? Is it not absurd that we try to confine youngsters to the straitjacket of an outdated system, and in addition, impose an unnatural pace on them?

#### 9. Speed does not guarantee freedom

This outrageously accelerated outside world is interconnected by numerous networks, and for years we have been hearing how liberating these networks are, and how they will promote our empowerment. Yet, funnily enough, we do not feel liberated at all in the outside world. Instead, we often feel overworked and stressed. Originally, stress meant emphasis, accentuation. Today, stress is overpressure, too much pressure. Robbing us of time and energy. Physics has taught us that heat and speed are one and the same thing. Movement produces warmth, either at the level of the molecule, or at that of a 'solid' body.

#### 10. The heat of a burnout

The faster something moves, the warmer it gets. A burn-out is the result of too much speed and not enough slowness. In this age of flexible labour, direct communication and deregulated economies, there seems to be no limit to the rhythm of work and the resulting options. The possibilities seem infinite. There is always something we could have done or should have done, preferably yesterday. We do our work faster and more efficiently than ever before, thanks to the new techniques. But instead of taking advantage of this increased efficiency by working less and creating and using space and time for reflection, for creating our 'inner garden', we often fill the time thus saved with more and faster activity. The speed reaches dizzying proportions. This is one of the paradoxes of the information revolution: the more time we save, the less time we have available.

#### 11. No time to save

Even before the internet era, Michael Ende, in his novel *Momo* and the *Time Savers*, tells the tale of how villagers are being persuaded to save

time in order to become more efficient. However, this makes them richer but less happy than they were before. The time that the villagers apparently saved was obviously lost and could never be recovered.

The contradiction between the soul world of the inner garden and the blaring cymbals of the accelerated outside world seems to result in a reality that is hardly workable any longer to young people. In the accelerated outside world you have to be successful; and you get the chance to do so by doing business in competition with others, by working 80 hour weeks or more, with constant tension. And in the economic picture, the chance of thus only being successful is a tiny bit bigger.

### 12. Emotional power next to growth needs

But you should probably abandon the idea that working like this will save time or money for the inner garden of soul growth, because, on the contrary, when working in the current world structure, you necessarily draw power from the natural soul for the growth of profit, comfort and continuous pleasure. In that natural power there is no nourishment there for the inner garden of the soul. The idea of becoming greater in a spiritual sense, of spiritual expansion, of elevation is blocked by the basic desire which society demands of you: “thou shalt enjoy, thou shalt earn, thou shalt grow in money and belongings”; as it is said at the cash register for refreshments: ‘Enjoy it!’

### 13. Hope

Love fails; especially because love is seen in the light of the erroneous basic desire: love as a hobby, a giving just to receive something back, an amateurism. But even though love fails for a variety of reasons,

there is indeed hope. Because before young people become suicidal because of stress, burn-out and depression, there is a realization of a social requirement that has turned into an impossible requirement, while on the other hand, it may be seen that the growth of the inner garden is experienced as a wonderful possible reality.

And if that last realization is not roughly put aside as a hopeless romance, then there is hope. Hope is then more than love. Which values are finally associated with the ‘inner garden’? And can you allow those values, let alone ‘learn’ them?

### 14. Wrong basic desire

In the outer world, the values of goodness, truth and justice have petered out and become bogged down in an eternal ‘on the one hand, on the other hand’. It has turned the erroneous ‘basic desire’ into the prevailing reality of this world. And in the double revolution which has taken place in the last 40 years - the digital tsunami and extreme commercial thinking - there is no place for goodness and justice. The British pioneer of the latter revolution, Margaret Thatcher, resolutely said: ‘There is no such thing as society’. Earlier, J van Rijckenborgh noted that society is more like a ‘communal death’ than a ‘communal life’.

### 15. Can a flower learn to bloom?

But this century is certainly not lacking in soul values for inner growth. Because with globalization, even though partly contaminated by negative effects, a new sense of the unity and solidarity of all human souls has arisen, thus opening a cosmic gate for the Aquarius consciousness. And the current desperate ‘urge-to-earn’ is offset by the desire for a new concept of freedom and experience, apart from comfort and profit; and efforts and

attempts are being made that will lead to joyfulness and not just enjoyment. With this, a lance is also broken for love - the impersonal love that can only be released in the soul state as a microcosmic radiation source. That love never fails and is for everyone and everything, Can these values of unity, freedom and love also be taught? Is training in those values possible? Can a flower learn to bloom?

### 16. Progress

Flowers already know how to bloom, and likewise, these are values that can be discovered and recognized in joyful understanding and as an impetus to action. Without previous awareness, the values of unity, freedom and love can resonate and vibrate as the radiation values of a new life.

Thus, life itself can become and be the ‘training’. At least if we do not have to look for profit here, or make excessive demands on life itself. When our human soul lets go of the urge for its own growth, then the zero point of rest has been reached, in which it is possible to achieve soul growth. Not so much growth as external progress, but rather the growth in joyfulness.

Not only teachers have a task in this respect, but all those who are dealing with the generation that is growing up now. If young people wish to be able to discover what is really of value, their whole environment will in fact have to reflect such values. Then there must be people who actually live them. Such examples make the transmission of values real and inspiring. If everything revolves around ‘showing performance that ensures economic productivity’, how can we expect young people to learn that life can be about different, higher values? Are there people who have experienced

the healing effect of beneficent silence, and the possibility to return to that silence at any time? Who knows, perhaps a younger person may then also experience something of this.

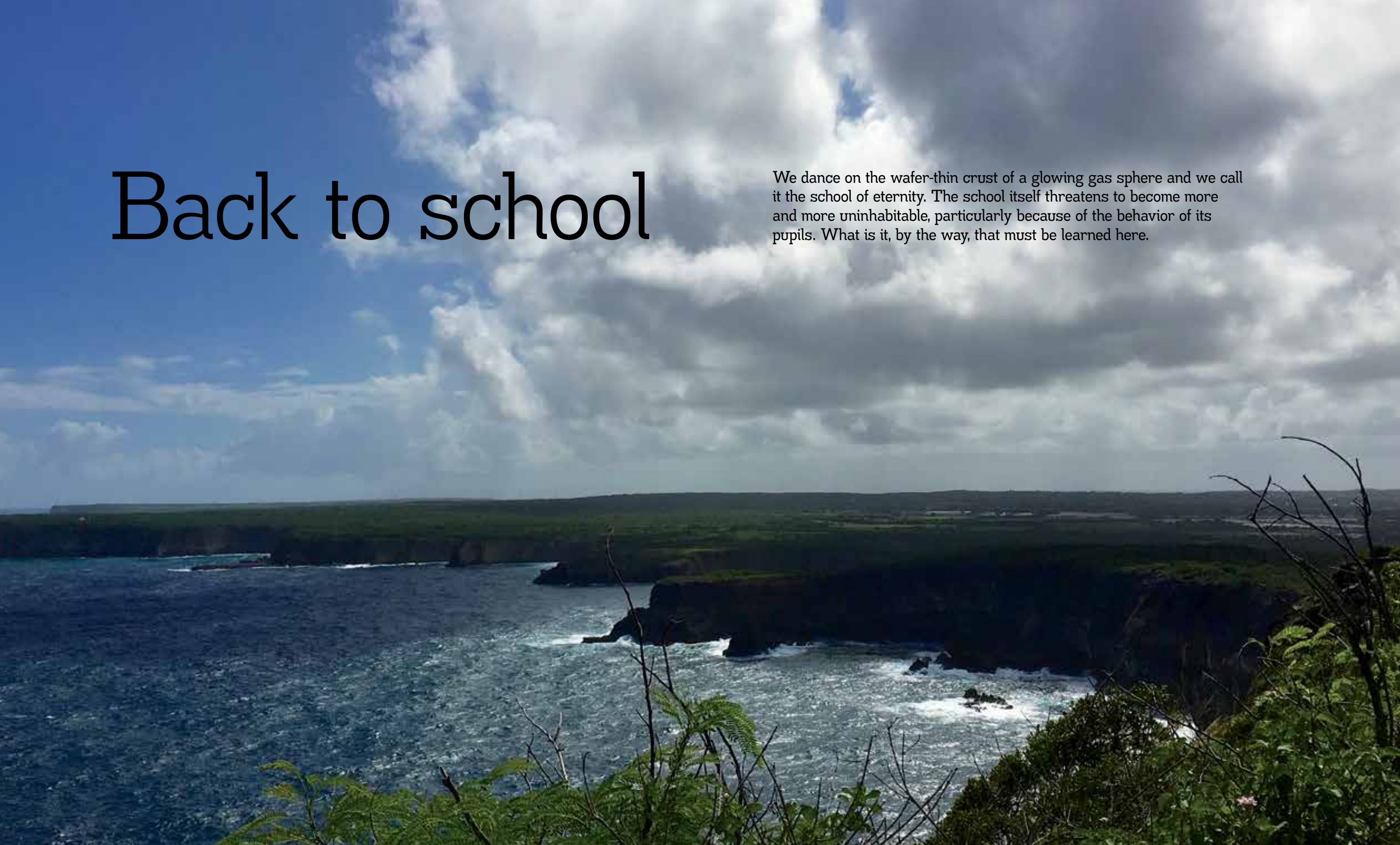
Are there people who in true detachment have left behind the ‘ever more, ever bigger’ mentality, then it is possible that young people may also take this into consideration.

If there are people who from experience are aiming for genuine contact with other human beings, then it might be possible that this inner wealth stimulates them, too.

If there are people who know deep inside that man is called to more than a ‘successful’ life and that his mission and his possibilities reach much further, then there is ‘gnosis’, that inner knowing, and it is possible for the young person to discover from them what is really of value. ☀

# Back to school

We dance on the wafer-thin crust of a glowing gas sphere and we call it the school of eternity. The school itself threatens to become more and more uninhabitable, particularly because of the behavior of its pupils. What is it, by the way, that must be learned here.



Besides everything that we hear and see around us, we seem to be connected to a database that records everything that was once said, felt, written or thought. If our inner receiver, by chance or by will, comes into the vicinity of a sensitive frequency, a knowing, an idea, flashes through our brain. We call it inspiration. The 'giving' seems to be unconditional, while the receiving requires an opening, an expectation, a yearning. If that is not there, which at first is usually the case, then there is only a confusion, a worry, a ripple in our minds. The trumpet echoes in the spheres in all eternity, but the world continues with the order of the day; a few raise their heads, listen breathless - and for those nothing remains the same. It seems that in reality we exist in the midst of omnipotence, but we cannot even express it to ourselves because we do not have the words and images to give the experience a recognizable format. And we neither have an instrument to discern between illusion and reality. In this way, the delicate impulses of an inner knowing create some swell: the soul wants to live out of it, the ego wants to possess it. Nevertheless, knowledge, whether conscious or unconscious, is a prerequisite for survival. Roughly speaking, it is a triptych of first - genetics, that is, the transfer of the spirit of the times, people, race, ancestors; second, - intuition, an inner view of what 'is in the air'; and, finally, everything that is called 'Education'. Acquiring knowledge and skills, seen from any angle, is called 'learning'. Learning refers to school, education, study, getting the necessary knowledge to function in the earthly existence, by aptitude and wish or out of necessity. For most people the highest reach of

this package of lessons is some form of a diploma - with or without the congratulations of the faculty members. Some people, however, also undergo an undefined awareness that is woven as a strange thread into the learning process; a trace of points of contact with that apparently built-in or intuitive knowledge. In itself it is not special; in every person both channels run parallel, albeit with different accents. In this way, a solid anchoring in the material world creates the peace and the receptiveness in our minds to discover and explore the signals of that other channel, that inner living and knowing, in addition to the necessary baggage for the earthly journey. This inner knowing is a wonderful mechanism that can open up at the most unexpected moments a window to unsuspected perspectives. Not just by chance - for it has grown and matured as an inner compass that seeks to express itself. On this path, the always recommended "Man know yourself" is, to the utmost extent, the awakening, the vivification of that inner point of contact. Besides, it is equally recommended to give the emperor what is the emperor's due. The program is directed at heaven, the class is here on earth. A duality that has its complications, because this double flow on the one hand offers our thinking and acting a harmonious development, but on the other hand it always confronts us with a choice. Does the suggestion, the inspiration, fit in the ordinary earthly scenario, or does it rather scan its limits, perhaps even with a stealthy look to the other side? Initially, we are immediately made aware of who chooses, who is steering our actions so far. Sometimes with a threatening roar at other times with temptations, the earthly powers put all rebellion neatly in line. They cannot do anything else, for it is their job to make people taste all layers and aspects of the

earth. And there are quite a few. Going from an almost paradisiacal experience, to the human being in whom no heavenly light nor earthly pleasures find a tangent point; the man who no longer believes anything, hopes anything, expects anything; he only has one thought: I want to be out of it all. That is not new either. Even 'from the beginning', people have been looking to escape from the earthly atmosphere, even though they often do not even know where to go. Dreaming, drinking, drugs, games, drum sessions, virtual worlds - in all possible gradations, ranging from an innocent intoxication, to even the fatal exit. Away, away from this earth, if necessary into the oblivion - without a diploma. Is this planet that we call our 'school' really habitable? We dance on the wafer-thin crust of a glowing gas-ball that spins around another gas-bomb with a frenzied speed, which in turn is trapped in an even bigger whirligig, with speeds and distances that no man can imagine. Moreover, we are defenselessly dropped into a human-unfriendly world. Too hot, too cold, extremes of day and night and seasons, permanently harassed with diseases and natural disasters. And this doesn't include the poisonous plants, the predatory animals, and fellow human beings! And do not forget the allergies and the sunscreen! Add all that together, and our equipment should be close to a space suit. But everything is colourfully packed in a paradisiacal setting in which we can catch our breath very briefly between consecutive disasters. Are we perhaps not really inhabitants of this planet, but rather 'astronauts', dropped somewhere by cosmic Titans, on our way to the stars? On our way - it is clearly in our genes. Traveling, pilgrimages, safaris - we are always on the road

to elsewhere, to something different, to places far away, away from the here and now. The eternal Wanderer, on the way to an unknown goal that forever recedes, thus preventing us from 'grounding' again and again. In this way we remain pilgrims, foreigners in our own house. As if an inner knowing reminds us again and again that indeed we do not ultimately belong here. But the capsule that we call 'I' nevertheless has everything in him to finish the 'school' and obtain the diploma. The way to true humanity is hidden in the folds and knots of this impossible world. That so-called database is the eternal source that hears all the questions and gives all the answers, the word that we need at that moment, regardless of whether it comes from earthly or heavenly spheres; the companion which shares with us the highest joys and descends with us into the darkest void. Because the name of that source is 'Love', and love knows no distinction. Such an answer can be something very exalted, or something very ordinary; an exercise that has yet to be made by us.

And some day, when the restless chatter of our own being goes silent, we shall also hear the trumpet, the Voice we have carried within us for so long. And we shall lift our heads, listen, breathlessly - and will set out. Struggling maybe, but unconquerable. ☼

Are we perhaps not really inhabitants of this planet, but rather 'astronauts' on our way to the stars?

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# Cygnus – the swan

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The image of the swan appearing in our lives reflects our purest depths and feelings. When this mythical animal glides over the waters of our consciousness, it overflows all events in our life with the lustre of love. In that light we are able for a moment to measure the true meaning of our relationships. He or she, male or female, the swan symbolizes balance, harmony and grace. See how she conquers earthly gravity, how she glides elegantly over the water and rises with indescribable majesty in the life-air. Is it not the perfect symbol for the balance between all aspects that influence our life?

In Celtic mythology, the swan is a sun-animal. She represents the shining glory of the new day, and in the evening during sunset, she bids the day farewell. In the pattern in which the swans fly (always in pairs), the Celts saw intuitively a direction for a coming change. Feminine, she protects her offspring with ferocious force, the new life that was been born out of her - and everyone moves back.

In Greek mythology the swan is masculine, the creature into which Zeus changes when he begets Helena through his sojourn with Leda and also fathers Castor and Pollux, the divine twins. Swans protect the temple of Jupiter when the Gauls climb the hill of the Capitol deep in the night.

In the Indian Vedas, the two swans Ham and Sa together are the physical aspect of Brahma, gliding into the divine spirit while living on the 'honey of the blossoming lotus of knowledge'. ♀



# Little white bird



Jae Seongh Ryu, Oil painting, 2015. 'With oil paint (material), oil paint (object) was proposed to leave behind the oil paint (illusion) forever'.

We met in a hospital, the kind of place where people are solely categorised by the medical specialism their illness belongs to. It was a room for two and I had been told that my roommate was severely ill. I was amazed when I saw a man sitting straight up on the bed and eating. Granted, he was incredibly thin, but he seemed very healthy because of the look in his eyes which was rather surprised and interested. Certainly not what you imagine as 'severely ill'.

**W**e met in a hospital, the kind of place where people are solely categorised by the medical specialism their illness belongs to. It was a room for two and I had been told that my roommate was severely ill. I was amazed when I saw a man sitting straight up on the bed and eating. Granted, he was incredibly thin, but he seemed very healthy because of the look in his eyes which was rather surprised and interested. Certainly not what you imagine as 'severely ill'.

Although allegedly he had only a short time to live, which made me move cautiously, we soon engaged in an exceptional conversation. Within about ten minutes we were discussing the fact that there may be events in your life that always stay with you, although you are not even sure anymore if they really happened. When he clearly became tired, we decided to resume the subject the next day and I said: 'Sleep well, sir', realising that every sleep could well be his last, according to the doctor. Funny, I thought while I put on my pyjamas: it is just as though I am in a movie.

I myself was there for a trifling thing but I still had to stay there for three days because of the need for regular checks. So as not to disturb my neighbour, I took up a book, but my thoughts kept circling around that intriguing start of our conversation. Right away I had myself remembered a trivial incident with major consequences, but I was only two years old, so I was not quite sure whether I actually knew it, or that they had told me about it. I decided to tell him about it tomorrow. He would only have to listen and hopefully wouldn't become too tired.

I have just now woken up and a weak snore comes from the bed next to me. Fortunately he is still alive; I see that it is still very early and I grab my book again. I look sideways from time to time, but my neighbour keeps breathing quietly. Looking around, I can't detect anything personal around his bed. No postcards, no flowers, no books, nothing at all. Only an empty glass and a small bowl. Because my curiosity remains and is not satisfied, I start fantasising a suitable background for him. Perhaps he has been a teacher, or a psychiatrist. Presumably someone who has worked with many people and is now all by himself.

A nurse comes in, clomping loudly, a sturdy woman with dimples in both cheeks. She is humming and takes my neighbour's wrist, just like that, in his sleep. Probably doesn't understand how that must be, if you are sound asleep. She looks at his hand and face and mutters that she is going to fetch water. Then she looks straight at me, finally greets me and leaves again straight away. When she comes back with a glass of water with a straw, my roommate is wide awake. He asks, in his soft voice, if she can put him upright and subsequently wishes me a good morning. Before I can answer, the nurse calls out that they will come for my check-up in a minute, but that she has to do 'the transfer' now.

I swing my legs over the edge of the bed and say, while getting my slippers: 'Good morning, sir. Have you slept well? I was so fascinated by the conversation we had yesterday, that I even dreamt of it.' 'Oh?' he says and looks me in the eyes with that peculiar young look he has. 'In that case I propose that we continue it right now. After all, I can die at any moment, as they say.' He winks at me

mischievously, grins and proceeds: 'I don't mind, you know. It's all right to laugh about it together.' That puts me at ease, a bit. First of all, I tell him the reason for my hospital admission and that I find it almost embarrassing that I am lying here so healthily. But he appeases me: 'You have a long life awaiting you. For me it is over and I must say, it has been very interesting and it actually still is.' I am flabbergasted. What an extraordinary man this is! Then he goes on: 'But tell me first an event in your life that has been very important, though perhaps not real. I could see that something came to your mind right away. And in the afternoon, after resting time, I will tell you about one of mine. Okay?'

It is certainly okay, but I'd rather not be disturbed during my story, so I propose to wait until the nurses have finished my check-up and all other necessary activities. It seems a good thing to be clean and fed, and most of all unbothered when we talk, and gives me time to think about how I will tell it to my new friend, for that is what he is, although that's, of course, ridiculous after only one night.

Well then.. I tell him my story but while I am telling it, its insignificance starts bothering me. In fact, it was such a shallow thing; I just know that he will tell me quite a different story this afternoon. It makes me uncertain, but when I glance at Marcus – we have dropped the formalities – he looks at me with that habitually interested expression of his and gives me a reassuring nod. Every now and then he asks me something and all in all the story takes me quite half an hour. He is a bit pale now, so I pretend having to leave for a moment. When I return fifteen minutes later, he is fast asleep.

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After lunch – Marcus hasn't eaten, but only took a sip of water – he begins: 'I was fourteen years old and life smiled at me. There I was: good at sports, high marks at school, loving parents and no pimples. There was a girl, too, that I had a crush on. That afternoon I would persuade her to go out with me and I was thinking about this plan while I cycled with my hands loose. Suddenly a car that seemed to come from nowhere crashed against me at full speed. I describe it now, but I wasn't aware of anything. I lay unconscious on the street, with crushed knees, broken ribs, internal bleedings, swellings all over my body and a skull base fracture. I woke up in intensive care. As soon as I knew where I was, I realised that my life was over. That thought was even worse than the pain. I floated away

and came round again. It was one big horror movie. I shan't bother you with all the treatments and other unpleasanties that were needed to patch me up a bit. When I was allowed to look into a mirror, I was so shocked by what I saw, that I almost lost consciousness again. After several days I was moved to a ward. I was so furious at life and at the same time revelled in self-pity. The nurses couldn't do anything right in my view and I snapped at visitors. It was horrible. Suddenly – on a very clear day – I heard an unfamiliar sound from the window. When I looked, there it sat, a little white bird. I had never seen such an animal before; it was white, like a sheet and a bit smaller than a sparrow. It did not sing – it rather made weird, undefined sounds. But in my head it translated as: 'Everything

I had never seen such an animal before; it was white, like a sheet and a bit smaller than a sparrow

.....



is for your own good, everything is for your own good, everything is for your...’ Marcus stops for a sip of water and sees that I want to react. ‘Wait a moment until I finish, I know that it sounds crazy, but I am telling you what I observed. Then the little animal suddenly disappeared. There I lay, musing and thinking about that weird sentence: ‘Everything is for your own good.’ Even a parrot would struggle with those words and I could hardly believe that the little bird had said them. Yet they remained in my head, going round and round, and in my imagination I could still see the bird. The nurse came by and asked if I was all right and because she was a kind woman, I told her about the bird. ‘But that must have been a dream,’ she said laughing. ‘No bird will come in here, see?’ And she showed me that the window could not open. ‘I think that it is an aftereffect of the anaesthetic,’ she added when she left and I was alone again. The funny sentence kept puzzling me, but I did not come one step further to its meaning, however I tried. Meanwhile I wondered if there had actually been a bird or not. In the end I looked more or less normal again when I left the hospital after several months. I couldn’t walk yet, but my spirits had gone up and I went for it. The strange thing is: afterwards, with every misfortune or difficulty, I remembered the little bird and the weird sentence. And when I was almost thirty, I suddenly started to understand that there might indeed be some sense to it. For instance, I realised that although I had been happy before the accident, I had also been very haughty and insensitive and afterwards this had changed completely, although I did develop other problematic traits then. When my wife left me after a mere three-and-a-half-year of marriage and took my daughter

with her, I remembered the bird too and I immediately recognised that I had certainly deserved this kick in the arse. A kick, not as a punishment, but to wake me up, to make me see that everyone wasn’t just there to serve me.’ ‘But,’ I protest, ‘for me it is very hard to believe that you were like that.’ An almost unnoticeable smile passes Marcus’ face. Then he continues: ‘I can hardly believe it myself, but I am very fortunate that I had the chance to recognise it. You know, if you can really see what kind of a person you are, something will happen to you. Before, I was absolutely unaware that I was living like this, and it wasn’t my fault or so. It was more like a lack of attention how I was living my life. The little white bird thus brought me lots and lots of happiness. It ensured that I started to pay more attention to what I did, what I thought and to the consequences of my actions. That is what amounts to what I would call a good life. I really wasn’t any worse than other people and I am not better than anyone else now. I am only more awake, more interested and happier than some others.’ He turns his head towards the window sill and points: ‘Look, there it is. It isn’t my bird though, it is yours as well. It wouldn’t surprise me if, from this moment, it will stay with you - that it will whisper, at appropriate moments: ‘Everything is for your own good.’ And that the day will come that you can accept this gift in the way it ought to be accepted.’ He stops. Out of politeness I look at the window sill but there is absolutely nothing there.

The next day he dies and it leaves me wondering. Everything that flies and everything white or clean, everything that will happen to me and everything that won’t, all curious looks, all smiles, even hospitals, will keep him alive. Him and the little white bird with the magic message. ☼

# Sword and cross

*‘The Spirit, the Father of all creatures, who is life and light, brought forth a man alike unto him, whom he began to love as his own child. For man, being the likeness of his father, was very beautiful; God loved in truth his own figure and gave him charge of all his works.’*

Hermes Trismegistos, Pymander, verse 32



‘Das Kreuz zum besten wende’ (Use the cross for the best). Commemorative coin on the occasion of the inauguration of a lodge of the Rosycross in the eighteenth century.

**T**he Spirit, the Father, the Creator gives man charge of all his works. As evidenced by the following verse, this divine gift includes in any case the urge as well as the ability to create. Verse 33 reads: ‘However, when man observed the creation the Demiurge had formed in the fire, he wished to bring forth a piece of work himself and this the Father granted him. As he entered the field of creation of the Demiurge, in which he was to have a free hand, he observed the works of his brother. The Rectors began to love him and each of them let him share in his own rank in the hierarchy of the spheres.’

The Demiurge, who is mentioned in this verse, had been created by the Spirit, the Father, before man, and in this sense, he is the ‘brother’ of man. The Demiurge is

the creator of the sensory world and he has appointed seven Rectors to govern this world. After entering the demiurgic field of creation, our world, Man as created by God has become entangled in the world created by the Demiurge. What was meant as a workplace for man has unintentionally become his place of residence. The result of the entanglement of the original man with the world of space and time, Hermes summarizes in verse 38 in the often quoted statement: ‘That is why, of all the creatures in nature, only man is dual, namely, mortal as to the body and immortal as to the essential Man.’ The ability to create and the urge to create is inbred in this dual creature, moreover, man has surrounded himself with an abundance and a variety of



The Nebra sky disk is a star chart of copper inlaid with gold from the Central European Bronze Age, 2300-1600 BC. We see a sun and a moon, and 32 stars. Scholars assume that the seven-star in the middle represents the Pleiades, an important marker for sowing and harvesting. The arches (of which one has been lost) show the bandwidth of the horizon, between which the sun rose and set during a year. The swords and axes and rings come from the same location. The disc takes a completely different look at the level of abstraction and attention to detail with which the peoples of that time studied the cosmos.

creations throughout the centuries and there is hardly any place on earth that is free from traces of what we call 'human culture'.

In the Gnostic Philosophy, our dual nature is interpreted on the one hand as the microcosm - 'the essential man' - and on the other hand as the personality - 'the body'. The urge to create can apparently be traced back to the microcosm with which we are connected as a personality. In the animal world, the urge to create is limited to reproduction and to finding simple hiding and nesting places.

The German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) structured the creations of man, wanting to make life more comfortable, under the predicate 'cultivation' and he saw cultivation as the first step in the development of humanity. Kant states: 'The process in history of the realization of human talents develops in three stages.

First, there is cultivation. Here man triumphs through his culture over nature through his handicraft, art and science. Then civilization, which comes down to this, that the individual desire must be limited by the coercion imposed by the community.

The highest step finally comes through moralization, that is the true liberation of man, the full development of his talents through education, morals and religion.' By civilization Kant explains that 'the coercion imposed by the community' develops via the legal system of the state by means of which the freedom of the individual is limited in such a way that the freedom of the other individuals is as great as possible. In other words: by putting man under the law, the state stands up for the weak, who would otherwise be crushed under the primitive 'right of the strongest'.

On the second step, man is still under the law, and it is the law that restricts his freedom.

On the third step, man will come to complete freedom, by being a law unto himself. Or, as is usually expressed in the school of the modern gnosis: by a voluntary obedience to the counsel of God, to the divine laws of creation, which is good and just for all.

The highest commandment of that law is: 'Love God above all things and your neighbour as yourself'.

It is clear that the step of cultivation has been attained by man. In many areas we have even gone beyond it and there is overproduction and decadence. Efforts are also made to ascend to the step of civilization - with or without satisfactory results. An organization like the United Nations proves that we have attempted to safeguard human rights to the global level. Unfortunately, it is also apparent that the internationally agreed human rights are still frequently violated and often trampled.

Finally, the step of moralization is not, as far as we know, realised by larger groups of people. What we usually call 'moral knights' are people who also try to insti-

tutionalize morality through regulations or laws, which can therefore only be called another form of civilization.

The gnostic sees that the step of true moralization, that is, moralization from within, is closely connected with a complete turnaround, with a complete transfiguration, with the only possible starting point: a path of transfiguration. Those who set their foot on it immediately provide proof that the inner law has been heard and will be read continuously from now on. It proves also that from now on man will give himself in full service to the microcosm with which he is connected, and which connects him to all mankind, yes, even to the entire fullness of creation. Because it is precisely thanks to the microcosm that he is able to encompass the divine Council.

After all, the vast majority of mankind is still on the first step of development. Moreover, there is admittedly exuberant cultivation, the world is indeed filled



Finally, the step of moralization is not realised by larger groups of people

with an endless stream of products of the human creative capacity, but not all of these creations bear witness to the dignity of man.

In addition to useful things such as homes, heating and agricultural machines, for example, a large arsenal of weapons has been manufactured - weapons that are used daily in the battle of one person against another and of one population against another - and we seem to be removed of that vision of the future further than ever, which was once outlined by the poet Anastasias Grün (1806-1876) in his long poem Five Easters. It is in 1836 that he paints a vision far into the future of:

*A race, by fortune kissed, of virtue rare,  
Earnest and cheerful, like the starry fires,  
Strong as the cedars, as the roses fair. [...]*

*Once, in the fields, the astonished children, screaming,  
Dug out a shapeless iron thing to light,  
Too straight and heavy for a sickle seeming,  
And for a ploughshare somewhat slim and slight.*

*The treasure-trove, they dragged it home with labour;  
The parents see it – but they know it not;  
For miles around they summon every neighbour;  
The neighbours look at it – they know it not.*

*Lo, an old man, from age's vale uprearing  
The snowy mountain of his crown, is brought,  
Out from the past like old Tradition peering, -  
To him they show it, - but he knows it not.*

*Well for them all that it is past their learning!  
The old world's shame, the grave's corroded hoard,  
Had else, as tear-drop, in their eyes been burning,  
For what they ne'er had heard of – was a sword!*

A dream perhaps, a distant future. But in fact, already on the first step of development there should be moral awareness,



of true morality, otherwise the urge of creation will be used for the sake of the (brute) self-maintenance - both on an individual and on a collective level. This also applies to the step of civilization: despite extensive legislation and all attempts to enforce these laws, including the sanctions that apply in case of violation, violation of the laws is still the order of the day, both small and big: from shoplifting up to violating agreements regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

A legal order can only function as intended if every individual who is placed under this order recognizes the usefulness and necessity of the regulations from within and therefore behaves accordingly.

In short: morality should always come

The cross  
of stone,  
so old and  
venerable...  
.....

from within; from within culture and civilization. The world around us however proves abundantly that this is not the case and it seems unrealistic to expect that it will become better in the foreseeable future - that humanity will soon be automatically blessed with a higher moral sense.

And yet ... the dream, the vision keeps gnawing, insisting, calling. For, from what we stated so far, can there any other conclusion than that the development of humanity has stagnated on the first step already?

But fortunately, the life-business of man is traversed by a call from afar, a message from the birth-domain of the microcosm. Because there is a call from the Father to his lost son. There is a light shining, there is a light radiation that can be captured and which then resonates in the spirit spark - which is the centre of the microcosm and coincides with the human heart.

And then something happens, something starts to glow. Then the consciousness of that person starts to gnaw inside, like a feeling of unrest - the feeling that something essential is missing in his self-created world. This turmoil and this lack will lead man to search, creating an ever-greater openness and receptivity for the light radiations.

Thus it appears that man who follows the suggestions of the Light, automatically, from within, comes to moral awareness and no outer rules or laws are necessary for this.

From such a turning to the Light results a new attitude to life, which cannot but bear witness to a high morality. In the power and in the spirit of the Light, man ascends on the path of transfiguration, the step of moralization. And that new mo-

rality has no rules but engenders a clear reality in thinking, doing and acting. It brings the vision of the poet closer. In the poem, in the vision of the future of nearly two hundred years ago, at the end, a peasant also finds a stone cross when he is ploughing. And no more than the sword, he knew what this was and whoever saw it, neighbours, friends, or the old greybeard, they did not recognize it...

*[...] They know it not, yet stands it, full of blessing,  
Within each heart, undimmed by rust or moss,  
Its fruitful seed all pathways bloom confessing;  
For what they ne'er heard of – was a cross!*

*They saw not the red field of battle streaming,  
They see the crown alone on Victory's brow!  
They saw not the black storm with lightning's gleaming,  
They see its rainbow's radiance only now! -*

*The cross of stone, they in the garden place it,  
An old, mysterious venerable thing;  
The rose and all the flowers conspire to grace it,  
Twine round the stone and climb and fondly cling.*

*So stands the Cross, enrobed with bloom and glory,  
On Golgotha, weighed down with precious lore:*

*Such wealth of roses hides the relic hoary,  
The cross could long ago be seen no more. ☼*

# The epic of the Kalevala

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A MONUMENT OF THE FINNISH IDENTITY



The Kalevala is sometimes called the Finnish Iliad. The epic has a firm place in world literature. More than one hundred years ago, on the 6th of December 1917, Finland became a sovereign state and this epic played an important role there.

In this article, we will shed light on this epic from two different angles. We will first describe the life and work of the editor of the Kalevala, the physician and botanist Elias Lönnrot. Subsequently, the ground-breaking spiritual interpretation of the Finnish philosopher and writer Pekka Ervast will be addressed.

*Dick van Niekerk*

#### **ELIAS LÖNNROT (1802-1884)**

In the southwestern part of Finland lies a tiny cottage with no direct neighbours. Behind it is a big lake. The horizon is far away. Surprisingly, the spiritual foundation of the Finnish state lies here, which was declared one hundred years ago in Helsinki, seventy kilometres from this location. In this cottage, the editor of The Kalevala grew up: Elias Lönnrot, son of a poor tailor. In just the one room, he lived there for many years together with his six sisters.

One day in April 1802, when father Lönnrot sent his fourth child on a long journey accompanied by his neighbour to be baptized, they got lost in a severe snow storm and upon arrival she had clear forgotten the child's given name. Therefore, the pastor took a look at the calendar of saints, and named the boy Elias, the saint of that day.

This distinct simplicity and poverty characterized Elias Lönnrot's childhood. In that poor cottage, flour was mixed with lichens and pine cone matter, and when this 'bread' was gone, they were hungry, very hungry. When the war broke out, the children had to beg. The six year old Elias did this by standing silently in front of the door and waiting... This did not make him embittered, however, as he forgot that he was hungry when he was walking or swimming. If it was all too much, he started reading the three books they had at home: the Bible, the hymnbook, and the catechism, and then all was well again...

The ten year old boy was allowed to go to school for a while to learn the mysterious Swedish language, but he had to go home quickly to help his father with his work. Yet he managed to enter a school again, this time in the capital Helsinki. Due to the fact that he had no books, he sat on the stairs with the books of his friend when he was having lunch, and he was not bothered by the freezing cold. He managed to do this for three years, while he earned money by helping the university staff with various chores. Then he was called home for a second time to help out there.

Eventually, an assistant preacher of the Lutheran congregation was concerned about the young Elias. He suggested that the seventeen-year-old boy should go door-to-door in the age-old custom — just like Luther once had done. He got rid of his extreme

shyness, and he started to sing psalms and collect grain, so a bread could be baked at home. This ensured that his family would have food on the table, and he was thus able to enter a gymnasium. When the bread stock had shrunk, Elias started working in an apothecary. He had no time off during the day, but he studied so successfully and intensively at night that he was able to go to university by the age of twenty. The student society he wanted to join refused him at first, because of the earlier inferior jobs he had had when he attended school.

#### **A second Orpheus**

Six years later, during the summer of 1828, the physician Lönnrot graduated from medical school, and was ready for his first tale-gathering expedition: his bare feet tarred, his meagre savings in a bag, dressed as a farmer, a firm walking stick in his hand, a pipe with tobacco in his mouth, with a solid backpack, a shotgun on his shoulder, and in his buttonhole a sash with his flute. He introduced himself everywhere as a farmer's son on his way to visit his family in Karelia. Some people take him for a bandit, although he is warmly welcomed most of the time. Whenever he arrives in a village and people gather around him, he plays his flute for them thus alluring even more people...

He then feels like, as he writes in his diary: "a second Orpheus, or, to couch it in a patriotic manner, like a new Väinämöinen". After making music, he always asks his audience if there are any of the song-sages and singers among the farmers, the so-called *Laulajat* and if so he pays them a visit. He then takes his notebook of the newly published collection of folksongs out of his bag and reads them aloud. The farmers already know what he reads by heart and they become excited and soon sing along. He does not always succeed in this, as not everyone can resist the brandy at these gatherings! However, slowly but surely, a rich collection accrues.

Ten more journeys follow in the next sixteen years with a distance of some 20 000 kilometers on foot or on skis to gather the folk songs of the Karelian region.

Thus, the sources of the Kalevala, also known as the Finnish Iliad, are gradually moulded into shape and form.

#### **In search of orally transmitted literature**

Lönnrot focused on Karelia, because—compared to the other areas of Finland—the oral transmission of songs among the illiterate population was still almost entirely intact. And he felt sharply that he had to record the songs now - as a kind of five-for-

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#### **THE EPIC OF THE KALEVALA**

The term "Kalevala" – the emphasis is on the first syllable – actually means "the Land of "Kaleva", a heroic tribe, only known in myths, and with no historic reality. The name can thus be translated as "the Land of Heroes". The Finnish Kalevala inspired the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to write his famous Native American epic *Hiawatha*. Its content parallels the story of The Kalevala. *Hiawatha* was translated into Dutch "in an inimitable manner" (according to Jan H. Eekhout) by Guido Gazzelle. The epic was also partly the model for Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings".

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As a  
second  
Orpheus  
he lured  
the people  
with his flute,  
to tell him the  
local stories

twelve effort - and he did so on the advice of the most important Laulaja (singer) who sang for him during one of his journeys: the eighty-year-old Arhippa Perttunen of Latvarjärvi in Russian-Karelia. This Arhippa owed all his knowledge to his father, the great Jivana, who had been a much greater singer than he had been. He told Lönnroth how he, as a child, was allowed to join his father fishing in the evening and how Jivana, hand in hand with his companion, sang for nights on end around the wood fire without ever repeating one rune:

‘I was still a boy and listened. In this way I learned the most important songs. But I have already forgotten many of them. None of my sons will be a singer after my death, like I came after my father. People are no longer as interested in singing as in my youth, when that was the most important thing both at work and during the free time in the village. You may still hear someone singing at meetings, but only if he had something to drink and then it is rarely a song that is of any value. Instead, the young ones only sing their own indecent ditties with which I would not dare to foul my lips. Ah, if someone in those days, as you do now, had collected the songs then, two weeks would not have been enough for him to write down just those songs that my father knew.’

Lönnrots collection activities fit perfectly in that zeitgeist. He was in good company for that matter. Inspired by Johann Gottfried Herder and the

Brothers Grimm, scholars throughout Europe searched for orally transmitted literature from a grim past. The underlying idea for them was to do justice to the people of that time period who lacked written sources and to save their history based on oral transmission. This was the logical consequence of the wish of the people to drive away the foreign rulers and to have political influence for themselves, yes, to realize autonomy at last. These were ideas that came to the surface during the European Revolution of 1848 and were—albeit often temporarily—indeed realized.

#### The Kalevala unveiled

In the history of the interpretation of the Kalevala, the analysis of the Finnish wisdom teacher Pekka Ervast plays a unique role. Initially, the Kalevala was historically interpreted. As a reflection of an alleged Golden Period that was useful for the process of constructing the Finnish identity. Later however, the mythological interpretation became more dominant. Today’s consensus is that the Kalevala is a cultural product of the nineteenth century.

Ervast distanced himself drastically from all those opinions and published in 1916—one year before the declaration of independence—a remarkable, ground-breaking interpretation: the Kalevala denotes the beginning of a typically Finnish inner Christianity, and symbolizes a path of initiation.

Despite his intense involvement with the national epic, Ervast was averse to every form of nationalism. For him, a sincerely aspiring human being only had one identity, that of Christ. “In Christ, all human souls are united. They form one great mysterious body in which the Logos of humanity, Christ, is clothed. That is the Corpus Christi!”

With his interpretation of the Kalevala, Pekka Ervast focusses on the role of the Sampo and on the three heroes; Wäinämöinen, the old singer, Ilmarinen, the blacksmith, and Lemminkainen, the light-hearted chap, the force of the future. They express themselves in a remarkable, literally superhuman language with a supra-human meaning, and function sometimes almost as monsters in an enigmatic story. The Sampo is being described in the poem as a flour, salt and money producing mill, which brings prosperity. That is the reason why everyone wants to own the Sampo.

Ilmarinen forges the Sampo for a strange area, where so-called older brothers of humanity or primitive people like the Finns live. He does so at the urgent request of Wäinämöinen. Far away from this area, the events of the story continue, things happen, and time goes by. Then, suddenly, Wäinämöinen and Ilmarinen feel forced to retrieve the Sampo from ‘the strange’ lands. However, during their return which is full of danger and threats, the Sampo is unfortunately shattered:

“Wäinämöinen, old and awake,  
Gazes at the breaking of the wave,  
Gazes at the floating to the shore,  
Gazes at how to flow to the land  
Carry these pieces of the Sampo,  
Splinters of the bright lid.  
Feels great joy about this,  
Speaks words that sound like this:

‘From there come seeds with germination,  
The beginning of steady prosperity,  
From there, the ploughing, from there, the sowing,  
From there, growing in many forms  
From there comes the lustre of the moonlight,  
Comes the joyful light of the sun  
Across Suomi’s wide fields,  
Across the precious land of Suomi.’”

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#### PEKKA ERVAST (1875-1934)

“The human being has something within that can inspire him from inside. He has an inner invisible, immaterial life. He is a spiritual being, a soul that makes him an inhabitant of another, spiritually invisible world; just like he lives in the visible world because of his body. His thoughts and feelings not only refer to his bodily functions. They can also be focused on the fact that he, as a Soul—as a thinking, feeling and willing Ego—receives inspiration from the divine world.”

This is, in a nutshell, the profound spiritual vision on the duality in the human being of the Finnish philosopher, poet and author Pekka Ervast. As an erudite person, he contributed greatly to the development of a spiritual atmosphere in his country during the first decennium of the twentieth century. Pekka Elias Ervast was born on the 26th of December 1875 in Helsinki. His religious upbringing starts at the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in that city. Ervast is going to study Roman languages, and later history of Indian religions, Sanskrit, and philosophy. When he is 21 years old in 1896, he mentions that he has experienced a spiritual rebirth, and he leaves university, because there “is no serious quest for the meaning of life”. He focusses on the deepening and formulation of his insights. The Finnish Rosicrucian Order was founded on March 14th 1920 by Pekka Ervast. The Order of Rosicrucians emphasized the primary importance of the evolution and maturation of the individual. The society of course arranged lectures and members’ meetings with discussions and also maintained lively publishing activities.

Although the Finnish Rosicrucians – not to be confused with the Finnish group of the Lectorium Rosicrucianum - evolved around their leader Pekka Ervast, there was no authoritarian belief or personality cult. The leader himself was appalled at the slightest signs of this tendency. Each member was accountable at any moment for what he might regard as spiritual truth. He nevertheless certainly wished to inspire the belief that unity with the divine cosmic consciousness, the truth, was obtainable although the condition for success was the realisation of a pure and ethical life. After the death of Pekka Ervast his successors attempted to maintain the basic ideas of the founder as the guiding principles of the society.

Due to translations into German and English, it has become clear only during the last decennia outside of Scandinavia how incisive and enlightening the message of Ervast has been. His insights and wisdom was laid down in more than 1300 public lectures, in more than one hundred books, and in translations into Finnish of books like the Tao-Te-King and The Dhammapada, the aphoristic wisdom of the Buddha.

At the same time, Ervast is still rather unknown outside of Finland. His biographer Jenkins explains why that is the case: “Unfortunately for the people of his days, Ervast lived and worked in a small language area, and in a tiny, then isolated country. He was very well-read in all major religions, and in many quite diverse cultures. As a homo universalis, he lived in truth and love, and with a permanent focus on the divine.”

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#### The shattered Sampo

According to Pekka Ervast, the Sampo symbolizes the completed spiritual body. The fact that it is eventually shattered means that the Sampo, the origin of Wisdom and the herald of Happiness, is not reserved for just one human individual only. The Sampo has to fall into pieces, so everyone may have a small part.

What about the Sampo’s eternity? Is it one great mystery?

The loss of the Sampo foreshadows its future resurrection, says Ervast. That is the law



of life. Everything spiritual that is lost will at some time again regain the spirit. Subsequently, all will be rehabilitated again. He who loses life, will obtain eternal life.

The ending of the Kalevala is very moving: the saga of Marjatta, the pure lady, and her child, that results in Wäinämöinen leaving. This part is decisive for the complete epic, and makes it all clear, according to Ervast: Christianity emerges in Finland, but is very impersonal, and independent of dogmas, time and space. Marjatta and her child have to escape the brute Ruotus, who plays a part similar to Herod, though we are nowhere reminded of the historical Jesus. Wäinämöinen bids an emotional farewell to his people and at that same moment Christianity arrives and the Son is baptized.

“The last doubt disappears from Wäinämöinen’s mind. He sheds a tear, which rolls down his pimply cheek and his big burden is lifted. ‘Yes, my son, thou art victorious,’ his heart whispers full of joy, ‘and I am now free to leave without any worries, free also to return with joy. Thanks and glory be to the Creator.’

The old man then baptizes him and proclaims this noble child king and lord of Karelia and the keeper of All.” ★

Bibliographic documentation is available through the editors.  
This article also appeared in two parts on Logon: [www.logon.media](http://www.logon.media)

Bibliographic documentation is available through the editors. There are no works by Pekka Ervast translated into Dutch. This article also appeared in two parts on Logon: [www.Logon.media](http://www.Logon.media)

# Three natures, three types of people

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Every universal movement tries to make human existence understandable by subdividing mankind into multiple types of people or levels of consciousness. In the hermetic gnosis of the first centuries people spoke of hyle, psyche and pneuma, a subdivision that is surprisingly modern.

In *The treatise of the three natures*, found at Nag Hammadi in 1945, the hylic, the psychic and the pneumatic principle are mentioned.

In this text these three concepts are connected to the different stages of consciousness of man.

The first, the hylic type, is the earthly human, who has a rock-solid faith in this world. Hylikos is Greek for wood or material.

In the second, the psychic human type, the desire for the light of the spirit has awakened in the soul, which creates a completely new direction, a new life.

But: there is still no direct and permanent connection with that light. The spirit only can express itself in the pneumatic human type.

In *The seal of renewal* Catharose de Petri writes about the pneumatic type: 'The pneumatic human type is so open to the Gnosis, its essence has such a crying need for the touch and fulfilment by the Light, that when the Light appears, he immediately rushes towards it and attempts to build a school to serve the Light, in order to offer it a home.'

From this it becomes clear that people

differ in state of consciousness, though there is always the risk that we will classify our fellow human beings according to such a description.

We may well ask ourselves: To what extent are we capable of judging them? To what extent do sympathy and antipathy play a role in this?

It will be more inspiring to consider to what extent these three principles are present in ourselves and what role they can play within us.

The hylic principle in us is the earthly, the physical; our body with which we are directly connected with matter. All of us are familiar with the experience that due to the worries of this world, we can be so absorbed that we forget the higher purpose of our lives. Then influences from outside can take over the helm from us, so that we are cut off from our own values and the spiritual core in our heart.

We can see such an experience as negative, but at the same time we gain a lot of life experience because of it. It is important that we do not linger there, but always re-establish ourselves in the realization that there is more than matter.



hyle

The psychic principle stands for the new soul life within us. The spirit spark in the heart comes to life and as a result questions arise in us about the purpose of our earthly existence: is this all?

Thus we discover, that we can let go of the earthly to give space to the new, the spirit spark in our hearts. The psyche teaches us to discern what is of this world and what is of the new soul. The fact of the two spheres of existence becomes clear to us and we live and strive accordingly.

#### **Feeding soil for the pneuma**

By cleansing ourselves from the influences of this world, the new soul grows and becomes higher and higher in vibration.

And thus our whole being becomes a feeding soil for the inductive radiation of the spirit, the pneuma.

It is important at this stage that we recognize that discernment and realise that letting go differs from rejecting. Ignoring is just pretending that something is not there and that is not realistic. Because everything that exists has its place and activity in the whole, whether we want to face it or not. The release of earthly influences is more a matter of making choices with which we will or won't connect ourselves.

In this way the human being grows towards a pneumatic consciousness, a direct and autonomous connection with the spirit. The word pneuma originally means 'breath' or 'wind' and later became spiritus sanctus, the holy spirit, in Latin.

The spirit radiates through the whole creation, and through pneuma man is consciously connected to the unity of the All. By the process-based release in the psychic phase the dialectical forces diminish which previously undermined him.

That is why the pneumatic human type can be more and more open to everything and everyone.

In the daily practice of life, it means, that man disarms himself. He pulls off his armour and is willing to be vulnerable for pain and sadness: it is fully accepted.

And from the connection with the spirit a new body, a new vehicle, a new instrument is built up. Then, on a higher spiral, man returns to the hyllic principle of matter. But no longer to the fixed self-contained matter as we know it here, but in a new etheric-physical vehicle that is connected with and in the service of soul and spirit. In a true, living, flowing unit.

#### **Perpendicular roads?**

Thus we can see the different stages of consciousness as a developmental course – of a path of great inner change. First, as a hyllic human, we fully engage with the earthly. Then, as a psychical human being, we distance ourselves from the earthly and we finally become an intermediary in the pneumatic principle of the spirit, to embrace all creation in love, without rejecting anything in it.

Sometimes it seems as if one state of consciousness is completely at odds with the other. But even though that is the case, they still complement each other, and they are all steps that can't be skipped. They are phases of consciousness that can coexist in the spiral path towards real life. Therefore, the insight of a pupil may easily change 180 degrees from time to time.

We may compare it with a journey through different landscapes. If we travel through a desert, we will have to be careful with water. If we travel through wetland then we will have to be careful that we do not drown.

Sometimes it seems as if one state of consciousness is completely at odds with the other



# psyche

### Driving lessons

And so it is on the glorious road to life: our understanding will always change, we find the courage to let go of old insights and we open our hearts and heads for the completely new. Because in order to gain awareness of the psychic and the pneumatic principle, we will have to get experience of these stages in their different workings. Thus we grow from the earthly separateness, through the discernment of all that is, to a new unity with the spirit. Then we leave the separation behind us and body, soul and spirit merge into a joint activity. Compare it to a process like learning to drive a car. Successively you learn to steer, change lanes, make a turn, park, learn road signs and rules and so on. In the meantime, the driving instructor, often without us being aware, performs the actions we have not yet mastered. Only when we can manage the various actions somewhat, are we able to combine two or more activities. And at the end of the process all skills merge into an automated unit and we can drive.

Jan van Rijckenborgh writes in the *Alchemical Wedding*, part 2, of the contradictions within the pupil that have to come to unity:

‘The threefold divine secret that exists undivided in the Logos must become alchemically divided in the candidate, so that each aspect becomes positive and effective, whereupon the three thus derived aspects can merge and work together as a trinity. That is the highest goal of all magic: the ideal cooperation between spirit, soul and body.’

On this varied journey, the activity of the spirit is always the determining factor. The spirit of God sustains this world and constantly seeks connection with the spirit spark in the heart of every human

being. In this sense, this whole world and everything that lives in it is carried by and immersed in love. Although the purely material human lives in a consciousness that is separated from the spirit, it is the spirit that allows him to gain experience in this world. And the human being in whom the new soul is awakening, receives new insights. Not by his own feeling or thinking, but through the mystery of the spirit to which he carries the gateway in the heart. It is up to man to be open to it, to listen to it, to follow the new insights and be led by that emerging spirit. For whoever entrusts himself to it, surrenders to ever-changing insights. And he will see that nothing, nothing at all is fixed and certainly not in this spiritual apprenticeship. Nothing is fixed and at the same time everything, the entire divine creation, is open to him!

### Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva

The big question is: Does he or she have the courage to live in this ever-changing dynamic? Consider this dynamic on the basis of the trinity of Indian mythology: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, which together bring about continuous growth in all creation, and in analogy also in us. Brahma stands for the generator, the creator;

Vishnu stands for the sustainer; Shiva stands for the destruction, but also for the purification.

If we project this on the inner path, we see that:

- first, a new insight is released within us; here Brahma the creator is working;
- then we start to live according to this new insight, it becomes an enriching place in our consciousness; this is Vishnu, the maintainer working.

This whole world and everything that lives in it is carried by and immersed in love

.....

# pneuma

- and once the new insight has reached full maturity, it has to make room for a new insight; this is Shiva the destroyer working.

And then the cycle of creator - sustainer - starts again, on a higher spiral of consciousness. This renewal of successive insights takes place again and again in all creation, as we say: from power to power and from glory to glory. Where do we find ourselves in this current of continuous change? Do we dare to let go of the insights that initially touched us so deeply, can we make room for something new? Do we dare to submit to Shiva, the destroyer, or do we prefer to stay in Vishnu, the sustainer and crystallize? Do we have the courage to let it dissolve into the new unity? It is often said: everything is one. But what is the sense of this oneness, if we have no insight into the different aspects of it?

### Love for the world

It will not be surprising that in this process fear of the unknown can be an impediment. A great motivation of man is fear and conservatism; while the spirit is love and all-embracing life and a constant stream of renewal. And with every step on the path, it is our choice whether we dare to surrender to this loving flow. The man who goes this path to a conscious bond with the spirit, will never think that he is finished with life in this world. That would be an absurd thought, completely opposed to his purpose in life. Precisely by being free of it, he is in the middle of it all. Not to lose himself in it but to transform the world through the all-embracing love of the spirit, in a pure triune act of head, heart and hands. Just as long as he still possesses an earthly body.

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### PNEUMA, PSYCHE AND HYLE

Valentinus (around 80-160) is the first well-documented founder of the Gnosis in ancient times - but that does not mean he was the first gnostic. Previously, Marcion, Simon, and Basilides were (more or less at the same time) kindred spreaders of this religion of the spirit. But it was mainly Valentinus' disciples who spread his teachings in the Roman empire, and beyond. The old gnosis manifested itself from the direct revelation of Jesus' doctrine in the first century and disappeared after a slow decline and numerous distortions in the seventh century.

Valentinus and his followers saw humanity in three groups: the hylics, the psychics and the pneumatics. The hylics (hyle is Greek for material, matter) would nowadays be called materialists or worldly people. Psychic people were capable of faith and moral insight (psyche translated and understood as soul) but lacked the direct knowledge of God. Pneumatics (from pneuma = Greek breath, wind or breath) breathed in the spirit of the Gnosis and had direct knowledge of God.

There is little point in applying this division to current humanity, but it is probably useful to apply it to our own being. Because each of us carries the potential of all three types.

During the life of Jesus and during the first fifty years after his death, pneumatics and psychics practically formed one unit: exactly as a gnostic school must function. Valentinus, a pneumatic and, moreover, a literary genius, propagated this unity in his school of Gnosis, love and beauty. And he would have shaped the whole Christian church in that way, if he had been chosen as the head of it. But it was not to be. Towards the end of the second century we see a clear hylic influence grow in the so-called old church. Organization became more important and too much direct inspiration from the spirit was difficult and confusing. They wanted a solid doctrine - and this would be the conflict model that would dominate during an important part of the first millennium. Council followed council, every time ideas were rejected, and groups were banished. Politics prevailed, and the Gnostics were more and more excluded and increasingly gained the stigma of heretics.

These true Christians, however, continued the line of inner Christianity in smaller schools, in which it was confessed that God-and-man, in Christ, are one of (holy) spirit. From the middle of the third century, the Gnosis was rejected by the ever-growing hylic church, until the church decided in the fourth century to ban "the un-loved sister Gnosis" and that a direct inspiration from the spirit was no longer necessary. After all, one had 'the doctrine'.

But those who live out of the pneuma will inwardly live the Sermon on the Mount. They can't and won't do otherwise. The psychics, the truly soulful, the souls longingly looking forward to the spirit, will try to maintain the same attitude to life in their lives - until the triune Gnosis of father-son-holy spirit fills their entire inner space. Each of them will always remain alert to the hylic man within, who will still work in him or her until they take the leave of this world, in a serving and subordinating capacity to the spiritual process. That is the hallmark of Gnostic man.

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Love is: receiving everything, surrendering everything and thereby renewing everything; in an uninterrupted stream; in the oneness with the spirit. Now we can ask ourselves: I am somewhere at the beginning of this road, how long will it take before there is a conscious connection with the spirit?

That is something that does not have to last long. It can even happen now because we are part of the living body of the school: the Sancti Spiritus home. Catharose de Petri writes, as mentioned earlier, that the 'pneumatics' immediately attempt to build a school, a house to be able to serve the light. '

In the past 100 years, a field of light force has been created, of which the highest vibration reaches into the spirit. As a result, the spirit can emanate in this living body and be active for all those involved: thus also for us. That is why every gathering is a light column that reaches to the very highest, the spirit and at the same time is planted with its foot in our hearts.

Jan van Rijckenborgh points at that gratifying fact in *The Egyptian Arch-Gnosis part 2, chapters 25 and 26*:

"The spirit exists in the living body of the school. And through your discipleship you are living cells in that living body. In that state, a projection of the spirit is transferred to you. The spirit radiations reach you in the living body and increase hourly in strength, without forcing you; they do not overwhelm you, no they only reveal themselves to you. And if you possess the eyes of the heart, when the centre of the microcosm, the rose, has opened up, you will be able to perceive that image of the spirit straight away. And when you observe that image, you will never more be free from it. Then

you are magnetically connected to the spirit, with unimaginable consequences. The new possibilities that open up to us, thus lead us through all phases of the Gnostic path to unity with the spirit." ✨

# The convert - Stefan Hertmans



In Rouen in 1070, Vigdis was born the daughter of a well-to-do Christian family. When she was fifteen, she met the Jew, David, son of a chief rabbi, and she fell madly in love with him. After a short time, she left everything behind and fled with him to Navarre. Her father followed her, so they left for a small place in Provence. In the meantime, she became a Jew and was called Sarah. The wars of religion were raging around them. After a short time of rest, fate struck again. The place was hit by a pogrom with dramatic consequences. Sarah survived with her youngest and she fled again, this time to Cairo

In 'The Convert', the Flemish writer Stefan Hertmans, known for his frequently translated book 'War and Turpentine', explores the distant past from his country house in the southern French region of Vaucluse, where he escapes the hectic times of today. There he hears of an event that took place at the end of the eleventh century about a Christian woman from the high Norman nobility of Rouen who fell in love with a Jewish man, fled with him and found a temporary accommodation in the hamlet of Monieux.

This is a small village where nothing much happens and where time has come to a standstill. There was once an established Jewish community full of life, and its existence became threatened after centuries of peaceful coexistence. Based upon manuscripts found by the historian Norman Golb in the 'Genizah of Cairo'<sup>1</sup>, Hertmans tries to clear a path through the ruins of time, to form a tangible image of her and to follow her track in the midst of a tumultuous time - the time in which the first forms of Catharism emerged in the region, and the fear of heresy was all around.

Almost recklessly, Hertmans opens a window to a time that is apparently long past, but which comes awfully close again in our

1. The 'Genizah of Cairo' (literally 'hiding place') comprises a collection of more than 200,000 fragments of Jewish manuscripts, of which the oldest dates from around the 9th century after Christ. The Genizah is located beneath the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo. The manuscripts were saved because somewhere the name of god is mentioned in them and for that reason they could not be destroyed.

days, because the fault lines turn out to be the same, even after a thousand years. He refrains from any judgment and only looks how an inevitable fate unfolds in the life of a single individual. In this way he gives a name to the loneliness which everyone experiences, who, just like her, has his world torn apart and leaves everything behind, 'all certainty, her fortune, her prestige, her future and her good name' (page 73<sup>2</sup>). First, she and her beloved are chased by knights which her father sent out to pursue them; then they must flee the advancing armies that had started their crusades, and which had been raised by the French Pope Urban II. Fired up by the promise of a full indulgence, they left a bloody trail

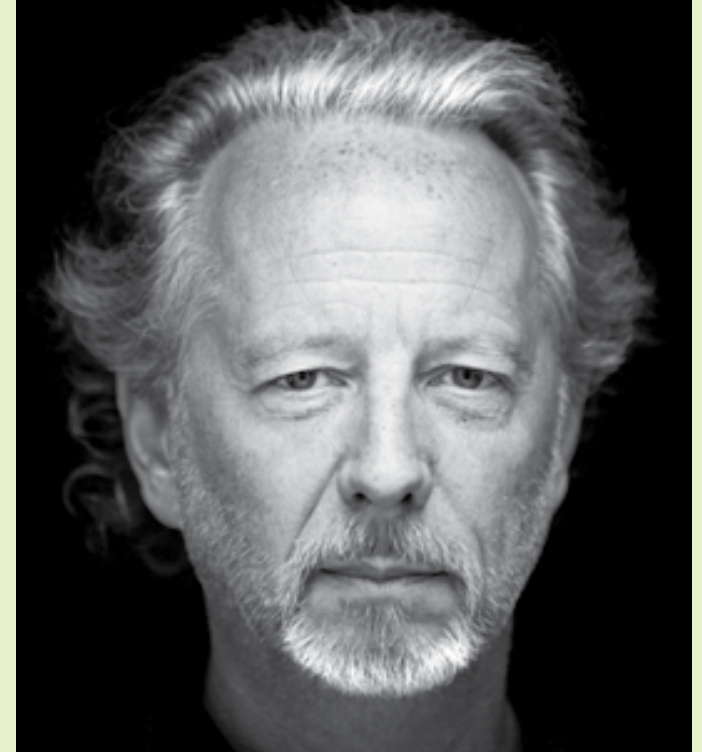
2. The page numbers mentioned in this text refer to pages in the Dutch-language book

of destruction on their way to Jerusalem to liberate the holy land from the Saracen evil. "The Western world is slowly moving towards a catastrophe, a break in history, and nobody sees it coming" (page 131). It was a time of intensified faith, of conversion delusion, persecution and xenophobia.

Adelais Vigdis took the Jewish name Hamoutal, and thus broke a strongly held taboo in her desire for another world, at the risk of her own life. "She had seen the white unicorn and she was raging through a forest of old prohibitions" (page 55). She flees in support of her own fellow believers, in the harshest conditions and tormented by many contradictory feelings, although she hardly feels at home in the new belief imposed on her. The long-standing hatred for the Jews simmers just below the surface, and she experiences first hand just how that is expressed. In the meantime, she has changed her rich clothes for discreet and sober clothing, and along the way almost everything is taken away from her. At the same time there is no way back to her old identity.

Forced by the most unsafe circumstances, she falls back on her own inner resources. "There is no counsellor who can tell her how to behave, how to take this on. She has been brought up in a pampered way, but now that she has responded to her passion and has taken a new direction, she is desperate" (page 78-79). Hertmans traces their journey, and visits all the places they may have visited, including Chartres, Orléans, and Narbonne, her husband's home town, where he was the son of the chief rabbi. They hoped to make this village their final destination. And now the writer comes there, so many centuries later, after retracing their steps for so long. Unknown to anyone, they had gone into hiding. But even there, fate strikes hard, when the village is attacked by a mad and drunken gang of fanatic crusaders. The synagogue is set on fire, whereby her husband is killed and her two children are kidnapped. 'Deus lo volt', is the slogan, as if this is God's will. It is a blind and bloody outburst of religious madness, a pogrom that leaves behind deep wounds in the local community. It is told that the valuables of the synagogue are hidden in the neigh-

Stefan Hertmans (1951), novelist, poet, essayist (with a large body of work, including 'War and Turpentine') has written this novel based on true events. He knows the Provence well, digs up the sources in Rouen, Navarre, Provence, Cairo and Cambridge and ingeniously mixes past and present. This is a flamboyantly written and excellently documented dramatic story that will find many readers.



bourhood, even though no one knows where. When he visits the ruins at the well, Hertmans still envisions the figure of that grieving woman who has just given birth to her third child, and it is as if a deep peace comes over him.

Meanwhile, Hamoutal had decided to search for her two kidnapped children, and so once again leaves her goods and chattels, without saying goodbye. This time she boards a ship sailing from



**'It is pitch dark around them, the deepest hour of the night. The Big Bear has slipped from the sky dome. Somewhere a lonely owl calls out. A few stars twinkle vaguely between the quietly blowing leaves. Something moves, not far from her. She is cold and shivering all over her body. Then someone staggers out and stands over her, dark and wobbly. This is my death, she thinks. She hears a gasping. Only then does she recognize David. He falls down beside her, and they grab each other's hands, and stay so until the morning.'**

Marseille, hoping to reach Jerusalem via Tunis. And Hertmans also follows her trail on this route, which finally leads to Cairo, earlier called Fustat. The distraught Hamoutal, who has also lost her third child on the way, symbolizes a whole period of time when she says: "The old world is disrupted, the laboriously maintained equilibrium of the past is shaken" (page 195). In this way, the journey finally leads her to a world that at that time is a mixture of cultures, a world completely different from the safe one in which she grew up. It is an Arab Muslim world, in which she at first feels completely as an outsider, being half Jew and half Christian. Hamoutal is more dead than alive, when she ... "indifferently and silent-

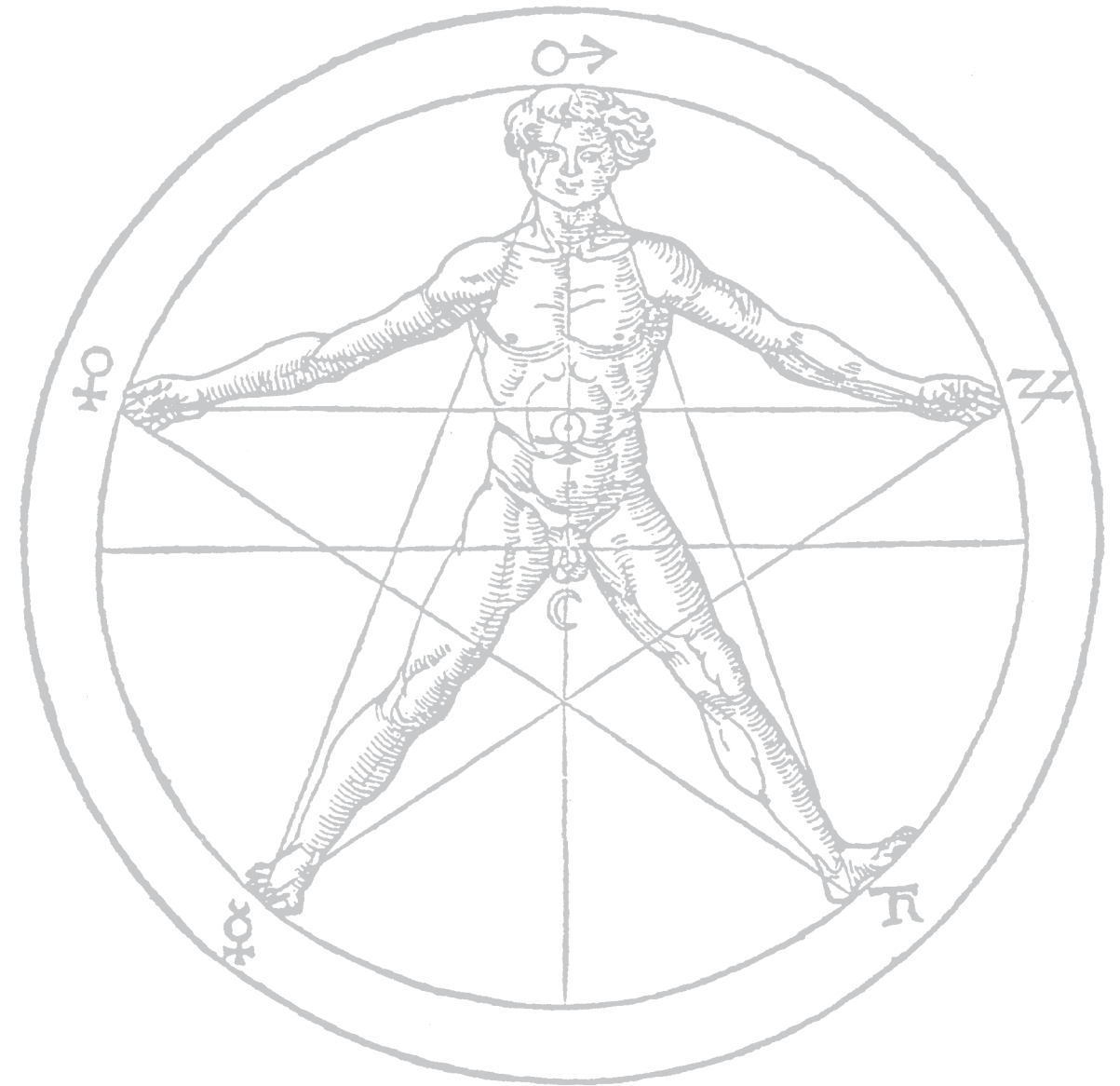
ly stares at a confronting world which she does not know and does not want to know." (page 232). But it is also there, in the old Jewish part of the city, that, many centuries later, Hertmans enters the synagogue where, in the Genizah, the few traces of her stay can be found. It is here that he really finds her, and here, too, that we learn, with Hertmans, what later happened to her, and why her way finally leads back to the place where his search for her started.

#### **Distant witness**

In everything, the writer of 'The Convert' remains the distant witness, who, in his own time-period, goes looking for traces under the dust and grit of time. Nevertheless, on almost every page, the reader

can feel in the background the inter-religious tensions that in the present time once again divide the world into irreconcilable camps. The author masterfully manages to build a bridge between two totally different time frames, and knows how to empathize with an almost unreachably distant past. 'So lost in time that it feels as if I have landed in a distant future in a time machine and actually should not be here' (page 124).

In this way, he also frees an initially anonymous woman from her own time, and lets her go the way that every person must ultimately go, if he wants both to follow his own destiny and finally escape from it - born in time, called to eternity. ☸



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**Managing editor**  
Peter Huijs

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**Editorial address**  
Pentagram  
Maartensdijkseweg 1  
NL-3723 MC Bilthoven  
The Netherlands  
e-mail: pentagram@rozekruispers.com

**Administrative address**  
Rozekruis Pers, Bakenessergracht 5  
NL-2011 JS Haarlem, The Netherlands  
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Address in England:  
The Granary  
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King's Lynn, PE32 2DF  
e-mail: contact@goldenroscross.org.uk

Address in Malta:  
P.O. Box 29, St Paul's Bay  
e-mail: lucert@malta.net

Addresses in U.S.A.:  
2430 19th Street  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
e-mail: lectorium1@bigplanet.com  
P.O. Box 334  
Chatham NY 12037  
e-mail: chatham@goldenroscross.org

Address in Canada  
5267 Holmes Road, RR#1  
Inverary (Kingston), Ontario K0H 1X0  
e-mail: ontario@goldenroscross.org

Address in New Zealand:  
258 Ariki Street, Karapiro RD2  
Cambridge 3494 - New Zealand

Address in Australia  
P.O. Box 664, Berwick Vic 3806  
e-mail: lectoriumrosicrucianum@dcsi.net.au

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- **The unicorn, the lion and the dove**  
*Jan van Rijckenborgh*
- **Sound and light**  
*Wisdom and Knowledge are the solid foundation of your time*
- **What is really of value**  
*Does society offer young people anything of value anymore? A training in sixteen tablets*
- **Small white bird**  
*The magic of an encounter*
- **Sword and cross.**  
*The impossible moral step*
- **Three natures**  
*Pneuma, psyche and hyle*
- **The epic of the Kalevala unveiled as a path of initiation**  
*Monument of the Finnish identity*
- **Back to school**

## COLUMN

- The superlative

## SYMBOL

- Cygnus – the swan

## BOOKS

- The Convert

